



# THE DRUM & BUGLE

Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table

## Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Newsletter

January 2015, Volume 12, Issue 1

**Speaker:** Phillip Greenwalt  
**Topic:** "With Lee's Bad Old Man: The Second Corps in the Shenandoah Valley 1864"  
**When:** Monday, January 12, 2015  
**Location:** Brock's Riverside Grill  
**Times:** Social Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 pm

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### Abstract on Phillip Greenwalt, our Scheduled Speaker for Monday, January 12, 2015

Phillip Greenwalt is our scheduled January speaker. Mr. Greenwalt is currently employed as a historian with the National Park Service at the George Washington Birthplace National Monument in Westmoreland County, Virginia and at the Thomas Stone National Historic Site in Charles County, Maryland. Greenwalt graduated with a bachelor's degree in history in 2008, from the Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia. In 2011, he graduated with a master's degree in American History from George Mason University. Greenwalt has been with the NPS for the past four years, after following a summer as an interpretive historical intern at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. Greenwalt currently resides in Montross, Virginia, along with his wife Adel. She is an elementary school teacher.

The Shenandoah Valley had always been a thorn in the side of President Abraham Lincoln and of the Union war effort. For the Confederates, the Valley had always been a theater of successes and an avenue of invasion into the north. It had been in 1862, when Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson had conducted a masterful campaign that stymied Union plans and more than once sent the capital of Washington D.C. into a frenzy. However, by 1864, Union plans for Virginia still called for the subjugation of the Shenandoah Valley's economic and military capabilities.

Once again, Robert E. Lee would turn to the survivors, i.e., those men who had served under Jackson in 1862 to head west from Richmond to defend the Valley. Under the leadership of Jubal Early, the Second Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia, with reinforcements from the Valley in tow, would try and upset Union plans once again.

Greenwalt's presentation centers on Confederate efforts to defend and capitalize in the Shenandoah Valley during the autumn of 1864. What happened there would tie directly into the final outcome of the war itself. Both sides had by 1864, come to understand Stonewall Jackson's ominous words *"If this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost."*

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### RVCWRT History Alert Program

RVCWRT member Alan Zirkle, provides a totally free service, which notifies subscribers about any/all upcoming local history events in the Fredericksburg general area. This is done via subscribers recorded e-mail address, it concerns upcoming history-related events. RVCWRT members receive Alan's important messages. If you do not now, but would like to receive *"History Alerts"* please send your e-mail to Alan noting this fact @ [az@azirkle.com](mailto:az@azirkle.com).

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## **“Mr. Lincoln: Let’s Set the Record Straight!”**

**Presented by Dr. Mike Stevens**

**A Review of our December Program by Greg Mertz**

Like all of us at the round table, one of our former presidents, Dr. Mike Stevens, would engage fellow members in discussion about the Civil War during dinner meetings. On one particular occasion, Stevens shared his admiration of Abraham Lincoln and was strongly challenged by one of our members. On another occasion, Stevens wrote a favorable review of a book about Lincoln which prompted a response that Stevens quoted to us as he began his presentation on Monday, December 8 2014.

This discourse went as follows: “Without a doubt Abraham Lincoln caused more damage to individual rights and had less respect for the founding principles of our country than any other president before or since. His war ended the voluntary nature of the constitution at gunpoint, tramping over the rights of states. He didn’t care about slavery and the Emancipation Proclamation didn’t actually free any slaves. The only reason he pushed to abolish slavery was to cripple the Southern economy . . . Mr. Booth did a good deed by sending this tyrant straight to hell.”

Such experiences have prompted Stevens to prepare this program. Stevens focused on two aspects of the written criticism he shared: Lincoln and racism and slavery, and Lincoln and the Constitution.

