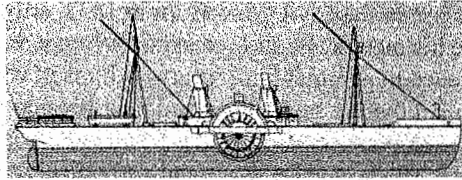


THE RUNNER



Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

February 2003 P.O. Box 10535, Wilmington, N.C. 28404 Editor: Bob Cooke

**Our next meeting will be Friday, 14 February at St. Andrew's On-The-Sound
Social Hour 7 p.m. Meeting, 7:30 p.m.**

Steering Committee Contact Numbers.

Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle (792-9091) Mike Budziszewski (458-1370) Dan Geddie (799-5338)
Bob Cooke (792-1601) Steve Gunter (686-4025) John Moore (256-6328) Tommy King (762-2930)
John Krohn (799-6014) George Slaton (452-7448)

Our speaker for February will be Mr. Jack Thomson, who will tell us about Charleston during the Civil War years. Mr. Thomson, who was "involuntarily transferred" to that place in 1968 from his native city of Miami, admits that it was the best thing that ever happened to him! He started giving his unique walking tours in 1986; they are unique in that he carries along a volume of photographs taken during the war and points out the very same scenes in his walk. The author of *Charleston at War*, Jack lives in an 1880-style home, with, as he says, a 1950's model wife. His wife is a native Charlestonian (whom he tells that its fine to tell people you're from South Carolina, but telling them you're from Charleston is bragging just too much!) Mr. Thomson's interests also include blockade running. He worked for three years in the salvage of two runners, the *Georgiana* and the *Mary Bowers*. Jack, who will be whetting our appetite for more, will be taking us in March on his walking tour. As he says, we will "walk the same streets and see the same buildings that were part of Confederate Charleston."

Were you among the those who visited Fort Fisher on Saturday, 11 January? We were and got to talk to member Bruce Patterson who also visited. We were able to get there early (and stayed late!) and meet many of the reenactors and staff who made the day a great one. There were field artillery and infantry demonstrations, heavy artillery (the Fort's 32-pounder is the largest gun of its type in the country) and mortars were fired off also. The CSN had a presence and discussed the use of torpedoes in the Civil War. The Huckleberry Brothers band played the old-timey melodies and also gave a brief history of the tunes. The highlights were, of course, in the evening hours when visitors were shepherded to meet the Union brass in the form of Admiral Porter and Lt. Cdr. William B. Cushing, Colonels Curtis, Pennypacker and Bell; General Terry was also on hand, as were the Southern commanders, General Whiting, Colonel Lamb and Major Reilly. For a finale, two field pieces at Battle Acres roared defiance at the night, thrilling the thinning crowd (hey, it was COLD out there!) It was all a dress rehearsal for 2005 when, for the 140th anniversary, there will be a huge reenactment of the battle.

Winners of our last raffle: *General William Averell's Salem Raid*, Palmer Royal; *Guns of the Civil War* (video), John Golden; *Civil War in the Ozarks*, Jim McCallum; *A House Divided*, Jim McCallum; *They Met at Gettysburg*, Ed Russ; *Little Book of the Civil War*, Sam Daniluk.

From the Calendar!

On this date:

Thursday February 13, 1863-The *USS Queen of the West* destroys the town of Simmesport, La., and several surrounding plantations in retaliation for an attack on the ship the previous day.

Friday February 14, 1864-In plain view of a helpless, outnumbered Confederate general Leonidas Polk, General William T. Sherman occupies and then burns much of the city of Meridian, Miss.

Mr. Horace Mewborn, who, according to George Slaton, has followed in the "horseprints" of John Singleton Mosby for quite some time now, spoke to us at our last meeting about the man who initiated and perfected guerilla warfare in the Civil War. Born in 1833, only ten months later than J.E.B. Stuart, the man who would become his mentor, he showed at an early age that he would not be pushed around! When a local bully threatened to pummel him, he armed himself with a pistol and shot the fellow as he came at him. It was while in jail that he studied law and later became a lawyer. Just prior to the outbreak of war, he joined a militia company commanded by William E. "Grumble" Jones, another man whom he admired. When war came, Mosby's value as a scout was quickly realized and before long, he operated independently, reporting only to the commander of the 1st Virginia Cavalry, J.E.B. Stuart. With his promotion, Mosby continued to report to him and after Stuart's death, would report directly to General R.E. Lee. When Stuart rode around McClellan's army in 1862, it was Mosby who scouted ahead. Beginning his "chaotic enterprise" in January 1863, he knew he would "reap a rich harvest." In an operation carried out on a cold winter night, Mosby, together with 29 men, rode into a Federal camp and captured one general (Edwin Stoughton), 30 men and 59 horses (when President Lincoln was told of the raid he replied, "Well, I'm sorry for that. I can make new brigadier generals, but I can't make new horses.") It was by exploits such as these that Mosby's reputation was made. He was not one to take chances, Mr. Newborn said, it was by virtue of planning that he was able to pull off his raids. By the end of 1863, Mosby was a real thorn in the Union hide and would remain a problem, tying down the equivalent of several regiments. The area of northern Virginia (Fauquier and Loudon Counties) in which he operated became known as "Mosby's Confederacy." Just how he learned his trade remains unknown, but by striking fear in the rear of the Union troops, he epitomized partisan ranger tactics. Mosby survived the war, practiced law and died in 1912.



