

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR AROUND TABLE
STONE WALL
MARCH 1996

**YELLOW
TAVERN**
Sheridan
against
Stuart

On May 9, 1864 Union Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan led his entire cavalry corps on a raid toward Richmond. The raid was intended to be another hit-and-run which created panic among the Richmond's citizens and shook up the Confederate government authorities.

Two days later Sheridan and his 10,000 troopers came to Yellow Tavern, where they clashed with Confederate cavalry. And where the South's "Bold Dragoon" Maj. Gen. James E. B. Stuart died.

This month the roundtable will take a detailed look at this raid, especially on the Battle of Yellow Tavern.

While virtually every Civil War enthusiast knows this was the engagement in which Stuart was mortally wounded, few know very much about the battle itself, or the implications it had on cavalry operations in the East for the remainder of the war.

Lt. Col. Marc Thompson, USAF, is the Principal Deputy for Information Warfare Support, Directorate for Intelligence, Joint Chiefs of Staff. He is a past member of the Alexandria, Va. and Lincoln, Neb. Civil War Roundtables. Currently a member of the Rappahannock Valley CWRT, he is also a National Park Service Volunteer historian/interpreter at Chancellorsville Battlefield Park.

LT. COL. MARC THOMPSON
Thursday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.
Manassas National Battlefield Park
Visitor Center

FROM THE PRESIDENT



MEMBERS,

I take this pen in hand to update you again on the goings on at Bull Run Civil War Round Table.

Everyone has received a newsletter this month. But if you have not paid your renewal dues, this will be your last newsletter until you do pay. We will print an updated member's list in May. Hopefully we will have all the same names from last year, plus new additions.

Since we have become a touring organization (yes, we are officially "party animals"), it is important to know that over the next several months we will be advertising two tours at a time. For example, this month we advertise both our March

16 tour of Stonewall Jackson's Winter Campaign, and our April 13 tour of Third Winchester. You will see two sign-up lists at the meetings, so be careful to log on for the tour(s) in which you wish to participate. The Winter Campaign tour can be postponed no longer; if there is snow on the ground, we are still going.

A quick reminder, we voted to have our Wilderness/Spotsylvania tour on consecutive weekends in May (the 11th and 18th); in June is John McAnaw's tour of Union Mills and Bull Run Fords; in August is Early vs. Crook in the Shenandoah Valley; and in September we are likely to have Brandon Beck leading us on the tour of First Winchester. And if that's not enough, in October is our symposium on the Summer/Fall 1862 Campaign, featuring John Hennessy. Tell me all that's not ambitious!

We have had a fine speaker's year to this point, and it appears the spring season will maintain the standard. Marc Thompson's Yellow Tavern talk is featured this month; Gordon Rhea visits in April; and Ed Bearss comes in May. For Gordon Rhea's talk, I am working with a representative of Louisiana State University Press to have several of his Wilderness books available at a

discount price (we're cheap and we're proud!).

In addition to our raffled books, over the next few months we will have our own round table authors available to sign their work for you. I encourage you to check out our roundtable's own Page Johnson, whose book about Fairfax County Civil War soldiers is available. In April, Scott Patchan's Piedmont book should be there. Our meetings are perfect for getting signed copies of these definitive histories.

Well, I've rambled long enough. Just one more point before I close. Our nominating committee will get together in a couple of months to select officers for the 1996-97 season. If you are interested in serving BRCWRT in any capacity, or would like some information, see myself, Martha or any executive committee member at the next meeting. Or call me between 5-8 p.m. weekdays. And remember, I still remain

most respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

Gary L. Ecelbarger

BULL RUN
CIVIL WAR
ROUND TABLE

P.O. Box 196
Centreville, VA 22020

PRESIDENT Gary Ecelbarger; VICE PRESIDENT Martha Hendley; SECRETARY Marilyn Clark Snyder; TREASURER Scott Logan; FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN Gary Ecelbarger; FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE Scott Patchan, John P. McAnaw; PRESERVATION CHAIRMAN John P. McAnaw; PRESERVATION COMMITTEE Armando Mancini; MEMBERSHIP Scott Patchan, Joe Kelley; SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE Scott Patchan, Martha Hendley, Scott Logan; CONSTITUTION CHAIRMAN Gary Ecelbarger; CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE John P. McAnaw, Bill Miller; ROUNDTABLE LIAISON Chris Custode; EDITOR Karen Fojt; AT LARGE Bill Miller, John P. McAnaw, Joe Kelley.

