

The Runner



Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, 11 September** at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound Episcopal Church (101 Airlie Road). Social Hour begins at 7:00 p.m. (with light refreshments), meeting at 7:30.

Please make plans to attend the first meeting of our 2014-2015 Program Year. Visitors are always welcome – **this year, ask a friend to join you**. Each of our speakers strives to enlighten, entertain, and add to our knowledge of Civil War history. This serves our mission of encouraging education and research into this seminal event in our nation's past.

***** September Program *****

Point Lookout

Richard Triebe will be giving a talk on Maryland's Point Lookout prison camp and Hammond General hospital.

Point Lookout prison camp was the largest Union Civil War prison in the North and 52,000 Confederate soldiers passed through its gates. It was also the only Northern prison camp to house the prisoners in tents throughout the war. Approximately 3,800 Confederate prisoners died at Point Lookout prison camp during the two years it was open.



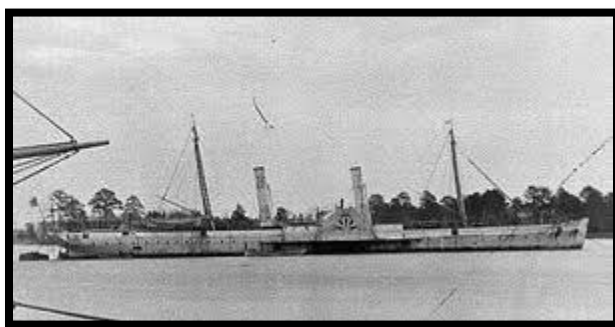
historical novels (*Upon a Rising Tide: A Tale of Running the Civil War, Port Royal*) and histories on Fort Fisher prisoners (*Confederate Fort Fisher: A Roster 1864-1865, Fort Fisher to Elmira: The Fatal Journey of 518 Confederate Prisoners*). His latest book, *Fort Fisher to Elmira*, is the recipient of the coveted Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal Award.

Richard H. Triebe is a freelance writer and historian. He is the author of several

Richard has an Associate's Degree in Marine Technology. Richard is a former Chicago police officer and also a former Provost Marshal investigator in the United States Army. He is a member of the Coastal Carolina Writers Guild and the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. Richard has presented historical overviews of the battles of Fort Fisher to many local organizations. He and his wife, Barbara, live in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Editor

***** **Member News & Activities** *****



Blockade Runner the *Robert E. Lee*

If you have member news or news about Civil War events that you think would be of interest to CFCWRT membership, send me an email with the details. Thanks.

1 – Welcome to the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table 2014-2015 program year. A wide variety of speakers and subjects will be featured during this exciting sesquicentennial year.

2 - The Brunswick Civil War Round Table will meet on **Tuesday, September 2nd** - registration and refreshments: 6:30pm. Program will begin at 7:00pm. They will meet at the **Trinity Methodist Church**, 209 E. Nash Street.

Peter Cozzens, noted Civil War historian, will present *“Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson’s Valley Campaign.”*

3 – Opportunity – On Saturday, **September 6**, 2014, **Dr. Chris Fonvielle** will present a lecture entitled, **“1864: The Beginning of the End of the Civil War in North Carolina.”** This Sesquicentennial talk will be sponsored by the Cape Fear Chapter 3, United Daughters of the Confederacy and will be held at **10am** at the Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church, 409 S. Fifth Avenue. For additional information, contact Pat Gasson, 392-0381.

4 – Making Sense of the Civil War @ NHCPL - Beginning on **September 9th** at the NHC Northeast Library (1241 Military Cutoff Road), **Dr. Chris Fonvielle** begins a series that calls for participants to read and then take part in discussions during each session. These Dr. Fonvielle led sessions are on September 9, September 23, October 7, October 21, and November 4 – **6:00 – 8:15pm**. Books for the programs are provided by the North Carolina Center for the Book and can be borrowed at the Circulation Desk at the Main Library or the Northeast Library.

For more information about these programs, or about local history and genealogy collections and research at NHC Library, please call Local History Librarian Jennifer Daugherty at 910-798-6305 or email jdaugherty@nhcgov.com.
<http://www.libraryaware.com/560/NewsletterIssues/ViewIssue/fff25567-63c0-443b-803c-9a088205d711?postId=609400d5-a252-466d-859b-e50e5194220b>

5 – Cape Fear Revolutionary War Round Table meets on **September 10th** at the Southport Community Building 223 E. Bay Street at **7:00pm**. Harry Warren and Albert Shaw speak on “Production of Tar and Turpentine in Colonial North Carolina.”

