



The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

The *RUNNER*

Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor Tim Winstead

******* April 2012 *******

Our next meeting will be Thursday, 12 April 2012 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30.



We invite and welcome all people with an interest in Civil War history to attend a meeting of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. The speakers for our programs are diverse in their views, interpretations, and presentations. This serves our purpose of encouraging education and research into that historic conflict.

******* April Program *******

Genealogy 101 – Digging into the Past: Finding Your Civil War Ancestors



Veteran Reunion

Have you ever wondered whose picture that was in your great-grandma's picture album? Have you ever wondered if any of your ancestors fought in the Civil War? Many of us have probably heard some family history that provided rather sketchy details about our ancestors and their whereabouts during the war. How can these sketchy details be utilized to learn more about that mysterious relative?

The April meeting of the CFCWRT will provide those who have ever wondered about their ancestors and their involvement in the war with the opportunity to learn from an accomplished genealogical researcher. CFCWRT member, **Becky Sawyer**, will provide a guide on the methods required to do basis genealogical research. Her presentation will include handouts, genealogy website information, and some tricks of the trade to work your way around roadblocks encountered while performing basis research.

Becky Rolwes Sawyer was born in St. Louis, Missouri and raised in the suburbs of St. Louis County. She graduated in 1996 from Southeast Missouri State University with a BS in Historic Preservation and a minor in History. Upon graduation, Becky began work at the North Carolina Historic Site at Bentonville as a program's coordinator and historian. Becky worked closely with the North Carolina Civil War Trails program in Johnston County and at the Bentonville Battlefield site. While working at Bentonville, Becky completed her MA in Public History from UNCW in 2001. During 2006, Becky began working in her present position at the North Carolina Historic Site at Fort Fisher.

Becky's own words provide an idea of the passion for the subject that she will address at the April meeting:

My passion for genealogy began at a young age. I do profess that I was a genealogy geek and people seemed to be in disbelief that some one of my age would be interested in "dead people." I learned

around the age of 8 how to load the microfilm reader in the basement of the St. Louis City Library genealogy room..... Never knew I had Civil War relatives until I started digging into the past. I had six ancestors who fought in the American Civil War, all for the Union.

Editor

***** **Raffle Winners** *****

Raffle Master: Ed Gibson

If you have books, prints, or other items that you would like to donate to the CFCWRT raffle, talk to Ed at our next meeting.

March Meeting:

Congratulations to the winners of the March Raffle.

The Civil War Battlefield Guide

Beverly Blanton

Grant

Beverly Blanton

Lee

Linda Lashley

Confederates in the Attic

Beverly Blanton

Manhunt

Linda Lashley

Historical Maps of Civil War Battlefields

Richard Covell

***** **Member News** *****

If you have member news that you think would be of interest to CFCWRT membership, let me know about it.

1 – Welcome to our two newest members, **Ned Carten** and **John Coble**, to the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. Thank you for joining us and we hope you enjoy the programs and the fellowship.

2 - On March 31, CFCWRT members **Linda Lashley**, **Dale Lear**, and **Keith Ward** (also representing Boy Scouts of America), helped dig post holes along the main road, weed around the Ft. Fisher visitors' center and rake up the abundance of fallen oak leaves across the street around the traditional wedding area. "Park Day" is an annual hands-on preservation event created by the Civil War Trust to assist with the maintenance of America's Civil War sites. It is funded with a grant from History(TM), formerly The History Channel. Volunteers were treated to lunch by the Friends of Fort Fisher, a nonprofit group that helps support the historic site.



Park Day at Fort Fisher

3 – Reminder of June 2012 Meeting: Special Event!!!! On June 19, 2012, **Dr. Susannah Ural** will speak at an “added” meeting of the CFCWRT. Dr. Ural, who teaches at the University of Southern Mississippi, will present “**The Rise of Hood’s Texans: Recruitment through Antietam.**” Dr. Ural will bring a knowledge and enthusiasm to her subject that you will not want to miss.

4 – Worth Seeing – Member **Lance Bevins** alerted us to this exhibit now showing at the Cameron Art Museum. *Eye Witness Civil War Drawings* from the Becker collection features 127 “first hand” drawings depicting colorful aspects of life and action during the Civil War era. This exhibit will be at the museum through May 6, 2012. These original drawings by artists-reporters for the *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, were used to inform a reading public of actions during the war.

Many of you will be familiar with these prints; however, it will be fascinating to see the original drawing next to the engraving that appeared in the newspapers.

5 – A great article by Si Cantwell appeared in the *Starnews* on April 1, 2012. Si and about 25 others followed CFCWRT member, **Dr. Chris Fonvielle**, on an annual walking tour of Confederate defensive positions that dotted the landscape around Carolina Beach. NOTE: Contact the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society (910-458-0502) for the schedule of next year’s walk.

