

# Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

February, 1999

NEWSLETTER

Editor: George Slaton

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## YELLOW JACK

February 11 Meeting  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
Social Hour 7:00.....Program 7:30

"I recollect well, having stood in our home on Market & Fifth Streets, watching the wagon-loads of corpses go by to Oakdale Cemetery, of those who had died of that malignant disease." Thus spoke John D. Bellamy of the 1862 yellow fever epidemic in Wilmington NC.

Our February speaker will be Dr. John R. Krohn, a retired Wilmington surgeon, who will relive these horrible times from August to November, 1862. One third of the population of our city became sick and one in ten died. Dr. Krohn will discuss the conditions which produced the epidemic, including the controversy surrounding the blockade runner *Kate* and will describe how Wilmington coped with this tragedy in a time before medical knowledge of viruses and disease transmission by mosquitoes.

Dr. John R. Krohn is a graduate of Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota (site of Jesse James' last bank robbery) and the University of Minnesota Medical School. Trained in plastic surgery at the Mayo Clinic, he practiced in Wilmington from 1975 to 1996. He is a student of the Battle of Gettysburg and Civil War medicine.

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**SPRING TOUR TO ANTIETAM**  
**Payment Deadline**  
**Tuesday.....February 23**

A reminder that the RT is on the line to the Sheraton Inn in Hagerstown, Maryland for an exact count. So we need your check for \$230.00 (double occupancy) or \$325.00 (single occupancy) by Tuesday, February 23, in order to guarantee your room reservation. Bring payment in full to the February meeting or mail to CFCWRT, Box 10535, Wilmington 28404.

There are still seats available on the bus for any of our members who haven't signed up for the trip or for additional guests. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the sites of a major Civil War campaign with an expert guide, so don't miss it! Contact Tommy King (762-2930, home; 763-7318, office) with any questions.

## ORGANIZATION OF TROOPS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA 1861-1865

(If you've ever researched North Carolina Confederate soldiers or the regiments in which they served, you've probably been confused by the regimental designations. I floundered about for years with the distinction between the NC Volunteers and the NC State Troops, but Jim McCallum, who has studied NC soldiers for many years, set me straight on the designations. Indeed, Jim is one of the most meticulous Civil War researchers I know, and his account of the formation of troops in the Tarheel state, which follows, will no doubt be just as helpful to you )

North Carolina furnished eighty-four full regiments, thirteen battalions, and at least thirteen unattached companies to Confederate service. There were also listed by the Adjutant General of North Carolina 3,103 men from NC serving in regiments of other states.

Of the regiments, the 10th, 36th, and 40th were artillery and the 9th, 19th, 41st, 59th, 63rd, 65th, and 75th were cavalry regiments.

The 70th, 71st, 72nd Regiments were Junior Reserves composed of boys seventeen years of age. The 73rd, 74th, 76th, 77th, and 78th were senior reserves; men between the ages of 45 and 50. The "Reserves" were created on 17th February 1864 by the Confederate Congress. A breathing spell was given, allowing those who wished, to volunteer. The Junior Reserves were called in April and May of 1864 and the Senior Reserves were left at home until August or September to permit the harvesting of much needed crops. As they entered the army, these reserves were locally organized into companies, then sent to training centers and placed into battalions composed of three to six companies. These battalions were numbered 1st, 2nd, 3rd Junior Reserves, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th Senior Reserves. As the recruits increased, they became the regiments listed above.

Besides these, there were regiments and battalions of Home Guards composed of those exempt from Confederate service by reason of being State officers or for other reasons, who rendered active service occasionally for short periods of time at the order of the Governor. In early 1862, there was a mobilization of the Militia for a short time in various parts of the state.

In November 1864, orders came from Richmond to place in Regiments the 3,117 men who had been detailed to North Carolina for various reasons. As a result the 81st Regiment of N.C. Troops (1st Regiment Detailed Men), 82nd (2nd Detailed), and 83rd (3rd Detailed) were formed.

The NC Legislature on May 8 authorized Governor Ellis to raise ten regiments of State Troops through "an Act to raise 10,000 men to be divided into eight regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and one of artillery to serve during the present war unless sooner discharged." The governor was given the power to appoint all the commissioned officers created by the last-mentioned act. Major James G. Martin, on his arrival at Raleigh following his resignation from the US Army, was appointed Adjutant-General of this corps.

