



The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

The *RUNNER*

Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Tim Winstead**

May 2012

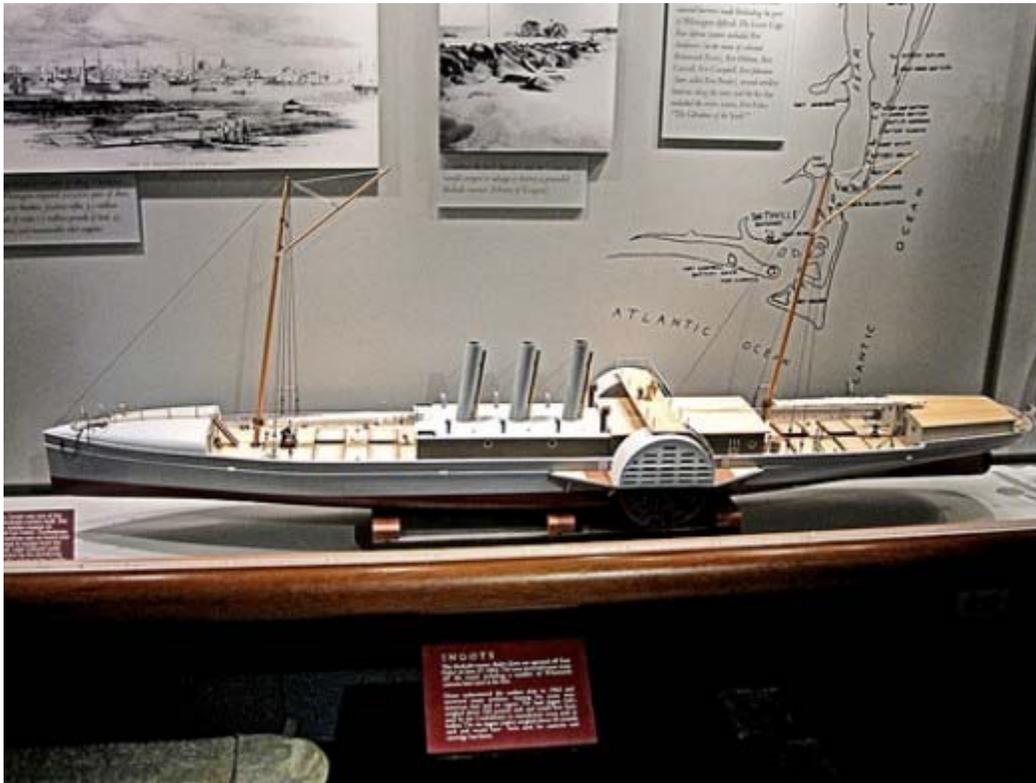
Our next meeting will be Thursday, 10 May 2012 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30.



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.

***** **May Program** *****

Blockade Runner *Modern Greece* – Archaeology Program



The Blockade Runner, *Modern Greece*

At 4:15 a.m. on the morning of June 27, 1862, Commander William A. Parker of the U.S.S. *Cambridge* spotted a large steamer about 3 miles from Fort Fisher. Parker ordered the *Cambridge* gunners to open fire upon the gray ship. The blockade runner hoisted an English flag and made for the protective guns of Fort Fisher. The iron steamer, the *Modern Greece*, failed to reach the safety of the Cape Fear River. Instead, she grounded and met her demise.

While some of the *Modern Greece's* large cargo was offloaded by the Confederates after she grounded, the steamer slipped under the water and sand of the Atlantic Ocean where she remained until she was uncovered by a fierce storm in the early spring of 1962. Divers from the Naval Ordnance School at Indian Head, Maryland discovered that the wreck was cleared of sand to a level below the main deck. Most importantly, much of the cargo was still there and in remarkable condition. The Office of Archives and History worked with other agencies and began the initial recovery of cargo from the *Modern Greece*. While generally successful, the knowledge about conservation of recovered artifacts was in its infancy and because of the large number of artifacts many were simply left in large outdoor storage tanks at the Fort Fisher site.



