

The *RUNNER*

Newsletter of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Tim Winstead**

***** December 2012 *****

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, 13 December 2012** at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 7:00 p.m., meeting at 7:30.

Please join us as we continue our 2012 – 2013 Program Year. Visitors are more than 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.

***** December Program *****

Three Times a Traitor: Mayor Isaiah Respass and the Civil War Occupation of Eastern North Carolina

The Burnside Expedition into eastern North Carolina in early 1862 secured a Union presence that posed a threat to the Confederate government for the rest of the war. Those people who lived in this Union occupied area were subjected to military and political pressures that forced many inhabitants to choose between loyalty to their state or to the Union. **Isaiah Respass**, mayor of Washington, North Carolina, was one of those inhabitants.

<insert image#1>
Isaiah Respass

Alex Christopher Meekins, Correspondence Archives and Records Professional at the North Carolina Division of Archives and Records, will present an interesting story about **Isaiah Respass**, merchant, trader and politician. Respass found himself in a delicate position between those pressures that made this area a powder keg of charged emotions.

<insert image#2>
Chris Meekins

Chris Meekins was born and raised in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. His interest in the Civil War began early – one great-great-grandfather was Unionist and another was Confederate, each died during the war as a result of their sympathies. Chris received a BA and MA in History from North Carolina State University. His Master's thesis concerned the Civil War in northeastern North Carolina and he later developed this thesis into *Elizabeth City, North Carolina and the Civil War: A History of Battle and Occupation*.

While researching other stories, Chris found bits and pieces about Mayor Respass that resulted in the presentation that we will hear on Thursday evening, December 13th.

Editor

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

Raffle Master: Ed Gibson

Cleaning out your Library? Downsizing? Or just making room for more books? If you have books, prints, or other items that you would like to donate to the CFCWRT raffle, see Ed Gibson at our next meeting.

November Meeting:

<i>Forrest</i>	-	Judy Ward
<i>Grant</i>	-	Bob Cooke
<i>Civil War USA</i>	-	Martha Watson
<i>Lincoln</i>	-	Ed Gibson
<i>Stillness at Appomattox</i>	-	Gary Henderson
<i>Reveille in Washington</i>	-	Rick Morrison

******* Trivia Question for December *******

1 – Observe the photo graph below. What do you think this photograph represented?

<insert image#3>

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

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

1 – A Christmas Holiday greeting goes out to all new and current members of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. Thank you for your support and continued interest.

2 – Fort Fisher - December 6: Holiday Open House, Thursday 10 am - 5 pm. Enjoy seasonal refreshments, decorations, and live music by area choral and instrumental groups throughout the day. Special one-day discounts in the Museum Shop. Sponsored by the Friends of Fort Fisher and the Fort Fisher Chapter No. 2325, United Daughters of the Confederacy. Please call the site at 910-458-5538 for more details.

3 - GREAT DEAL! Christmas gifts for your Civil War buff or for yourself! The Historical Publications Section of the N.C. Office of Archives and History announces a 60 percent to 70 percent discount of the popular and well-respected "**North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster**" series, volumes 1 through 18. Regularly priced at \$50 per copy, volumes 1-15 are sale priced at \$15 per copy and volumes 16-18 are sale priced at \$20 per copy.

NOTE: Ansley Wegner's *Phantom Pain* is available for a sale price of \$2.50.

To purchase, please visit [online](#) or call [\(919\) 733-7442](tel:9197337442), extensions 0 or 225.

***** *Civil War Courts-Martial of North Carolina Troops* *****

Researching a Civil War ancestor is a challenging endeavor. As with all research into the past, surprises are possible with the turn of a page. One hopes that they find their ancestor with a distinguished record of service, but that is not always the case. The quest of research is to discover the facts; however, they play out in the drama of the Civil War. The quest for facts lead to many sources that aid in tracking an ancestor: *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (and Navies), Regimental histories, memoirs, letters, websites (fold3), and countless books on the war. All sources provide facts that help determine an ancestor's path – the circumstances that lead to that path may be forever unknown – however, by studying the events surrounding the ancestor's path one may gain a better understanding of that individual and their fate.

