

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

October, 1997

NEWSLETTER

Editor: George Slaton

STONEWALL OF THE WEST PATRICK CLEBURNE AND THE CIVIL WAR An Evening With Craig L. Symonds

Cape Fear Club

Corner Second & Chestnut Streets

Tuesday, October 21

Social Hour 6:30-7:30 pm, Hors d'Oeuvres

Program 7:30 pm

The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table is proud to host at its October 21 meeting the recent biographer of one of the Civil War's most renowned combat generals! Craig L. Symonds is the author of *Stonewall of the West: Patrick Cleburne and the Civil War*, which appeared in Spring, 1997.

Wiley Sword, leading historian of the CSA Army of Tennessee, lauds Symonds' book, writing, "At last Pat Cleburne, who ranks as one of the Confederacy's best fighting generals, is getting the serious attention he deserves. Symonds' account is fresh and thought provoking. Cleburne's worthy story should be an inspiration to all who appreciate the highest virtue and character under extreme hardship and disadvantage."

And Albert Castel, who wrote the definitive history of the Atlanta Campaign, describes Dr. Symonds' accomplishment as, "The finest biography of one of the Confederacy's finest fighting generals that has been written or is likely to be written."

Craig Symonds is currently Professor of History at the U.S. Naval Academy (since 1986). He began teaching at the USNA in 1981, following a year as Assistant Professor at the U.S. Naval War College. Dr. Symonds has been a Visiting Professor at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, England. He was an active duty officer in the U.S. Navy, 1971-1974.

Dr. Symonds, a California native, received his Ph.D. from the University of Florida. His *Joseph E. Johnston: A Civil War Biography*, published in 1994, is the best known work on Johnston. He has won numerous academic honors, edited and contributed to a number of books, written articles and reviews for many leading military journals, and given more than a hundred professional papers on military history at national conferences.

The social hour from 6:30-7:30 pm will feature lots of food and drink. Come early and socialize! And feel free to bring a guest to this special program.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS/SIGNUPS NOW DUE

It's time to pay your dues for the 1997-1998 RT year! Prospective members should remit membership dues by Friday, October 31 in order to receive the November issue of the newsletter. Members from 1996-1997 should remit their dues by November 26 to receive the December issue. The membership form is printed on the last page of the newsletter. You'll make our job easier by paying your membership dues promptly.

BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER

The crisis that split the Union split many families as well, particularly in the divided border states.

At Gettysburg, the 7th West Virginia (Union), commanded by Lt. Col. Jonathan Lockwood, drove back the Confederate 7th Virginia. A Lt. Lockwood, CSA, and nephew of the regimental commander, was wounded and captured by his uncle's troops.

The Crittendens of Kentucky were another case. Maj. Gen. George B. Crittenden went with the South, while Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden and Col. Eugene W. Crittenden fought with the Union army. Their father, John J. Crittenden, was a U.S. Senator.

Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge, the former vice-president, and his three sons fought with the Confederacy, while their two cousins, Presbyterian ministers, stayed in the Union. One of these had two sons in the Confederacy and two in the Union army. A Yankee Breckinridge captured his Confederate brother in the battle before Atlanta. A daughter, Margaret E. Breckinridge, was a Sanitary Commission worker.

In the *Monitor-Merrimac* battle, the latter was commanded by Franklin Buchanan, C.S. Navy, while his brother, McKean, who had remained with the Union Navy, was killed in the sinking of the *Congress*.

William R. Terrill, Brig. Gen. USA, was killed at the Battle of Perryville, 8 October 1862, and his brother, James B. Terrill, Brig. Gen. CSA, was killed near Bethesda Church in May, 1864. Chester Hardy, Bvt. Brig. Gen. USA and son of the noted portrait painter, had one brother in the Union army and two in the Confederate.

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, a native of Kentucky, had one full brother, three half-brothers, and three brothers-in-law in the Confederate army. Her half-sister Emilie, widow of the Confederate general, Ben Hardin Helm, visited her in the White House in the winter of 1863-64.