Through the Blockade

On March 5 - 7, eleven East Carolina University Maritime Studies graduate students and four interns from UNC Wilmington began efforts to discover what artifacts remained in those muddy outdoor storage tanks. This year marked the 150th anniversary of the sinking of the *Modern Greece* and the 50th anniversary of the original recovery effort. These student's efforts to clean out the tanks, catalogue the artifacts, and store them in more stable indoor wet storage was the beginning of a long conservation process that will allow these "bits of history" to be shared with the public.



Mark Wilde-Ramsing

On May 10, **Mark Wilde-Ramsing** will present the current status of the *Modern Greece's* cargo and the ongoing conservation efforts being made by the Underwater Archaeology Branch. Please join with the members of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table and learn about the latest discoveries from the *Modern Greece*.

Mark U. Wilde-Ramsing, Ph.D, became a staff archaeologist with the North Carolina Division of Archives and History – Underwater Archaeology Branch in 1978 and in October 2010 he became Deputy State Archaeologist – Underwater. Mark was appointed to develop an environmental review system for the submerged cultural resource management program. Wilde-Ramsing has surveyed many miles of North Carolina waters and supervised on underwater site investigations ranging from dugout canoes to 20th Century steamers. Throughout these investigations, Mark has sought input from marine archaeologists, historians, conservators, and physical scientists to help interpret and preserve the submerged archaeological record. Since 1997, Mark has been project director for the *Queen Ann's Revenge* shipwreck. Wilde-Ramsing graduated from Wake Forest University and the Catholic University of America. He received his doctorate in Coastal Resource Management from East Carolina University.

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.

April Meeting:

Congratulations to the winners of the raffle.

Lee's Tar Heels

Generals South – Generals North

The Civil War Battlefield Guide

Sherman

Lincoln's Men

Devil's Dream

Dennis Wrynn

Davis Paul

Linda Lashley

Ed Gibson

Connie Hendrix

Martha Watson

Winners of the ancestry items:

Tracing Your Ancestry

History of Lumpkin County

Passports Issued by Governors of Georgia

Family Tree Maker

Dale Lear

Linda Lashley

Joseph George

Gail Clements

******* Trivia Questions for May 2012 *******

1 – Who owned the *Modern Greece*?

2 - What especially valuable articles were recovered from the *Modern Greece* and how were they used by the Confederates at Fort Fisher?

3 – On May 6, 1864, the C.S.S. *Raleigh* ventured through New Inlet and for a short interval broke the Union Blockade. What was the relationship between the *Modern Greece* and the *Raleigh*?

4 – In Genealogy 101, Becky Sawyer discussed the immigration records that were available for research purposes. Where were the three major ports through which many of the new Americans entered the United States?

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

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

1 – **Reminder of June 2012 Meeting: Special Event!!!!** On Tuesday night, 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. **NOTE:** Please make a notation on your calendar that this meeting is not on our traditional second Thursday night but on the following Tuesday night – at the same time and place.

2 – **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.

3 – **1st NC Co. E** - The newly formed 1st North Carolina Company E has made the **Cameron Art Museum** its home site. The unit will provide monthly civil war activities on the museum's grounds, so come and watch drills, rifle firings and more. Engage with the reenactors about their passion for providing living history and explore the historic Civil War site where the Battle of Forks Road took place. The museum's site is where Major General Robert F. Hoke made his last stand against Union soldiers comprised primarily of U.S. Colored Troops in the final fight for Wilmington on February 20, 1865. Check the museum website <http://www.cameronartmuseum.com/index.php?c=calendar> for the calendar events involving the **1st NC**. The initial drill was held on April 21st from 10:00AM – 2:00PM.



1st NC Company E

4 – May 12th: Confederate Memorial Day Service – Saturday 4 - 5pm. Fort Fisher Chapter #2325 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy will present the annual Confederate Memorial Day ceremony at Battle Acre. Local historian and CFCWRT member, Richard Triebe, author of *Fort Fisher to Elmira: The Fatal Journey of 518 Confederate Soldiers*, is guest speaker. For more information, call 910-458-5538.