******* September 1864 *******

September 1864 - Near Atlanta, the South launched an attack against Union positions at Jonesboro. It was a failure but of greater importance to the Union was that those who fought at Jonesboro for the Union noticed that the Confederate attack was nothing like previous ones in terms of “weight nor persistence”. A loss of a further 2,000 men at Jonesboro (against 200 lost by the North) showed that the South was losing far too many men to be able to sustain the campaign in Atlanta.

Atlanta fell on September 2nd and such was the importance of taking the city that Lincoln ordered a day of national rejoicing on September 5th 1864. It is what happened in Atlanta itself that remains one of the most controversial incidents of the American Civil War. Sherman ordered that any building that was of no use to the military should be destroyed and that the city was to be for the military only - not civilians. Grant encouraged Sherman to continue being aggressive.

September 1st: The whole of Sherman’s army was employed against Jonesboro. The Confederates here withdrew at night leaving behind 3,000 prisoners. There was little in the way of Sherman’s army now and the decision was taken to evacuate Atlanta. What the Confederate Army could not take with them was destroyed.

September 2nd: General Lee suggested that slaves could be used for the labouring tasks done by the Army of Virginia. This would free up non-slave labourers for combat.

The first Union troops entered Atlanta – men from the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry. Sherman sent a message to President Lincoln, “Atlanta is ours, and fairly won”.

September 3rd: Lincoln declared that September 5th would be a day of national celebration.

September 4th: the Confederate raider, John H Morgan, who had been a continual thorn to the Union, was killed at Greenville, Tennessee.

In Atlanta, Sherman ordered all civilians to leave. He wanted the city to be a purely military zone. He also ordered the destruction of any buildings other than private residences and churches.

September 5th: A national day of celebration. Louisiana, occupied by Union forces, voted to abolish slavery in the state.

September 8th: George B McClellan accepted the Democrat nomination to stand against Lincoln in the November election. However, the Republicans were reaping the rewards of the fall of Atlanta. Many also questioned why a major general would want to stand against the army's commander-in-chief.

September 10th: Sherman received a message from General Grant urging him to continue with his aggressive offensive.

September 12th: Buoyed by Sherman's success in Atlanta, Lincoln contacted Grant to urge him to be more aggressive against Lee. However, Grant was aware that Lee was facing major problems and that his army was becoming desperately short of men who were capable of fighting. His army was bolstered by men from General Early's army but this left Early short of men in the Lower Shenandoah Valley. Early had 20,000 men to face a Union force of 43,000 men.

September 16th: Lee's army ran out of corn and there was no obvious way his Army of Virginia could be supplied, especially as there were food shortages across the Confederacy. Lee was saved by a daring Confederate raid behind enemy lines that captured 2,400 head of cattle.

September 19th: General Early's men were attacked by a much larger Union force at Winchester. Early lost a total of 3,921 men out of 12,000 while Union losses numbered 4,018 men out of 40,000 men. While General Sheridan, commander of the Union force that attacked Early could afford such losses, Early could not. Only a very skilled withdrawal by Early avoided a far greater number of losses.

September 22nd: A large Union force pursued Early. They clashed on the banks of Cedar Creek. Early lost a further 1,200 men and 12 artillery guns.

September 23rd: Early weakened army embarked on a rapid withdrawal. They were not vigorously pursued.

September 24th: Crops in the Shenandoah Valley was destroyed on the orders of General Grant.

September 25th: What was left of Early's army fell back to Brown's Pass in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Jefferson Davis met with General Hood at Palmetto, Georgia, to discuss what they both agreed was the parlous state of the Confederate Army in the Western Theatre.

September 26th: Union forces attacked Early's men in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

September 27th: Confederate guerrillas continued to unsettle Union forces in the South. Especially successful was Bloody Bill Anderson who looted the town of Centralia in Missouri.

September 29th: Grant started a major assault on Richmond.

