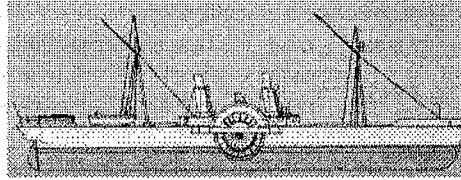


THE RUNNER



Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

January 2004 P.O. Box 10535, Wilmington, N.C. 28404 Editor: Bob Cooke

**Our next meeting will be Thursday, 8 January at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound
Social Hour 7:00 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) Ross St. George, Dale Lear, David Norris.

Our January speaker, Mr. Ray Flowers has worked at Fort Fisher State Historic Site as a Site Assistant and has spoken to several groups on various subjects. This past May, he gave a talk at the Fort about both battles ("from a decidedly Confederate perspective"). Using contemporary photographs he will once again give his "Southern Exposure" talk. (Remember that at that last talk, there was standing room only!) And while we're on the subject (of Fort Fisher, that is), on 17 January 2004 there will be a reenactment of the January 1865 battle (it is the 139th anniversary of the battle). Call for details!

Winners in the Raffle: Gods and Generals (CD)-- Mary Royal; *Civil War Collector's Encyclopedia*-- Jim Burroughs (thanks to Jim, he won twice & took one prize!); *Gardner's Photographic History of the Civil War*-- Bruce Patterson; *The Good German*-- Walt Bullard; *A Shower of Stars*-- Bob Cooke; *Don't Know Much About the Civil War?*--Richard Covell; *The Last Lieutenant*-- Bob Quinn; Collectible Cars-- Ed Hickman and Ray Martin; 2004 Civil War Calender-- Steve Gunter. Winner of our 50/50- Mary Royal. [Keep those donations coming, PLEASE!]

Too Bad To Die!

Gen. Basil Duke, who was with his brother-in-law, Gen. John Morgan, the Confederate raider, in most of his operations and who became commander of Morgan's cavalry after the death of Morgan, told this story at a Confederate reunion at home town, Louisville, a short time before his death:

During one of the Tennessee campaigns Morgan's men surprised and routed a regiment of Federal troopers. In the midst of the retreat one of the enemy, who was mounted upon a big bay horse, suddenly turned and charged the victorious Confederates full tilt, waving his arm and shrieking like mad as he bore down upon them alone. Respecting such marvelous courage, the Confederates forebore shooting at the approaching foe, but when he was right upon them they saw there was a different reason for his fool-hardiness.

He was a green recruit. His horse had run away with him- the bit had broken, and, scared stiff, the luckless youth was being carried straight at the whooping Kentuckians. Jeff Sterritt, a noted wit of the command, stopped the horse and made a prisoner of the rider. Sterritt, who had not washed or shaved for days and was a ferocious looking person, pulled out a big pistol and wagged its muzzle in the terrified Federal's face. "I don't know whether to kill you right now," he said, "or wait until the fight is over!" "Mister," begged the quivering captive, "as a favor, please don't do it at all! I'm a bad character- I ain't prepared to die!"

[Confederate Veteran, 1925]

Our December speaker, Mr. Chad Johnson gave us an excellent discourse on Fort Caswell in war and peace. Beginning with the statement that the Fort Caswell of today looks nothing like the fort did during the Civil War. The Confederates in the Cape Fear area "watched and reacted" to what was happening in other parts of the Confederacy. So when they saw what happened to Forts Sumter and Pulaski, they quickly covered the brick masonry walls of Fort Caswell with layers of sand. Fort Caswell is unique in that it was first taken early in 1861, by the Cape Fear Minute Men, pro-secessionists, only to be given back to the Federal government when so ordered by the Governor of North Carolina. After Fort Sumter was fired upon, the forts were again taken, this time to be held "against all comers." The fort was strengthened by reinforcing the casemates with railroad iron, heavy guns (one of the state-of-the-art 150 pound Armstrong guns was emplaced at the fort) and garrisoned with troops.

Boring duty was interlaced with exciting gun duels with U.S. blockaders, but there was time for hunting and fishing and watching moon rises over the Atlantic! The only time the fort was really in danger was late in 1862 when an Federal attack was thought to be imminent. Interestingly, Sergeant James Reilly, the Ordnance Sergeant who initially surrendered the fort, joined the Southern cause and was in command at Fort Fisher (after the wounding of Colonel Lamb) upon that fort's surrender! In Mr. Johnson's words, it could be said that the war began and (was nearly) ended with Reilly's surrenders! After the war, the fort fell into disrepair and became a popular place to picnic. At the present time, it is one of the few forts in American history that is privately owned!