Source: <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/fisher/>

******* May 1862 *******

In May 1862 Union forces moved against the Confederate capital Richmond. Jefferson Davis wrote to his wife that he was disappointed with the resolve of the people in Richmond. May 1862 also saw Unionist forces occupy Yorktown.

May 1st: General Butler occupied New Orleans. His administration of the city was to prove controversial.

May 2nd: Unionist forces were massed for an attack on Yorktown. General Johnston, the Confederate officer in charge of the city, knew he would not be able to make a stand against a mass attack and decided to evacuate the city.

May 3rd: Confederate forces started to evacuate Yorktown and withdraw to Richmond.

May 4th: The Army of the Potomac occupied Yorktown in Virginia.

May 5th: President Lincoln left Washington DC for a meeting with McClellan at Fortress Monroe. Secretary of War Stanton and Secretary of the Treasury Chase accompanied the President. A battle at Fort Magruder, Williamsburg, against a rearguard Confederate force protecting the withdrawal from

Yorktown, led to a Union victory but at a cost – 456 dead, 1,400 wounded and 372 missing. Confederate losses were estimated at being between 1,000 and 1,700.

May 7th: Union forces sailed upriver to Eltham's Landing, Virginia, and landed near West Point. They came under fire from Confederate troops still withdrawing from Yorktown and lost 49 killed, 104 wounded and 41 missing.

May 9th: Lincoln met McClellan to discuss the course of the war. Confederate forces abandoned the important naval base at Norfolk. When Unionist forces arrived at the naval base, they found large amounts of stores and equipment.

May 11th: The '**CSS Virginia**' (formally the 'USS Merrimac') was destroyed by the Confederates to stop it falling into the hands of the Unionists. It was too heavily armoured to be used on rivers and could not navigate the River James to help Confederate forces at Richmond.

May 12th: Lincoln announced that as ports Beaufort (North Carolina), Port Royal (South Carolina) and New Orleans were now in Federal hands, the blockade that they had been under would be lifted. Unionist forces occupied Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

May 13th: Many citizens in Richmond fled the city as Unionist forces approached.

May 15th: In New Orleans, the men of the city were kept in order by the presence of a large Unionist force. However, the women of the city made very public what they thought about the Unionist occupation of the city. Butler's response was to issue General Order Number 28. This stated "when any female shall, by word, gesture or movement insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation."

May 18th: Suffolk, Virginia fell to Unionist forces.

May 19th: In a letter to his wife, Jefferson Davis, commented on the lack of resolve he had observed in those defending Richmond.

May 20th: Lincoln signed the Homestead Act. This act made available 160 acres of government land that would be handed over to a homesteader if he agreed to improve it for five years. Post-war America greatly benefited from this act as it encouraged many to migrate west.

May 21st: Advanced units of the Army of the Potomac were just eight miles from Richmond. However, McClellan was still cautious about attacking the Confederate capital, as he still believed that he did not have enough troops.

May 23rd: Union forces at Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley suffered heavy casualties after being attacked by 'Stonewall' Jackson's men. Over 1,000 Union troops were killed or wounded out of a total force of 1,400 men. On the same day, the Confederates suffered a defeat at Lewisburg and lost over 200 men killed, wounded or missing.

May 24th: Lincoln ordered that 20,000 Unionist troops be sent to the Shenandoah Valley to eradicate the Confederate forces there.

May 25th: Lincoln gave McClellan an ultimatum – either attack Richmond or return with the Army of the Potomac to Washington DC to assist in the capital's defence.

May 29th: To counter Confederate success in the Shenandoah Valley, Unionist strength there was increased to 40,000 men. Ashland, a town just to the north of Richmond, was captured by the North.

May 31st: A major Confederate attack against the Army of the Potomac started at Fair Oaks. It was led by General Joseph Johnston. Towards the end of the day Johnston was seriously injured by shrapnel.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/may-1862-civil-war.htm>, accessed April 17, 2012.