MARCHING ORDERS



Forward to Romney

Saturday, March 16

You heard about it in December. Follow in the footsteps of Stonewall Jackson and his Valley District, including the Stonewall Brigade, on their winter campaign of January-February 1862. We'll visit the sights and set foot on ground no organized group has ever seen before. Time constraints prevent us from visiting Romney itself.

WINCHESTER CAMPS: The division sets off, Jan. 1, 1862.

PUGHTOWN ROAD: Jackson's Trail.

BATH (BERKELY SPRINGS): The action of Jan. 4.

ALPINE STATION SITE: The Union escapes.

HANCOCK: Gen. Lander's defense, Jan. 5.

LUNCH: In Berkely Springs.

UNGER'S CROSSROADS: Confederate movements and decisions.

BLOOMERY GAP: The action of Feb. 14.

FORT COLLIER REDOUBT: The final defense of Winchester.

JACKSON'S HEADQUARTERS: The last council of war, March 11.

TOUR GUIDES: Dan Jenkins and Gary Ecelbarger.

DEPARTURE: Saturday, March 16, 8 a.m. at the Dogan's Ridge parking lot at Manassas National Battlefield Park, Rt. 234, one half mile north of the Stone House intersection. We leave 8 a.m. sharp, so be there early.

WEATHER: We're going, sun, rain or snow.

COST: Free. Members are encouraged to reimburse the driver of the carpool \$3-5 for gas.

RATIONS: Bring your own, or dine out in Berkely Springs.

RETURN: 4:30 p.m. to Dogan's Ridge.

SIGN UP: Sheets are available at the meeting.

CONTACT: Gary Ecelbarger, (703) 406-4933.

EVENTS & ISSUES

By John P. McAnaw

GOOD NEWS!

Brandy Station Motorsport Complex Off the Track

Culpeper Star-Exponent staff writer Eric Nolan has the knack for turning a phrase.

On page one of the Star-Exponent's Feb. 23rd issue, he wrote, "At 12:03 p.m. on the steps of Culpeper Courthouse yesterday, Elkwood Downs bid \$1,250,000 to repurchase the 425 acres in rural Brandy Station, site of a massive 1863 Civil War cavalry engagement. There were no other bidders."

The same day as this article was published, I travelled to Culpeper to discuss developments on Brandy Station issues with several knowledgeable local residents.

This foreclosure action administered the coup de grace to the problem-ridden efforts by undersubscribed (to put it mildly) Benton Ventures, Inc. to build a motorsport complex at Brandy Station. The path is now clear for the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) to purchase not only the 425 acres, but the entire 1,543 acres of Brandy Station Battlefield owned by Elkwood Downs. The estimated purchase price for these 1,543 acres is \$6.2 million.

According to a representative of APCWS, the association has raised about \$3.5 million as of Feb. 23. Consequently, prepare for a fundraising drive to gather the still needed \$2.7 million. I strongly urge your monetary support for this worthy endeavor.

In his article, Eric Nolan mentioned that in addition to representatives from APCWS, Elkwood Downs and the Brandy Station Foundation (BSF) at the foreclosure proceedings, officials from the Culpeper County Planning Dept. and John Coates, the concerned district (Salem) supervisor were present. Needless to say, there were a number of glum expressions on the faces of those present.

The well-known Civil War historian and dedicated preservationist, Clark B. "Bud" Hall, was quoted with the following understatement: "It's been a contentious situation. In large part, the success of the BSF and the APCWS in saving the Brandy Station Battlefield from landmaulers is due to the truly gifted BSF attorney, Tersh Boasberg, of Washington D.C. He is a remarkable individual. While the future of the Brandy Station Battlefield may be bright if we all

chip in and make our donations to preserve this magnificent 1,543 acre site, do not expect clear sailing."

