

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
THE STONE WALL

January 1995

MCNEILL'S RANGERS

In the Shenandoah Valley
and West Virginia

McNeill and his men lacked the post-war media glitz which swelled the importance of Mosby's Rangers. In terms of actual damage to the Union war effort, McNeill's band did more physical damage than Mosby's.

Hear Roger DeLauter, author of four books on the Civil War, give the details at our January meeting. DeLauter became interested in the Civil War by listening to his grandmother talk about his family's participation in the war. A native of Frederick, Md., he lives in Winchester, Va., and is writing a book about Jubal Early's 1864 Valley Campaign.

Roger DeLauter

*Thursday, Jan. 12, 1995, 7:30 p.m.
Manassas National Battlefield Park
Visitor Center*

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR
ROUND TABLE**

P.O. Box 196
Centreville, VA 22020

Scott Patchan
President

Gary Ecelbarger
Vice President

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Membership

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At Large

THE STONE WALL is published monthly. Submissions are welcome. Deadline is the 25th of the month. Send manuscripts to Karen Fojt, 9296 Caladium Drive, Manassas, VA 22020.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Column illustrations are from *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* by John D. Billings, Corner House Publishers, 1993. Originally published in 1888.

President's Desk



Dear Members,

My thanks to all of you who attended the December meeting to hear Joe Whitehome speak about Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. It certainly proved to be an enlightening and well-delivered talk.

The executive committee met and voted on several resolutions in December.

Since becoming involved in the leadership of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table, our vice president's and my goal for our round table has been to sponsor a symposium. At the meeting, the executive committee voted unanimously to set aside \$1,000 toward a symposium on the 1862 Summer Campaign in Virginia and Maryland.

We believe this is the most logical subject for our round table to present at a symposium, given our name and location. The topics we hope to cover include Cedar Mountain, Brawner Farm, 2nd Bull Run, Chantilly, South Mountain and Antietam. We intend to hold the symposium some time in 1995.

We also voted unanimously to allow the president to appoint another at-large member to the executive

committee. Based on our bylaws, the past president, in good standing with the round table, has a seat on the committee. As our past president is no longer a member of BRCWRT, this motion was needed to fill the ninth spot on the committee.

In other meeting business, I notified the round table of my intent to organize a constitutional committee. An incident which occurred during the round table's second year convinced both our founder and me that a more detailed cash disbursement policy was an absolute must.

The change will stipulate that any cash disbursement greater than \$100, or outside the course of normal round table business, must be approved by both the executive committee and the BRCWRT members. Prior to voting on such a disbursement, the issue will be addressed in at least two newsletters. The vote will be strictly yes or no on a single issue. If a member wishes to introduce an alternative, it will be considered as a separate item upon its own merit. The vote will not be held in the form as alternative A vs. alternative B.

This change to the bylaws will be voted on by the BRCWRT members at the February or March meeting.

We voted 6-2 in favor of continuing to provide plaques to our speakers as an expression of our gratitude for their time and effort in preparing their presentations.

The executive committee also considered the recommendations submitted by our field trip chairman at the December meeting. We decided to add a tour of Chancellorsville on

Saturday, May 13, 1995. Ernest Ferguson, will lecture on this battle at the May meeting, so the timing is perfect. We are looking for volunteers to give presentations at the tour stops, so all you Stonewall Jackson fanatics (I know you're out there) get ready to present Jackson's grand flank attack.

Bristoe Station and Fisher's Hill tours will also be conducted in 1995. The list is not final.

The executive committee meeting concluded with a lively discussion on the role of the round table in Civil War site preservation. We all agreed that John McAnaw, Preservation Chairman, is doing a great job in this area. There was, however, little agreement on how to get more BRCWRT members involved in preservation efforts. John and I will be talking to random members at the next meeting to gain a better understanding of our members' interests in preservation.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Scott C. Patchan
President, BRCWRT

BRCWRT MEETINGS

Executive Committee - Thurs., Jan. 26,
7:45 p.m. at the Centreville Library
conference room.