Civil War Preservation

For some time we have mentioned various local Civil War projects that need assistance of one kind or another (see the bottom of page 4). There are new battles being fought in Virginia and elsewhere as development encroaches on Civil War battlefields. There are sites here in North Carolina and around Wilmington as well that could use some attention. We will be assembling soon (probably in January) at Forks Road to clean up that location once again (mainly underbrush that has grown up). Fort Anderson requires a bit more work; there are several unrestored gun batteries that need attention (and wouldn't it be neat to have a gun or two in a battery?) Fort Fisher will be requiring help for the Armstrong gun which will be on loan from West Point, next year volunteers will be needed to help with the 140th anniversary ceremonies. Veteran's graves at Oakdale Cemetery could use a cleanup also, several groups take part in cleaning them up, if you would like to volunteer for any of these activities, contact them at the numbers below.

Fort Anderson----910.371.6613 Fort Fisher----910.458.5538 Oakdale Cemetery---910.762.5682

Dr. Livingstone's Appeal for His Son.

Dr. Livingstone, the African traveler, is at present in considerable anxiety respecting his eldest son, who was kidnapped in an American port, on board the vessel in which he was serving, by some of those unprincipled agents for procuring substitutes of whom we have heard. He enlisted in the Third New Hampshire Volunteers. He is known to have been present at the skirmish before Richmond on October 7, 1864, but from that time all trace of him is lost, and every mode of sending letters to him has been tried in vain. He is believed to have been made prisoner by the Confederates. It is hoped that if the American papers would give circulation to the above facts the son may be able to send notice through the Southern journals of his present condition and place of abode to his father before he sets out once more for the interior of Africa. [From *The Herald of the Union*, 4 April 1865.]

A Reminder! The money (\$150) for our spring trip to Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville has to be in by 19 February 2004.

Thanks to this month's refreshment coordinators, Mike and Karen Budziszewski.

Sheathed in Mystery

(Part II of II)

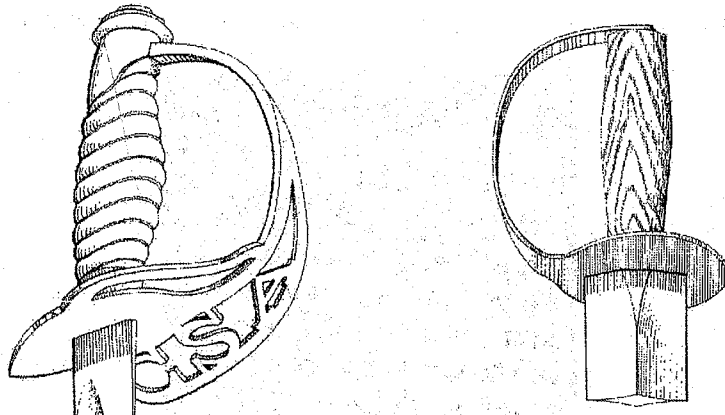
The removal of Louis B. Froelich's Sword Factory or Armory from Wilmington to Kenansville in 1863 may have had root in several factors. First, a fire in February 1863 nearly destroyed his Wilmington operation; secondly, although the yellow fever epidemic had passed, Wilmington was very much a target of the Federals (Froelich had purchased property in Kenansville as early as October 1862, probably to remove his family to safety); lastly, fuel (wood and coal) was becoming very hard to get in Wilmington. By March (1863) he was again ready to begin production at a 2 ½ acre site just south of Kenansville. Located at the crossroads of the Warsaw and Wilmington roads it was within a short wagon trip from the Wilmington and Weldon railroad.

A CARD:
THE UNDERSIGNED has established a Machine Shop at Messrs. Kidder & Martin's Saw Mill, and is prepared to make Swords, Bayonets, etc., at the shortest notice and in the most approved style. G. STEINMETZ Formerly Foreman at the so called Confederate Arms Factory. Dec. 1st, 1861. 50-27

**When the firm moved from Wilmington, competitors moved in!
There were at least two individuals fabricating swords in town;
as Steinmetz was the foreman at Wilmington, it is likely he was fired by Froelich!**

It wasn't always arms that Froelich produced: in April of that year, he sold two brass kettles to an army quartermaster for the use of the medical department; the foundry also turned out horseshoes and agricultural implements. Also that month he contracted to provide 550 sets of infantry accoutrements, consisting of cartridge and cap box, belt and bayonet scabbard. The first installment of 150 sets (at \$13 per set) was to be delivered on 1 June, and "thereafter at the rate of 50 sets every two weeks," with payment made with one-third in Confederate bonds and two-thirds in cash. Also included in the agreement was the buyer's option of canceling the order, "in the event of an armistice or public notice of peace." It was not peace, however, that canceled the order! On 4 July, Union cavalry from New Bern raided Kenansville and burned down the factory. Union reports said:

The Confederates had established an armory and a saddle manufactory at that place, both were destroyed, burning the former with a large number of sabers, saber bayonets, knives, and all kinds of arms of that description, a large and splendid engine and boiler...all the tools, saddles and all the stock[.]