Elkwood Downs owns additional acreage east of the Culpeper airport and the acreage which concerns us. Nolan, in his article, quotes Elkwood Downs vice president, Michael Armm, stating that once APCWS acquired the battlefield acreage, "no-growthers" could no longer use its preservation as a reason to fight development projects. Nolan also quoted Armm saying that "the historic veil would be lifted" from those individuals who fought the destruction of the battlefield only to prevent commercial development in the vicinity of Brandy Station. Spokesmen for the BSF have made it abundantly clear to officials of Elkwood Downs that they will not hesitate to sue Mr. Armm's organization if the historic integrity of the battlefield is threatened.

Let me close by stating that the APCWS is now in an excellent position, with our support, to acquire the 1,543 acres in question. However, regarding the future of the magnificent Brandy Station Battlefield, the fat lady has not yet sung.

So join the Brandy Station Foundation. Membership is only \$15. Send a check to Brandy Station Foundation, P. O. Box 165, Brandy Station, VA 22174.

Prince William County Historical Commission Survives

For the Time Being

The Prince William County Board of Supervisors apparently has shelved plans to gut cut the county's historical commission by rolling it under the architectural review board.

According to the minutes of the supervisors' meeting, Feb. 13, all of the board members of the county historical commission were reappointed for another calendar year. They were unable to vote on a new chairman at that meeting due to the illness of its current chairman, and will do so at its March meeting.

On behalf of the officers of the BRCWRT, I extend my sincere thanks to all Prince William County members of our organization who contacted their county supervisor and supported the retention of the historical commission as an independent agency. Your voice was heard. Well done!

THE STONE WALL is published monthly. Submissions are welcome. Deadline is the 25th of the month. Send manuscripts to Karen Fojt, 6355 Yates Ford Road, Manassas, VA 22111, (703) 330-1965.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. 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.

Rappahannock Valley Conference on Preserving Civil War Sites

The Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table sponsors its 4th Annual Virginia Civil War Preservation Conference March 30-31 in Fredericksburg.

This year's theme is "Preserving Sites in the Rappahannock Valley." It includes tours of Fredericksburg, Kelly's Ford, 2nd Brandy Station battlefields, and a banquet featuring John Hennessy as guest speaker.

All proceeds go to the APCWS for acquisition of property on the Brandy Station Battlefield. The cost is \$75. Contact Mac Wyckoff, Program Chairman, RVCWRT, P.O. Box 7632, Fredericksburg, Va. 22404, (540) 786-2470.

Memorial Honoring Fairfax's Civil War Veterans to be Dedicated

A memorial honoring the Civil War veterans who are buried in Fairfax Cemetery, will be dedicated Saturday, March 30 at 12 noon.

The memorial lists all soldiers and sailors, both Union and Confederate, and is placed next to the Monument to the Confederate Dead. For information about the unveiling ceremony, call the Public Information Office of the City of Fairfax, (703) 385-7855.

PRINT SALE & SIGNING

Mort Kunstler

*Saturday, March 30
10 a.m.-4 p.m.*

A Patrons Edition of Mr. Kunstler's latest work, portraying John Singleton Mosby's raid on Fairfax Court House, is being offered for \$200 apiece. Terms are cash or check, no credit cards can be accepted. Prints may be reserved in advance by contacting the Virginia Room of the Fairfax City Regional Library, (703) 246-2123. Reserve early, similar offerings have sold out quickly.

Mr. Kunstler will autograph these prints Saturday, March 30 at the Fairfax County Courthouse, 4000 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Proceeds of this Patrons Edition benefit the Fairfax City Regional Library. For information, contact Brian Conley at the Virginia Room of the library, (703) 246-2123.

Get a Copy

Copies of the Study on Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley, are still available at no cost. For a copy, contact the ABPP, (202) 343-9505, or by fax (202) 343-1836. Or write to the ABPP, National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services, American Battlefield Protection Program, P.O. Box 37127, Ste. 250, Washington D.C. 20013-7127.

1996 History America Tours

Our roundtable gets a cut, to be used for preservation, for every member who signs on for a History America tour.

Stonewall in the Valley

April 10-14

Start Point: Washington Dulles Airport Hilton Hotel

Historian/guide: Frank O'Reilly

Cost: Double \$699; Single \$839

Civil War on the Gulf Coast

April 15-21

Start Point: St. Marie Hotel, New Orleans, La.

