

## The *RUNNER*

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

Editor **Tim Winstead**

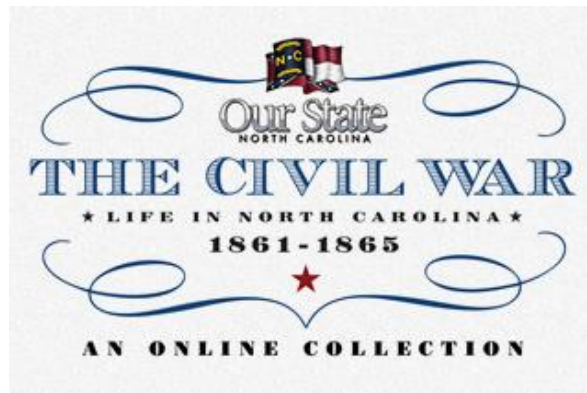
\*\*\*\*\* February 2013 \*\*\*\*\*

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, 21 February 2013** at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 7:00 p.m., meeting at 7:30. *Note: This is a change from our normal second Thursday meeting date.*

Please join us as we continue our Program Year with our second meeting of 2013. Visitors are always welcome. Each of our speakers is selected to enlighten, entertain, and add to our knowledge of Civil War history. This serves our purpose of encouraging education and research into that historic conflict.

\*\*\*\*\* February Program \*\*\*\*\*

### The Adventure of Discovery, or Why We Don't Know What We Think We Know About the Civil War



Source: <http://www.ourstate.com/civil-war/> (accessed January 18, 2013).

The observance of 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Civil War has led to an enormous number of articles being written about a wide variety of subjects. The people of North Carolina have been particularly fortunate that a writer has skillfully undertaken the task of examining life in this state during that war. **Philip Gerard**, author and historian, has begun a series in *Our State* magazine in which he has tried to capture what was “the best and worst of the human spirit” caused by the events of those years.

**Phillip Gerard** is a professor and chairman of the Creative Writing department at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. A native of Newark, Delaware, Gerard holds a B.A. in English and Anthropology (Phi

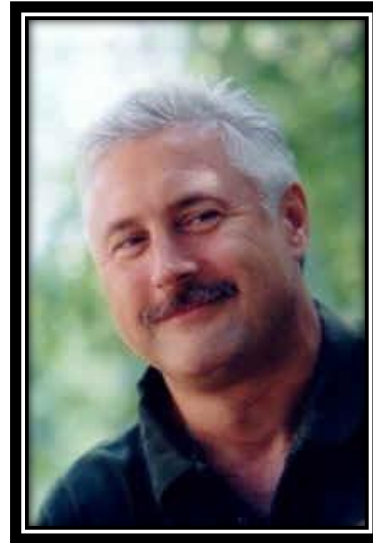
Beta Kappa) from the University of Delaware and a M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona. His work experiences include stints as a bouncer, a musician, a freelance writer, a newspaper

reporter, and as a college teacher. His publications are both fiction and nonfiction and include *Creative Nonfiction: Researching and Crafting Stories of Real Life, Secret Soldiers, Writing a Book That Makes a Difference, Desert Kill, Cape Fear Rising, and Hatteras Light*.

“I’ll talk about the experiences of doing the *Our State* pieces and some of the surprises that researchers like me discover – how the war, especially in NC, turns out to be much more complicated and many-faceted than our schoolbooks told us.”

Please join us on **February 21<sup>st</sup>** for what promises to be a most interesting meeting of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table.

**Editor**



**Phillip Gerard**

**\*\*\*\*\* Fort Anderson January 10, 2013 \*\*\*\*\***

It was early January in North Carolina and **Ed Bearss** (pron: **bars**) was making his annual trek to speak to many Round Tables throughout the state. He spoke to the BCWRT on January 9<sup>th</sup> – he then made his way to round tables in Pinehurst, Greensboro/Burlington, Raleigh, Tarboro, and New Bern. His schedule would have been difficult for anyone, but Ed, who was born on June 26, 1923, was just getting warmed up for a new year.

I will not tell you about Edwin Cole Bearss other than to say that he is “THE MAN” among Civil War Historians. I will refer you to an article that appeared in the *Smithsonian* magazine in 2005 - <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/bearss.html?c=y&page=2>.

