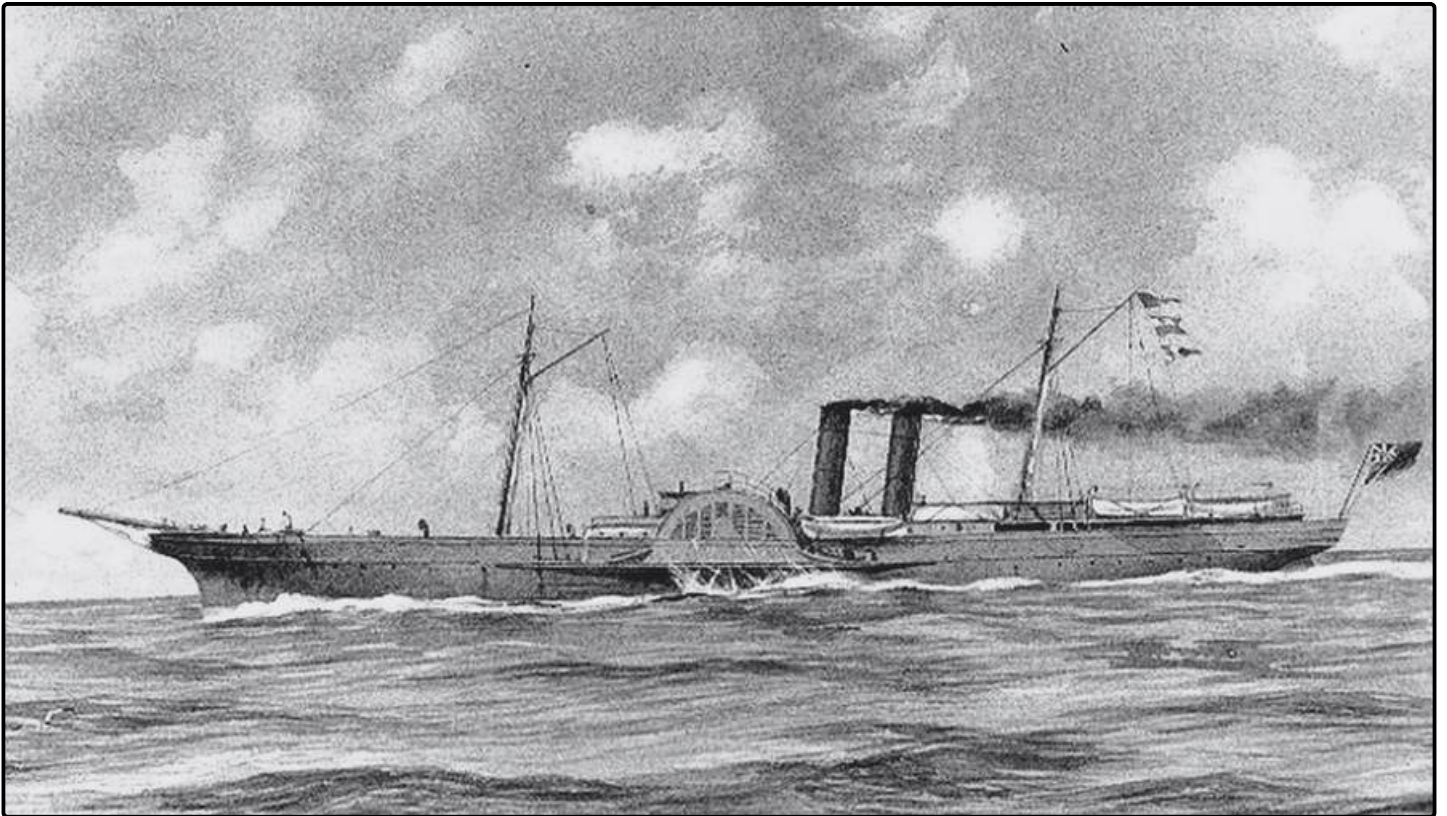


The Runner

The Official Newsletter of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table



May 2025 | Volume 31 | Number 5

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Letter from the Editor



As May unfolds, we find ourselves reflecting on a month rich with historical significance. From the daring maneuvers at Chancellorsville to the brutal combat of the Overland Campaign, this was a time when the course of the Civil War, and the nation, shifted dramatically.

One of the war's most harrowing engagements, the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, raged through much of this month in 1864. It was a truly brutal conflict and soldiers on both sides endured unimaginable conditions. It was there that my own third great-grandfather, Daniel Landmon Howell, lost his life at the Bloody Angle.

Remembering him this time of year is a personal reminder of how deeply the echoes of history reach into our own lives and families.

Whether you come to our meetings out of academic curiosity, personal ancestry, or a broader interest in the Civil War, your presence helps keep these stories alive. Thank you for being part of our community.

Matthew Howell

Editor

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

President's Address

By Dr. Yelena Howell



Dear friends,

May is a prominent month in Civil War history: Chancellorsville, "An Act to Raise Ten Thousand State Troops" and the meeting of the Secession Convention in Raleigh, the beginning of the siege of Vicksburg, the Battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House, and Day One of the Battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) are some of the milestones that spring to mind. Matt and I think of our own "Inman", not of *Cold Mountain*, but of Wayne County—Daniel Landmon Howell, family man and a reluctant recruit to the North Carolina 4th Infantry, mortally wounded in Virginia.