September 30th: Union forces took three miles of land in just one day in their attack on Richmond. Lee with just 50,000 men to protect the city informed Davis in Richmond that his position was bleak. Lee survived by sending reserves to areas where a Union breakthrough looked the most likely. However, he knew that it was not the solution to the problems he was facing. Lee himself took command of several counter-attacks, which were successful. But he did believe that he was delaying the inevitable.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/September-1864-civil-war.htm>
(Accessed May 21, 2014).

***** Civil War Ancestors *****

Do you know what your ancestors did during the Civil War? **Bruce Patterson** shared the following about two members of his family.

If you would like to share stories of your kinsman or kinswoman and their lives during or after the Civil War, forward a short article and I will include in *The Runner* so others may learn you're your family history.

Henry Stroub(e)

Company A, 15th New York Engineer Regiment



15th & 50th New York Engineers Monument at Gettysburg

Henry Stroub(e) served his Country during the Civil War with service in the 15th NY Engineers. Stroub(e) was not with the Regiment for an extended period but it was during his enlistment that the 15th was committed to one of the most significant early battles of that great conflict.

The 15th Engineer Regiment was raised in New York City in response to President Lincoln's call for troops. Henry Stroub (spelled Stroube on the Regimental roll) joined Company A, 15th New York Engineer Regiment at the age of 26 on 23 September 1862. As was the practice during the Civil War, he immediately joined the Regiment which was preparing for a campaign against the Confederate Capitol of Richmond, Virginia. In order to reach Richmond, the Union Army of the Potomac would have to cross the Rappahannock River and drive the Army of Northern Virginia from positions on the south side of the river at Fredericksburg.

Thus the 15th Engineers found themselves on the north bank of the Rappahannock River before Fredericksburg, Virginia in December, 1862 when newly appointed Union General Ambrose Burnside decided to cross the river with 120,000 men and attack General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia who were dug into prepared positions on Marye's Heights, a wooded ridge to the south of and overlooking the city. The task for Union forces would be to cross the swift running Rappahannock, traverse the city of Fredericksburg and then attack Lee who held the high ground, south of the city. The date was 10 December 1862.



During the Civil War and for every conflict since, it is the Engineers that prepare the way for the Infantry and thus it was the 15th NY Engineer Regiment, together with the 50th NY Engineers, that was called upon to build three pontoon bridges over the Rappahannock while under Artillery fire from Marye's Heights and sharpshooter sniper fire from the city.

General Burnside began the assault with an artillery bombardment of the city the afternoon of 10 December. His Engineers followed immediately in their effort to build the bridges. They completed three bridges, with appropriate approaches by the night of 12 December. The Union Army attacked the morning of the 13th with disastrous results but the Engineers had done their job well. The bridges held and in fact were used in the Union assault and their subsequent retreat from Fredericksburg. Although there is no report of Henry Stroub's specific actions, he was no doubt in the thick of the action during that cold and wet operation.

Following the Fredericksburg Campaign, the Regiment went into winter camp but was called upon to construct corduroy roads in the vicinity as the dirt roads became impassible during the balance of the Northern Virginia winter.

Stroub was to remain with the Regiment until he was taken ill with Typhoid Fever and evacuated to a military hospital in Washington. His three year enlistment was cut short when he was discharged with disability on 25 March 1863. Henry Stroub had become a casualty of war due to disease rather than enemy action. Such was the case for more than 50% of all Civil War casualties. His records show that he was discharged with the rank of Artificer signifying that he had become a specialist in one or another discipline required for duty within the Regiment.

Henry Stroub, like so many of his fellow citizens answered his Country's call to arms in the defense of Union. As members of the (New York) Militia, they were the epitome of the Citizen Soldier.

The Military History of William H. Dobbs (1829-1885)



William Dobbs was an ordinary laborer who made his living as a painter. That was before April 1861 when the Civil War began.

Dobbs was married (Sarah Newman, 23 October 1854) and living in Cold Spring, NY (Putnam County) when the New York State Militia began recruiting in order to meet the levy imposed on each state by President Lincoln. Dobbs enlisted (9 August 1862) in the newly formed 6th Heavy Artillery Regiment, raised from Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties. He was assigned to Company L for a contracted three year period.