***** May 1862 cont'd *****

C.S.S. Virginia

The destruction of the CSS *Virginia* on May 11th was just one of many reverses experienced by Confederate forces in May 1862. As related in the following excerpt from a paper about John Taylor Wood, the Confederate hopes and visions of glory associated with the construction of the *Virginia* were short lived.

In January 1862, John Taylor Wood received orders to report to Commodore Franklin Forrest at the navy-yard in Norfolk. Wood was to be a lieutenant assigned to the C.S.S. *Virginia* then under construction from the remains of the frigate U.S.S. *Merrimac*. The *Virginia* was a revolutionary iron-clad vessel proposed by Lieutenant George M. Brooke and wholeheartedly backed by Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of the Navy. Mallory proposed the iron-clad as a technological leap which would allow the Confederate Navy to counter the numerical superiority of the Union Navy. Wood was aware of the limitations of the *Virginia's* refurbished steam engines, her deep draft, and her Noah's Ark maneuverability. He was also aware that the ten guns mounted behind the iron casemate would be nearly impervious to the heavy guns of the Union's wooden fleet. Wood wanted to be in the midst of the experiment and to witness the *Virginia* in action against the Union fleet at Hampton Roads. Stephen R. Mallory knew that the *Virginia's* potential uses as an offensive weapon were in the hands of the Franklin Buchanan and his officers. He knew that Buchanan and his officers must be bold and daring. Mallory was a visionary whose ideas were sometimes out of reach to the realities of the present day. He expected much from "an untrained and untried crew, in an untested vessel, pitted against the undoubted mettle of a Federal fleet in Hampton Roads." On March 7, 1862 on the day before the *Virginia* would venture forth from Gosport Navy Yard, Mallory sent a confidential letter to Flag Officer Buchanan. Mallory's ultimate objectives for the *Virginia* were ambitious and far beyond the confines of Hampton Roads. He wanted to know Buchanan's views on a *Virginia* attack against New York City. "Such an event would eclipse all the glories of the combats of the sea, would place every man in it preeminently high, and would strike a blow from which the enemy could never recover. Peace would inevitably follow." Mallory would find boldness and daring in one of the *Virginia's* officers, John Taylor Wood. In the South's quest for independence, Mallory and Taylor would be linked in numerous bold and daring campaigns.

Wood wrote the following about the March 8, 1862 engagements in Hampton Roads between the *Virginia* and the Union wooden fleet, and on March 9 between the *Virginia* and the *Monitor*. It was, "in some respects the most momentous naval conflict ever witnessed. No battle was ever more widely discussed or produced a greater sensation. It revolutionized the navies of the world." The *Virginia* inflicted severe damage on the wooden ships but had been fought to a draw by the *Monitor*. After both ships withdrew for repair and refit, Buchanan sent Wood with a dispatch that informed Mallory of the two-day conflict. Buchanan also, "directed me to proceed to Richmond with it and the flag of the

Congress, and make a verbal report of the action, condition of the *Virginia*, etc." Wood reported to Mallory and they went to President Davis's office where Wood related the events to the gathered members of the government. "As to the future, I said that in the *Monitor* we had met our equal, and that the results of another engagement would be very doubtful." That Wood was sent to Richmond to report the events showed that his observations were valued by Buchanan. While Wood was excited by the historical significance of the conflict, he was able to give an even-handed appraisal of the actions. Wood's detachment from the growing excitement about the capabilities of the *Virginia* made his value as a reliable observer for Mallory and Jefferson Davis increasing important.

Wood returned to the *Virginia* and participated in her future actions against the Union fleet. As he observed, the unreliability of the *Virginia's* engines, the resulting slowness, and her depth of draft limited the ability to bring the *Monitor* into battle. The *Virginia* protected Norfolk but her survival was dependent upon the Confederate army's continued presence in the city. In April 1862, the threat of McClellan's Peninsula Campaign caused General Joseph E. Johnston to order the abandonment of Norfolk. The *Virginia* was too heavy to proceed up the James River to Richmond. Efforts to lighten her failed; hence, the navy ran the *Virginia* aground near Carney Island and set her ablaze on May 11, 1862. Wood and Lieutenant Catesby ap R. Jones were the last to leave the ship that had generated such enthusiasm for the Southern cause.

