

THE STONE WALL

February 1995

HARDTACK AND TOOLS, HORSES AND MULES

Civil War Logistics and the Peninsula Campaign

Great commanders argue that logistics, that is supply operations, determine the outcome of campaigns. "Understand that the foundation of an army is the belly," wrote Frederick the Great, who considered the primary duty of a general to be procuring nourishment for his soldier. The Duke of Wellington said that victory hinged on attention to logistic detail, and that a wise commander traces the path of every biscuit from the stalk into the soldier's mouth. Napoleon, who declared that an army moves on its stomach, and theorists Karl von Clausewitz and Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini called logistics decisive. A modern historian states flatly that "logistics make up as much as nine-tenths of the business of war."

Most writers of history dwell upon strategy and tactics and impatient to get into the action, too often begin studies of campaigns at the point of the fixed bayonet and work backward. Yet generals, going back to Hannibal, stress that battles are won or lost before the first shot is fired. An old Army saw holds that "Amateurs talk about strategy, professionals talk about logistics."

Bill Miller will give us an introduction to the important and unexpectedly fascinating subject of logistics in the Civil War. He will examine what logistics is, and how it works by referring to various campaigns, with an emphasis on the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. If you don't understand logistics, you can't understand how the war was fought.

BILL MILLER

*Thursday, Feb. 9, 1995, 7:30 p.m.
Manassas National Battlefield Park
Visitor Center*

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR
ROUND TABLE**

P. O. Box 196
Centreville, VA 22020

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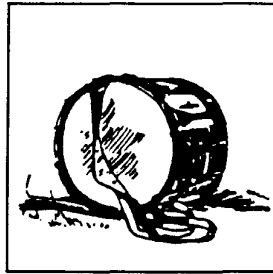
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BRON WOLFF
At Large

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Story of Army Life* by John D. Billings, Corner
House Publishers, 1993. Originally published in
1888.



**UPCOMING TOURS
Bristoe Station**

The round table tours the
Bristoe Station campaign
March 25. Sign up sheets
for speakers and members
will be available at the
February meeting.

Join us and see how that
campaign progressed from
the Rapidan River to
Broad Run at Bristoe.

**NEXT MONTH
The Role of Artillery
at the First Battle
of Bull Run**

Jim Burgess
NPS Historian

March 9

**Are the Days
of the
National Tower
Numbered**

Many Civil War buffs are
disturbed by the 310-foot
National Tower at
Gettysburg, and want to
see it removed.

The Congressionally-
approved boundary
expansion of 1990 placed
the tower within the
battlefield park's boundary.
However, while the
National Park Service now
has the right to topple the
tower, it does not have the
funds to do so.

James A. Holechek, a
retired public relations
executive and Maryland
resident, intends to
negotiate with the tower's
owners. He said that the
owners want \$6.6 million
for the tower. Holechek is
setting up a non-profit
corporation to seek the
funds from numerous
sources.



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)

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PRESERVATION UPDATE

BRANDY STATION

The Next Steps

by John McAnaw

On Sept. 26, 1994, U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge William Anderson ruled that Lee Sammis' Elkwood Downs Limited Partnership can sell 425 acres located at the Brandy Station battlefield to Benton Ventures Inc. for the development of a Formula One motorsports complex.

Brandy Station Foundation's Michael Green wrote in the January 1995 issue of the foundation's Bulletin, that one of the larger investors in the proposed motorsport complex is Thomas Golisano, the chief executive officer of Paychex Inc., of Rochester, N.Y. Golisano recently ran and lost as an independent candidate in the New York gubernatorial race. The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle recently quoted Golisano as stating that the racetrack will not disturb the battlefield.

Judge Anderson earlier denied a Button estate motion to submit an alternate reorganization plan to the court.

This plan was announced in July by the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, a consortium of benefactors and the Brandy Station Foundation. It offered \$5.2 million in cash for the purchase of 2,300 acres owned by the Elkwood Downs Limited Partnership. The bankruptcy judge's approval was required since that organization, which originally proposed a 1,500 acre industrial development at Brandy Station, had filed for protection under Chapter 11 of Federal bankruptcy laws.

The site, however, contains wetlands, and a permit from the U.S. Corps of Engineers must be obtained before the complex can be built.

Additionally, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation must issue a decision on the effect it will have on the battlefield site.

PRESERVATION UPDATE

Continued from page 4

Kindly take the time to express opposition to the desecration of one of our nation's most treasured historical sites by writing:

THOMAS GOLISANO, *Chief Executive Officer, Paychex, Inc., 911 Panorama Trail South, Rochester, N.Y. 14625-0397*

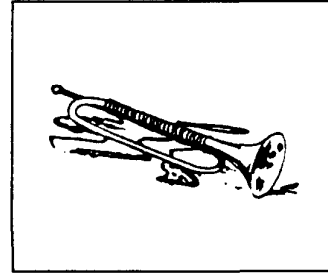
EDITOR, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, 55 Exchange Blvd., Rochester, N.Y. 14614*

Another organization worth writing is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Green writes that the Corps of Engineers "must be persuaded as to the importance of the battlefield and the devastating effect the racetrack will have on the environment of the battlefield. Further, the historic nature of the site and its national prominence should temper any decision made by the Corps."