Recently I received a book that provided much information concerning a subject that few people have researched in depth – desertions among North Carolina troops. **Aldo Perry**, a retired IBM Project Engineer, laboriously sifted through records at the National Archives in Washington, in the North Carolina State Archives, and in library collections throughout the nation. After twenty-five years of research, 35,000 note cards, and an initial 800 page manuscript, *Civil War Courts-Martial of North Carolina Troops* was published earlier this year.

Perry noted in his book's introduction, at least 160 of the trials of Tar Heel deserters ended in the sentence of death being carried out, making North Carolina the deadliest state for executions in United States wartime history. Perry asserted that discipline in the ranks was the factor that kept troops in the fight, loss of that discipline and the fabric of the army was weakened. Once that fabric had been weakened, the continued survival of the Confederate army and the Confederate States of America were in jeopardy.

Civil War Courts-Martial of North Carolina Troops provided an intimate look at the lives of hundreds of soldiers who lived, and more often died, after being court-martialed for desertion and other offenses. The 360 page book was arranged by the various regiments in which the soldiers served. Perry, with the detailed eye of an engineer, shared the stories and the emotions that controlled duty to country, to family, and to self-preservation. Concerning a mass execution

of members of the 58th and 60th North Carolina regiments approved by Braxton Bragg, an attending doctor recalled:

One other dreadful tragedy I will relate, and while it may reflect on our soldiers in some respects, it shows the great hardships they were compelled to endure under the most discouraging circumstances. When we were near Dalton Ga. sixteen men were condemned to be shot by order of General Bragg. One man was pardoned the day before the execution was to take place and one died in the hospital when he learned he was to be shot. The next day these fourteen men were executed All of the army there was ordered out; the infantry formed a hollow square with cannon in the rear, while the Cavalry just back of them made such a strong line it was impossible for any one to pass. A long ditch had been prepared, and the rude coffins placed in front of it, with a stake by it, while a guard appointed to this duty marched each man to the stake & coffin prepared for him, and each man bound to his stake. The senior officer ordered all in position and to make ready, and Lt. Robert Claytongave the order to fire. All were killed but two, as I found when I advanced to examine them. One had been shot in the side,- the other in the arm. I reported that two were alive and the guard advanced and fired killing them immediately. . . . Oh! what a Sunday was that!

While Perry provided numerous statistics in his Epilogue that supported his conclusions, the stories of the individual soldiers were what I found most compelling. I felt that this book was a reference material that was a good addition to my library.

Editor

Source: Aldo S. Perry, *Civil War Courts-Martial of North Carolina Troops* [Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2012], 258-259.

NOTE: Mr. Perry has offered to send copies of his book to CFCWRT members who would be interested in the subject and in receiving a copy. Mr. Perry sought only to recover his cost of \$25.

***** **December 1862** *****

December 1862 witnessed the Battle of Fredericksburg. It was General Burnside's first major challenge after taking over from McClellan. The battle did not go in Burnside's favour and he lost far more men killed and wounded than the Confederates. The freezing weather killed many of the wounded. It also meant that little could be done at a military level.

December 1st: Lincoln addressed the 37th Congress in the capital and once again announced his intention of abolishing slavery within the United States.

December 7th: A battle fought at Prairie Grove left 167 Union soldiers dead, 798 wounded and 183 missing. The Confederates lost 300 killed, 800 wounded and 250 missing.

December 10th: The House of Representatives passed a bill to create the state of West Virginia.

December 13th: Burnside started his attack against Fredericksburg. However, the delay in doing so allowed Lee's men time to dig themselves into well-fortified positions both in the town and in the hills that surrounded it. All attacks were repulsed. An attack on Confederate troops dug in on Marye's Heights led to many Unionist deaths. By the end of the day the Army of the Potomac had lost 1200 killed, 9000 wounded and 2145 missing. Many of these were at Marye's Heights. The Confederates had lost 570 killed, 3870 wounded and 127 missing. Many of the wounded left out on the battlefield died of the cold during the night. Lee was heard to say: "It is well that war is so terrible; we should grow too fond of it."

