



**THE DRUM & BUGLE**  
**Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table**  
**Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Newsletter**  
**August 2018, Volume 15, Issue 8**

**Speaker:** Richard Lewis  
**Topic:** "Cloaked in a Mystery - Confederate Generals and Their Uniforms"  
**When:** Monday, August 13, 2018  
**Location:** Brock's Riverside Grill  
**Times:** Social Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 p.m.

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**Richard Lewis "Cloaked in a Mystery: Confederate Generals and Their Uniforms"**

Richard Lewis of Richmond, Virginia, is the retired Director of National Media Relations for the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Secretary and board member of Civil War Trails, Inc. He received a Bachelor's Degree in History from Louisiana State University in 1978 and studied under Pulitzer Prize-winning Civil War scholar Dr. T. Harry Williams. He served as Liaison to the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the Civil War Commission from 2010 to 2015 and is the former Marketing Director at Pamplin Historical Park. He has authored articles in Civil War Times and Hallowed Ground magazines and has appeared multiple times on the History Channel.

Mr. Lewis's presentation was inspired by his discovery that a number of Confederate generals and colonels posed for studio portraits wearing the same uniform coat. His research expanded to include a look at the regulation uniform for Confederate general officers, the many variations that resulted from uniforms being made by private tailors, family members or admirers, the story of how he tracked down the single uniform used in the aforementioned portraits, and discoveries about when and where these images were taken. He describes his approach as "lively and fun for the audience."

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"Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Massacre of Fort Pillow."

by Edwin C. Bearss

A Review of the July 2018 Program by Greg Mertz

Ed Bearss chose to speak on one of the darkest chapters of Confederate cavalry commander Nathan Bedford Forrest for his annual presentation in which Bearss and the intern named in his honor are both recognized by our round table. Forrest was a man who did not suffer fools gladly. Whether up against a rival individual or an opposing army, whether in conflict with a Union soldier or a fellow Confederate, whether dealing with a superior or a subordinate, Forrest was tough and demanding adversary.

Bearss gave examples of how exacting Forrest could be, even when dealing with comrades in the Confederate army. When Bearss mentioned that Forrest disemboweled the man who shot him, he was alluding to a confrontation between the general and one of his artillerymen, Lt. Andrew Wills Gould. Forrest blamed Gould for the loss of a cannon and had Gould reassigned. Gould considered the transfer an insult to his honor. An ensuing argument resulted in Forrest being shot in the abdomen and Gould being stabbed in the chest – a mortal wound.

Bearss also told of a meeting that may have taken place between Forrest and Confederate army commander Gen. Braxton Bragg in the aftermath of the Battle of Chickamauga, when Forrest's troopers were taken from him for the third time during the war. Forrest supposedly conveyed his anger to his superior by stating, *"You have played the part of a damned scoundrel, and are a coward, and if you were any part of a man I would slap your jaws and force you to resent it."*

Whatever the circumstances, Forrest was sent from the Army of the Tennessee then at Chattanooga to command a district in west Tennessee. During the subsequent spring campaign of 1864, as Gen. William T. Sherman embarked upon the Atlanta Campaign, the Confederate whom he feared the most was Forrest. Sherman offered a major general's commission to the officer who defeated Forrest. Sherman was concerned that if Forrest departed western Tennessee, he might sever the Union supply line along the Western Atlantic Railroad and deny Atlanta from the Union army. Sherman made sure that the forts in the Mississippi Valley, where Forrest would be campaigning, were heavily garrisoned.

Gen. Forrest began the spring campaign operating against the Union fort at Paducah, Kentucky, but then rode to Jackson, Tennessee, where he organized his troops to converge on a fort along the Mississippi River, north of Memphis called Fort Pillow. Though constructed by the Confederates and named for Confederate Gen. Gideon Pillow, the fort was in Union hands in April 1864.

The Union garrison at the fort numbered about 700 men. Maj. Lionel F. Booth commanded United States Colored Troops (USCTs) comprising about half of the Fort Pillow defenders, including six artillery pieces. While Confederates were angered by Lincoln's call to arm black men, Forrest's men despised the white troops in the garrison even more so. Maj. William F. Bradford commanded the 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Union regiment, a white regiment made up of people from west Tennessee who were loyal to the Union, and who Bearss described as being "bullies" when encountering their neighbors who supported the Confederacy. Forrest and his men detested these Yankee Tennesseans worse than they hated the black troops, Bearss stressed. Union gunboats patrolled the river.