In our time, May is often the grand finale of Civil War round table program cycles before a summer hiatus. As you plan to rejuvenate and regroup in the upcoming months, please note that our organization will continue to offer scheduled programming. Your out-of-town guests are most welcome to join us to deepen their appreciation of American history and its local chapters. Our summer tradition of member forums provides unique opportunities for interested parties to highlight areas of their fascination and expertise. We are so proud of each and every speaker and encourage you to keep notes during your Civil War-related summer travels and reading adventures that may inspire you to lead future rounds of member presentations or to submit a piece for publication in our newsletter.

May also happens to be a great month to have a birthday. The children of May have a particular youthful vivacity about them. Please wish our Treasurer Ed LeStrange many happy returns on the 8th (the day of our meeting!) and congratulate Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle Jr. on another trip around the sun on the 27th. Though his star rose and set in April, 70 blessed years apart, William Wordsworth described the May vibe like no other:

And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday.

If your special day is coming up as well, happy birthday to you! Many thanks to each of you for your involvement that keeps us moving forward and fosters our spirit of community, inquiry, and impassioned learning.

Warmest regards,

Yelena

Membership Report

By Kim Berger

The April 2025 meeting of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table was a great success, with 42 engaged participants, including members, guests, and visitors. We're excited to welcome two new members to our ranks: Chauncey Lambeth, who found us on Facebook and has a keen interest in Civil War small arms, and Scotty Dawson, eager to explore the role of the Marines during the war.

We also had one membership renewal. Thank you for your continued support! A warm welcome goes out to our guests Michael and Alicia Taylor and Timothy Edman—we hope they enjoyed the meeting and will join us again soon!

Name Tags

Name tags are an amenity that facilitates communication among all attendees. Please be sure to return your badge at the end of each meeting or plan to bring it the next time you join us in person. If you need a new tag, just let me know.

Membership Renewals

Your renewal month is printed on your name tag. Please feel free to check with me in person or by email at CapeFearRT@gmail.com if you have a question about your renewal month. There are several easy ways to “reenlist”:

- See membership options and renew online: <https://cfcwrt.org/>
- Mail a check to CFCWRT, 1008 Heron Run Dr., Leland, NC 28451
- See Ed Lestrage at the next meeting with a check or cash.
- See Yelena Howell for Venmo.

Spread the Word

Remember, we are all ambassadors for the Round Table. Please invite your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to join us. We will ensure every guest feels welcome.

Sincerely yours,

Kim Berger

Membership Chair, Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

In Memoriam



In Memoriam: Dwight Hughes From the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

This month, we pause to remember and honor the life of Dwight Hughes, a valued historian, veteran, and voice in the Civil War community who passed away in April 2025.

Dwight first joined us at the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table in September 2020 as our very first virtual speaker, presenting on the fascinating history of the CSS *Shenandoah*. Despite the technical glitches that came with our inaugural Zoom meeting, Dwight's professionalism, patience, and good humor left a lasting impression. His depth of knowledge and passion for naval history brought the Civil War at sea vividly to life.

A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a Vietnam-era Navy veteran, Dwight dedicated much of his post-service life to researching and sharing the often-overlooked maritime stories of the Civil War. His contributions to *Emerging Civil War* and his books, including *A Confederate Biography: The Cruise of the CSS Shenandoah*, reflect his commitment to telling balanced, well-researched, and engaging stories from the water's edge.

We are grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from him and to count him as part of our extended community, even if only briefly. Our thoughts are with his wife, Judi, and all who knew and admired him.

Members who wish to send condolences may do so at the following address:

Judi Hughes
8650 Justice Ridge Place
Nokesville, VA 20181

Fair winds and following seas, Mr. Hughes.

CFCWRT May Meeting

By Bill Jayne



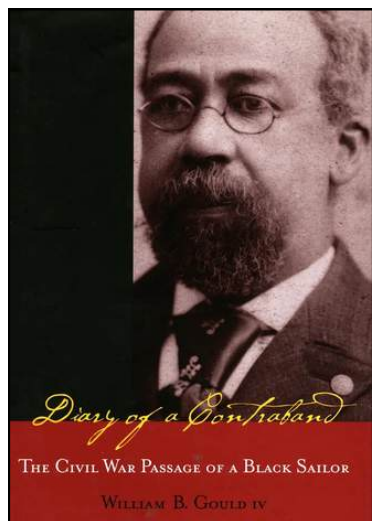
MEMBERS GRAZER AND ALLISON HEADLINE DOUBLE HEADER PRESENTATIONS

For our May 8 meeting, the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table will feature a special “Members Forum” presentation from two distinguished members. Christina Grazer is a guide at the Bellamy Mansion whose tours are in great demand. MaryBeth Allison recently earned her Ph.D. in History and is working on a book based on her dissertation. As usual, the round table meets at centrally located St. John’s Episcopal Church, in Wilmington, NC. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

A native Texan, Christina moved to Wilmington several years ago and quickly became enamored with the local history. The first time she drove past the Bellamy Mansion, the magnificent antebellum house at 5th and Market, she fell in love with it and for the past seven years has served as a Premium Tour Guide. According to Christina, the incredible story of William B. Gould awakened a deep passion for, as Paul Harvey put it, “the rest of the story”. As well as escorting visitors from around the world through the house, Christina has recently started giving tours of downtown Wilmington with the Wilmington True History group. She is looking forward to participating in the excitement and events surrounding the 250th birthday of our great country!