COL. ANDREW PERKINS, *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, 803 Front Street, Norfolk, VA 23510-1096.*

Membership in the Brandy Station Foundation is \$15.

BRANDY STATION FOUNDATION,
P.O. Box 165, Brandy Station, VA 22714.



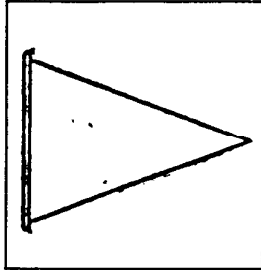
BRCWRT MEETING NOTES Preservation Committee

The Preservation Committee met Jan. 25 at the Centreville Library.

The meeting focused on local Civil War sites including: Bristoe Station; Union Mills; Bull Run fords; Mayfield fortification site (the only one of 12 forts guarding Manassas Junction that remains intact); and Cannon Branch fortification on the Wakeman tract. These sites will be addressed in future issues of THE STONE WALL.

Since many of you are very well informed on preservation issues, I request your input to ensure that all readers are up to speed in these important issues. Call John McAnaw, (703) 978-3371.

PERMISSION TO SPEAK FREELY



Most Overrated Brigade
THE IRISH BRIGADE

By Gary Ecelbarger

How can an excellent fighting unit like the Irish Brigade be considered the most overrated?

True, the unit suffered tremendous casualties, and no one can question their courage. However, brigades must be judged by their accomplishments on the field. The best brigades were the ones that turned a defeat into a victory, or ones that were responsible for securing the advantage for their army. Losing 545 men on Fredericksburg's Marye's Heights made Meagher's Irish Brigade famous. But like Pickett's Charge, it accomplished absolutely nothing for the army in which it fought.

The brigade performed well at the Sunken Road at Antietam, but they were forced to retire before the position was taken, and were not with the units that eventually overran Bloody Lane.

They made several daring repulses at the Wheatfield at Gettysburg, but with a brigade strength of only 532 men, they were unable to successfully hold it late in the afternoon.

After Gettysburg, the remainder of the Irish Brigade fought hard and well during the Overland Campaign. No question about it, the Irish Brigade was a strong and certainly colorful fighting unit. However, based on their actual impact on the Army of the Potomac, they do not deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as the truly top-notch brigades like the Iron Brigade and Hood's Texas Brigade.

STATUS REPORT

CROSS KEYS BATTLEFIELD

Author preserves battlefield lands on his farm

By John McAnaw

Many round table members are familiar with Peter Svenson's excellent book, **BATTLEFIELD**, published in 1992 about his stewardship of his farm located on the Cross Keys battlefield.

An article in the U.S. Dept. of Interior's **Battlefield Update**, Dec. 1994, said the Cross Keys battlefield "now is protected in perpetuity, thanks to an easement purchased recently by the Civil War Trust (CWT)." This easement is Svenson's 40-acre farm.

The Cross Keys battlefield is considered Priority II by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission. Priority II means a battlefield with opportunities for comprehensive preservation. The CWT lists 2,153 acres as the core battlefield area of Cross Keys.

Matt Andrews, the Trust's executive vice president, handled the negotiations. A Harrisonburg bank, a private donor and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation were also involved. The Trust will pay Svenson \$74,000 for the development rights of his property. According to one report, which I have not substantiated, is that the Civil War Trust will transfer development rights to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

The battle of Cross Keys was fought June 8, 1862 between 10,500 Federals under Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, and 5,000 Confederates commanded by Maj. Gen. Richard S. Ewell. Ewell repulsed Fremont's attack against the Confederate right without much difficulty. Ewell's forces advanced more than a mile and occupied the terrain from which the Federals staged their morning attack.

Federal losses were at least 684. Shelby Foot, in volume 1 of his massive **THE CIVIL WAR** wrote that nearly half the Federal casualties lay dead of their wounds in the grainfields. The Confederate lost 288, with only 41 killed. Most of the Confederate losses were suffered during Ewell's counterstroke. Of note, much of the Confederate right flank lay on what is now Svenson's farm.

I recommend a visit to this battlefield, and the nearby one at Port Republic. Bring maps; interpretive maps and markers are scarce.

BOOK REVIEW



HANGING ROCK REBEL

Lieut. John Blue's War in West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley

by Scott C. Patchan

HANGING ROCK REBEL relates the exciting war experiences of Lieut. John Blue, a Confederate cavalryman from what is now West Virginia. Blue's tales originally appeared in *The Hampshire Review*, a West Virginia newspaper, between 1898 and 1901. You probably are asking

yourself by now, Why should I read another memoir written by a Confederate soldier from the Army of Northern Virginia?