Forrest had assembled a force that was about three times larger than the Fort Pillow garrison. As Forrest encircled the fort, he demanded the surrender of the Union forces. Bearss indicated that Booth was an experienced officer who would have realized the futility of resisting the Confederate assault and would have surrendered the garrison, but he was killed early in the battle and Bradford took control of the fort as the senior officer. Forrest continued to send correspondence to Booth, while Bradford concealed from the Confederate commander that the old army veteran Booth was dead. If Fort Pillow surrendered, Forrest promised to treat the garrison as prisoners of war, but he then warned that if the Union commander refused to surrender, he would not be held responsible for the fate of the Union force once his men attacked and overwhelmed the fort. As Gould and then Bragg had done the previous year, Bearss indicated that Union commander Maj. Bradford pushed Forrest beyond his limits of his patience on April 12, 1864.

Forrest learned that Yankee gunboats were coming up the river to the aid of Fort Pillow and promptly sent his troops forward. The Confederates quickly went up and over the walls of the fort. Forrest, having had three horses shot out from under him, probably taking hard falls leading to an increase in his infatuation with the Union forcers, personally withdrew from the battlefield, probably because he knew what was about to happen. Though many Union troops tried to surrender, the Confederates kept fighting, killing a number of Union soldiers who no longer offered any resistance and posed no threat to Forrest's men. Nearly half of the garrison was killed in what has become known as the Massacre of Fort Pillow.

Bearss explained that Fort Pillow was not the worst massacre of the war. That distinction came three months later at the Battle of the Crater at Petersburg. Less than a week after Fort Pillow, the

Massacre of Poison Springs, Arkansas took place, but it is much less known because the Confederate commander, Gen. Samuel Maxey, was not as prominent as Forrest, and the atrocity at Poison Springs attracted much less attention.

A congressional investigation was done. Bearss indicated that Confederate President Jefferson Davis hid behind Forrest and did not seek to defend Forrest's actions. While congressional investigations are published in the normal quantity of 10,000, there were 40,000 copies published of the Fort Pillow investigation for a broad distribution of the atrocities.

Forrest went on to fight one of his most brilliant victories at Brice's Cross Roads, Mississippi on June 9, 1864. The USCTs engaged in the battle entered the fight wearing "Remember Fort Pillow" boutonnieres; Bearss suspects many of them would have discarded them during the fight lest they fall into Confederate hands wearing the touting message.

Forrest's postwar activities including being involved with the Ku Klux Klan, spreading horror particularly after the Civil War, after World War I, and during the Civil Rights movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Forrest probably died of diabetes.

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### **The Fifth Annual Emerging Civil War Symposium at Stevenson Ridge—August 3—5, 2018**

#### The Battle of Gettysburg

The Fifth Annual Emerging Civil War Symposium at Stevenson Ridge will be held August 3 – 5, 2018

This year's theme is "Turning Points of the American Civil War"

#### Speaker Line-Up:

Bert Dunkerly, "Turning Points: An Overview"

Gregory A. Mertz, "Defeated Victory: Albert Sidney Johnston's Death at Shiloh"

James A. Morgan, "Unintended Consequences: Ball's Bluff and the Rise of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War"

Doug Crenshaw, "The Rise of Lee: Richmond 1862"

Matthew Atkinson, "Gettysburg vs. Vicksburg: What's the Bigger Turning Point?"

Chris Kolakowski, "Grant Takes Command"

Edward Alexander, "Grant Crosses the James"

Rea Andrew Redd, "The Election of 1864: The Point of No Return"

#### Keynote Speaker:

Scott Hartwig, "If We Fail Now the North Has No Hope:" The Antietam Campaign of 1862.

#### Sunday's Tour:

The wounding of Lt. Gen. Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson at Chancellorsville led by the co-author of The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson, Chris Mackowski.

