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# The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

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## The *RUNNER*

### Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Tim Winstead**

\*\*\*\*\* March 2012 \*\*\*\*\*

Our next meeting will be Thursday, 8 March 2012 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30.



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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.

\*\*\*\*\* March Program \*\*\*\*\*

*To Strike a Blow: The Burnside Expedition of 1862*



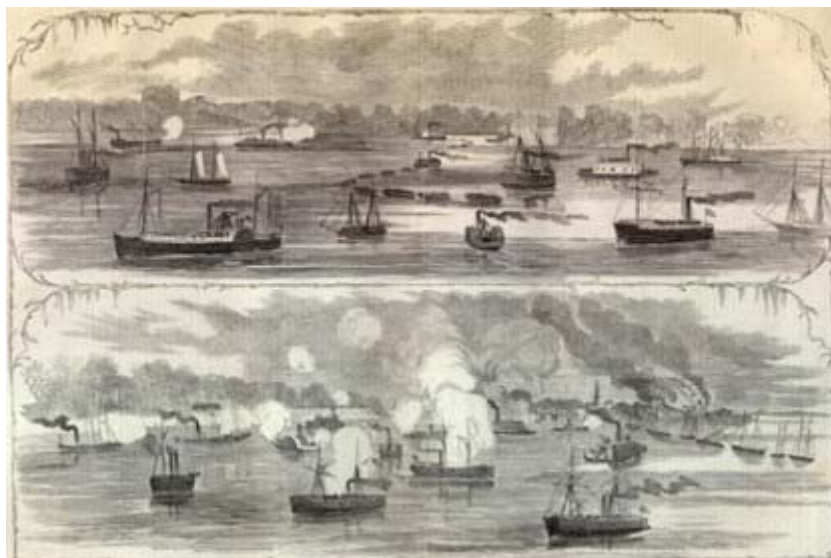
**Jeff Bockert**

**Jeffrey L. Bockert**, will be our speaker for the March Meeting. Jeff's topic will be *To Strike a Blow: The Burnside Expedition of 1862*. By using letters, diaries, and first-hand accounts, Jeff will discuss the background and strategic goals of the expedition, the effect of the expedition on Confederate war aims and goals, and the effect on North Carolinians and African-Americans behind Union lines. He will also briefly address the battles of the campaign.



**Ambrose Burnside**

**Jeff Bockert** currently serves as the Associate Curator of Education for the North Carolina Division of Historic Sites based in Kinston, N.C. and as Vice-Chairman of the North Carolina Civil War Tourism Council. In addition, Jeff serves on the N.C. Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee as well as the N.C. War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee.



*Harper's Weekly* – Attack on New Bern

Jeff has worked for over fifteen years in the historic site and museum field. Prior to his position in Kinston, he served as the Civil War Specialist for N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. Jeff's previous work experience has included managing the President James K. Polk Birthplace, Associate Curator of the Battleship *North Carolina*, and he has worked at the National Archives in Washington, DC. Jeff received his undergraduate and master's degrees at UNCW.

If you want to learn more about the war in eastern North Carolina, join the members and guests of the CFCWRT on Thursday, March 8.

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.

**February Meeting:**

The Silent Auction provided some good deals for those who had winning bids.

Original Oil Painting	Linda Lashley
<i>The Morning Star</i> September 18, 1881	Martha Watson
General U.S. Grant print	Jim Gannon
Mort Kunstler's Road to Glory – "Jackson Leaves VMI"	John Moore
General Longstreet & horse print	Bob Watkins
General Longstreet print	Tim Winstead
<i>The Civil War Art of Mort Kunstler</i>	Ed Gibson
<i>The Gettysburg Companion</i>	Ed Gibson

\*\*\*\*\* Trivia Questions March 2012 \*\*\*\*\*

**Joe George** was the winner of the February Trivia question and its dinner prize. Joe quickly and correctly identified **Brig. Gen. James Dearing**.

