

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

April, 1998

NEWSLETTER

Editor: George Slaton

THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY CAMPAIGN OF 1864 Early and Sheridan April 9 Meeting UNCW

At our April meeting, we will explore an exciting chapter in Civil War history, one our RT has never before examined! And our speaker, Ev Smith, is one of the nation's leading authorities on our subject for the evening, the 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign which featured a series of important battles in which USA General Philip Sheridan and CSA General Jubal Early struggled for control of this vital portion of Virginia.

A native of Washington DC, Dr. Everard H. Smith has lived in North Carolina for more than 25 years. He received his B.A. degree, *magna cum laude*, from Yale University and his Ph.D. in history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After coming to Wilmington in 1991, he served for three years as a senior administrative officer and adjunct professor of history at UNCW. While at the university, he team-taught a course on local history in partnership with Chancellor James R. Leutze. In 1994, he co-hosted a trip to Normandy for 30 local residents, including a dozen veterans, to attend the 50th anniversary celebration of the D-Day invasion.

Dr. Smith is a resident of the downtown and the owner of a 145-year-old home on Dock Street, the Larkins House. He has been active in the movement to preserve the Community Arts Center, originally the Wilmington USO Building, and was recently elected chairman of the Community Arts Center Accord, composed of local stakeholders in the fine and performing arts.

Dr. Smith's first love remains the Civil War. He contributed the article on the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864 to Volume V of *The Image of War*, published by the National Historical Society. He was a consultant to "Civil War: The North Carolina Story," a documentary produced and broadcast by the North Carolina Center for Public Television. His work has appeared in *Civil War Times*, *Civil War Magazine*, *The North Carolina Historical Review*, and *The American Historical Review*, among other publications. His most recent article, "The Burning of Chambersburg," appeared last year in Volume I of *True Stories from the American Past*, a college-level reader published by McGraw-Hill. He has frequently spoken before local groups, including the 19th Annual Congress of Civil War Round Tables here in Wilmington in 1993.

The meeting will be held Thursday, April 9, in Room 123, Cameron Hall, UNCW. The room will be open at 7:00 pm and the program begins at 7:30 pm. (We're unable to meet at St. John's Episcopal Church because of Maundy Thursday services that evening, and the steering committee regrets that we did not check the date more closely when this program was planned last spring).

*Oh, days of great and glorious deeds,
Of valiant men and gallant steeds,
As back to yon my memory leads,
My blood throws off its chill;
And I'm again a sturdy blade,
In loyal Blue once more arrayed,
As when by danger undismayed,
I rode with "Little Phil."*

We Rode With Little Phil And Other Poems, 1912, by Cyrus B. Lower, late Private, Company K, 13th Pennsylvania Reserves, Medal of Honor Winner

STEALING A MARCH May 1 Meeting

The May program will be a joint meeting with the Chicago Civil War Round Table on the *USS North Carolina*. Dinner (approximately \$15.00) will be followed by a program on the North Carolina Campaigns led by Chris Fonvielle and Mark Bradley. Details in the May newsletter.

CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION NEWS Recent Developments

Efforts to preserve Civil War battlefields continue to make the news. Here are some news briefs from a number of sites.

Last fall, two U.S. senators came close to setting aside \$50 million to buy unprotected battlefield property. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) and James Jeffords (R-VT), a CW enthusiast, sought to earmark these funds from the \$12 billion Land & Water Conservation Fund to acquire land at Gettysburg, Antietam, and Fredericksburg.

The effort got its start in April, 1997, when former NY congressman, Robert Mrazek, another CW buff and co-author of the landmark 1988 legislation to acquire land planned for development on the Manassas battlefield, arranged for one of his periodic battlefield tours for friends. During the tour at Antietam, Robert K. Krick served as guide. Torricelli was in the group. "We had a wonderful tour," recalled Krick. "The drama of Bloody Lane was being described when Torricelli spotted a "for sale" sign within six feet of the historic lane. It was the Roulette Farm, scene of intense battle action, privately owned, yet inside the park boundary. "This was a kind of epiphany for him," Krick said. "He was really dismayed and shocked," recalled a Torricelli staffer. "He was really shocked that this could be for sale."