December 14th: Burnside wanted to repeat the assault on Fredericksburg but was persuaded otherwise by his commanders in the field. The Army of the Potomac camped out along the Rappahannock River.

December 17th: General Grant's reputation was tainted when he issued General Order Number 11, which expelled Jews from his department because "they are a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department."

December 20th: A Confederate force attacked a major Union supply base at Holly Springs, Mississippi. Over \$1 million in supplies was seized along with 1000 prisoners. Such a loss of supplies meant that Grant had to postpone his attack on Vicksburg.

December 23rd: Jefferson Davis names General Butler, formally in charge of New Orleans, an outlaw and an enemy of Mankind. Davis stated that Butler would be hanged if the Confederates captured him.

December 28th: A unit of Union troops captured a considerable amount of Confederate supplies at Van Buren, Arkansas.

<insert image#4>
Sinking of the USS *Monitor*

December 31st: Lincoln met Burnside to discuss what went wrong at Fredericksburg. The ironclad '**Monitor**' sank in a storm (off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina).

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/december-1862-civil-war.htm> (accessed November 7, 2012).

******* December 1862 Continued *******

From the Naval History Blog: "**The loss of MONITOR off Cape Hatteras, 31 December 1862**"

On the morning of December 29, 1862, Commander John Bankhead, recently appointed commanding officer while Monitor repaired at the Washington Navy Yard, ordered his crew to prepare to put to sea. The weather finally clear, Monitor departed Hampton Roads

that afternoon in the tow of the sidewheel steamer Rhode Island to join the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron in offensive operations against Confederate ports.

After Monitor rounded Cape Hatteras at approximately 7:30 in the evening on the 30th, the starboard tow hawser gave way in reaction to the pounding waves and current rubbing the rope against the hull. At 9pm, Commander Bankhead signaled Rhode Island to halt her engines to better ride out the storm, but by this time water poured into Monitor at a pace greater than the bilge pumps could evacuate. A large steam pump arrested the rising water within the vessel, but the respite proved to be temporary. At approximately 10:30pm, the situation hopeless, Monitor asked that Rhode Island send rescue boats.

Bankhead ordered the remaining towline connecting his vessel to Rhode Island cut, but a wave swept two of the three volunteers for this duty overboard to their deaths before Master Louis Stodder hacked the hawser in two with a hatchet. Unfortunately, the severed hawser became entangled in one of Rhode Island's paddle wheels which left the large wooden ship drifting toward Monitor and threatening to crush one of the rescue boats. The rope that fouled the paddle wheel was cleared with an axe, but not before Rhode Island slammed into the first lifeboat and barely avoided a potentially calamitous collision with Monitor. The two ships got so close, that five or six sailors attempted to climb ropes to safety on Rhode Island; but only three reached their destination. Despite being damaged by Rhode Island, the first lifeboat took on survivors as the waves swept several of the ironclad's crew overboard to their death. The heavy seas had grown so violent that the second lifeboat nearly struck the first as it made the treacherous, now nearly half-mile, return passage.

Some of the sailors in Monitor heroically remained in the engine room stoking the boilers that powered the pumps as they fought a losing battle against the incoming water. At about midnight, the water extinguished the boilers and the last of the men inside scrambled to the top of the turret as a second lifeboat was taking on survivors and a third approached. Traversing the short distance to the lifeboats proved a treacherous task and several men lost their lives in the attempt. Some, perhaps unable to swim, petrified by the gruesome spectacle, or waiting for others to be saved first, continued to cling to the turret even as the third lifeboat filled to capacity. For those fortunate enough to make a lifeboat, the danger was far from over as several men lost their lives attempting to board the paddle wheel steamer. Rodney Browne, skipper of the second lifeboat, made one last gallant attempt to save those remaining on Monitor, but failed to reach the vessel before it disappeared beneath the waves around 2 o'clock on morning of the 31st. Despite the rough seas, his boat managed to survive the night and was rescued by another ship mid-morning.