John S. Mosby (1863)

Mosby in 1864 and as a private citizen

(photos from Time-Life Books, Spies Scouts and Raiders.)

Definitions from the Confederate Dictionary (from the *Wilmington Daily Journal*.)

Benevolence.-Giving half a bushel of green fruit to a hospital and having it published in all the newspapers in the country.

Charity.-Refusing a soldier's wife a barrel of flour, and then falling on your knees to thank God you are not as other men.

Contract.-A system of exemption used to relieve Government favorites from military service.

Contractor.-The person benefited by the above system. He is easily told by his cloth coat and square toe boots.

General.- Formerly this was the title given to the officer commanding an army. These gentlemen would be of great service to the nation if the Government would place them in their proper places. A group of Generals can be found any warm evening by looking on the shady side of the street.

Felicity.- A word used by young ladies when sitting by a coat with a star on the collar.

Charleston Firsts: Americas first public museum, the **Charleston Museum**, was established in 1773. The first **rice** planted in America was grown in Charleston almost as soon as the colony was settled. America's first regularly scheduled **train** offering passenger service originated from Charleston in 1830. Part of the wreckage of the Best Friend was used in 1861 to cast the first cannon to be built in the Confederate States, one of which is on display at the **Confederate Museum** in the old City Market. **Speaking of which, be sure to look at the insert, it is about our trip to Charleston!**

Part II, Wilmington Hospitals

After Northern troops captured Wilmington, General Joseph R. Hawley was placed in command of the district; his job was not an enviable one. There were many sick and wounded Union soldiers (plus a few Confederates too wounded to move) in town. General William T. Sherman had sent virtually all "contrabands" (former slaves freed by his advancing army) from Fayetteville down the Cape Fear. These and other refugees flocking to Wilmington numbered nearly ten thousand. In addition, in late February and early March, Union POWs (over 7,000) were released at the North East (near Castle Hayne) bridge. Many of these men, from Andersonville and Salisbury needed immediate hospitalization. Those from Salisbury brought Typhoid fever with them and soon the disease appeared among the citizens and newly freed slaves. Is it any wonder the bluecoats were hard-pressed for doctors and hospitals! Part II of our continuing medical series (hey, we're on a roll here!) by Dr. Jim McCallum lists the various hospitals in Wilmington after its occupation by Federal forces early in 1865.

Following the surrender, hospitals were divided among three categories: Confederate, Union and Freedman. The Confederate hospital was located in the Bunting house on Fourth Street while the Union army commandeered all of the former Confederate hospitals and created several more. Dr. Edwin A. Anderson, Jr. (1816-1894) wrote an account of the Federal occupation and the hospitals.

"Present in Wilmington at the entrance of the Federal Army, Drs. Medway, Love, Erkiner, King and Anderson. My office adjoined that of Colonel Randall, the provost marshal, and thus I had full opportunity of witnessing what steps were taken for the cleansing of the city....The federal soldiers were terribly afraid of yellow fever, and hence gave the greatest care to the hygiene of the city. The provost marshal and his assistants had a hundred Negroes constantly employed cleaning the streets and the sewers. Martial Law prevailed: an unlimited supply of wagons, laborers, men and money was at [his] disposal...and used unstintingly. All of the resident physicians were placed on duty in the Federal hospitals and I was ordered by General Hawley, then commander of the city, to organize a hospital for the sick and dying Federal soldiers, taken, as Dr. [W.G.] Thomas forcibly expresses it, from Southern prisons. The hospital I organized contained from six to seven hundred patients, and was in the building, and tents around the building, known as the 'customs house,' in the eastern part of the city, corner of Orange and Tenth Streets. There was also another large hospital in St. James' church; [taken over in large part because of the refusal of its minister, Dr. Alfred Watson, to pray for President Lincoln, Ed.] a third in the Hill building, corner of Mulberry and 4th Sts.; a fourth in the Wright house, a large building on Market St.; a fifth in the MacRae house, also on Market St.; a sixth in the house occupied by Adrian & Vollers, on the corner of Front and Dock; a seventh in the very large building used as the Seaman's Home, occupied at the entry of the Federal Army as a Southern hospital; an eighth in the present Marine hospital; a ninth over the railroad. On the property known as the Dickenson's property, overlooking the Charlotte Railroad Depot.