A vintage Fonvielle quote exclaimed the beauty and importance of the surviving fortifications, “It seems an oxymoron to talk about the beauty of wartime defenses, but the Confederate earthworks are absolutely magnificent.”

******* Lexington, Virginia *******



VMI – Stonewall Jackson & the Cadet Battery

On March 23, 2012, several members of the CFCWRT took advantage of the free lectures and tours sponsored by the VMI Museum, the Stonewall Jackson House, Lee Chapel and the Lexington Visitor Center. **John Munroe, Lance Bevins, David Cooke, Dale Lear, and Roger Lear** journeyed to Lexington where they absorbed a massive dose of *Lexington's Civil War*. Among the lectures they were able to attend were: "Washington College in the Civil War," "Virginia Military Institute in the Civil War: The Institute Will be Heard from Today," "An Overview of Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign."

According to Dale, the sight of the 1500 member VMI Cadet Corps in parade formation was worth the visit. Then again, Dale said the same about the Lee Chapel, Traveler (with apple), the Stonewall Jackson house, the George C. Marshall Museum, and the entire trip.



VMI Cadets on Parade

******* April 1862 *******

In April 1862 General McClellan finally made a decisive move against Richmond. April also saw the first move that would lead to the outlawing of slavery across America when Lincoln declared the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. The act spurred on the Confederacy in its belief that the government in Washington was doing what it could to destroy the way of life in the South. Lincoln's action served to enflame the American Civil War even more.

April 1st: McClellan had a force of three regiments facing 12,000 Confederate soldiers at Fortress Monroe. In total McClellan had a total force of 112,000 men.

April 3rd: The Senate outlawed slavery in the District of Columbia. This was seen to set the precedent that slavery should be abolished in any area over which the Federal government had jurisdiction. There were only 63 slaves in the District but the act set the wheels in motion for the abolition of slavery in all areas controlled by the Federal government.

April 4th: Union forces started a move on Yorktown – the start of McClellan's campaign in Virginia. The Confederate general Johnston had 17,000 men under his command along an eight-mile front but faced 100,000 Union troops.

April 5th: McClellan's force continued its push down the Virginia peninsula.

April 6th: 40,000 Confederate soldiers attacked a major Union base at Shiloh. They took the Union force by surprise and used to their good the fact that the Unionist force had not built any major defensive lines around their camp as they believed it would be perceived as a sign of weakness by the South. The fighting was fierce but by nightfall the North had managed to bring up reserves so that they had 54,000 men to the Confederates 34,000.

April 7th: The North launched a counter-offensive at Shiloh. Like the previous day the fighting was fierce but gun ships on the River Tennessee supported the Unionists. "Bloody Shiloh" had no obvious winning side and historians view the battle as a 'draw'. But the losses suffered by both sides far

outweighed any previous battle. The North lost 1754 killed, 8408 wounded and 2885 captured while the South lost 1728 killed, 8102 wounded and 959 men taken prisoner. Of the two sides, the North was better able to cope with such losses so their media portrayed it as a Northern victory.

April 8th: 3,000 Confederate soldiers were taken prisoner at Island Number 10 on the Mississippi River.

April 11th: The House of Representatives, in support of the Senate, passed a bill to ban slavery in the District of Columbia. The Unionists captured Fort Pulaski in the mouth of the harbour at Savannah after an eighteen-hour bombardment.

April 16th: President Lincoln signed a bill that outlawed slavery in the District of Columbia. President Davis signed a bill that made all males living in the Confederacy aged between 18 and 35 liable for military service.

April 18th: A Unionist naval fleet assembled at Ship Island in the Mississippi Delta, to begin its move against New Orleans. The route it was scheduled to take was fraught with dangers not least the forts at Jackson and St Philip, which could muster over 170 rifled 63-pounder cannon. The Unionist fleet was under the command of Commodore David Farragut and it carried 15,000 troops who were tasked with taking New Orleans.

April 21st: After three days of bombardment and being hit by over 4,000 rounds Forts Jackson and St. Philip were still functioning.

April 22nd: A Confederate deserter, however, confirmed to Farragut that the damage to both forts had been great. Farragut decided to try to 'run' the forts with his fleet. He told his subordinates that his philosophy was "conquer or be conquered".

April 24th: By dawn of this day, the Federal naval fleet had passed both forts. However, his fleet had lost 37 men killed and 171 wounded. Farragut steamed to within 18 miles (by river) to New Orleans.

April 25th: **Fort Macon in North Carolina fell to Unionist troops.** 450 Confederate soldiers were taken prisoner. Farragut's fleet arrived in New Orleans and claimed the city.

April 28th: Forts St. Philip and Jackson formally surrendered to Union forces.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/april-1862-civil-war.htm>, accessed March 27, 2012.