Christina will tell the story of William B. Gould, an enslaved artisan who worked on the construction of the mansion. He was responsible for much of the decorative plaster work seen in the moulding of the mansion. Gould and seven other enslaved men commandeered a small boat on a stormy September night in 1862 and rowed down the Cape Fear River—“28 nautical miles” according to Gould’s diary—and out to the USS Cambridge, a U.S. Navy ship on blockade duty in the open ocean. Gould went on to serve honorably and well in the U.S. Navy and after the war settled in Massachusetts with his wife, a fellow North Carolinian, and raised a distinguished family that has contributed to the country in many ways in succeeding generations, including extensive military service. Gould wrote a diary of his Civil War service and his great grandson, William B. Gould IV, a distinguished jurist, is the author of *Diary of a Contraband: The Civil War Passage of a Black Sailor*, which presents his great grandfather’s wartime diary along with much supporting information.

CFCWRT May Meeting Cont.



The publisher, Stanford University Press, wrote that after his escape from slavery, the elder Gould “served in the United States Navy for the remainder of the Civil War and left a diary of his experiences—one of only three known diaries of African American sailors from the period. It is distinguished not only by its details and eloquent tone, but also by its author’s reflection on the conduct of the war, on his own military engagements, on race, on race relations in the Navy and on what African Americans might expect after the war and during Reconstruction.” Christina will tell this stirring and little known story with skill and in-depth knowledge of Gould’s work and life.

Next, Dr. MaryBeth Allison, PhD, will focus on a little studied aspect of the Civil War prisoner of War experience. MaryBeth is a Civil War Era historian from Cambria County, in southwestern Pennsylvania. She received her B.A. in history from the Pennsylvania State University in 2005, with her senior capstone focusing on America’s response to the Holocaust.

After graduation, MaryBeth used her research and writing skills as a proposal manager at two companies focused on correctional products and services. In her own words, “feeling restless,” MaryBeth enrolled at Liberty University and obtained her M.A. in history in the fall of 2021, focusing on American history and European history, and, of course, Civil War history, delving into the world of Civil War prisons and prisoners of war. She ultimately returned to Liberty University for her PhD in history with her dissertation, “*Shine a Light into the Darkness: Illuminating the Battles Fought by Civil War Prisoners of War.*”

During her research, MaryBeth traveled considerably for primary sources, mainly prisoner diaries, manuscripts, and letters. Her travels took her to West Virginia University’s Regional History Center, Virginia Tech, the Library of Virginia, Andersonville National Historic Site, and Wilmington, NC, where she had the privilege to learn from Dr. Chris Fonvielle Jr. and Dr. Angela Zombek of the University of North Carolina Wilmington. We’re lucky to have her as a member of our round table in Wilmington.

Four hundred thousand Union and Confederate soldiers found themselves imprisoned by the enemy during the American Civil War. Of that number, over fifty-six thousand captives died in the prison camps while their comrades endured unspeakable conditions. The amount of misery and suffering inside these prisons is undeniable, and the history of Civil War prisons encompasses a dark chapter in American history.

CFCWRT May Meeting Cont.

Understanding the day-to-day life of prisoners of war is crucial to understanding their experience. MaryBeth focuses on the experience of Union POWs as they struggled with extreme levels of physical deprivation, psychological abuse, and brutal treatment at the hands of guards and, in some cases, fellow prisoners. They often coped through engagement in everyday activities such as letter-writing, Bible-reading, playing sports, and other means. In the process, these survivors formed a strong bond that enabled them to endure these difficult conditions.

Much scholarship exists on the prisons and the conditions of the prisons; however, MaryBeth's work focuses on the prisoners' experiences in their own words. Prisoners continued fighting battles, and most of all, they battled to find light in the darkness, as told in their letters, journals, and memoirs written after the war. Experiences of Civil War captives go beyond the suffering and excessively high death rates as MaryBeth explains how they lived: from captivity, through daily living where some worked, others enrolled in classes, to their battles to maintain their faith, and how they struggled after the cessation of the Dix-Hill Cartel exchanges, battling disease and the environmental conditions, and fighting to stay alive. Finally, she reveals how prisoners learned to heal and the symbolism of healing as former POWs and their healing within a once-fractured nation.

MaryBeth continues her work as a proposal manager while teaching part-time at Penn Highlands Community College. She published two academic journal articles and is currently working on her book manuscript, *Shining Light into Darkness: Day-to-Day Lives of Civil War Prisoners of War*. MaryBeth will be relocating to Beaufort, SC, this summer, along with her husband and their gang of cats, where she hopes to pursue more teaching opportunities and further her research and writing.

The May 8, 2025 meeting of the round table will be held at Elebash Hall at the rear of St. John's Episcopal church at 1219 Forest Hills Drive, Wilmington. The church parking lot, close to the entrance to our meeting room, is easily accessed via Park Avenue off of Independence Boulevard. For more information about membership in the Cape Fear Civil War Round table, go to <http://www.cfcwrt.org> and click on "Join/Rejoin." There is no charge for guest admission. Our members are our best recruiters. Bring a friend. See you there!