Torricelli, in a statement to the Senate on September 17, said, "The battlefields of America, which define this country...may be lost to history." On the same day, Jeffords told his colleagues in the Senate that setting aside millions for the battlefields would represent "a giant stride in preserving our history."

"I am proud to say that there is in this land a great wellspring of caring for the places where freedom was won and defended," Jeffords said. Millions of Americans have, in recent years, become aware of the hallowed ground of our Civil War battlefields, have visited them, read of them, many have written of them."

The three battlefields mentioned above still have unprotected property. According to Krick, the area of Stonewall Jackson's celebrated flank attack at Chancellorsville is largely unprotected. At Gettysburg, there are 1327 acres still privately held, including 80 acres within the CSA battlelines on Herr's Ridge, 12 acres at the Lutheran Seminary, and a 77 acre farm where Union cavalry and artillery attempted to threaten the right flank of the CSA army as it prepared for Lee's assault on the third day. And at Antietam, about 450 acres of the park remain in private hands. This includes the 165 acre Roulette Farm which went on the market in recent months.

Near Marietta, Georgia, an antebellum plantation that survived the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain and served as Union HQ might not survive the development wars of the 1990's. The historic William G. McAdoo House on Powder Springs Road saw the Battle of Kolb's Farm swirl around its front door. It sits now on a low hill overlooking a formerly rural intersection. Several shopping centers have sprung up, and the 57 acres surrounding the house have become too valuable to remain as pasture. Development plans include a grocery store, two low-rise office parks, and seventy homes. Fortunately, the developer plans to preserve the McAdoo House, though the surrounding acreage will probably be compromised. The Battle of Kolb's Farm was the scene of CSA General John B. Hood's attack against Union entrenchments. CSA casualties were 870, Union losses 350.

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust is planning an unprecedented recreation of Stonewall Jackson's famous flank march at Chancellorsville Sunday, May 3. The event will assist CVBT in raising funds to purchase 100 acres at Chancellorsville. Participants will be expected to supply financial support, each being required to raise \$110 in order to attend the event. An encampment and interpretive programs are also planned. Adult admission \$5.00. Call (540) 374 0900 for details.

(Taken from articles in the November, 1997 issue of *The Civil War News*)

SOUTH CAROLINA CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM Columbia SC

This small, but wonderful, museum has a rich collection of SC Confederate material exhibited for visitors. It seems that, in the 1890's, the only major repositories in the South searching for CSA artifacts were the Museum of the Confederacy and what is now called the SC Confederate Relic Room. In those early years, both museums collected priceless items before they were lost or destroyed. I recently visited the Relic Room for the second time, and here are some of the treasures I found.

The museum has probably, with the exception of the Museum of the Confederacy, the largest collection of CSA regimental battleflags anywhere, all of them from SC. Though many of its flags are in the process of being conserved, several are exhibited, including the flag of the 24 SC Infantry Regiment (Gist's Brigade, Army of Tennessee) and the 8 SC Infantry Regiment (Kershaw's Brigade, Army of Northern Virginia). Captain H.M. Stuart's brass spur, a product of the melted brass from the captured *USS Keokuk*, sunk near Morris Island, is on view, as well as a spur taken from the mortally wounded General William Dorsey Pender of NC when he was mortally wounded at Gettysburg. General Wade Hampton's Whitney Navy revolver and General Matthew C. Butler's Manhattan revolver are featured in the collection of arms.

One of the most spectacular artifacts in the Relic Room's collection is the officers' frock coat worn by General Micah Jenkins when he was killed at the Wilderness. His bullet-riddled sword and scabbard rests in the same display case. Another superb item is the original telegram written and signed by General John Bell Hood to General John S. Preston informing him that his son, Major William C. Preston, had been killed in action. Hood was then engaged to "Willie's" sister, Sally "Buck" Preston.

The extensive collection of Dr. Benjamin H. Teague, a Confederate veteran and passionate collector of unusual relics, is also represented in the museum. Teague collected everything, it seems, including General PGT Beauregar's tooth extracted by his dentist in 1890!

Next time you're in Columbia, take the opportunity of visiting the SC Confederate Relic Room, located corner of Sumpter and Pendleton Streets. Hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. No admission is charged, though donations are accepted. You'll find the staff very friendly, knowledgeable, and available for questions.