Swords of Froelich manufacture. (From Albaugh's *Confederate Edged Weapons*)

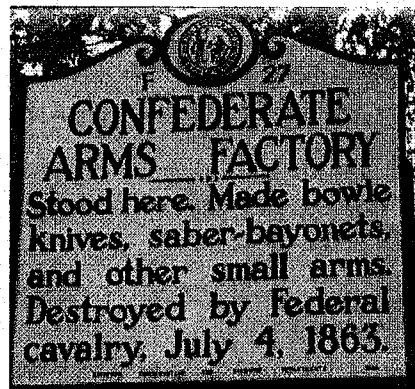
Still undaunted, Froelich rebuilt the factory and was again in business after the raid. The raid certainly set back not only production, but profits as well. Early in January, 1864, strapped for cash, he entered into a partnership with Jacob Henry Nicholas Corneholson. Jacob, who with his brother Christian, ran a "Billiard Parlor and Saloon" in Wilmington, paid nearly \$30,000 to gain equal rights in the company. The last known correspondence between Froelich and Confederate authorities took place in June, 1864 and concerned a shipment of knapsacks to Richmond.

After the war, Froelich remained in Kenansville and involved himself in agriculture. In 1866, several prominent citizens of Kenansville met at his home to discuss the possibility of the large-scale production of wine. He proposed establishing a cooperative and hoped that several hundred acres could be brought under cultivation. It would appear that no consensus was reached, but Louis went into the wine business. In November 1869, he exhibited many of his farming products at the Cape Fear Agricultural Society Fair. Listed in the 1870 census as a "horticulturalist," he proudly displayed his scuppernong wine (and was especially proud of his "Sparkling Burgunda") and also showed off his shell and butterfly collection. Louis sold his wine commercially; in 1872 he brought suit for \$184 against the Southern Express Company for failing to deliver a barrel of wine to Hartford, Connecticut. He was awarded \$187, but the company appealed the decision because Froelich had sued in the wrong court. Learning that the court that he sued in only handled cases of losses over \$200, he promptly increased the wine's value to \$250! Upon appeal in the States' Supreme Court, Froelich lost.

The house that Froelich lived in while in Duplin County still stands (although not in its original location) and one write has stated:

Some citizens in Kenansville remember seeing an old photograph of the house that could have been made in the 1860s. They described seeing a fence along the front and sides of the house. This fence was different. It was made of dozens of sabers evenly spaced and partially thrust into the ground creating a fence made totally of Froelich's swords.

After the war, still in debt, Louis began to be hounded by creditors. Transferring ownership of his home to his wife only a few months before creditors took his other properties, it may well be that he was trying to escape debt by moving out of Kenansville. Sometime after 1872, he moved to Enfield in Halifax County and it was there, in 1873, at the age of 56, that he died from consumption. The *Wilmington Morning Star* wrote, "he was among the most useful men of his day and generation." A historical marker denotes the Kenansville site, it was at the junction of highways N.C. 11 and N.C. 24/50. Although crude by 19th century standards, an identified Froelich staff officer's sword today, with scabbard, commands anywhere from ten to thirteen thousand dollars (depending on condition). A Foot Officer's sword (with the CSA lettering on the guard) can bring from 15 to 20 thousand dollars. The high prices are due to their rarity and of course, its Confederate origins. There are still several Froelich swords in existence, some are in the N.C. Museum of History at Raleigh, but at least one is still in Kenansville. The sword of Colonel Thomas Kenan, on display at Liberty Hall in Duplin County, is of Froelich manufacture. Yet another may have achieved fame as the sword that was broken in two at Appomattox (no, it was not turned into a plowshare!)



State Historical Marker (Kenansville, N.C.)

Note: In Kenansville, commercial development threatens what remains of the Froelich site, but there is a movement on to save the property. Mr. Franklin Fussell is responsible for having the site added to the "North Carolina Civil War Trails." His non-profit *CSA Sword Factory Foundation, Inc.* seeks the purchase of the remaining 1½ acres. To help, you can buy a raffle ticket and possibly win a reproduction Froelich Officer's Sword. For further information, please contact Mr. Franklin Fussell, P.O. Box 871, Kenansville, N.C., 28349.