CFCWRT April Meeting Recap

By B.E. Bee



WADE SOKOLOSKY DELIVERS ENTERTAINING AND INFORMATIVE HOSPITALS PRESENTATION

On April 10, our round table welcomed back a highly respected favorite of the membership, Wade Sokolosky, Col. U.S. Army (Ret.). Wade is one of the most accomplished historians of the Civil War in North Carolina, especially the period at the end of the war encompassing the Carolinas Campaign of Gen. Wm. T. Sherman's army culminating in the Battle of Bentonville, March 19–21, 1865.

As part of his research, Wade has produced the most definitive studies of the Confederate hospital system in North Carolina. He spoke to us about Volume 1 in February 2023, and now that Volume 2, covering the last two years of the war has been published, he returned to tell us about that period.

He began with the declaratory—and informative—statement that the period was an unmitigated “disaster on the Lower Cape Fear.” In the years before the Civil War, the concept of a highly professional hospital providing comprehensive, advanced medical care as we know it today simply didn't exist. There were just three institutions in the state known as hospitals.

Two were “Marine Hospitals.” A system of “Marine Hospitals” was established by the U.S. federal government beginning in 1798 to care for ill and disabled seamen in the U.S. Merchant Marine, U.S. Coast Guard and others. Called the Marine Hospital Service, it evolved into the Public Health Service. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Marine Hospital Service operated 27 facilities in the United States. Two were in North Carolina. The first was the Marine Hospital on Portsmouth Island near Cape Lookout. It was established in 1847. After a hurricane opened the Hatteras Inlet, seaborne traffic diminished in the area and plans were made to build a Marine Hospital in Wilmington. It was built in 1857 at Eighth and Nun streets. The third “hospital” in the state was the Dix Hill Hospital in Raleigh, built in 1856 to house patients who were mentally ill. In 1862 the U.S. Army controlled the Outer Banks and the soundside cities of North Carolina and utilized the Portsmouth Island Marine Hospital for U.S. soldiers and sailors.

Throughout his presentation, Wade chronicled and analyzed the contributions of the many women who served in the hospitals and, in so doing, broke down many societal barriers that had limited the ways in which women could contribute to society. Many served as nurses, and many also served as “stewards,” who, in effect, were managers of the different sorts of hospital facilities and disciplines such as pharmacy, hygiene and nutrition.

CFCWRT April Meeting Recap Cont.



He noted, for example, Barbara Franks of Asheville, who was the head matron of the hospital established in Asheville. At the beginning of the war, Wade said, dozens of facilities were established in and around Richmond, VA, including hospitals established by the various states specifically for the soldiers from their states. Women from North Carolina flocked to those hospitals to provide care. It was found, he stated, that hospitals run by women experienced lower mortality rates.

Wade noted that there were privately operated hospitals, state-run hospitals and those operated by the Confederate government. North Carolina faced a particularly tumultuous situation at the beginning of the war as Governor John Ellis died in July 1861. He was succeeded by Henry T. Clark, the speaker of the N.C. Senate. Clark was an able leader but unable to rally the state to face the manifold threats of U.S. occupation of the sounds and major towns along the seaboard, the effects of the blockade, and raising, equipping and training tens of thousands of raw recruits.

And those recruits were especially susceptible to infectious diseases such as measles, chicken pox, typhus and typhoid fever caused by poor sanitation. Clark served as governor for only a short time and was succeeded by Zebulon Vance. Vance was an energetic, young man in his early 30s who became a lawyer and politician who originally opposed secession but changed his position after U.S. President Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers to put down the rebellious southern states. Surrounded by seceding states, South Carolina to the south, Virginia to the north and Tennessee to the west, North Carolina seceded as well. Vance volunteered for the Confederate army and became colonel of the 26th North Carolina infantry regiment, which he ably led in battle at New Bern in March 1862 and then in the Seven Days Campaign around Richmond. He was elected governor in 1862 and faced the emergencies of war with the concrete experience of soldiering on the battlefield and in camp.

CFCWRT April Meeting Recap Cont.

There were many different types of hospitals, from temporary hospitals and field hospitals, garrison or post hospitals, specialty hospitals, wayside hospitals offering respite for sick or wounded soldiers being transported—usually by rail—from the “seat of war” back to their home states where they could recover or be discharged. The “general hospitals” were open to all sorts of military personnel from all states and with all sorts of medical problems. Many general hospitals were built or planned around the pavilion style hospital developed by British battlefield nurse Florence Nightingale. The pavilion style hospitals prioritized ventilation and comfort for the sick and wounded. In North Carolina most general hospitals used existing buildings. It was difficult to build new facilities at times. In Wilmington, for example, the competition for lumber was so great that it was impossible to build a new pavilion hospital.

The first medical director of N.C. hospitals was Napoleon Covey, an able administrator with many good ideas for organizing and building a system of facilities but he wasn’t from North Carolina and Governor Zebulon Vance forcefully argued for his reassignment so that a North Carolinian could be appointed in his place. From September of 1863 to the end of the war, Surgeon Peter E. Hines was the Medical Director.