The weapon platform technology advanced by the *Virginia* was beyond the mechanical propulsion means available to the Confederate Navy. Mallory's dream of an attack on New York City never came to anything; however, John Taylor Wood did attempt to carry out an attack on that city when he took the *Tallahassee* and the war north in late 1864.

Editor

Source: [archive.html](#) , accessed April 17, 2012.

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

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



Becky Sawyer and the Census

To those who attended the April meeting, Becky shared the basic steps that should be taken to trace the roots of a Civil War ancestor. If you were lucky, you started with your ancestor's name, age or year of birth, and a location – state and town. If you were not lucky, you worked backwards and with names you knew and used census data to follow your ancestors back to the Civil War era. The 1850 Census was especially valuable – the 1850 Census was the first census that provided the names of the all the people who lived in a particular household.

Among other sources, Becky mentioned the following as possible information about your Union or Confederate veteran.

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Do the math: During the early days of the war, men were usually found to be born between 1826 and 1842. As the war continued, older and younger men were drawn into the conflict. Especially in the South, the Senior Reserves and the Junior Reserves were prominent as the Confederacy called upon "cradle to the grave" enlistments.

1890 Veterans Census was a source (Ancestry.com) of much information about Union Veterans. This was the only portion of the 1890 Census that was not destroyed in a 1921 fire.

1910 Census was the first to have an indicator that a man was a Union or Confederate veteran.

Geography – Be aware that new counties could have been created after the war. Becky gave an example of Pender County being created from New Hanover County in 1870. She also shared a map of North Carolina as it existed between 1861 and 1865.

Regimental Histories – Both Union and Confederate veterans contributed to regimental histories in the years following the war. Official Regimental histories and individual soldier memoirs have been helpful in searches for men in a particular unit.

North Carolina Resources – The State of North Carolina began Roster of North Carolina Troops during the 100th anniversary of the war. This effort continued as new volumes are still being completed at the 150th anniversary.

Public Libraries – Many Public Libraries have genealogy rooms or access to on-line databases that can be helpful. The good thing about Public Libraries – they are usually helpful with suggestions and your tax dollars actually work for your quest.

The Internet has enhanced the ability of individuals to access huge amounts of information from their computers. The old days involved microfilm, microfiche, and paper records and these sources remain valuable tools; however, on-line databases can make your search much easier. Becky shared sites, both subscription based and free sites, that are good places to begin your search.

Subscription Based Sites:

Ancestry.com - \$22.95/month, \$155.40/year

Fold3.com - \$11.95/month, \$79.95/year

Civil War Database: www.civilwardata.com - \$25.00/year

Free Sites:

Port of New York, source of immigrant records, www.castlegarden.org (1820-1913)

Immigrant Ships Transcription – <http://www.immigrantships.net/>

Soldiers and Sailors Database (NPS site) – <http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/>

Find A Grave.com – www.findagrave.com

Internment.net – www.internment.net

Family Search.org – Sources for various records (marriage, census, death – US & Europe) – www.familysearch.org

GenWeb projects by state & counties – <http://www.ncgenweb.us/>

State Archives or State Libraries – www.nclive.org Remote access to state library or local libraries with your library card number – Heritage Quest (census records, Rev War pensions, Freeman's Bureau) Dyer's Compendium (Union Regimental Histories) – www.civilwararchive.com/regim.htm

Other tips that Becky offered included:

Document, Document, Document – Always write down the source of information you found and where you found it. Nothing is as frustrating as have something and not having a clue as to where you got it.

Brick walls – You will encounter problems and this is where you need to get creative.