In all, four officers and twelve sailors from Monitor lost their lives. The heroism of the volunteers from Rhode Island who manned the rescue boats kept the human toll from being much worse

Source: <http://www.navalhistory.org/2010/12/31/the-loss-of-monitor-off-cape-hatteras-31-december-1862>, (accessed November 26, 2012).

******* The Angel of Marye's Heights – Fact or Fiction *******

On December 13, 1862 at Fredericksburg, Virginia, Burnside's Army of the Potomac assaulted the well entrenched troops of the Army of Northern Virginia. Confederate General James Longstreet had supposedly remarked that the defensive position of his Corps on Marye's Heights was so strong that a chicken could not cross field with impunity. The fourteen failed assaults made by the Union troops upon

Longstreet's men revealed the truth of the general's observation. As night fell, thousands of dead, wounded and stranded Union soldiers faced a cold night under the Confederate cannons and muskets.

The cries of the wounded were audible to all who were on the battlefield. There was no escape from the cries for aid, for water, for mercy. From the misery that lay upon that field, a story of the compassion of man for his fellow man unfolded. A Confederate sergeant in James Kershaw's brigade, Richard Kirkland, went among the Union wounded with water to quench their thirst and to show them compassion. Sergeant Kirkland remained among the wounded giving them comfort for an hour and a half.

The story of Kirkland's actions became widely known after James Kershaw wrote an account of the deed in 1880. A statue of Kirkland giving water to a wounded Union soldier was erected on the battlefield in 1963.

The story of the Angel of Marye's Heights may well have helped heal the wounds that remained after the war. Kershaw's article was published during a time when veteran groups and the population in general were trying to move toward reconciliation.

While researching the Battle of Fredericksburg and especially Kirkland's actions, I ran across an article that questioned whether the act had really taken place. The writer of the article used the OR to look for any reference to an act of compassion during the night of the 13th. Per that writer, Kirkland's name was not mentioned among fifteen officers and two orderlies cited for meritorious conduct in the 2nd South Carolina official reports. Douglas Southall Freeman failed to mention Kirkland in his writings, as did Shelby Foote. The entire article can be found at <http://cwmemory.com/2009/12/22/is-the-richard-kirkland-story-true/>.

Richard Kirkland died in action at the Battle of Chickamauga in the fall of 1863. He left no record of his actions on that cold night on December 13, 1862 (that I have found).

Was the Angel of Marye's Heights a myth? Read the entire article sited above and make your own decision. I have made mine. I may be a romantic, but I choose to doubt that anywhere in the OR was there an example of compassion being giving to the enemy. Giving aid to the enemy was something that was just not done in writing. The actual facts could have been much different from what was reported in those actual battle reports.

Editor

***** November Program *****

Phantom Pain: North Carolina's Artificial Limbs Program for Confederate Amputees

While working in the North Carolina Archives Research Room, **Ansley Wegner** began looking into record boxes labeled "Artificial Limbs." The previously little studied records contained the names and county of residence of those North Carolina Confederate amputees who had taken advantage of a state program designed to return these men to a level of mobility that would allow them the "ability to earn a subsistence." Wegner's interest in those men and their experiences, both good and bad, led her to continue her research and to write *Phantom Pain*.

Ansley's presentation on November 8th gave insight into a little known facet of North Carolina's Civil War history. Civil War era medicine, while fraught with dangers of severe pain and infection, saved the lives of many victims of the Minié ball and rifled musket. Returning those amputees to as normal life as possible was another matter.

<insert image#5>
Ansley Wegner with *Phantom Pain*

From Ansley Wegner's North Carolina Time Traveler, November 7, 2012:

About 75 percent of the operations performed by surgeons during the Civil War were amputations. For those who survived amputation and the resulting infections, the pursuit of artificial limbs was natural.

Artificial legs, and to a lesser extent, arms, also helped the amputees get back to work in order to support themselves and their families. The United States government assisted Union amputees after the Civil War, but Confederate veterans were considered the responsibilities of the states.