Steven concluded by sharing some personal observations. Stevens took on the allegation that Lincoln did not care about the slaves or slavery, and that his only interest in ending slavery was to further war aims. The views commonly held by the vast majority of those living in the Civil War era would be regarded as racist by today’s standards. Lincoln understood that racial prejudice was a typical belief of most white Americans whether they lived in the North or in the South. Consideration of this factor was a key in President Lincoln’s initial solution to the slavery issue – colonization. Lincoln favored sending African Americans to colonies outside of the United States, because he felt that racism would make it very difficult for blacks to fit into American society once emancipated. While black colonization was a part of the preliminary emancipation proclamation issued on September 22, 1862, it was not part of Lincoln’s final decree issued January 1, 1863

As the president, Lincoln appreciated the parameters of the office regarding what could be done with slavery. His personal feelings regarding slavery were tempered by what he could actually do within the bounds of our political system. There were limits to what could be done where slavery had already existed. Lincoln’s platform, while running for the nation’s highest office did not appeal for an end to slavery but called for a halt of the further extension of slavery. His policies also had to consider the Border States – the slave states that remained loyal to the Union – lest they decide to join the Confederacy. Appeasing both the abolitionists and the loyal slaveholders and keeping both in support of the Union required moderation and pursuing policies that were practical.

The exigencies of war gave the presidency the ability to do some things on the grounds of military necessity that he could not do in times of peace. The Emancipation Proclamation was indeed a war aim based upon the realization that slave labor was contributing to the Confederate cause and enabling their economy to remain functional. It applied only in areas of rebellion, where slave holders were not going to obey the law. “But the lack of immediate enforceability,” Stevens argued “had no effect on the legal validity of the Emancipation Proclamation.” Slaves who had passed into Federal lines early in the war were retained by the United States army as property – contrabands of war. Slaves who made it to Federal lines after the Emancipation Proclamation were no longer property – they were free men and women. The slaves had an incentive to escape and Stevens declared that the Emancipation Proclamation “gave a new moral dimension to the war.” War aims and the end of slavery went hand in hand. Stevens noted that whatever advancements Lincoln may have made regarding slavery would have been for naught if he could not save the Union and that the Union would not be worth preserving if it did not destroy slavery.

Stevens asserted that many statements made by Lincoln can easily be taken out of context and then used to give the appearance that Lincoln “did not care about African Americans.” However, numerous quotations make Lincoln’s position clear. “There is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” Lincoln stated, “I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man.”

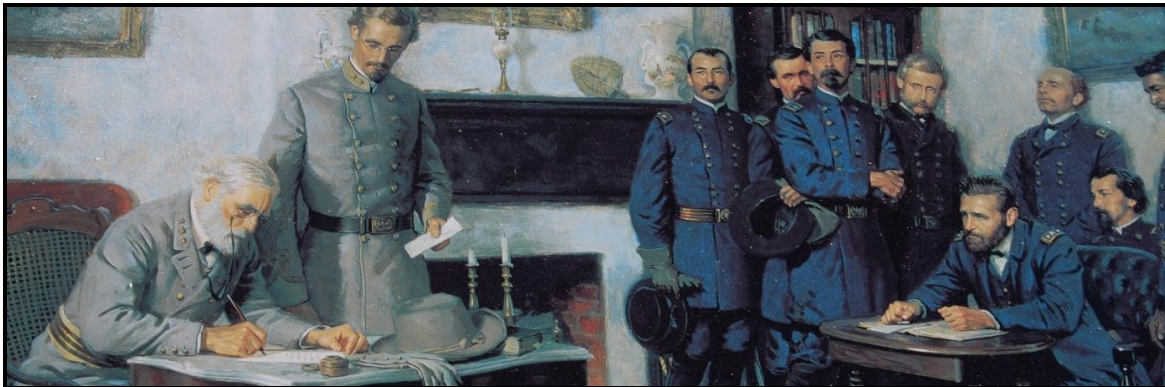
Regarding Abraham Lincoln and the constitution, arguably the greatest criticism was the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and the arrest of as many as 20,000 citizens. In loosely defining the president’s role as commander in chief, the constitution indicated that the writ of habeas corpus may be suspended in cases of