Many of our members visited with the Brunswick Civil War Round Table to hear Ed speak on Wednesday night, January 9<sup>th</sup>. A lucky few were able to accompany Ed and a small group on a walking tour of the extended fortifications of Fort Anderson from the state site onto private lands bordering the main fort. Thanks to the generosity of David Sprunt and his family along with coordination by Dr. Chris Fonvielle and Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson Historic Interpreter Jim McKee, a hardy few accompanied Ed along the fortifications that extended from Fort Anderson to Orton Pond.



Connie Hendrix, Ed, Linda Lashley



Ed, Tim Winstead

I cannot speak for Connie or Linda, but for me, it was an *amazing* morning.

Editor

**\*\*\*\*\* Endor Iron Furnace \*\*\*\*\***

Restoration work on Lee County’s 150 year old Endor Iron Furnace will begin sometimes during 2013. Work will probably take a decade, but an important part of Lee County’s history will be preserved for future generations. The sagging industrial plant restoration will become the center piece for a 400 acre recreation area. Initial work will be to stabilize the furnace system and to provide access to the site on the Deep River.

The site was built about 1862 to supply the Confederacy with pig iron from the iron ore deposits that were available in the area. The furnace was built by Wilmington businessmen John and Donald McRae, and John W.R. Dix. Profitable until the end of the war, the furnace ceased production in the 1870s.

**\*\*\*\*\* Trivia Question for February \*\*\*\*\***

- 1 – Who founded the *Our State* magazine? When?
- 2 – Who was Alexander Davis Betts?
- 3- When was the last case of yellow fever in the United States?
- 4- Who discovered how yellow fever was transmitted?
- 5 – Where can the inscription *PRO ARIS ET FOCIS* be found in Wilmington?

**\*\*\*\*\* 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 new members of the CFCWRT: **David Rice, Robert Royce, and Tom Taylor.**

2 – **Happy Valentine’s Day** to all members, their families, and our friends.

3 - If anyone is interested in researching his/her ancestral roots to find his/her Civil War ancestry, the Old New Hanover Genealogical Society will host Joe Sheppard, research librarian for the North Carolina room of the main New Hanover County Public Library. On **Jan. 26, 2013**, Joe will give a presentation on “Advanced Research” at the “Landfall branch” of the public library 1241 Military Cutoff. Joe will begin his presentation at 1:30PM sharp. You do not have to be a member to attend. You will be skipping over the very basics of research, but that is relatively simple and can be easily picked up later. If interested, please contact the “ONHGS” historian, our own CFCWRT member, **Linda Lashley** for more details (395-0012).

4 – **8th Annual Civil War Living History Weekend - Sat. Feb. 9 10:00 am – 5:00 pm**  
**Sun. Feb. 10 10:00 am - 2:00 pm** (museum remains open until 5:00 pm)

Free and open to the public

Reenactors, **Battle of Forks Road** skirmish, sutlers, period music, and more during the 8th Annual Civil War Living History. The weekend’s activities will also include an opening ceremony on Saturday, February 9, 2013. **Cameron Art Museum** commemorates the 148th anniversary of Battle of Forks Road on the museum's historic site with two days of family fun interacting with Confederate, Union and U.S. Colored Troop re-enactors. The weekend features infantry and artillery demonstrations, battle sites tour, music of the era, artisan demonstrations, period games and art activities for families. For updates, schedule and more information visit our new site: [www.battleofforksroad.org](http://www.battleofforksroad.org). - **Linda Lashley**

5 – **148<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fall of Fort Anderson – February 16 & 17, 2013**. Check the Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson site for additional information:

<http://www.nchistoricsites.org/brunswic/brunswic.htm>

6 - Interested in philately in addition to your Civil War obsession? The third set of Civil War stamps issued by the United States Postal Service will commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the **Battle of Vicksburg** and the **Battle of Gettysburg**. 2011: Battle of Fort Sumter and Battle of First Bull Run; 2012: Battle of New Orleans and Battle of Antietam. – **Bruce Patterson**

\*\*\*\*\* **February 1863** \*\*\*\*\*

The economic blockade of the South during the American Civil War started to really hit home by February 1863 with the South's currency worth just 20% of its pre-war value. The weather meant that important military issues were kept to a minimum though the intelligence network of the Army of the Potomac was completely revamped.