By 1864, a system of hospitals existed throughout the state built around 14 general hospitals primarily spaced out along the major railroads of the state. Two were in Wilmington. Seven Wayside Hospitals recognized by the Confederate government were also in operation plus three state Waysides and a private facility, the Barbee Hospital in High Point.

Wade went on to chronicle the unprecedented challenges faced by the hospitals in 1864 and 1865 as they dealt with the thousands of wounded soldiers sent back to the state or passing through the state as a result of the intense combat of the Overland Campaign and the siege of Petersburg and Richmond and then in early 1865, the fall of Ft. Fisher and the “Two Weeks of Fury” associated with Sherman’s march into the state.

As Wilmington fell, then Fayetteville the Confederate facilities along the coast became untenable and Surgeon Hines and others moved to open new facilities in the Piedmont.

Wade traced the evacuation of Confederate wounded from the Second Battle of Fort Fisher in January 1865, discussing that although most were unable to be evacuated to Smithville (now Southport). USN Lieutenant William B. Cushing wrote that he captured 44 sick and wounded along with the surgeons and nurses ministering to them. Soon Ft. Anderson fell with its 32-bed medical facility and then in late February, Confederate forces evacuated Wilmington and the Confederate facilities in Wilmington were taken over by the U.S. Army.

CFCWRT April Meeting Recap Cont.

As U.S. forces gained control of the railroads and towns in the Piedmont, medical care moved further west and north. Field hospitals sprang up as needed near the battlefields, notably Harper House on the Bentonville Battlefield. Amy Harper and women from the surrounding farms and the town of Bentonville cared for Confederate wounded left behind when the armies moved west. The time left to the Confederacy was short but the devoted medical staff and volunteer nurses worked at a feverish pace to care for the wounded from Aversboro, Bentonville, and Wise's Forks. Janie Smith, a volunteer nurse in Goldsboro who moved on to High Point, became a casualty as she died of illness contracted in the hospital.

Wade graciously fielded questions from the audience for about 15 minutes and added to the enjoyment and enrichment of the audience. He noted that he is looking at a third volume about Confederate medical care in North Carolina but plans to work on a volume about Sherman's Carolinas Campaign in South Carolina first.

Confederate General Joseph Johnston quipped in regard to Sherman's command that "there was no such army since the days of Julius Caesar." We in the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table may say that Wade Sokolosky deserves such lavish praise as well and we look forward to welcoming him back in the future.



The Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse

By Matthew Howell



The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House: A Crucible of Persistence and Sacrifice **May 8 – 21, 1864**

In the early spring of 1864, the Civil War had entered a new and grueling phase. General U.S. Grant, newly appointed commander of all Union armies, had brought with him a determination to engage Confederate General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia head-on. This direct approach marked a shift from the more cautious strategies of earlier Union generals, and it would lead to some of the war's bloodiest and most enduring conflicts. Among these, the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House stands out as a symbol of the relentless human cost of war and the unyielding nature of both armies during this decisive period of the conflict.

The battle, which lasted from May 8 to May 21, 1864, was the second major engagement of Grant's Overland Campaign. After the brutal fighting at the Battle of the Wilderness, where both armies suffered heavy losses but neither could claim a decisive victory, Grant continued his advance toward Richmond. Lee, determined to protect the Confederate capital, set up defensive positions near the crossroads town of Spotsylvania Court House.

What followed was not a single battle, but a series of engagements that saw the two armies locked in a deadly contest for control of key terrain and the initiative. The most iconic phase of the battle occurred at the "Bloody Angle," a section of the Confederate line at the end of a salient. It was here that Union soldiers launched repeated assaults, attempting to break through Lee's entrenched defenses. The fighting at the Bloody Angle became a horrendous example of close-quarters combat, with soldiers on both sides fighting in the most extreme conditions. Men huddled in trenches, exchanging fire at point-blank range, as artillery and musketry tore into their ranks.

It was here, amid the smoke and blood, that the battle's devastating cost was realized. The Union's attempt to break the Confederate line came at a high price, but they did not relent. The fighting was intense and unyielding, with both armies sustaining enormous casualties. When the smoke finally cleared, approximately 30,000 soldiers—killed, wounded, or missing—had been left behind on the blood-soaked fields.

The Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse Cont.

Despite the staggering losses, there was no clear victor. General Grant, however, was undeterred. His strategy was simple but brutal: to apply relentless pressure, preventing Lee from retreating and wearing down the Confederate forces until they could no longer fight. Lee, though a master tactician, found himself trapped in a war of attrition he could not sustain, as his army continued to be battered by Grant's forces and the Union's superior resources.

The significance of the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House lies in the determination shown by both sides. For the Union, it marked a shift toward sustained engagements. For the Confederacy, it revealed the increasing strain on their forces. The battle highlighted Grant's persistence and Lee's dogged defense, setting the stage for the protracted conflict that would follow. The high cost underscored the harsh realities of a war where both sides were unwavering in their commitment, but only one would ultimately prevail.

As we reflect on the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, we are reminded of the bravery and sacrifice of the men who fought there. Their determination to push forward in the face of overwhelming odds and their willingness to endure unimaginable suffering serve as a testament to the human spirit in times of war. We are also reminded of the staggering cost of that persistence, both on the battlefield and in the lives of those who carried its memory long after the fighting ended.