Confederate commissioner, John Slidell, was the paternal uncle of Union Gen. Ranald Slidell Mackenzie and Union naval officer Alexander Slidell Mackenzie.

Virginia-born Philip St. George Cooke chose to stay with the Union while his son, John R. Cooke, and his son-in-law, J.E.B. Stuart, went with the South. All three became generals. Philip St. George's nephew, John Esten Cooke, also chose the Confederacy and later wrote *Wearing of the Gray*.

Edwin V. Sumner's son-in-law, Armistead Long, resigned from the U.S. Army while serving as Sumner's aide and rose to be a Confederate general.

Henry B. McClellan became J.E. B. Stuart's Chief of Staff, and, after Stuart's death, was on R.E. Lee's staff and then Chief of Staff to Wade Hampton at the surrender of Johnston in North Carolina. He had four brothers who served in the Union army, one of them, Carswell, as adjutant general of Maj. Gen. A.A. Humphreys, commander of II Corps, Army of the Potomac. His first cousin was Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, twice commander of the Army of the Potomac.

-Jim McCallum

NORTH CAROLINA: THE CIVIL WAR CONNECTION

A Field Report

The Civil War conference, held the weekend of September 26-28 in Wilmington, was an enjoyable experience for well over one hundred CW enthusiasts from around the country. The speakers and the battle tours held the interest of participants, in spite of rainy weather.

The CFCWRT sponsored a silent auction, organized and led by Tommy King, to cover the costs associated with featuring William C. Davis as keynote speaker for the conference. The auction raised over \$1500.00! The RT gives a special thanks to Tom Broadfoot, Chris Fonvielle, Albert Jewell, Tommy King, and Jim McCallum for donating significant items to be auctioned.

And the RT was well-represented at the conference! Tonia Smith, a key member of the NC Civil War Tourism Council, was a driving force behind putting the conference together. Jim McCallum and George Slaton volunteered during registration. Conference participants included Bob Cooke, Palmer and Mary Royal, Carolyn Godwin, Tom Carr, Ed Gibson, Bill Clark, Bert Williams, Beverly Tetterton, Gene Van der Molen, Carol Ringberg, Tom Morgan, Ed Russ, Bob Quinn, Tommy King, James McLaren, Bob and Linda Rand, and Joyce Binkley.

SHELBY FOOTE'S 80TH BIRTHDAY A Reporter's Interview

(The following newspaper story, written by Bill Thomas, appeared in an October, 1996 issue of The Commercial Appeal in Memphis TN, the home of Shelby Foote. Tommy King brought it to our attention, and the managing editor graciously allowed us to quote portions of it).

When I arrived, he was sitting in the room at the back of his magnolia-shaded house where he'd written the third and last volume of his monumental history, *Civil War: A Narrative*, a work so good it gives you the feeling he must have been there. Taking notes. I went to see Foote because he comes about as close to being a survivor of the Civil War as you can get without having actually been there and shot somebody or gotten shot yourself.

...Foote "fought" the Civil War as a writer five times longer than any soldier in the field. And when it was over, it had become the defining event of his writer's life. "There is no doubt but that that three-volume history of the Civil War defines me on the American literary scene," said Foote, who started out as a novelist and then spent 20 years researching and writing a war that took only four years to fight. He did it in style too, writing 1 and 1/2 million words in dipped pen and ink, which helps explain why it took so long.

"I was in more battles than any veteran of the war," noted Foote, who studied every engagement from both sides of the fence. His interest in the war bloomed early - his great-grandfather fought at Shiloh, where he got the tail shot off his horse and came home. "One Shiloh was enough for him," Foote said.

Foote started his first volume in the spring of 1954, and by the time he finished the last one in 1974, he'd become anti-war and was ready to put it all behind him. "I wanted to forget the Civil War," he said, "but then along came Ken Burns and that TV thing. Up to then, the book had sold well. But after that, it took off like a skyrocket."

The TV series brought Foote a flood of speaking offers, opening a new career at a time when most people should have welcomed it. Although "it pays well and is a great temptation," he turns down most of the offers because it interferes with his writing. However, he said, "I'll speak if (1) I feel an obligation to do it, (2) if it's in a place where I always wanted to go, and (3) if it's so much money I'd be a fool not to."