Preservation Committee - Thurs., Jan. 26,
7:15 p.m. at the Centreville Library
conference room. All executive committee
and preservation committee members are
requested to attend.

Opinion

Grant reconsidered

By Gary L. Ecelbarger

Some time prior to Joe Whitehorne's thought-provoking discussion of Ulysses S. Grant, a true gray son of the South repeated an opinion that I have heard all too many times explaining the reason for the Union commander's success. I was told that Grant was a butcher who cared more for his horses than his men, and won simply because he had more men.

Grant, before he took command of all Federal armies, had a casualty rate that was lower than his opponent's in nearly every single battle during 1862-1863.

For example, at Shiloh Grant lost 16% of his men, a tremendously high rate of loss by today's standards, but considering his adversary lost 24% at the same battle, Grant comes off looking quite efficient. During the same period, Robert E. Lee suffered a casualty rate that nearly always exceeded his opponent in battle. Lee was aggressive and achieved most of his victories as an offensive tactician. Not surprisingly, his successful slaughter at Fredericksburg represented the only time the Federals suffered a higher casualty rate. His defensive stand at Antietam was a disaster: Lee lost over 22% of his men, while McClellan lost about 16%.

What about Grant's rate of loss when he faced Lee in the spring of 1864? The

Federals suffered 23,000 more losses than the Confederates May 5-June 12, but the rate of loss tells a different story.

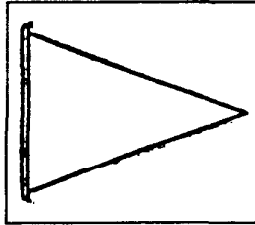
Recently-computed casualty figures for the Confederates at the Wilderness reveals a total of 10,830 men out of 62,000 engaged, a rate loss of 17%. Grant lost 15%, 17,666 of 118,000.

During the 14 days at Spotsylvania, Lee lost 20% vs. Grant's 17%. Grant lost 3% and Lee lost 2% at North Anna. Grant admitted that Cold Harbor was a mistake and the statistics confirm this, Federal losses of 14% vs. 8% Confederate.

Considering that Grant was on the offensive during most of the 1864 spring campaigning, his rate of loss is very close overall to Lee's.

Grant knew he would win the war by employing simultaneous movements on all fronts. His success has been overshadowed by flippant criticisms of his cold-heartedness. His opponents escape this view despite suffering similar or higher casualties. For those who continue to insist that Grant was merely a butcher, I only ask for consistency. For if Grant was a butcher who cared little about his men, then Lee deserves the same label for his losses during 1862-1864. Case closed.

Permission to Speak Freely



STONEWALL BRIGADE

Overrated!!!

By Scott C. Patchan

The Stonewall Brigade performed superbly on the slopes of Henry Hill at the 1st Battle of Bull Run in 1861. They performed at a level they would never again attain during the remainder of the war. Many brigades in both armies delivered more consistent efforts throughout the course of the entire war.

The Stonewall Brigade was driven in confusion from the field at Kernstown, and checked at Port Republic by Shield's midwesterners. At Cedar Mountain, this brigade was once again driven from the field. At Brawner Farm and Antietam, the Virginians fought against the Iron Brigade and came up on the short end of the stick both times, once again proving the superiority of the midwestern troops. At Chancellorsville, the brigade was driven back after gaining a temporary success. At Gettysburg, the Stonewall Brigade received a check in its attempt to carry Culp's Hill.

The brigade performed ably in the Wilderness, but failed to support Leroy Stafford's Louisiana Brigade, which suffered severely as a result. The Stonewall Brigade was virtually destroyed in Grant's overwhelming assault on the Mule Shoe at Spotsylvania. A few hundred survivors were consolidated with several other brigades. This demoralized lot was one of the first units to break and run at both Opequon and Cedar Creeks, although given the previous destruction of the brigade's structure, it is not fair to consider these and subsequent failures such as Fort Stedman and Saylor's Creek when evaluating the Stonewall Brigade.