-Try variations of the spelling of a particular name. Names were Americanized: Dryer, Dreyer, Drier, etc. In my family's case, Kilit became Killet and finally Kilette. (Can you imagine being called Private Kilit?)

-Think of other links – siblings, parents

-Sons of Union Veterans, Daughters of Union Veterans

-Sons of Confederate Veterans, United Daughters of the Confederacy



Smiling Becky – Good job!

Finally, the last tip for your search and potentially the most valuable is: Becky loves this genealogy stuff, she works at the Fort Fisher State Historic Site, and she enjoys helping people find their Civil War ancestors. Seriously, there are records and databases available at Fort Fisher which could help you shorten your journey.

I believe I am going to make another trip to Fort Fisher.

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.

***** **Trivia Questions for May 2012** *****

1 – Who owned the *Modern Greece*? The *Modern Greece* was built by the Richardson's firm of Stockton, England during 1859. According to *Lloyd's Register*, she was a 753 ton ship, 210 feet in length, 29 feet in breadth, and drew 17 feet and 2 inches of water. She was not designed as a blockade runner and her deep draft made her ill-suited for running the bar into the Cape Fear River. On June 27, 1862, she paid the ultimate price for her design deficiencies.

The *Modern Greece* was owned by one of the first British companies that attempted to challenge the Union blockade. **Zachariah C. Pearson** was a ship owner, merchant, and the mayor of Hull, England. Pearson loaded his ships with supplies provided by Confederate agent, **Caleb Huse**. While accounts show that many blockade running enterprises reaped huge profits, Zachariah Pearson was not among their membership. Between May 4 and August 4, 1862, Pearson sent seven ships to run through the blockade – six were captured and the *Modern Greece* ran aground. By the end of 1862, Pearson and Company had declared bankruptcy.

The blockade of the Southern states was officially ended by President Andrew Johnson on June 23, 1865. The first successful run was by the *Bermuda* into Savannah on April 18, 1861, the last run was by the *Lark* out of Galveston on May 24, 1865. More than 300 steamers challenged the Union blockade. Of the approximate 1,300 attempts, more than 1,000 were successful. The average blockade runner made four runs (two round trips) during her lifetime. Per Stephen R. Wise, some 136 blockade runners were captured and another 85 were destroyed.

Source: Leslie S. Bright, *The Blockade Runner Modern Greece and her Cargo* [Raleigh, NC: Archaeology Section, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1977], 4.

Note: This book can be read on-line at <http://archive.org/stream/blockaderunnermo00brig#page/n1/mode/2up>

Source: Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running During the Civil War* [Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988], 71, 221.

2 - What especially valuable articles were recovered from the *Modern Greece* and how were they used by the Confederates at Fort Fisher? According to Colonel William Lamb:

Shortly after taking command of Fort Fisher I recovered from the wreck of the blockade runner, the British Steamship MODERN GREECE, four 12 pounder **Whitworth rifle guns**, with a range of five miles. With these guns, we made the U.S. Blockading fleet remove their anchorage from two and a half miles to five miles from the fort. So many vessels were saved with these guns that they soon had a reputation throughout the South, and three of them were transferred to other commands, two going to Virginia.

Source: Leslie S. Bright, *The Blockade Runner Modern Greece and her Cargo* [Raleigh, NC: Archaeology Section, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1977], 14.

3 – On May 6, 1864, the C.S.S. *Raleigh* ventured through New Inlet and for a short interval broke the Union Blockade. What was the relationship between the *Modern Greece* and the *Raleigh*? Other than the fact that both vessels ran aground, it was thought that the engines removed from the *Modern Greece* were used to power the *Raleigh*.

Source: Leslie S. Bright, *The Blockade Runner Modern Greece and her Cargo* [Raleigh, NC: Archaeology Section, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1977], 18-19.

4 – In Genealogy 101, Becky Sawyer discussed the immigration records that were available for research purposes. Where were the three major ports through which many of the new Americans entered the United States? New York, Baltimore, and New Orleans were the major gateways for the immigrants to enter and begin a new life.