February 1<sup>st</sup>: The dollar used in the Confederacy was worth just 20% of what it did when the war broke out. Such was the success of the Federal Navy in the rivers of the South that a decision was taken to remove any stores of cotton away from rivers. Any cotton that could not be moved was burned to save it falling into the hands of the Union.

February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Grant started his attempt to build a canal around to the rear of Vicksburg using the Yazoo River as his source of water. By doing this, Grant's men would avoid the Confederate artillery stationed in Vicksburg.

February 3<sup>rd</sup>: The French continued to offer attempts at mediation. Secretary of State Seward met the French ambassador in Washington DC to discuss such a move.

February 5<sup>th</sup>: The British government announced that any attempts at mediation would result in failure. Their lack of action was in stark contrast to the pro-active stance of the French government.

February 6<sup>th</sup>: The Federal government officially announced that it had rejected French offers of mediation.

February 9<sup>th</sup>: General Hooker started his reorganisation of the Army of the Potomac. He decided that his first task was to improve its intelligence gathering. On his arrival at his headquarters he found no document that could inform him about the strength of the Army of Virginia. General Butterfield wrote: "There was no means, no organisation, and no apparent effort to obtain such information. We were almost as ignorant of the enemy in our immediate front as if they had been in China. An efficient organisation for that purpose was instituted, by which we were so enabled to get correct and proper information of the enemy, their strengths and movements."

February 11<sup>th</sup>: Hooker then turned his attention to the conditions his men lived under, which he linked to the high levels of desertion. New huts were built that could cope with the winter weather and fresh fruit and vegetables were provided. Medical facilities were also improved. The impact on desertions was dramatic and even men who had deserted returned to their regiments.

February 12<sup>th</sup>: The Union's naval blockade had a disastrous impact on the South's economy and the river patrols of its flat-bottomed boats were equally as successful. However, the sheer size of the fleet operating meant that the Federal government faced a supply problem no one had encountered before. It was estimated that the North had to supply 70,000 bushels of coal each month to keep the fleet on the move. Food and water could be obtained locally but there was little chance of getting hold of large quantities of coal.

February 13<sup>th</sup>: General Hooker made what was to prove to be one of the most important changes to the Army of the Potomac during the war. Scattered cavalry units were amalgamated into one corps. No one was immediately appointed to command it as no army commander had ever had access to one concentrated cavalry unit. Hooker was willing to wait to appoint the most suitable candidate – he later selected General Stoneman to command it.

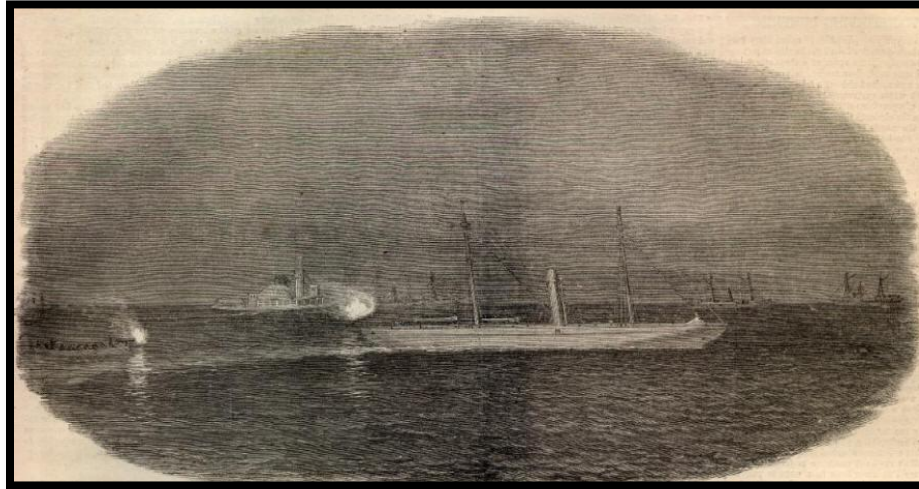
February 16<sup>th</sup>: The Senate passed the Conscription Act, which was passed, as volunteers for the Union army were not forthcoming.