The Stonewall Brigade's bright reputation dims significantly when its record is examined in detail. Many units from Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia (many belonging to Longstreet's Corps) performed at a much higher level of proficiency consistently throughout the war, but do not receive the recognition they deserve because they lacked a glittery title. Remember the old saying, "Never judge a book by its cover." It seems to apply here to no small degree.



1995 DUES FORM

Membership in BRCWRT runs from January to December. Unless you joined in October-December, this is the last newsletter issue covered by your dues.

Make checks payable to Bull Run Civil War Round Table. Drop it off at the membership table at the next meeting, or mail form and dues to **Bull Run Civil War Round Table**, P. O. Box 196, Centreville, VA 22020.

Membership categories \$ 15 Individual
(circle one)

 \$ 25 Family

 \$ 10 Student (age 22 and under)

Name _____

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City _____

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Telephone _____ Date _____

Focus On

UNION MILLS: Part 3

By John McAnaw

In the December issue of **The Stone Wall**, I covered the ground reconnaissances of the Union Mills area that four round table members, Charles Grymes, Mark Knowles, Bron Wolff and I, conducted on Nov. 12 and 14.

Reconnaissance - Subsequently, on Dec. 18, Wolff and I traversed a large area of Union Mills terrain on the Prince William County side of Bull Run, well south of the railroad bridge. After photographing what appears to be the Civil War military cemetery noted in the last newsletter, we moved northward and upstream, to Yates Ford. This ford was a well-used crossing point during the war.

We mapped the ford and the pre-Civil War road that led from the ford, first north, and then northwest, to the top of the ridge. The surrounding area, both on the Fairfax County and Prince William County sides, is undeveloped. Without reservation I vote the Yates Ford area as one of the most scenic in the two-county region. The stands of deciduous and coniferous trees are magnificent, as is the nearby rocky section of Bull Run. Fortunately, the Fairfax County side is part of Hemlock Overlook Regional Park.

Meetings - On Dec. 27, I met with Richard Sacchi and Justin Patton of the Cultural Resources Office, Historic Preservation Division, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). They described county efforts to preserve certain archeological and historic sites on the proposed Balmoral development of 960-plus acres located within the Union Mills area. This development will be bounded on the north by Compton Road, on the east by a ridge, located to the east of the old Ivakota Farm, on the south by the Norfolk and Southern Railroad tracks, and on the west by Bull Run Regional Park, located to the east of Bull Run.

Members of the Cultural Resources Office and the county archeologist have been working with representatives of the Elm Street Development Company toward protection of specific sites within the proposed development. During our conversation, it became obvious that Sacchi and Patton are very knowledgeable and are keenly aware of the sites' importance to our archeological and historic heritage.

On the following day, I met with Fairfax County archeologist, Larry Moore; Brian Connolly of the Fairfax County Regional Library and an expert on registration of cemeteries; Cynthia Whitley, principal archeologist; and three assistant archeologists employed by Elm Street Development

company. Moore, Whitley and the archeology team have been studying and working at the Balmoral Tract for several years. We also visited a number of historic sites on the eastern side of the tract.

Summing up, I now have a clearer picture of the impact of the impending development on existing Native American, Civil War and cultural sites within the boundaries of the Elm Street Development Company property. Much effort has been expended to preserve many of these sites. Unfortunately, it appears that several Civil War sites will fall victim to the bulldozer.

Development of certain parts of the Balmoral Tract may be right around the corner. Work on the private 18-hole Balmoral Golf Course, located south of the intersection of Union Mills Road and Compton Road, may begin shortly. Also, home construction at the old Ivakota Farm, south of Compton Road and east of Union Mills Road, may begin shortly.

Preservation News

Ox Hill (Chantilly) Battlefield

Richard Sacchi of Fairfax County Park Authority, confirmed that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors holds titles to the two-plus acre Menges tract, located immediately south of the Ox Hill Battlefield Park. This park is located near the intersection of West Ox Road and Monument Drive. He does not anticipate any problems regarding the transfer of the tract to the park authority.