Dearing was born at Otterburn in Campbell County Virginia. James Dearing attended West Point and would likely have graduated in 1862 had the war not divided the country. Like most of the Southern Cadets he resigned from the Academy. His allegiance to his family and state he became a junior officer with the Washington Artillery along with Thomas Rosser. His leadership skills gave him notable recognition as he moved up in rank from 2nd Lieutenant, Captain and to Major. He married Roxanna Birchett, of Dinwiddie Va., they would have one daughter Mary Lucretia Dearing.

Leading the charge of the Laurel Brigade at High Bridge he is believed to have engaged in duello with Gen. Theodore Read. After Gen. Read fell wounded from his horse, Dearing was shot in the chest, the ball passing through both lungs. Gen. Dearing was taken from the battlefield to the home of James Watson, "Chatham." After the fight Col. Elijah Viers White went to see him, as White entered the room where Dearing rested, Gen. Dearing who could hardly speak, took Gen. Rosser's hand, pointing to his collar insignia to gesture that Col White be promoted in his stead.

Mortally wounded, Dearing was taken to the Ladies Aid Hospital, in Lynchburg where he passed away April 23, 1865.

At 25 years old, he was the last Confederate General to die of wounds received in battle during the war.

Source: [http://highbridgebattlefieldmuseum.com/the\\_soldiers](http://highbridgebattlefieldmuseum.com/the_soldiers)

- 1 – On February 7, 1862, Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside and Flag Officer Louis M. Goldsboro led a combine Union force of 15,000 men and 100 naval vessels to a landing on Roanoke Island. Who were the Confederate Army and Navy commanders who opposed this invasion?
- 2– After the fall of Roanoke, Burnside turned his attention on New Bern and the capture of much of eastern North Carolina. Confederate Gen. Lawrence O’B. Branch and 4,500 poorly equipped and trained forces opposed Burnside and his 12,000 well equipped soldiers. The Battle of New Bern took place on March 14, 1862. After a failed defense, Branch and his force retreated to Kinston. The defeat was a stinging one for the people of North Carolina; however, two officers of the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina emerged from the conflict with their reputations intact. While many North Carolina newspapers argued that many of the Confederates were guilty of cowardice, these two men would achieve further fame in the continuing conflict. Who were the men and what were their fates?
- 3 – As Burnside’s soldiers advanced inland from Roanoke Island, residents of one town decided on a course of action similar to the Russian’s actions as Napoleon advanced on Moscow. What was the town and what actions did the townspeople pursue?
- 4 – How long did Pickett’s Charge last?
- 5 – Who was responsible for the Union artillery during Pickett’s charge?
- 6 - According to Arthur Fremantle, what was Lee’s reaction to the failure of Pickett’s Charge?

\*\*\*\*\* **Member News** \*\*\*\*\*

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

1 – Welcome new member, **David Paul**, to the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. We hope you enjoy the programs and fellowship.

2 – **Dr. Chris Fonvielle**, past CFCWRT President, gives many presentations and tours to promote the Cape Fear region and our fascinating history. A special opportunity exists to hear Chris and another Cape Fear historian/writer, Philip Gerard, in June 2012. The *Our State* magazine is sponsoring a Civil War History Weekend on June 1-3 in Wilmington. More details available in the March issue of the magazine.

3 – **Dale Lear**, “The Tour Guy,” is working on the spring trip to Lexington, Virginia. Be looking for additional pronouncements on the particulars.

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 was fascinating to see the original drawing next to the engraving that appeared in the newspapers.

\*\*\*\*\* **Fort Fisher** \*\*\*\*\*

On a cold and windy February 9<sup>th</sup>, Bob Cooke led our February speaker and several members of the CFCWRT on a great tour of our own Civil War treasure. Bob shared many stories that explained the history of Fort Fisher and why its location was so critical to the Confederate cause.