February 22<sup>nd</sup>: Hooker believed that his changes were starting to have an impact as the levels of scurvy and intestinal diseases dropped quite markedly.

February 25<sup>th</sup>: Congress authorised a national system of banking.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/february-1863-civil-war.htm> (accessed January 21, 2013).

\*\*\*\*\* February 1863 cont'd \*\*\*\*\*



For the men of the Union blockading fleet, their job to prevent blockade runners from slipping past them was not as easy as many supposed. Imagine the frustration of Acting Master Richard Hustace as he reported the appearance of an apparition that had moved out of the darkness of a February evening.

U.S.S. Monticello,

*Off Western Bar, Cape Fear River, February 25, 1863*

SIR: I have to report that last night at 7 o'clock I left this ship in the first cutter with a crew of eleven men and proceeded in for the Western Bar for the purpose of performing picket duty. I arrived at the bar at 8:15 o'clock, sounded in and out over the bar and across the channel, and at 9 o'clock took my position on the north side of channel and anchored in 12 feet of water. Sea was smooth and weather cloudy. Near midnight the weather became clear and I was enabled to take the following bearings: Bald Head lighthouse about E.S.E. and Fort Caswell nearly E. by N.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N. after 1 o'clock the weather became misty to southward and westward and along the land, rendering it difficult to see objects at any distance. At 3:30 a.m. a steamer suddenly hove in sight between me and the land, coming out from under the cover of the woods; she passed between the boat and the shore, going at full speed. The breaking of the surf on the beach drowned the noise of her paddles. I had to get underway in order to bring the gun to bear on her, but before I could do that she was some distance up the channel. I immediately made the signal of a vessel having succeeded in passing me. I proceeded in toward the fort and got soundings at 8, 9, and 10 feet, where the steamer had passed. She was hailed from the shore, but I did not hear the answer returned. She stopped on the Rip long enough to take a pilot, as I supposed, then stood in and was soon out of sight. Tide had been running ebb three hours when steamer ran in. steamer was very long, low hull, side-wheels, short smokestack, no masts. Fort Caswell beat to quarters when I made signal to the blockaders.

Yours, respectfully,

RICHARD HUSTACE,  
*Acting Master, U.S. Navy*

Lieutenant-Commander D.L. BRAINE,  
*Commanding U.S.S. Monticello*

Source: ORN, Series 1, Volume 8, pg 573

If you are not familiar with the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies* and the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, these records are a great research tool that were compiled between 1881 & 1901 and consist of 128 volumes. They are available on-line and can be searched with simple, boolean or proximity queries. One on-line source is Cornell University's "Making of America" site: <http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/m/moawar/index.html>

Editor

\*\*\*\*\* January Program \*\*\*\*\*

## Yellow Fever: "Wagon-load of Corpses"



David Rice

In August 1862, Wilmington was the largest city in North Carolina. Blockade runners had discovered the geographic advantages – two widely separate inlets into the river - that the mouth of the Cape Fear River afforded those who sought to avoid the Union blockade. These blockade runners brought in essential military supplies necessary for the survival of the Confederacy; they also brought in luxury goods that were in high demand. Soldiers, sailors, merchants, opportunists, scoundrels and adventurers were drawn to Wilmington because of the war – and the chance for



fame and fortune. More than 10,000 people lived in the increasingly busy and important port city.

**David Rice**, Director of the New Hanover County Health Department, shared with our members what else a runner may have brought in through the blockade. While there was speculation that there was sickness in Wilmington prior to the arrival of the blockade runner *Kate*, the ship's arrival on August 6, 1862 with sick crewmen among its complement boded ill for Wilmington and those who crowded its docks and

dwellings. Lewis Swartzman, a wood-and-coal dealer became the first recorded case of a death from yellow fever when he died on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Within a short interval, everyone who could escape the city departed to safer climes. The population fell to 3,000. Of those who stayed, 1,500 contracted the disease; approximately 700 died before the disease played out with the first hard frost. Many of the victims were buried in Oakdale Cemetery.