In the end, Spotsylvania Court House was not just a military engagement; it was a crucible that tested the limits of endurance, resolve, and sacrifice. And though neither side could truly claim victory, both armies were irrevocably changed by the experience, setting the stage for the war's bitter, final year.



My eldest son, exploring the grounds of the battlefield.

He carries on the name of my 3rd great-grandfather, who fell in battle at this very spot.

Gettysburg: How it Might Have Been

By Major John Weisz



Gettysburg: How It Might Have Been

It's 6:00 AM, July 1st, 1863, and two great armies are moving towards their destiny in determining whether the Confederate States of America will win their independence.

As daylight arrives, General Robert E. Lee and his advance divisions move towards the sleepy town of Gettysburg. About 30 miles south, Union Commander George Gordon Meade is marching north. Neither side knows the outcome of what will be a momentous three-day battle, which will leave the field with a total of 22,000 killed, wounded, and missing.

In this meeting engagement, a small Union cavalry brigade, armed with repeating rifles, takes up good defensive positions and stops the 6,000 infantry of the Confederates in their tracks. Heth's division is effectively removed from the first day's fighting.

General John Buford acknowledges significant losses, but he holds the high ground after this one-hour engagement, and he still has another brigade to keep up the fight while the Union First Corps is coming up quickly to support them.

Confederate reinforcements from the north and northeast race to gain control of the town. Union infantry arrives first and fortifies Cemetery and Culp's Hills. They extend their lines along Cemetery Ridge, about one-third of the way to Little Round Top.

At this time, Meade's forces lack the artillery to retard the Confederate tidal wave. A seesaw fight along a three-mile front ensues, with the winners switching every hour until the rebels are ready to break through in several places.

Gettysburg: How it Might Have Been Cont.

But fate would intervene. Due to confusion, poor coordination, and little intelligence from JEB Stuart's cavalry division, the men in gray and butternut make several assaults, but are beaten back every time, suffering devastating casualties. The Confederates are done. As Longstreet's First Corps is still miles away, the "Grey Fox" admits defeat and plans the heartbreaking march home to Virginia.

Of course, the story above is fiction, predicated on the results of a board game using well-documented facts about the terrain, leaders, men, and their combat capabilities.

Unlike the actual battle, we see the differences:

- The two forces fight only about two miles south of the town. Neither side is interested in the two large hills, Little Round Top and Round Top.
- East of the town, there is limited fighting. In the actual battle, there were numerous bloody fights over all three days. In our game, the sun sets and the battle dies down. The next day, a strong force of Union infantry and artillery arrives, significantly reducing the Confederate ranks.
- Only the first 1.5 miles of the long and critical Cemetery Ridge saw moderate fighting.
- South of the town and to the southeast is where the Confederate forces threw everything at the Union and where Lee's army was decisively beaten back.

Is this how you remember the Battle of Gettysburg? Probably not.

The Gettysburg "Battle" I've just described was only a simulation, as mentioned before. It took place not in South-Central Pennsylvania but in the southern part of New Hanover County. The commanders are two members of the Cape Fear Civil War Roundtable: Byron Hovey represented Robert E. Lee, Commanding Officer of the Army of Northern Virginia, while John Pilli was the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Potomac.

Gettysburg: How it Might Have Been Cont.



*Byron Hovey (in green) and John Pilli (in blue)
playing "Gettysburg."*

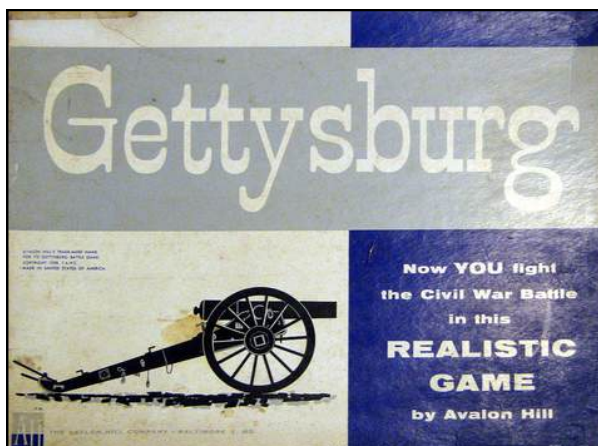
The battle described above was without bloodshed and was congenially conducted in a gentlemanly manner. It was "fought" on March 24, 2025. No people or pets were harmed, nor was any furniture damaged in the host's home.

The Battle Game, Gettysburg, was one of the first military simulation board games in the United States. It was created by two gentlemen in Baltimore, Maryland, and distributed by the Avalon Hill Company. At the peak of their success, they produced close to 100 military simulation games.

This particular game is relatively simple but sophisticated and challenging. It takes about 30 minutes to learn the rules. It comes with a 28 by 24-inch battle board with very accurate terrain features, vegetation, hills, creeks, and roads.

There are approximately 80 pieces that represent about 75,000 Confederate soldiers and 90,000 Union troops, each representing brigades of cavalry, artillery, and infantry. Each combat piece has a military designation (the name of the commander or number), with two numbers on each piece (showing relative combat factor and movement factor). Each turn is one hour, and each side moves units as few or as many as they need to engage or take and hold key terrain. When enemy units come close to each other, they engage in combat. There's a table that compares the combat factors, and with the help of a die roll, the combat result is generated. Units may be destroyed, pushed back, or recover ground based upon these factors.