**Back row: Bruce Patterson, Dan Geddie, Linda Lashley**  
**Front Row: Tim Winstead, Bob Cooke, Mike Priest, Becky Sawyer, Ed Gibson**  
**Ray Flowers - photographer**  
**\*\*\*\*\* March 1862 \*\*\*\*\***

March 1862 finally saw McClellan make some kind of move against Richmond - some two months after being ordered to do so by Lincoln. In March, Jefferson Davis appointed Robert E. Lee to be his military advisor.

March 1st: Richmond was put under martial law while a number of prominent citizens were arrested for proclaiming that the war should be brought to an end.

March 2nd: Confederate forces abandoned Columbus, Kentucky, seen as a major Confederate stronghold but one that was vulnerable to attack after the fall of Fort Donelson.

March 3rd: General Halleck accused General Grant of “neglect of duty, inefficiency and drunkenness”. McClellan gave Halleck permission to arrest Grant if he thought it was necessary. This argument was the result of Grant’s popularity in the North after the capture of Fort Donelson, which Halleck claimed the credit for coupled with Halleck’s lack of any real progress in Missouri.

March 4th: General Robert E Lee was appointed military advisor to Jefferson Davis. Halleck removed Grant from his command. Halleck was appointed commander of all the Union’s western armies – his reward for the victory at Fort Donelson.

March 6th: Lincoln asked Congress to approve Federal funding to assist states thinking about introducing emancipation of slave legislation. The Confederate Congress agreed that a scorched earth policy could be used in Virginia if Unionist forces broke through. The aim was to ensure that no cotton or tobacco fell into the hands of the North.

March 7th: McClellan moved the Army of the Potomac into Virginia. His target was the Confederate force based at Manassas.

March 8th: Lincoln finally agreed with McClellan's plan to invade Virginia from the sea. However, the President did insist that sufficient men had to be left behind to defend the capital. The Confederates suffered a heavy defeat at the Battle of Pea Ridge losing nearly 800 men with 1000 captured. The former 'USS Merrimac' – now the Confederate 'Virginia' – inflicted major losses on a small Union naval fleet of three ships resulting in the North losing 2 ships and 250 men at Hampton Roads. Only the night saved the third ship. The 'Virginia' was a heavily armoured ironclad that stood up to six full broadsides with little damage done to her. However on the evening of the 8th the 'USS Monitor' entered the Hampton Roads.

March 9th: The Army of the Potomac moved off in search of a Confederate force they thought was at Rappahannock – but it was not and they returned to their base at Alexandria without having made contact with the enemy. The 'USS Monitor' engaged the 'Virginia' at Hampton Roads. After a series of attacks on one another neither saw an opportunity to win and both broke off the engagement. Both ships were simply too heavily armoured to be susceptible to the firepower of the other.

March 11th: Another War Order by Lincoln stated that McClellan was now only commander of the Army of the Potomac. This was a temporary move only to ensure that McClellan could concentrate all his energy on a successful campaign in Virginia.

March 13th: Union forces captured \$1 million of Confederate supplies at Point Pleasant, Missouri.

March 15th: Grant was handed a command once again – he was placed in charge of Unionist forces in Tennessee.

March 17th: McClellan started his campaign to attack Virginia from the coast by moving his troops to Fortress Monroe.

March 19th: The South puts into place a plan to stop the North taking two vital rail lines – the Chattanooga to Georgia and the Corinth to Memphis lines. If the North took either line, they would have an easier route into the South's heartland.

March 23rd: The Battle of Winchester was fought (in the South this was known as the Battle of Kernstown). The South took heavy casualties with 270 killed and as many as 1000 missing. The North suffered 103 killed with 400 wounded and missing. A large Unionist force gathered at Camp Shiloh and made ready for an attack on Corinth, Mississippi. As the Confederates expected such an attack, their forces in Corinth were being increased.

March 24th: Lincoln became convinced that the South was about to launch an attack on Washington DC and ordered troops who were to have supported McClellan's campaign in Virginia to remain in the capital.