**David Rice** told of the doctors and clergy who remained in Wilmington and their struggles to meet the needs of those who could not flee. Dr. James H. Dickson, Rev. John Lamb Prichard of First Baptist Church, and Rev. Robert Brent Drane – Rector of St. James Episcopal Church gave their lives in service to their community. There was no cure for the disease; hence, the medical personnel could only keep the victim comfortable and the clergy could only pray

that the patient was strong enough to fight off the disease. A fatality rate of 40% was not uncommon during this period.

**Rice** finished his presentation by expanding his talk into an evolution of the Public Health Service in New Hanover County and in North Carolina. Wilmington native, Dr. Thomas Fanning Wood, led “an organized effort by society to protect, promote, and restore the people’s health.” Wood was not the only Wilmington doctor who championed a State Board of Health – Dr. Solomon Satchwell became chairman of a State Board of Health that was first organized in February 1877.

This was a most interesting talk by a speaker who understood the challenges faced by those who were in Wilmington in the fall of 1862.

Editor

NOTE: Additional information concerning the role and evolution of Public Health Services in Wilmington (and North Carolina) can be found in a paper written by Sharad J. Shah entitled “A History of Public Health in New Hanover County.” This paper can be accessed at <http://www.nhcgov.com/Health/about-us/Documents/Pub%20HI%20History.pdf>.

\*\*\*\*\* **Trivia Question for February** \*\*\*\*\*

**1 – Who founded the *Our State* magazine? When?** In 1933 during the depth of the Great Depression, Carl Goerch founded this magazine, then known as *The State*. Goerch, an eastern North Carolina newspaper man, had an idea that he believed would be important to North Carolinians – he wanted to share the stories of North Carolina’s industries, tourist attractions and lifestyles. From 2,500 copies in 1933, the magazine, now known as *Our State*, has grown to more than 150,000 copies today.

The promoter of all “things” North Carolina was a native of New York.

**2 - Who was Alexander Davis Betts?** The Rev. Alexander Davis Betts grew up in Cumberland County, but was a resident of Smithville when President Lincoln called for troops to bring the seceding Southern states back into the Union. Betts left a wife and four young children at home when he went to war with Company C, 30<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment. Betts became chaplain of the 30<sup>th</sup> Regiment when he received his commission on October 25, 1861. Betts



was a 29 year old man who had been injured as a young boy. This injury had limited the physical labors he was able to perform.

Betts may have been physically challenged; however, he shared his men's hardships and he ministered to their needs until the end of the war. Afterwards, Betts returned home and preached to congregations for almost another half-century.

**3 - When was the last case of yellow fever in the United States?** According the David Rice, a traveler from Oakridge, Tennessee contracted the disease during a visit to the Amazon in 1996. From 1970 through 2010, a total of 9 cases of yellow fever were reported in **unvaccinated** travelers from the United States and Europe who traveled to West Africa (5 cases) or South America (4 cases). Eight (88%) of these 9 travelers died. There has been only 1 documented case of yellow fever in a vaccinated traveler. This nonfatal case occurred in a traveler from Spain who visited several West African countries during 1988.

Source: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2012/chapter-3-infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/yellow-fever.htm> (accessed January 22, 2013).

**4 - Who discovered how yellow fever was transmitted?** No one knew what caused the often-deadly yellow fever, but it occurred in epidemic proportions, with one person after another in a given area becoming sick. People feared the mysterious disease, until **U.S. Army physician James Carroll** endangered his own health in the name of science. On August 27, 1900, Carroll allowed an infected mosquito to feed on him. He developed a severe case of yellow fever but helped his colleague, **Walter Reed**, prove that mosquitoes transmitted the feared disease.

Source: [http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/progress/jb\\_progress\\_yellow\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/progress/jb_progress_yellow_1.html) (accessed January 22, 2013).

**5 – Where can the inscription *PRO ARIS ET FOCIS* be found in Wilmington?** *For Alter and Home* is the inscription on the Confederate monument located on South Third and Dock Street. The monument has an interesting history and its location in the median has subjected it to several altercations with motor vehicles.



The monument was designed by Henry Bacon, of Lincoln Memorial fame, and sculpted by F.H. Packer. It was donated to the City of Wilmington in 1924 by Gabriel Boney.

Source: <http://cdm15169.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/searchterm/Monument> (accessed February 6, 2013).