The regiments of Volunteers were formed under an act of the General Assembly, ratified May 10th, 1861 and entitled "An Act to provide for the public defense." These men were to be enlisted for twelve months and tendered to the Confederate States of America. The field officers were to be elected by the company commissioned officers who were in turn elected by the men of the individual company. The captain of the company then appointed the non-commissioned officers.

The First Volunteers (Bethel Regiment) was organized ahead of any other regiment in the state: the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th soon followed. The Bethel Regiment volunteered on April 17, 1861 and was sent to Virginia by May 21 and fought and won the first land battle of the war on June 10. The 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th Volunteers were organized June 15-18, 1861.

The double sets of numbers 1,2,3,4, etc. State Troops and 1,2,3,4 etc. Volunteers created confusion, especially in Richmond, where they were unable to keep up the distinction. This led to an understanding between the War Department and the NC Adjutant-General's office that the State Troops would retain the numbers 1 through 10 and the First Volunteers be numbered 11th Regiment North Carolina Troops (First Volunteers), etc. This caused some dissatisfaction at first among the volunteers, but it was short lived. There was some irregularity about the election of field officers of the 9th Volunteers, so the governor withheld the commissions. Into the vacant number was placed Spruill's Regiment, the 19th North Carolina Troops (Second Cavalry). After the irregularities were corrected, the 9th Volunteers took the next number which, at that time, was the 27th. The designation of a number and the word "Volunteers" placed parentheses after the infantry regiments was soon dropped with only the cavalry and artillery retaining such designation.

The State's Battalion designation can be even more confusing than the Regiments, in that some bore the name of their organizing officer and some were numbered. As battalions were combined, they would assume the number of the unit having the greater number of companies or be given a new designation. An example was Woodfin's Battalion with three companies originally formed in 1861. When three additional companies were added it was designated the Fourteenth Battalion. In the spring of 1865 four additional companies were added, giving it the ten companies needed for regimental status and thus the designation, Seventy-Ninth Regiment (Eighth Cavalry). The war ended before it saw action as a regiment so it never achieved wide-spread recognition.

There were twenty-five numbered Battalions in service at one time or another during the years 1861-1865. Some of these twenty-five Battalions were given official numbers and some were given unofficial numbers and officially designated by other names. I will attempt to clarify on an individual basis.

#### OFFICIALLY NUMBERED BATTALIONS

1st Battalion (Sharpshooters) organized in April 1862 from the 21st Regiment which had twelve companies. Continued to fight with the 21st.

2nd Battalion - composed of eight companies of infantry and fought in many of the Va. battles in Rodes Division. Organized in 1861.

3rd Battalion (Light Artillery) three batteries organized in Feb. 1862. Fought in N.C.

4th Battalion (Wright's) joined the 8th Battalion (Nethercutt's) and some independent companies to become the 66th Regiment N.C.T.

5th Battalion combined with the 7th Battalion on 3 August 1863 to become the 65th Regiment (6th Cavalry).

10th Battalion (2nd Bat. Heavy Art.) organized in 1862.

12th Battalion formed in 1862 (three cavalry companies). In July 1864 two companies transferred to the 59th Regiment (4th Cavalry) and one company to the 16th Battalion.

13th Battalion (Starr's Bat. of Artillery) composed of six batteries (companies) organized 1 December 1863.

14th Battalion - see above- Woodfin's to 14th Bat. to 79th Reg. (8th Cav.)

15th Battalion (Wynn's Cavalry) organized July 1863 and composed of six companies.

16th Battalion (Cavalry) was formed in 1864 from five companies of the 7th Confederate Cav. and three companies from the 62nd Ga. and one company from the 12th Battalion. One of the companies from the 62nd Ga. was large enough to divide into two companies, but due to administrative "foul ups" it was never designated a regiment "officially." All of these were N.C. men.

#### UNOFFICIALLY NUMBERED BATTALIONS

6th Battalion officially designated Armory Guards was composed of seven companies stationed in Fayetteville N.C. There was another 6th Battalion which became the 60th Regiment.

9th Battalion was officially designated the 1st N.C. Heavy Artillery organized March 25 1863 from four unattached companies which had existed since early 1862. They were stationed throughout the war in the Cape Fear area until the fall of Fort Fisher, thereafter fighting as infantry in the Battle of Bentonville. Another battalion was called the 9th Battalion (Reserves) but later designated 1st Battalion of Reserves and later as the 20th Battalion.

11th Battalion (Whitford's) became the 67th Regiment on 18 January 1864, being composed of nine infantry companies and one cavalry.

17th Battalion (Avery's) was composed of two infantry companies and one cavalry used as guards for N.C.'s western mountain passes.