Bull Run Civil War Round Table TOURS

Sign up for the 1995 field trips before the next meetings. The field trip committee plans to view Bristoe Station in March; Chancellorsville on May 13; and Fishers Hill in June. The tours are self-guided. Members will use their own vehicles.

Members who would like to be guides during these tours can also sign up at the meetings. The topics to be covered at each stop are available at the meetings.

In addition, we will have local trips as field reconnaissances, field verification, or just visitations to sites as we have done for Sudley Ford and Union Mills.

From the Ranks

Visitors to Hancock, Md., today may notice a cannonball embedded in the north wall of the Presbyterian Church. This is a 133-year-old relic of a brief engagement between Stonewall Jackson's division and a Federal outpost stationed there in early January, 1862. The following opposing soldier accounts describe the action that resulted in the cannonading that scarred the church wall.

From the Journal of Jed Hotchkiss, Top. Engineer Valley District

Sunday, January 5th. General Jackson sent a flag of truce to Hancock to the Federal Commander there, by Colonel Ashby; he was shot at three times as he approached the river but they finally recognized him and sent over a boat and took him, blind folded, before the Federal Commander. General Jackson demanded the evacuation of the town, that our troops might pass over undisturbed or he would shell it. One hour was given for a reply. The Federal General replied that he should dispute the passage and if that would justify General Jackson in destroying the town, the responsibility would be his. The artillery was promptly posted on a commanding hill on the left of the road overlooking the town and a rapid artillery fire from both sides began. The Yankees screened their men and pieces behind a brick Church about half way up the hill in the rear of the town except when firing. In less than an hour the guns were withdrawn behind the hill and the firing ceased. The snow had increased in depth, the air was penetrating and piercing and we had almost a Russian winter. The troops were allowed to burn rails and the fencing rapidly disappeared. General Jackson and staff remained behind our batteries during the cannonade. The guns were in position before day. It snowed in the P.M. The enemy fired big guns at us from out of Hancock and below, the guns from the "Red Church" did not reach our position, those from the "Brown Church" did so when the men cried out "Brown Church" (meaning a shot from there) down all would go, but when "Red Church," no one moved. "Brown Church" and "Red Church" became watch words. Camp was two miles back of Hancock. *The Hotchkiss Journal is part of his collection at the Library of Congress.*

From a letter by Alexander Read, 84th PA, written Jan. 30, 1862

...After arriving at the run we went down the railroad to Hancock at the same time our company was ordered out as skirmishers in advance of the regiment. After proseding within about 100 yards of the ford the Reble Cavalry came on us by the south road in order, if possible, to cut off our retreat but fortunately there was a company of Illinois boys placed on the point of a hill which foiled their calculation. They hailed them with rifle bulits at the same time mistakeing us for rebles they fyred at us. some five or six of our boys returning the compliment but fortunately nobody was hurt...Two of the company

undertook to wade the river. One reached the other shore in safety and one was drowned. His name was Theodore Pardee, a native of Indiana County.

After we were ferried over to Hancock we went to our quarters and layed on our arms until the next morning when about nine o'clock Col. Ashby of the Reble army came over asking us to surrender. Col. Murray replied "I have some men here whitch intends to fight until the last man falls and if you undertake to cross you will have to run your own risk." But on the evening when we was going to our quarters we had to march under the roar of canon amidst the cracking shells. At eleven o'clock Bang went one of the reble canon and Bang Bang went our canon and from the time until three o'clock there was a perfect shower of shot and shell...When all was quiet the next morning and the rebles apered in large numbers on the opisite hill we sent a few well directed shot among them which made them sealihute...So ends my poorly written chapter. Please write soon.

COMING UP

**The Logistics of Supply:
White House Landing**

William J. Miller

February 9

Bull Run Civil War Round Table
P.O. Box 196
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Michael Duggan
5531 Winford Court
Fairfax VA 22032