#### Friday Evening Roundtable Discussion:

Emceed by Dr. Chris Mackowski: What are the great turning points of the war—Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Lincoln's Election, the Emancipation Proclamation, and more.

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#### **Ongoing Reminder**

Please contact Bob Jones to order your dinner in advance or to confirm your dinner reservation. Please call Bob Jones @ 540-399-1702 or send him your e-mail at [cwrtedinner@yahoo.com](mailto:cwrtedinner@yahoo.com)

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## Executive Committee Bios

Each month this newsletter will feature a short biography of one of our Executive Committee members. This month we feature Greg Mertz

### Greg Mertz, Scribe

Greg is one of the founders of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table and was the president for the initial two years of the organization. Greg is also a past vice-president of the Brandy Station Foundation. He grew up near St. Louis, Missouri, is a graduate of the University of Missouri, and has a masters from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. Greg is an Eagle Scout and annual visits by his Boy Scout troop to the Shiloh National Military Park resulted in his fascination with the Civil War and his love of parks. He first worked for the National Park Service as a temporary employee at Gettysburg National Military Park, then as a permanent employee at both the Eisenhower National Historic Site and Gettysburg for a total of four years. He then held several different positions at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park for 34 years – most of them as the Supervisory Historian, managing the personal services provided by permanent, temporary, volunteer and intern historians. He has written four feature articles for Blue and Gray Magazine and within the next year his book *Attack at Daylight and Whip Them: The Battle of Shiloh, April 6-7, 1862* will be released in the Emerging Civil War series.

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### The Civil War Round Table of Fredericksburg By Bob Jones

As a courtesy, the RVCWRT provides as a regular feature each month, the ongoing scheduled speakers for the CWRTF's 2018 Program Year. The Civil War Round Table of Fredericksburg normally meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month (except for one meeting held on the third Wednesday of June 2018). Dinner Meetings are held at the UMW's Jepson Center located at [1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg, VA](#), dinner cost is \$32.00 per person. Advance reservations should be made by email: [dinner@cwrtf.org](mailto:dinner@cwrtf.org) or telephone: 540-361-2105.

CWRTF's Scheduled Speakers for the 2018 and 2019 Program Year:

September 26, 2018	Frank Orlando	"Gen. and Mrs. Robert E. Lee in Character"
October 24, 2018	Gordon Rhea	"The Generalship of Lee and Grant in the Overland Campaign"
November 14, 2018	Richard Lewis	"Confederate Generals' Uniforms"
January 23, 2019	Robert Dunkerly	"Civil War Railroads"
February 27, 2019	Dr. Bradley Gottfried	"Maps of the Battle of Fredericksburg"
March 27, 2019	Bob O'Connor	"James Hanger and the Hanger Company"
April 24, 2019	Mark Tooley	"The 1861 Peace Conference"

May 22, 2019	Patrick Schroeder, NPS	"Zouaves: America's Forgotten Soldiers"
June 19, 2019	Dave Bastion	"The Vicksburg Canal"
SEPT. 25, 2019	Brian E. Withrow	"Ulysses S. Grant in Character"
OCT.23, 2019	Michael K. Shaffer	"In Memory of Self and Comrades: Thomas W. Colley's Recollection"

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### Who we are

The Drum and Bugle Newsletter is published monthly, by the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 7632, Fredericksburg, VA 22404. Each month, The Drum and Bugle newsletter is also placed on our web-site, [www.RVCWRT.org](http://www.RVCWRT.org). Yearly membership dues are \$35.00 for an individual, \$45.00 for families, and only \$7.50 for students. Membership is open to anyone interested in the study of the Civil War and the ongoing preservation of Civil War sites.

### The RVCWRT Executive Committee:

President/Dinner Meeting:	Bob Jones	Membership:	Ryan Quint
Vice President:	John Sapanara	Member at Large:	Robin Donato
Secretary:	Melanie Jordan	Member at Large:	John Griffiths
Treasurer:	Bob Pfile	Member at Large:	Robin Donato
Assistant Treasurer:	Ben Keller	Member at Large:	Barbara Stafford
Meeting Scribe:	Greg Mertz	Media & Events Coordinator:	Paul Steir
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Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:	Dan Augustine		

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