Blue doesn't cover up his or others shortcomings. Reading his accounts of the raids, battles and prison escapes give the feeling of a fireside chat. When reading of Blue's journeys and skirmishes throughout the rugged West Virginia mountains, the reader senses his fear and uncertainty while riding on a narrow mountain road through a dark forest with enemies lurking around every corner.

Many of the campaigns and battles Blue describes have been woefully underreported. Included is Brig. Gen. William E. Jones' successful, but little known, 1863 spring raid deep into Union-held West Virginia. Blue also participated in the opening battles of the war in West Virginia (Virginia at the time).

His prison camp make the book. These include a breakout from Johnson's Island, Ohio, by walking across the frozen stretches of Lake Erie during a severe cold spell. Blue also escapes Point Lookout, Md., by swimming and wading around the stockade which ran from one side of the peninsula to the other. During both attempts, Blue is almost glad to be back in prison when he is saved by his Yankee captors.

Like all books, HANGING ROCK REBEL is not without fault. He spends too much time dwelling on his early experiences in the Virginia Militia. And too many details detract from his story. Bottom line, HANGING ROCK REBEL is one of the better soldier's memoirs published recently. I strongly recommend it to those who enjoy reading about off-the-beaten-path campaigns and old-fashioned storytelling.

HANGING ROCK REBEL, *Lt. John Blue's War in West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley*. Edited by Dan Oates. Burd Street Press, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, 1994, 324 pages. \$24.95.

FROM THE RANKS

CRADLE OF SECESSION SURRENDERS

Union troops entered Charleston Feb. 18, 1865. Following are newspaper accounts announcing its surrender.

RICHMOND DISPATCH, *Feb. 21.* On last Thursday night, the 16th inst., our forces evacuated Charleston, and it is believed that the enemy took possession during the next day. Many guns must have been abandoned by our troops, but it is consoling to know the Yankees got little else. There was no cotton at Charleston to gladden Lincoln's heart, and the city itself was little better than a deserted ruin. Several telegraph operators, all of them men of Northern birth, did not come out with our forces, but remained to receive the Yankees. The evacuation of Charleston should rather inspire cheerfulness than gloom. Sherman can only be checked by an immediate concentration in his front of all our troops, both in North and South Carolina. If this is done, he may be defeated, and his present expedition broken up. If he is not defeated, he will march straight up the railroad to Charlotte, thence to Salisbury, thence to Greensboro and Dansville, and so on to Richmond. Many different estimates have been made of Sherman's army. We know he has four full army corps, and a strong force of cavalry. His corps will not number less than 12,000 men.

NEW YORK TIMES, *Feb. 22.* The City of Charleston is in the possession of the Union forces. The last of the rebel troops, consisting of about one brigade, left at six o'clock this morning.

We had intimation in the night that the city was being evacuated, from seeing a dense volume of smoke rising over the city. The smoke was caused by the burning of the Central Railroad buildings, one or two other public buildings, and a quantity of rice and corn, also 200 kegs of powder. This morning early, while the citizens were inside gathering up the rice and corn, a rebel soldier entered and ignited the powder. The result was a terrific explosion, and the killing and wounding of 100 of the people.

At daylight the rebels blew up four rams which lay in the inner harbor, near to the city.

I noticed only one private house in flames. I was told that the owner applied the torch a few minutes before the rebels left the city.

Gen. Hardee was in command, and by his order two 13-inch Blakely guns on the wharf battery were bursted. The remaining guns, six in number, mounted on the wharf batteries, were spiked, and the carriages disabled.

FROM THE RANKS

Continued from page 9

The first one of our men who entered the city was Lieut. Col. A. G. Bennety, 21st U.S. Colored Troops, who arrived about half an hour after the last of the rebel forces had left. He was followed by Col. Ames, of the 3rd Rhode Island Artillery...

Capt. H. M. Bragg, of Gen. Gillmore's staff, went over to Fort Sumter in a small boat, and planted the American colors on the parapet. In Sumter are nine guns, four columbiads and five howitzers. Capt. Bragg brought away with him a tattered secesh flag which he found in a corner of the fort...

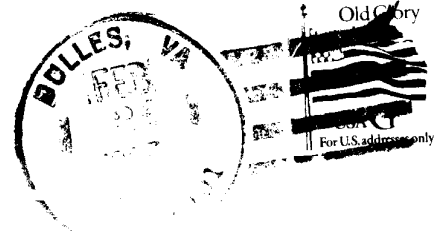
The rebels retreated in the direction of Wilmington.

The city is in a terribly dilapidated condition. The effect of our shells on the buildings was such as to shatter and break down the walls of nearly all of them in the lower part of the place.

But few of the inhabitants remain. When Gen. Gillmore reached the pier in his flagboat - the W. W. Coit - he was greeted by about 50 whites and blacks. All day long the people have been begging for provisions...

The rebels have left an innumerable quantity of guns in the various forts about the harbor...The citizens say that the harbor from Sumter up to the city is filled with torpedoes, but none of them have exploded as yet. The arsenal in the city is filled with ammunition.

Bull Run Civil War Round Table
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