***** April 1862 cont'd *****

Shiloh: The Hard Reality of War

On April 6, 1862, Confederate troops lead by Albert Sidney Johnston struck at Union forces that occupied the positions near Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. The surprise attack against the unprepared Union defenders almost overpowered U.S. Grant's entire command. A determined Union defense in the "Hornet's Nest" gave the time necessary for the Union troops to hold until reinforcements arrived. General Johnston died of a wound he suffered on the battlefield and he was replaced by P.G.T. Beauregard. The fighting continued until darkness ended the vicious struggle. During the night, Grant received reinforcements and on the morning of April 7th, the Union

counteroffensive reversed the Confederate advantage. Beauregard was forced to retire his smaller army from the field.

The two day battle resulted in more than 23,000 casualties and set the stage for the increasingly deadly contest.

Source: <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/shiloh.html?gclid=CKHs5cK0lq8CFYNo4AodPC6x0g>, accessed April 2, 2012.

Editor

***** **March Meeting** *****

To Strike a Blow: The Burnside Expedition of 1862



Jeff Bockert

Our March Speaker, **Mr. Jeff Bockert**, began his presentation about Union General Ambrose Burnside (of “Sideburns” fame) who made his debut during the Civil War as a Colonel at First Manassas, where he “creditably” led his brigade in a flank attack. Shortly after the engagement, Burnside was promoted to Brigadier General and placed in command of an expedition to coastal Carolina. Mr. Bockert indicated that there were several main objectives of this expedition: To capture Roanoke Island (which controlled Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds); close the Dismal Swamp canal, thereby cutting supplies to Norfolk; capture New Bern, Beaufort and Morehead City and to reduce Fort Macon, to destroy the

railroad bridges of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad (which was Richmond's main supply route); also, if feasible, to hold Goldsboro and then continue on to Raleigh.



Attack on Fort Macon

Mr. Bockert went on to detail some of the problems Burnside faced: not enough shipping – New York City ferry and tugboats were finally obtained. Seafaring men from the New England states were also sought after and were hard to come by as the Port Royal expedition had already been outfitted with such men.

Overcoming these obstacles, Burnside gathered 13,000 troops and after a difficult sea trip, reached his destination. Soldiers were landed out of the range of the guns on Roanoke in February 1862 and Burnside was quickly successful due to the lack of Confederate troops on the island. All eyes turned to the reduction of New Bern (which was to be used as a base of operations) and Fort Macon. In mid-March, the Union army was again on the move to New Bern and by the end of March, had taken the city, as well as Beaufort and Morehead City.

By the end of that month, Fort Macon (the last entrance to the Outer Banks still not in Federal hands), was invested and by the end of April, the fort was in Union hands as well. Jeff pointed out that General John Foster had once served at Fort Macon and knew exactly where the powder magazine was. Artillery fire was then directed against the magazine and was in danger of exploding, hence the fort's surrender! As Burnside prepared to gather his forces and continue on to Goldsboro, General Burnside was ordered to the Peninsula to aid General McClellan,

The results of the expedition were mixed (the locks were not closed, but the capture of Norfolk by the Federals relieved the pressure to close the canal) but with a firm lodgment on the coast of North Carolina, the Union army and navy would remain more than just a thorn in the side of North Carolina and the Confederacy. The U.S. Navy used the area as a coaling station and in December 1862, General

Foster, now in command, launched an attack on Goldsboro and successfully destroyed the railroad bridge at that point. He was not able to hold the city and was forced to retreat, but throughout the remainder of the war, several more raids on the road showed that an attack could be made at any point and at anytime along the vast “no man’s land” of coastal North Carolina.

Robert J. Cooke

******* New Estimate Raises Civil War Death Toll *******

At our January 2011 Meeting, **Josh Howard**, Research Historian for the North Carolina Office of Archives and History, outlined the effort underway for the North Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial to reanalyze the number of North Carolinians, Confederate and Union, who served and died during the Civil War. The study by the North Carolina researcher was not the only effort being undertaken to reexamine the significance of the Civil War deaths on the decades that followed the war.

In an article that appeared in *The New York Times* on April 2, 2012, Dr. J. David Hacker, a demographic historian from Binghamton University in New York, has used newly digitized census records from the 19th century to recalculate the Civil War’s death toll. Dr. Hacker raised the estimate of deaths by more than 20 percent – from 618,222 to 750,000.

Josh Howard will speak at the North Carolina Military Historical Society Symposium on May 12, 2012 in Raleigh. It will be interesting to learn the current findings of the two studies and how they may have differed.

Editor

******* Comments and Suggestions *******

Comments and suggestions to make the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table and “The Runner” more relevant to your Civil War experience are welcomed. Send them to me at tpwinstead@gmail.com. Please include “CFCWRT News” in your Subject line.