Historian/guide: Ed Bearss

Cost: Double \$959; Single \$1,179

Abraham Lincoln: The Conduct of the War, History Cruise on the Nantucket Clipper

May 4-11

Start Point: Nantucket Clipper, Alexandria, Va.

Historian/guide: David E. Long

Cost: Double \$1,650-2,550; Single \$2,700

Trans-Mississippi Civil War

May 22-28

Start Point: Capitol Hotel, Little Rock, Ark.

Historian/guide: Ed Bearss

Cost: Double \$895; Single \$1,095

Running with Custer: 1st Bull Run to Appomattox

July 13-19

Start Point: Washington Dulles Airport Hilton Hotel

Historian/guide: Gregory J.W.

Urwin

Cost: Double \$995; Single \$1,225

Civil War Steamboatin' History Cruise on the American Queen

Start Point: American Queen, Memphis, Tenn.

Historian/guides: William C. Davis,

Richard McMurry

Cost: Double \$1,656-3,320; Single no price given, some availability

BROTHERS AND COUSINS

Confederate Soldiers and Sailors of Fairfax County

by William Page Johnson, II

If you're interested in local Civil War history, you'll want a copy of this book by one of our own roundtable members.

Brothers and Cousins records the vital statistics of all Confederates who were born, or who resided in Fairfax County. It also has anecdotes on their war experiences and about Fairfax landmarks.

To order, send \$20 to William Page Johnson, 4141 Orchard Drive, Fairfax, VA 22032, (703) 273-6130.

Mexican-American War: 1846 Advance into Pre-NAFTA Mexico

Sept. 7-14

Start Point: Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Tex.

Historian/guide: Neil Mangum

Cost: Double \$995; Single \$1,269

Shiloh

Sept. 19-22

Start Point: Union Station Hotel, Nashville, Tenn.

Historian/guide: Stacy Allen

Cost: Double \$549; Single \$629

Riding with Forrest

Sept. 24-29

Start Point: Adam's Mark Hotel, Memphis, Tenn.

Historian/guide: Ed Bearss

Cost: Double \$849; Single \$995

The American Revolution in the Carolinas and Georgia

Nov. 2-11

Start Point: Dunhill Hotel, Charlotte, N. C.

Cost: Double \$1,295; Single \$1,595

For brochures, reservations or information, contact History America Tours, (800) 628-8542, P. O. Box 797687, Dallas, TX 75379

If you sign up for a tour, please let John McAnaw know, to ensure our roundtable gets its percentage for battlefield preservation.

FROM THE RANKS

Stuart Meets His Fate

The following is an excerpt from I Rode with JEB Stuart, a memoir written by H. B. McClellan, the chief of staff for the Army of Northern Virginia's Cavalry Corps. Published by Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind., 1958.

Stuart's march was now directed toward Yellow Tavern, at the intersection of the Telegraph and Old Mountain roads. As I rode by his side we conversed on many matters of personal interest. He was more quiet than usual, softer, and more communicative. It seems now that the shadow of the near future was already upon him.

He reached the Yellow Tavern at about 10 o'clock, and found himself in advance of the enemy's column, and in full time to interpose between it and Richmond. Not knowing what troopers were at the disposal of Gen. Bragg, he was uncertain whether to take position in front of the enemy or to remain on the flank of his march, near the Yellow Tavern. He preferred the latter course if he could be satisfied that there was sufficient force in Richmond to hold the trenches. To ascertain this he sent me to Gen. Bragg. I was informed by Gen. Bragg that he had irregular troops to the number of about 4,000, and that three brigades had been ordered from the army at Petersburg, and were hourly expected. He thought he could hold the fortifications. On my return I found that the enemy held the Brook turnpike, south of the Yellow Tavern, and I was compelled to make a detour through the fields to avoid capture. This somewhat