Gettysburg: How it Might Have Been Cont.



The goal of the game?

For the Confederates to win, they must exit at least three divisions of infantry units off the southern end of the board.

I believe that both of our commanders learned more about the factors that governed military operations in this level of board game. Both John and Byron knew much about the battle from extensive reading and personal research, but to see the battlefield from the standpoint of the commanding officers resulted in a very lively discussion after the game.

I am John Weisz, a longtime member of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. I served as the host, referee, and “War Correspondent” for the above narrative.

If you are interested in participating in the game or watching it, please email me at: hans52weisz@gmail.com or see me at the next meeting. Maybe you can change history with your tactical and operational acumen?

The next opportunity to do this would be in late May or early June, so don't delay!

Notable Events in the Cape Fear Region

Friday, May 2, 3-4 pm. NHC Public Library, Oak Room at Northeast Branch, 1241 Military Cutoff Rd., Wilmington. **Past Tense: Historical Fiction Book Club**. Info: <https://libcal.nhcgov.com/event/12795759>

Friday, May 2, 9-10 pm, Burgwin-Wright House, 224 Market St., Wilmington. **Candlelit Night Tour of the museum**. Tickets \$15 (+tax). Please call (910) 762-0570 to reserve your spot.

Wednesdays and Saturdays in May, 11 am or 2 pm. Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site.

Guided Tour of St. Philips Church. Adults \$2, children \$1. Info: <https://tinyurl.com/ImagineStPhilips> or call (910) 371-6613

Saturday, May 3, 5-6:30 pm. Wilmington True History Tours presents its popular downtown **Dark History Tour**. Tickets are \$25 for adults or \$22 for Veterans and First Responders: <https://www.wilmingtontruehistory.com/our-experiences-1/>

Saturday, May 3 or Saturday, May 17, 8:30-10 pm. Latimer House Night Tour featuring a scholarly discussion of gaslight. 126 S. 3rd St., Wilmington; \$22: <https://latimerhouse.org/tours/#night>

Tuesday, May 6, doors open at 5:30 pm, musical program at 6, followed by feature presentation. **Generations Church**, 4019 Executive Park Blvd SE, Southport. **Brunswick Civil War Round Table celebrates its 15th Anniversary** and welcomes **Brad Gottfried** with “The Battle of Antietam: The Paintings of James Hope”. The visitor fee is \$10 and can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues, which can include a spouse. Big congratulations to BCWRT on their many successes! Info: <https://brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com/>

Saturday, May 10, 9 am – 3 pm. Fort Fisher State Historic Site and NC Military Historical Society host **“Restored Freedom: 80 Years Since V-E Day”**. Three speaker presentations: “The Creation of the American Airborne”, “Efficiency, Skill, Spirit, and Determination: Exploring the Impact of the Women's Army Corps in the European Theatre”, and “U-boats on the North Carolina Coast”. Living history displays, Veterans organizations, and NCMHS Museum tours also planned. Info: <https://tinyurl.com/VDay4Always>

Saturday, May 17, 9-10:30 am. Bellamy Mansion Museum, 503 Market St., Wilmington. **Past Meets Pavement Walking Tour: Wilmington “Lost But Not Forgotten”**. Info: <https://www.bellamymansion.org/group-tours.html>

Sunday, May 18, 10-11:30 am. Wilmington Water Tours features **Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle Jr.** with **“Founding of Wilmington and Decline of Brunswick**. Info and more of Chris’s upcoming programs: <https://www.chrisfonvielle.com/events>

Saturday, May 24, 10 am-3 pm. North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport. 204 E. Moore St., Southport. **“Deep Dive Into History: An Act of Remembrance.”** Drop-in programming dedicated to the origins of U.S. Memorial Day. Info: <https://ncmaritimemuseumssouthport.com/events/>

Brunswick Civil War Round Table



The Round Table likes to consider combining bluegrass music with Civil War paintings as fine arts! That's how it will celebrate their 15th anniversary on Tuesday, May 6th at Generations Church on Route 211, near the St. James main gate.

Registration begins early at 5:30PM. Then it's Dear MariBella and the Pigkickers to play from 6:00PM to 6:45PM.

The program, featuring guest speaker Brad Gottfried and his story of artist and Union Captain James Hope, begins at 7:00PM. Everyone is invited. Guests only pay \$10, and that can be applied toward the \$25 annual membership dues which could include a spouse.

Brad Gottfried will share his vast knowledge about James Hope during his presentation entitled, "The Battle of Antietam: Paintings of James Hope." Captain Hope was a professional artist, who recorded sketches of actual battles, and later converted them into full blown paintings. These paintings are considered to be some of the most important and detailed depictions of Civil War battles ever created.



For more information, email president John Butler at Brunswickcwrt@gmail.com or call him at (404) 229-9425. Visit BCWRT online at <https://brunswickcivilwarroundtable.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/brunswickcivilwarroundtable>

TRIP TO VICKSBURG WITH CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Last year the Cleveland Civil War Round Table invited members of our round table to participate in their annual battlefield tour and trip. The destination was Gettysburg and the experience was top-notch in every way. Five members of our round table plus two guests went to Gettysburg in September and reveled in a two-day guided tour of the battlefield plus a moving and enlightening tour of the Spangler Farm field hospital site.