March 29th: The Confederates continued their build-up of men at Corinth, Mississippi, and waited for the North to attack. The size of the force gathered in Corinth showed that the South was not prepared to let the town fall to the North in view of its importance with regards to the two vital rail lines identified by the South.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/march-1862-civil-war.htm>, accessed February 10, 2012.

\*\*\*\*\* March 1862 cont'd \*\*\*\*\*

One of the most beautiful letters written during the Civil War was the letter that Major Sullivan Ballou, of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment, supposedly wrote to his wife, Sarah, just prior to the July 21, 1861 battle at Manassas, Virginia. Ken Burn's *Civil War* documentary made Ballou's letter and the haunting musical backtrack, "Ashokan Farewell" known to many Civil War enthusiasts.

July 14, 1861

Camp Clark, Washington

My very dear Sarah:

The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days - perhaps tomorrow. And lest I should not be able to write you again I feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall under your eye when I am no more. I have no misgivings about, or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. I know how American Civilization now leans upon the triumph of the government and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and suffering of the Revolution. And I am willing - perfectly willing - to lay down all my joys in this life, to help maintain this government, and to pay that debt. Sarah, my love for you is deathless, it seems to bind me with mighty cables that nothing but omnipotence can break; and yet my love of Country comes over me like a strong wind and bears me irresistibly with all those chains to the battlefield. The memory of all the blissful moments I have enjoyed with you come crowding over me, and I feel most deeply grateful to God and you, that I have enjoyed them for so long. And how hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes and future years, when, God willing, we might still have lived and loved together, and see our boys grown up to honorable manhood around us.

If I do not return, my dear Sarah, never forget how much I loved you, nor that when my last breath escapes me on the battle field, it will whisper your name...

Forgive my many faults, and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless, how foolish I have sometimes been!...

But, O Sarah, if the dead can come back to this earth and flit unseen around those they love, I shall always be with you, in the brightest day and in the darkest night... always, always. And when the soft breeze fans your cheek, it shall be my breath, or the cool air your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by.

Sarah do not mourn me dead; think I am gone and wait for me, for we shall meet again...

Sullivan's premonition of his death proved correct. Ballou died of the wounds he received during the battle on July 21, 1861.

Ballou's body, along with those of other Rhode Island men, was later buried on the battlefield.

On the morning of March 19, 1862, Rhode Island Governor William B. Sprague and a party of 71 men left Washington City to recover the bodies of their Rhode Island dead. They had been spurred to undertake this journey by newspaper headlines that had appeared in the spring of 1862: **Molested Graves! Burned Bodies! Beheaded Skulls! Skull-And- Bone Souvernirs!**

Sprague and the party were led by Josiah W. Richardson, a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island. Richardson had remained behind to help care for the wounded and he would later view the burial of Ballou and others. Richardson thought he could find the location of the graves of Colonel Slocum and Major Ballou. Once on the battlefield, soldiers dug at the spot Richardson indicated. They failed to locate a body.

A local girl saw that soldiers and asked them if they were looking for "Cunnel Slook?" Was she referring to Colonel Slocum?

"Yassuh, dat's it," she said. "Dat his name. Well, you ain't go' find him. Dem Georgia boys dug him up weeks ago. Dey cut his head off and carried it away and dey done burnt his body down in de hollow dere."

After finding the charred bones and articles of clothing that remained from the fire, a soldier who knew Slocum said that the items of clothing did not belong to the colonel. The body remains were those of Major Ballou. Sprague and the others dutifully recovered Ballou's remaining fragments and those bodies of the others from Rhode Island for return to their native state.

Subsequent investigation among the people who lived in the area confirmed the girl's story. The locals also reported that soldiers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Georgia had done the deed because of the rough handling the Georgians of the 8<sup>th</sup> Georgia had received from Slocum's command. Unfortunately for Ballou, the revengeful act had been against the wrong officer. Governor Sprague later testified about the recovery expedition and its gruesome findings before the U.S. Congress Committee on the Conduct of the War. And what became of Sarah Hart Shumway Ballou? Hopefully, Sarah and Sullivan did meet again, but without the pains inflicted by this terrible war. She was twenty-four years old mother of two young boys when Sullivan died. Sarah never remarried and lived with her son, William, in New Jersey until her 1917 death at the age of eighty years.