A tenth hospital was a Negro hospital, under the charge of Dr. King of this city, at the northern end of Front St.--a very large four-story building now occupied by the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. Kidder's Mill, a very large building, with its numerous outhouses, made an eleventh. Dudley's Mill, a structure with out buildings similar to and of equal capacity to Kidder's, made a twelfth hospital [this was the former site of Louis Froelich's Confederate Sword Factory, just south of the Cape Fear bridge, east of Surry St., Ed.] This last was in charge of Dr. Tucker of the United States Army, as a colored hospital and had at this time, 300 patients. John C. Heyer's house, corner of 4th and Walnut made the thirteenth. The very large four-story house of Benjamin Beery, corner of Nun and 2nd Sts., was occupied by Dr. Savage of the U.S. Army. The depot of the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad, across the river, opposite the foot of Market St., was the fifteenth, used for Negro refugees. The large side-wheel steamer *Spauling*, of 1,000 tons capacity, lay at the foot of Orange Street, and was fitted up as a floating hospital in the most complete manner, making 16 hospitals in commission at the time...surely enough for any given amount of sick and dying Federal soldiers. No army in the world for the last century has seen similar hospitals, not even in the Crimea, or [the Franco-German] War, for their comfort and arrangements were admirable. Nothing was wanting, not even luxuries. The Christian Association supplied most liberally every want the Government had overlooked. I had only to sign an order to get whatever I wanted for my sick.

Canned fruits, soup, vegetables of all kinds, milk, preserves, fine wines, liquors, brandy, ale and an unlimited supply of ice. Fresh loaves of bread, equal to any in the world, were served daily to the sick and convalescents by the government bakers; and a large California steamer, the *Black Warrior*, ran weekly between this city and Baltimore, bringing live cattle on her spacious decks for the use of the troops and hospitals. With 16 hospitals at their command, attended by Southern physicians familiar with the diseases of the climate, and an able corps of army surgeons, with a trained body of nurses and hospital stewards, all under admirable military discipline, what was to be dreaded even if every section of the city was occupied by sick soldiers? For the provost marshal spared neither time, trouble nor money to keep the city in good order, and so it was kept."

There was one hospital that was evidently was not kept in good order early on in its existence, and was the source of controversy---The Freedman's Hospital. Congress established the Freedman's Bureau as part of the War Department in 1865 to protect the interests of the former slaves. It was charged with many responsibilities, few of which were met. Over a hundred hospitals were established, at least one of which was located in Wilmington. The Freedman's Bureau was resented by the white population and it was probably a disappointment to the recently emancipated slaves who had hoped their problems would be solved with a stroke of the pen.

A local physician, Dr. Thomas Wood just recently returned from the war, wrote of the hospital:

One hospital was forced upon the city by the Freedman's Bureau, in 1865... and [was] called the 'Small Pox' Hospital (by the townspeople.) It endured for nine months and received 712 cases of small pox. Five patients died during the first day. Seventy-three Negroes, in all stages of illness, freely intermingled as to sex, were confined in rooms where windows had been boarded up to keep out the cold. No bedding existed except for sleazy army blankets---or rather would have been sleazy had they not been stiff with smallpox fluid. Vermin were disgustingly numerous. The first day of occupation of the city, the food sent consisted of 10 loaves of bread, and three 2-gallon water cans of some sort of soup for 73 patients. The maggots were so thick in the soup that it was directed to be thrown away, to prevent the half-starved convalescents from greedily devouring it. Finally bedsteads with mattresses were provided and blankets. The house was literally 'hoed out,' scoured, and white washed; ventilation was provided, proper food was prepared, and in a few days the hospital was as well off as most pest-houses.

This sketch [parts I & II] of the hospitals in Wilmington during the Civil War period is but a small part of the fascinating story of Medicine and the medical men from our area. The heritage, lives, accomplishments and progeny of more than 75 men, great and small, is well worth reading. If the interest is sufficient, perhaps we'll have a part III, detailing a few of them!

[Dr. McCallum consulted Mark Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*; Dorothy Lang, *Medicine in North Carolina*; Diane Cashman, et. al. *The Lonely Road*; Bill Reaves Collection at New Hanover County Public Library and Edwin A. Alexander, "Yellow Fever As It Occurred" N.Y. Medical Journal (1872.)

Parting Shots!

Why was the taking of Norfolk a sheepish affair? Because [Mayor] Lamb surrendered to General Wool.

General Rhodes was riding around his brigade, and came up with the conscript who had taken his gun in pieces for the purpose of cleaning and rubbing it up. [Gen. Rhodes] "What are you doing, sir? What are you anyhow?" [Conscript] "I am a sort of a sentinel. What are you anyhow?" [Gen. Rhodes] "I am a sort of a General." [Conscript] "Well General, if you will hold on, I will give you a sort of salute." [Gen. Rhodes] "Well, sir, you hold on a while and I will show you a sort of a guardhouse." The last we heard of the conscript, Gen. Rhodes had him in the guardhouse at his headquarters, bucked and gagged.