delayed me, and I did not reach Stuart until after 2 o'clock. He told me that a heavy fight had taken place during my absence. The enemy had attempted to drive him from the Telegraph Road, but had been repulsed, after a most desperate and hand to hand fight, by the sharpshooters of Fitz Lee's brigade. The losses had been heavy. Among the killed was Col. H. C. Pate, of the 5th Virginia Cavalry. Stuart spoke of the great gallantry he had exhibited under his own observation. He was pleased with the information I had brought from Richmond, and expressed the intention of retaining his position on Sheridan's flank, and the hope that, aided by a strong attack by the infantry in Richmond, he might be able to inflict serious disaster on the enemy's cavalry. Thus we sat talking for more than an hour, near one of our batteries on the right of our line, north of Half-Sink. [Brig. Gen. Williams] Wickham held the right, and [Brig. Gen. Lumsford] Lomax the left. Lomax's line extended along the Telegraph Road for a short distance, then crossed it to a hill on the left, where was posted a piece of artillery. Two guns were placed immediately in the road. the whole command was dismounted except a portion of the 1st Virginia Cavalry, which was retained as a mounted reserve.

I quote the following passage from a letter which I wrote to Mrs. Stuart soon after the general's death...

About 4 o'clock the enemy suddenly threw a brigade of cavalry, mounted, upon our extreme left, attacking our whole line at the same time. As he always did, the general hastened to the point where the greatest danger threatened, ' the point against which the enemy directed the mounted charge. My horse was so much exhausted by my severe ride of the morning that I could not keep pace with him, but Cpt. G. W. Dorsey, of company K, 1st Virginia Cavalry, gave me the particulars that follow.

The enemy's charge captured our battery on the left of our line, and drove back almost the entire left. Where Capt. Dorsey was stationed ' immediately on the Telegraph Road ' about 80 men had collected, and among these the general threw himself, and by his personal example held them steady while the enemy charged entirely past their position. With these men he fired into their flank and rear as they passed him, in advancing and retreating, for they were met by a mounted charge of the 1st Virginia Cavalry and driven back some distance. As they retired, one man

who had been dismounted in the charge, and was running out on foot, turned as he passed the general, and discharging his pistol inflicted the fatal wound. When Capt. Dorsey discovered that he was wounded he came at once to his assistance, and endeavored to lead him to the rear; but the general's horse had become so restive and unmanageable that he insisted upon being taken down, and allowed to rest against a tree. When this was done Capt. Dorsey sent for another horse. While waiting the general ordered him to leave him, and return to his men and drive back the enemy. He said he feared that he was mortally wounded, and could be of no more service. Capt. Dorsey told him that he could not obey that order; that he would rather sacrifice his life than leave him until he had placed him out of all danger. The situation was an exposed one. Our men were sadly scattered, and there was hardly a handful of men between that little group and the advancing enemy. But the horse arrived in time; the general was lifted on to him, and was led by Capt. Dorsey to a safer place. There, by the

general's order, he gave him into the charge of private Wheatly, of his company, and returned to rally his scattered men. Wheatly procured an ambulance, placed the general in it with the greatest care, and, supporting him in his arms, he was driven toward the rear. I was hastening toward that part of the field where I had heard that he was wounded when I met the ambulance. The general had so often told me that if he were wounded I must not leave the field, but report to the officer next to him in rank, that I did not now presume to disregard his order, and the more so because I saw that Dr. Fontaine, Venable, Garnett, Hullihen, and several of his couriers were attending him. I remained with Gen. Fitz Lee until the next morning, when he sent me to the city to see Gen. Bragg, and I thus had an opportunity to spend an hour with my general.

As he was being driven from the field he noticed the disorganized ranks of his retreating men, and called out to them: "Go back! go back! and do your duty, as I have done mine, and our country will be

safe. Go back! go back! I had rather die than be whipped."

RECOMMENDED READING

Marc Thompson recommends the following readings on the Battle of Yellow Tavern:

Starr, Stephen Z., *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War: Vol. II*, LSU Press, Baton Rouge, La., 1981, Chapter IV.

Freeman, Douglas S., *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Gettysburg to Appomattox*, Vol. III, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N.Y., 1972, Chapter XXI.

Thomas, Emory M., *Bold Dragoon: The Life of J.E.B. Stuart*, Harper and Row, New York, N.Y., 1991, Chapter XIV.

Urwin, Gregory J.W., *Custer Victorious: The Civil War Battles of Gen. George Armstrong Custer*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Madison, Wis., 1983, Chapter 6.

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
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