rebellion when public safety would require it. Stevens contended that doing so was both Lincoln's prerogative and that it was the right thing to do. Although, Lincoln did trample some civil liberties, he preserved a greater liberty by doing so. The very existence of the country was in danger, and defending the nation and the constitution as a whole superseded any specific aspect of the constitution. When Federal troops were attacked in Baltimore, and telegraph lines and bridges were destroyed leading to the undefended capitol of the nation while congress was not in session. Lincoln acted, using the wartime measures he understood to be within his authority for the safety of the public and the defense of the country. Lincoln was faithful to the spirit of the constitution, Stevens declared, if not to the letter of it.

In imparting some of his personal reflections, Stevens shared with those in attendance that he admired and revered Lincoln above all others in American history. Stevens does not view Lincoln as the sainted father Abraham, but respects and honors a Lincoln who may have compromised, but never compromised his principles. He then stated in closing that those who love this country owe President Abraham Lincoln a debt that can never be repaid.

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**“THE SUN SETS ON THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA”**



**RVCWRT 2015 Bus Tour; Saturday & Sunday, April 25 & 26, 2015  
150th Anniversary visit to:**

- **Five Forks Battlefield (April 1, 1865)**
- **Sailor's Creek Battlefield (April 6, 1865)**
- **Appomattox Court House (April 8/9, 1865)**
- **The Museum of the Confederacy**

Saturday: 7:30 a.m. – Bus departs Fredericksburg – Bus to Five Forks VC; Box Lunch; Bus to Sailor's Creek VC; Dinner in Farmville at Charley's Waterfront Cafe; Bus to Hampton Inn in Farmville.

Sunday: Breakfast at Hampton Inn; Bus to Museum of the Confederacy; Lunch at Babcock House Bus to Appomattox Court House VC; Bus returns to Fredericksburg.

Cost Per Person: **\$295.00** (If sharing a room); **\$362.00** (If using a single room).

Cost includes: Bus; Room; Fees & Donations; Box Lunch; Dinner; Breakfast; Lunch; Room and Meals for Tour Guide & Bus Driver; Handouts.

*Attendees are responsible for any alcoholic beverages, additional food and beverages, and any purchases made at the various on-site gift stores.*

Reservations: Contact Bob Jones at '[3dognight@bigplanet.com](mailto:3dognight@bigplanet.com)' or telephone 540-399-1702  
\$100.00 per person deposit required by NLT March 1, 2015.  
Send deposits to RVCWRT, Box 7632, Fredericksburg, VA 22404

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**Remember: Contact Bob Jones To Order Your Dinner In Advance**  
To Confirm Your Reservations; Telephone 540-399-1702 or e-mail [3dognight@Bigplanet.Com](mailto:3dognight@Bigplanet.Com)

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## Your RVCWRT Membership is Due

Guess what? It's that time of year once again, i.e., when we need to request that you each renew your yearly RVCWRT Membership again. While other area organizations have of course, raised their membership dues to cover costs – we have not needed too. Individual yearly membership is still just \$30.00, family membership is only \$45.00 and our student membership remains \$7.50.

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## Dinner Meeting Parking . . .

From recent *Survey Sheets* which our members are asked to complete at each Dinner Meeting, several people have noted their concerns about available parking for our Dinner Meetings. It was well over one year ago, that in lieu of this concern, Brock's took steps to open up their Parking Lot and placed parking signs along the street and they are enforcing these signs for available parking! However, if parking in their lot or along the nearby street is unavailable, there are other fairly close-by parking options. There are (of course) the *Parking Lots* for Train passengers (these lots are open to the public for parking after 6:00 pm daily). Also, there is always the downtown *Parking Garage* (a short walk from across the street), and of course, further along Sofia Street there is usually available on street parking . . .