The 6th Heavy Artillery (HA), following a period of training, was assigned to the defense of Washington, DC and in July of 1863, took part in the Second Battle of Manassas followed by the Mine Run campaign. The Regiment then spent the winter of 1863-64 in Winter Quarters at Brandy Station, VA (see picture) as part of the Army of the Potomac preparing for what became the most intensive and prolonged action of the war. The action of 1863 was just a foretaste of what was to follow, for in 1864, President Lincoln gave command of the Army of the Potomac to General Ulysses S. Grant with orders to defeat the Army of Northern Virginia (Robert E. Lee's battle tested troops) and ultimately capture the Confederate Capitol in Richmond.

The Regiment had taken few casualties prior to 1864 but in May they fought the Battle of the Wilderness followed by the Salient and Harris House at Spotsylvania Courthouse. It was at the Salient that the 6th HA was forced out of their traditional Artillery role and deployed as Infantry taking 161 casualties on the afternoon of May 12th. There is no record of what William Dobbs role was on those fateful days but the record of the 6th is resplendent with vignettes speaking of individual heroism. Newspaper reports, mostly written by soldiers in the field, give evidence of the terror on the battlefield as Grant continually hounded Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia as they attempted to move south and defend Richmond. It was reported in the Westchester (NY) newspapers that the Confederate forces at Spotsylvania had been told that they were facing green (untrained) troops. They were shocked to learn to the contrary as they faced the 6th Heavy Artillery fighting with rifle and bayonet.

Although the 6th sustained their highest casualties at Spotsylvania, they were quickly committed to battle at North Anna and then Cold Harbor where Grant won the day by simply committing more troops to the battle than Lee could possibly fend off. The cost to the 6th was 133 men.



Gordon Rhea at Spotsylvania Courthouse – April 2015 CFCWRT Speaker

Following Cold Harbor, Lee went into defensive positions around Richmond and Petersburg, VA. The siege had begun. It was during the early stages of what would become a nine month standoff that William Dobbs became ill, ill enough to turn himself into the medics and on 27 June 1864, he was transferred to the 5th Corps Hospital at City Point, Virginia (the major Union supply point at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers, downstream from Richmond and Petersburg) Our ancestor remained at City Point for two months but was finally transferred (by ship) to the Military Hospital in West Philadelphia, PA for discharge on 6 May 1865.

Pension records reflect that a serious illness had afflicted him throughout his military service but it wasn't until the siege of Richmond and Petersburg that he sought (recorded) medical help. There is no doubt that Dobbs suffered from what is now known as celiac disease.

Dobbs returned to New York and his family. He received a small pension and supported his family as best he could by continuing work as a day laborer and painter. He continued to suffer from celiac until his death from a cerebral hemorrhage (8 January 1885). The medical examiner commented at that time that he appeared at least 10 years older than his 56 years. He is buried in Saint Michael's Cemetery (Astoria, LI, NY)

William Dobbs enlisted when his nation called and as fate would have it, took part in some of the most furious fighting of the war. Civil War veterans (from both sides) looked to the battles at Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor as perhaps the bloodiest of the conflict. Current day Civil War historians look with awe upon those battles still wondering how the combatants, national cousins for the most part, could have continued the engagement as their brothers fell on each side of them. When it was over, Dobbs went home and picked up where he left off. He was mustered out of the service as a Private First Class on 6 May 1865 and was awarded the appropriate service buttons at that time. William Dobbs military service was not unique. He answered the call, performed his duty and returned to civilian life. As a member of the New York Militia he was the epitome of the Citizen Soldier.

******* Thoughts *******

I recently read several articles in the Winter 2014 issue of *The Museum of the Confederacy Magazine*. The articles were written by John M. Coski and they basically told of a story of Confederate veteran organizations and their importance in the resurrection of a defeated section of a reunited nation.

Coski's stories got me to thinking: Has any other nation allowed those who participated in a civil war and lost, to organize its defeated soldiers into veteran groups who honored the memory of their losing efforts? I cannot think of one other nation where this occurred whether in the ancient or modern world. Rome, England, France, Russia, Spain, China, the Balkans, and Syria? "Off with their heads" was and is more than a cliché. Most winners did not and do not embrace the losers in a civil conflict.

So what is the point?

Even though the United States was slow in seeing the North and the South to really embrace, it happened and compromise was achieved. It was a hard process and as recent events have shown, it is a continued process. That being said, the path that Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, William S. Sherman, Joseph E. Johnston and others took in April 1865 was truly unique.

Comments?

Editor