SPRING TOUR TO LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

Eleven RT members traveled to Lexington last weekend for a tour of this charming 19th Century town where Jackson taught at VMI before the war and where Lee served as President of Washington College during the last five years of his life. In spite of rain on Friday afternoon, the group enjoyed an informative tour with guide, Richard Lewis, of Lee and Jackson sites in Lexington. The group included: John Moore, James MacLaren, John and Dorene Krohn, Palmer and Mary Royal, Tommy King, David and Becky Barefoot, Dan Geddie, and Joyce Binkley.

CIVIL WAR BOOK SALE

The University of North Carolina Press is offering on sale its Civil War books at a 20% discount. The sale runs through April 30. UNC Press publishes some of the choicest titles in Civil War literature from the recent *Pickett's Charge In History and Memory* (Carol Reardon), *Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain* (Robert Krick), and *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life* (Donald Pfanz) to such appealing classics as *The Civil War in North Carolina* (John Barrett), *Two Great Rebel Armies* (Richard McMurray), and *Stephen Dodson Ramseur: Lee's Gallant General* (Gary Gallagher). Call (800) 848-6224 for the sale catalogue.

THANKS FROM ROBERT K. KRICK!

The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table received the following letter of thanks from Bob Krick, Chief Historian at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Battlefield and leading authority on the Army of Northern Virginia, for the RT's gift of \$1000.00 towards the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust's purchase of a 100 acre tract in the heart of the Chancellorsville battlefield. I recently spoke with Bob by phone, and he shared the good news that CVBT has closed on the property, thereby insuring its preservation!

"Bless you, bless you, bless you for your help with the Chancellorsville preservation project. I have been pleasantly startled by the degree of commitment of the local fellows, who have been fabulously dedicated and generous. Contributions from distant strangers are especially valuable for keeping them going; not only is the financial support important, but it encourages them to recognize that what they are working on is of consequence to people of substance all across the country."

"We are in about the last decade during which the primary Virginia battlefields can be saved to some extent. By then, everything not preserved outright will be under a solid coat of asphalt. The Shenandoah Valley sites and some others will survive much longer, giving us a later window of opportunity, but anything on or near the I-95 corridor is on the final chapter. It's depressing, of course, but ardent efforts are accomplishing some good. I keep asking myself why on earth didn't we (myself included) begin working this hard 25 years ago. Hindsight is 20/20, of course.

Best
Bob Krick

THE THREE BATTLES OF WINCHESTER A History and Guided Tour

Much of the fighting in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864 took place around Winchester, Virginia. And the city saw considerable combat earlier in the war as well. Now, *The Three Battles of Winchester: A History and Guided Tour*, by Brandon Beck and Charles Grunder (2nd edition), a guided driving tour, is available for battlefield buffs.

If Dr. Smith's program this month leads you to plan a visit to the area, you'll want to order a copy (\$12.00 plus \$3.00 postage) from The Civil War Foundation, Box 770, Berryville VA 22611, phone (540) 955-1176. Profits from sale of the book go directly to Kernstown Battlefield Association, a nonprofit preservation group.

A PARTING SHOT

The following newspaper story affords some insight into one of the Confederacy's more colorful generals, Roger A. Pryor, a practicing attorney after the war. Bear in mind, as you read this post-war account, that General Pryor's descendent, Ted Lynch, is a member of our RT.

General Pryor Rampant

Ex-General Roger A. Pryor, late of Virginia, had some words with counsel to whom he was opposed in a case on hearing before Judge McCunn, in the special term-rooms of the Superior Court, this morning, says a New York paper of Thursday, 18th inst. When the case had been disposed of the two counsel met just outside the door of the courtroom, and the dispute was renewed. General Pryor waxed wroth, seized counsel by the nose, tweaked that organ violently, then grasped the victim by his coat lapels, giving him a vigorous shaking, and showering epithets, remarkable for their vigor and terseness, upon his unfortunate head. Counsel threatened the vengeance of the law upon the belligerent general, but the latter turned upon his heel and walked away, thus ending the scene.
(*Richmond Daily Dispatch*, May 22, 1871)