.....*But, O Sarah, if the dead can come back to this earth and flit unseen around those they love, I shall always be with you, in the brightest day and in the darkest night... always, always.....*

Source: Virgil Carrington Jones, *Gray Ghost and Rebel Raiders* [New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956], 66-73.

Source: [http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/war/ballou\\_letter.html](http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/war/ballou_letter.html), accessed February 25, 2012,  
<http://www.historynet.com/sullivan-ballou-the-macabre-fate-of-a-american-civil-war-major.htm>,  
accessed February 26, 2012.

Editor

#### \*\*\*\*\* February Meeting \*\*\*\*\*

**Mike Priest** gave the audience at our annual dinner meeting a somewhat controversial interpretation of one of the most famous battle scenes in history. With exhaustive research for *Into the Fight: Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg*, Mike used a careful study of the battlefield terrain, calculations of unit frontages, eyewitness accounts, and the casualty reports of the various Confederate units to form his thesis of the actions of July 3, 1863. Mike laid aside the romantic notion of the gallant charge of all the committed Confederates into the carnage of the hell that was created by the Union army's Cemetery Ridge defensive line. Plain and simple, many of the Confederate soldiers recognized the futility of the charge and they chose to not go forward.



**Armistead and the Glorious Charge**

Mike disputed the usually quoted 15,000 men who began the charge. His calculations put the number at approximately 11,500 available for the assault. Of this number, about 5,000 in narrowing battle line even reached the Emmitsburg Road. This number was simply too few to break and hold the Union position. The Confederates made it into the Union lines, but they could not hold or expand their momentary gains.





**Mike Priest**

Why did many of the veteran troops of the Army of Northern Virginia fail to attempt the charge that Robert E. Lee thought would win the battle and the war? These were men who had given Lee victories over a numerically superior opponent on many occasions. They had achieved success through hard action and they had learned from the mistakes of their enemy (Fredericksburg). They also learned from their own past assaults on massed artillery (Malvern Hill). They were veterans who made a decision to fight on another day when the odds were more in their favor.

What about the 5,000 who made the final assault on the Union line. From Mike's article that appeared in the Number 6 Issue 1998 of the *North & South* magazine, page 52:

The combined numbers of the wounded captured and unwounded captured (discounting Brockenborough's 3 captured) accounts for 55% of the 5,000 who attempted to carry the charge to its end. ....Casualties among the men who crossed the Emmitsburg Road ranged from approximately 53% for Lowrance's Brigade to 100% for Fry's and Marshall's Brigades..... Armistead lost about 98% of his stalwarts between the road and the Angle. Overall, of the 5,000 who attempted to complete the charge, no more than 20% and perhaps less, returned to their own lines. The fact that 1,527 of them (30%) surrendered indicates that they knew when not to press the odds any further. When faced with annihilation or living, they chose to live.

Mike's *Into the Fight: Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg* provides the specific details that he used to support his thesis.

**\*\*\*\*\* John Dooley Confederate Soldier \*\*\*\*\***

**John Dooley** was mentioned in Mike Priest's presentation for Dooley's journal entries as a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Infantry (Kemper's Brigade) during the Battle of Gettysburg. The journal began as Dooley joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia prior to Second Manassas. Dooley fought his first battle at Manassas and

recorded his innermost feelings as to what he felt during combat. At South Mountain, Dooley related that only his pride kept him with his comrades. Dooley's entry about Pickett's Charge (where he was wounded and captured within thirty feet of the guns) was especially revealing:

I tell you, there is no romance in making one of these charges. You might think so from reading 'Charlie O'Malley.' That prodigy of valour, or in reading of any other gallant knight who would as little think of riding over *gunners and sich like* as they would of eating a dozen oysters. But when you rise to your feet as we did today, I tell you the enthusiasm of ardent breasts in many cases *ain't there*, and instead of burning to avenge the insults of our country, families and altars and firesides, the thought is most frequently, *Oh*, if I could just come out of this charge safely how thankful *would I be!*

Dooley recorded what many men must have felt but were reluctant to share.