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**Edmund Ruffin**  
by Jim Smithfield

Edmund Ruffin was born on January 5, 1794, and he ended his own life on June 17, 1865, after writing in his *Journal* that he did not want to live in a Yankee controlled world. Besides being a die-hard Secessionist, Ruffin was a wealthy Virginia planter and slaveholder who in the 1850's became a political activist known as one of the *Fire-Eaters*. Ruffin advocated *States Rights* and justified slavery in the South. He argued for secession many years before the Civil War. Ruffin is credited as "firing the first shot of the war" at the *Battle of Fort Sumter*. In fact he served as a Confederate soldier despite his advanced age. When the Civil War ended in Southern defeat in 1865, Ruffin committed suicide rather than submit to "Yankee rule". It is interesting to note, that by June of 1865, we find Ruffin broke and many of those he cared about gone.

Ruffin's chief legacy is of all things, his pioneering work in methods to preserve and improve soil productivity. He recommended crop rotation and then making specific additions to restore soil exhausted from constant tobacco crops. Early in his career, he studied bogs and swamps to learn how to correct soil acidity. Ruffin published essays and then in 1852, he wrote a book on his findings for improving soil. Whatever else Ruffin was, he has become known as "the father of soil science" in the United States. He was among a tight circle of intellectuals who sought and fought for reformation in the South.

Ruffin wrote several books about slavery and how slavery affected the economy of the South. He made comparisons between the conditions where slavery existed and of those areas of free labor in the North. During the last three decades prior to the Civil War, such pro-slavery writings received more attention than his notable agricultural work. Ruffin wrote in his *Journal* on a day in January of 1859, "I have had more notice



taken on my late pamphlet (on slavery) than on anything I ever wrote before." In 1989, at a time of increased scholarly attention to southern intellectuals, his *Journal* was edited and published posthumously by Louisiana State University Press. The Edmund Ruffin Plantation, known as *Marlbourne*, has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

Edmund Ruffin's end came on June 17, 1865, this occurred while he was staying with his son and daughter-in-law at *Redmoor Plantation* in Amelia County, Virginia. Ruffin went upstairs to his study with his rifle and a forked stick. While in the study, Ruffin was called away to greet several visitors at the front door. Then, after his visitors had left, Ruffin returned to his study and wrote one final *Journal* entry:

*"And now with my latest writing and utterance, and with what will [be] near to my latest breath, I here repeat, & would willingly proclaim, my unmitigated hatred to Yankee rule - to all political, social and business connections with Yankees, & to the perfidious, malignant, & vile Yankee race."*

After completing the above noted *Journal* entry, Ruffin put the rifle muzzle into his mouth and used the forked stick to manipulate the trigger. However, the percussion cap went off without firing the rifle, and the noise alerted Ruffin's daughter-in-law. By the time she and his son reached the study, Ruffin had reloaded the rifle and fired the fatal shot. Ruffin's body was returned to *Marlbourne*, his plantation located in Hanover County, Virginia, where he is buried. Edmund Ruffin's Plantation, *Marlbourne* remains a National Landmark.

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**Did you know . . .**  
by Jim Smithfield



Photo of actual Confederate Two Dollar Bill

that . . . the only person of the *Jewish Faith* to have ever had his face printed on any American paper money was Judah P. Benjamin, at one time he had been the Confederate Attorney General, the Confederate Secretary of War and the Confederate Secretary of State? The above printed photo is of an actual *Confederate Two Dollar Bill* . . .

*Benjamin has often been called the "brains of the Confederacy" or "the man behind the throne" of the Confederate Aristocracy. Judah Benjamin was first a statesman and jurist in the United States, and then as noted above in the Confederate States and again in Great Britain after he escaped to England!*

that . . . *Faith Paper* was the Civil War soldiers name given to paper money that was based on trust rather than on any precious metal?

that . . . *Spondulics* was a term Civil War soldiers of both sides applied when someone had loads of cash?

that . . . any Civil War soldier who'd been wounded multiple times was said to have a *Lead Mine*?

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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 still just \$30.00 for individuals, \$40.00 for families, and it's still 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:	Marc Thompson	Newsletter Editor:	Jim Smithfield
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