18th Battalion (MacRae's) was composed of three infantry companies of two of cavalry organized in Nov. 1863 to protect the mountain areas.

19th Battalion (Mallet's or Hahr's) composed of five companies of "Light Duty Men" who acted as camp and provost guards.

21st Battalion (Erwin's Senior Reserve) organized in July 1864.

22nd (Hill's Senior Reserve) Battalion and 23rd Battalion (Littlejohn's Senior Reserves) were transferred to the Senior Reserve Regiments.

24th Battalion (Rencher's) became part of one of the Regiments of Detailed Men.

25th Battalion (Bingham's) was composed of three companies organized to protect Watauga and adjacent counties in winter of 1864-1865.

There were several other Battalions not numerically listed whose existence was soon merged into regiments. These were Singletary's Battalion which became the 27th Regiment; William T. Williams' Battalion which was raised into the 32nd Regiment; Roger's Battalion, later the 47th Regiment; and Evan's Battalion, later became the 63rd Regiment. I am sure there were others of which I am not aware.

From a military age population of 115,369, North Carolina furnished 125,000 men for the cause of the Confederacy.

- Jim McCallum

## EXTRA RATIONS

We extend a hearty welcome to new members Richard Bellows, Gene Bush, H.L. McConnell, and Jerry Wine! Our paid membership for the 1998-1999 year stands now at 113.

A reminder to members that we have a table at each monthly meeting featuring newsletters from other RT's across the country. Take a moment to look through them and learn more about the programs and activities our fellow RT members are enjoying. One of the best of these newsletters is *The Maryland Line*, published by the CWRT of Montgomery County, Maryland, and its December issue recounts the group's 1998 field trip to Gettysburg. They did a 1.2 mile Pickett-Pettigrew Charge walk from the CSA lines to the USA defenses. Carrying one of their flags was Lucas Meredith, Jr. whose father carried a flag during the actual Pickett-Pettigrew Charge in 1863 for Kemper's Brigade in Pickett's Division! Lucas is one of three known surviving children of veterans of the legendary assault. Also in attendance was Colonel Jeb Stuart IV, a direct descendent of the great cavalry commander, and Dan Paterson, great-grandson of General James Longstreet. What a day!

Our monthly raffle will return at our February meeting! Some interesting items will be available, and we encourage all our members to buy a raffle ticket (\$1.00 each) or two. The raffle helps bolster our RT treasury.

## THE BENTONVILLE BATTLEFIELD SYMPOSIUM March 19-21

We now have more information about the Bentonville conference which we announced in the December newsletter. The tour guide will be the legendary Ed Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service. Other conference leaders will be Mark Bradley, author of the recent book on the Battle of Bentonville, John Marszalek, the biographer of William T. Sherman, Craig Symonds, the biographer of Joe Johnston and Patrick Cleburne, John Goode, and Fred Burgess.

The conference will open on Friday, March 19, at 12 pm with presentations that afternoon. Saturday will feature walking tours of the Battles of Aversboro and Bentonville, more presentations that evening, then further walking tours on Sunday. The conference is being held on the anniversary of the 1865 battle.

Cost for the conference is \$199.00. Proceeds will benefit the preservation efforts at Bentonville. Motel rates are additional. For more information, call Bentonville Battleground State Historic Site at 910-594-0789.

## A PARTING SHOT

After the battle [Spotsylvania Courthouse] was over and the wounded very well cared for and night had closed around us, one of our bands began to play "The Dead March" just in the rear of the "death angle." You could hardly ever hear a man speak, and it seemed that we all wanted to shed tears of real sorrow; some that had lost relatives or dear friends did have to wipe their eyes. When our band ceased playing, one of the Union bands played "Nearer, My God, to Thee;" then our band began to play "The Bonny Blue Flag," after which the Union band played "The Star Spangled Banner;" and then our band played "Dixie Land," and the Union band finally struck up "Home, Sweet Home;" this probably brought tears rolling down many powder-blackened cheeks in both armies.

When the Union band played "The Star Spangled Banner" we could hear their soldiers huzza, and when our band struck up "Dixie" it looked like it cheered every man, and we raised a yell; but oh! how different when "Home, Sweet Home" was played.

Can anyone, either Union or Confederate, ever forget these historic times?

- G.W. Nichols, *A Soldier's Story of His Regiment (61st Georgia) And Incidentally of the Lawton-Gordon-Evans Brigade Army Northern Virginia, 1898*