This year, our friends in Cleveland have invited us to participate in a tour of the Vicksburg Campaign from Bruinsburg to Vicksburg on 25-28 September, 2025. The trip includes expert guidance provided by Capt. Rick Martin, USAF (Ret.) who is also a retired Chief Ranger for Vicksburg National Military Park. On Friday, September 26, the tour will focus on Grant's movement across the Mississippi and the battles leading up to his investment of the fortress city of Vicksburg from the east. The next day will focus on the Union assaults and siege operations leading up to the capitulation of the Confederate command on July 4, 1863.

The cost of the trip is \$175 which will cover the cost of the guide, any entrance fees and boxed lunches each day. Rooms have been reserved at the Courtyard by Marriott Vicksburg and breakfast is included in the room rate. The cost of the room and the cost of transportation to and from Vicksburg is at your own expense, as will be the cost of dinners.

Full details are available at:

<https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Field-Trip-2025-movement-order.pdf>

Feel free to contact Bill Jayne at jayne.bill@gmail.com or (910) 386-9203 if you have questions.

We were lucky to hear Terry Winschel's excellent presentation on Vicksburg in February and this is a great opportunity to actually see the ground and learn more about this most pivotal campaign.



CFCWRT Lifetime Sponsors

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our strategic partners, whose generous support through discounts and services sustains the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. Your ongoing contributions play an invaluable role in helping us preserve history, foster education, and connect our community. Thank you for standing with us in our mission!



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Yelena Howell, BSN, RN, DNP



Family Nurse Practitioner

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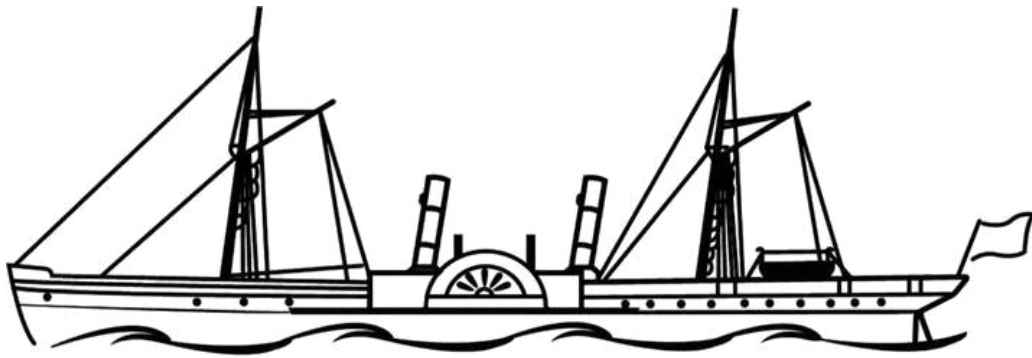
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CAPE FEAR

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table is a voluntary, not-for-profit association of people with a common interest in the history of the American Civil War and Reconstruction.

Based in Wilmington, our group is devoted to broadening the knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the era.



www.cfcwrt.org



www.youtube.com/@cfcwrt



CapeFearRT@gmail.com



www.facebook.com/groups/cfcwrt

You Are Invited!

Join us at our monthly meetings featuring acclaimed authors, esteemed professors, and passionate historians from sites like Fort Fisher.

Held at **St. John's Episcopal Church, 1219 Forest Hills Drive, Wilmington, NC**, these events are a chance to explore fascinating Civil War topics and connect with fellow enthusiasts.

Doors open at 6:30pm and the meetings start at 7pm.

5/8/25 - Dr. MaryBeth Allison & Christina Grazer

6/12/25 - Dr. Angela Zombek
"Civil War History of Fort Jefferson Florida"

7/10/25 - Civil War Fair

8/14/25 - Fred Claridge
"Civil War Historians"

9/11/25 - Dr. Robert M. Browning Jr.
"I Am Fighting for the Union: the Civil War Letters of Naval Officer Henry Willis Wells"

10/9/25 - Clint Johnson
"A Vast & Fiendish Plot: The Confederate Attack on New York City"

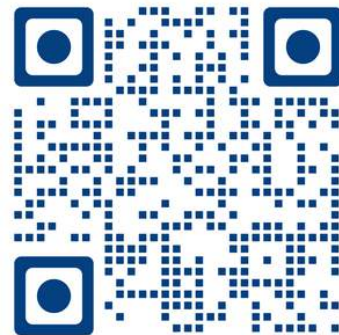
11/13/25 - Sarah Kay Bierle
"John Pelham: Trained at West Point but Aiming Artillery for the Confederacy"

12/11/25 - Brad Gottfried
"The Best & Worst Generals at Gettysburg"



Discover more with our engaging tours, trips, and special events that bring Civil War history to life in unforgettable ways. Stay informed with our monthly newsletter, packed with insights, updates, and stories from the past.

Want to help? Explore our corporate & individual sponsorship options to support our mission while gaining meaningful recognition for your organization. There's something for everyone—join us and be part of the adventure!



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Our Membership Options



A Gun Crew at Fort Fisher (2024), James C. Horton, oil
<https://hortonart.net>