Source: John Edward Dooley, *John Dooley Confederate Soldier*, ed. Joseph T. Durkin [Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1945], 105.

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](mailto:tpwinstead@gmail.com). Please include "CFCWRT News" in your Subject line.

\*\*\*\*\* **Trivia Question Answers March 2012** \*\*\*\*\*

**1 - On February 7, 1862, Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside and Flag Officer Louis M. Goldsborough led a combine Union force of 15,000 men and 100 naval vessels to a landing on Roanoke Island. Who were the Confederate Army and Navy commanders who opposed this invasion? Col. Henry M. Shaw**, with approximately 3,000 men, and **Flag Officer William F. Lynch**, with seven gunboats, opposed the Union invasion force. As had been the alarm felt by many in the North Carolina government, this small contingent of Confederates was no match for the invasion force.

Source: <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-civilwar/5467>, accessed February 19, 2012.

**2 - After the fall of Roanoke, Burnside turned his attention on New Bern and the capture of much of eastern North Carolina. Confederate Gen. Lawrence O'B. Branch and 4,500 poorly equipped and trained forces opposed Burnside and his 12,000 well equipped soldiers. The Battle of New Bern took place on March 14, 1862. After a failed defense, Branch and his force retreated to Kinston. The defeat was a stinging one for the people of North Carolina; however, two officers of the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina emerged from the conflict with their reputations intact. While many North Carolina newspapers argued that many of the Confederates were guilty of cowardice, these two men would achieve further fame in the continuing conflict. Who were the men and what were their fates? Col. Zebulon B. Vance and Lt. Col. Henry King Burgwyn, Jr.** Vance would achieve fame for his purported actions at New Bern and would use his notoriety to pursue a political career. As my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher told me years ago, Zebulon B. Vance became our beloved War Governor. Burgwyn (VMI Class of 1861) became the "Boy" Colonel of the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina and effectively led the 26<sup>th</sup> until his death at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863.

Source: Rod Gragg, *Covered With Glory: The 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry at the Battle of Gettysburg* [New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2000].

**3 – As Burnside’s soldiers advanced inland from Roanoke Island, residents of one town decided on a course of action similar to the Russian’s actions as Napoleon advanced on Moscow. What was the town and what actions did the townspeople pursue?** Elizabeth City was set on fire by some of its panicky citizens. Luckily for the town, only about two blocks actually burned.

Source: <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-civilwar/4604>, accessed February 20, 2012.

**4 - How long did Pickett’s Charge last?** The artillery barrage began at 1:00pm and continued for about an hour. At 1:50pm, Pickett’s men began the advance. By 3:00pm, the Confederate force that had attacked the center of the Union line had reached its high tide. The Confederates had failed to achieve the victory that Lee had wanted. `

**5 - Who was responsible for the Union artillery during Pickett’s charge?** Brig. General **Henry Hunt**. Hunt made sure his artillery reserves were available and supplied to counter the Confederates barrage. As he had a Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862, Henry Hunt handled his artillery with frightful effect upon the Confederate soldiers who assaulted the Union lines.

**6 – According to Arthur Fremantle, what was Lee’s reaction to the failure of Pickett’s Charge?** “This has been a sad day for us, Colonel – a sad day; but we can’t expect always to gain victories.” Lt. Col. Fremantle of the Coldstream Guards recorded his observations of the Confederacy in his book, *Three Months in the Southern States*. His observations at Gettysburg and his feelings upon meeting many of the commanding officers of the Confederacy led him to believe that the South and its gallant people would never be conquered by the North.