As for his 20-year immersion in the Civil War, Foote says, "My God, what a subject. Where am I going to find characters like William Tecumseh Sherman or Pat Cleburne? There was just a host of wonderful people to write about."

The work has made him internationally famous. "A German professor came by here and told me they now have American Civil War re-enactments in Germany. Problem was, everybody wanted to be a Confederate soldier. So they passed a rule: You had to do two years as a Federal soldier before you could become a Confederate."

Although pushing 80, Foote writes a lot, lectures a little and occasionally fights to keep Civil War battlefields from being destroyed by commercial developers. A while back, he helped stop a Disney theme park from encroaching on historic ground; more recently, he helped block a racetrack at the site of the Battle of the Big Black River outside Vicksburg, Miss. He is dismayed that the perimeter of Gettysburg is "one big hotdog stand."

Foote also comes to the defense of Civil War figures such as Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest when he feels they're being unfairly attacked. "Blacks would like to get rid of the memory of Forrest, and I can understand that," he said. "But they don't know Forrest, don't know what he stood for, and they don't understand the predicament people were in after that war. Forrest was probably the first imperial wizard of the KKK, but he dissolved it, and it should not be confused with the later Klan that did all the lynchings in the 1920's."

Asked if his life as a writer had turned out like he'd expected, Foote said, "I never worried about being rich or poor or any of those things. I just watched it unfold. Somebody is always asking would you do things differently if you had it all to do over again. Looking back, I don't think I'd change a single thing, including the wicked and sinful things."

Foote laughed at some unspoken memory. "In one of those letters (to Percy) I said, 'every sin I ever committed, I'm very glad I did. I just wish I'd done more.'" Copyright, 1996 The Commercial Appeal, Memphis TN. Used with permission.

**ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION ON STONEWALL JACKSON
November 13 Meeting**

As many of you know, this past spring saw the publication of a monumental biography of Stonewall Jackson. James I. Robertson's *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend*, will probably never be surpassed by any future writer on the general. Each of you who have already picked up this book will surely agree with William C. Davis who exclaims, "Truly a stunning achievement. *Stonewall Jackson* must stand as one of the half-dozen preeminent 'lives' of the Civil War, and in its own right a landmark in American biography."

The November meeting will feature a Round Table panel and general discussion of the legendary Confederate general. We hope that members will consider buying or borrowing a copy of this biography and reading it before the meeting. Some members may just wish to brush up on what they already know about Jackson, and of course, some may come just wishing to learn more. Whatever you do, spend some time over the next month sorting through your ideas and knowledge about Stonewall so you'll be prepared for some rousing discussion and debate.

THE WILMINGTON CAMPAIGN

Upcoming Bus Tour With Civil War Historian, Chris E. Fonvielle, Ph.D.

Chris Fonvielle, whose *Last Rays of Departing Hope: The Wilmington Campaign* is doubtless on the bookshelf of nearly every member of the CFCWRT, has generously offered to lead another tour of sites associated with the 1865 campaign in the Cape Fear area. Our early members will remember the enjoyable Saturday bus tour in February, 1995 when Chris took us to these sites. Once again, on a Saturday, we'll be treated to a six-hour plus tour of the Forks Road battlesite, Sugar Loaf, Fort Fisher, and Fort Anderson.

If you are interested in signing up for this tour, call Chris Fonvielle (H. 792-9091) or George Slaton (O. 452-7370). Or, put your name on a sign-up sheet which will be available at the October meeting of the RT. As we get some idea of the number of members who wish to go, we'll plan and announce a tour date, which will likely be a weekend in the next three months.

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MEMBERSHIP

Mail the form below along with \$20.00 membership fee (Cape Fear Civil War Round Table, Box 10535, Wilmington NC 28405) or present to Dan Geddie, Treasurer, at the next meeting.

Name _____ Phone O _____ H _____

Address _____

Special Civil War Interests _____

Name & address of friend who might be interested in joining the RT _____