North Carolina responded quickly to the needs of her citizens and became the first of the former Confederate states to offer artificial limbs to amputees. The General Assembly passed a Resolution in February 1866 to provide artificial legs to amputees. (Because artificial arms were not considered to be very functional, it was another year before the state offered artificial arms.) The state contracted with Jewett's Patent Leg Company, and a temporary factory was set up in Raleigh. During the five years that the state operated the artificial limbs program, 1,550 Confederate veterans contacted the state for help. (The state of North Carolina committed \$81,310.12 to this effort.)

<insert image#6>
Amputation Kit

There are two Jewett legs that are on display in North Carolina. Robert Alexander Hanna's below-the-knee prosthetic is in the visitor's center at [Bentonville Battlefield](#) in Four Oaks. Hanna's family reported that he made a variety of peg-type legs to use on the farm so that he could save the manufactured one for special occasions. Samuel Clark received a Jewett leg for his above-the-knee amputation. His later pension indicated that he was unable to use the device. Clark's prosthetic leg remained in his family and is now on loan for the new exhibit called *North Carolina and the Civil War: The Raging Storm, 1863*, which just opened at the [North Carolina Museum of History](#) in Raleigh.

The records of the Artificial Limbs Department are available for research in the North Carolina State [Archives](#). And an index to all of the records, by the name of the veteran, is published in *Phantom Pain*.

Source: <http://nccultureblogger.wordpress.com/2012/11/07/north-carolina-gave-veterans-a-leg-to-stand-on/>, accessed November 23, 2012 and Wegner's November 8, 2012 presentation to the CFCWRT.

***** **One Pair of Shoes** *****

After Ansley's presentation, I asked her if she had ever heard the story of the two Confederate amputees who supposedly met in a general store while looking for shoes. One of them had lost his left leg, the other his right leg. As the story went, they both wore the same size shoe and they quickly realized that if they bought one pair of shoes, each would benefit from their joint purchase. For years afterwards, or as the story was related, they met at the same store on a mutually agreed upon date and made their frugal bargain.

I could not remember where I had heard this story, but I believe it was during a tour I took with Hood's Texas Brigade Association Re-activated (**HTBAR**) back in June. As I usually do. I did not remember the details because I had not written down the story. This was just one more incomplete story that I tucked into the recesses of my Civil War memory bank.

On November 15th, I attended presentations at Fort Fisher made by Medal of Honor recipient, Joe Marm, and Bronze Star recipient, Joe Galloway. Both men had been at LZ X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley during November 1965 when American forces heavily engaged North Vietnam regulars in a three day battle. Their remembrances of their involvement were both riveting and extremely moving. If you saw the Mel Gibson movie *We Were Soldiers Once* you were exposed to the story of this action. Joe Galloway, an embedded UPI reporter, and Hal Moore, the commanding officer of the American units, had written *We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young* that was used as the basis for the movie.

As Joe Galloway finished up his talk, someone asked him to tell the story about his great-grandfather. Joe, a native Texan, began his story. His great-grandfather, James Isham Galloway, had been a sergeant in Company C (Robertson County Five Shooters). 4th Texas Infantry, Hood's Texas Brigade. James had lost his left leg at the Battle of Second Manassas. After the war, James returned to Texas where he later became sheriff of Robertson County. Sometimes later, James Reid, formerly of the 2nd Louisiana, bought a ranch adjacent to Galloway's spread. Reid had lost his right leg at the Battle of the Wilderness.

According to Joe Galloway's family legend: Once a year, Galloway and Reid would go to the store, buy one pair of shoes, and return to their homes laughing about how they beat the storekeeper out of an extra pair of shoes.

As Paul Harvey said, that was the "rest of the story."

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 Question for December *******

1 – Observe the photograph below. What do you think this photograph represented? The image captured two Minié balls from opposite sides that collided head-on during the Battle of Fredericksburg during December 1862.

The Minié ball was designed to flatten upon contact with a target. If that target was a human, the individual was subjected to a wound that could shatter any bone it contacted as it passed within the body. The Minié ball and its ability to shatter bones made necessary the large number of amputations that took place during the Civil War.

Source: http://www.civilwar.si.edu/weapons_minieball.html, (accessed November 27, 2012).