



THE DRUM & BUGLE
Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table
August 2023, Volume 20, Issue 8

Speaker: Brian Withrow
Topic: “U.S. Army Provost in the Civil War”
When: Monday August 14, 2023
Location: Brock’s Riverside Grill
Times: Social Time Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 pm
Our Website: www.rappvalleycivilwar.org
Our Facebook: www.facebook.com/rvcwrt

Brian Withrow “U.S. Army Provost in the Civil War”

Brian served 21 years in the U.S. Air Force and retired a Lieutenant Colonel. He has a Bachelor’s degree in anthropology-archaeology and a Master’s in information technology. Over the last 24 years Brian has been a historical reenactor and impressionist. Most famously, his portrayal of Ulysses S. Grant has been praised for authenticity. He served as co-director of the Friends of Stafford Civil War Sites and helped found in 2013 the Stafford Civil War Park. He is currently the President of the Army of the Potomac Eastern

Theater 1861-1865, Inc. and the Commander of the Civil War Impressionist Association (AoP-CWIA). Brian resides in Stafford Virginia with his wife Nancy.

As the United States Army rapidly expanded during American Civil War, the services of policing soldiers were needed. The establishment of provost marshal and provost guard units was necessary for large-scale enforcement of order and discipline. What began as provisional details would give way to a new permanency and formality of duties, both military and civil, in the war-torn nation.

“After the Battle of Chancellorsville: The Confederate Hospital at Ellwood”

by John Kanaster

A Review of the July 2023 Program by Greg Mertz

John Kanaster was part of a trio of Friends of Wilderness Battlefield (FoWB) members who took on the project of researching the Confederate hospital at Ellwood during the Chancellorsville Campaign. The team also explored other Civil War hospital museums for ideas of how to turn what they had discovered into an effective display at Ellwood.

Ellwood is the name of the plantation and manor house owned by J. Horace and Betty Lacy at the time of the Civil War. The building is part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park and had been interpreted by volunteers with FoWB for the past two decades. The site was the headquarters of Union Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren during the May 5-6, 1864 Battle of the Wilderness, where all of the major fighting took place to the west of Ellwood and nearby Wilderness Tavern.

However, the site is also well known as the location of the grave of Confederate Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson’s arm. The amputated limb was buried in the Ellwood family cemetery by the Rev. Beverly Tucker Lacy, chaplain to Jackson’s corps and brother of Ellwood’s owner. Just as Ellwood was in the Union rear of action taking place to the west in May of 1864, Ellwood was also in the Confederate rear of action taking place to the east during the May 1-3, 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville. A Confederate hospital was located in the vicinity of the Wilderness Tavern during that

earlier fight, and that is where Jackson's arm was amputated. Ellwood was known to be a convalescent hospital for those too badly injured to be moved to distant general hospitals for recovery. The quest to learn more about the convalescent hospital started Kanaster and his two friends on their research project.

When the Confederates discovered that the Federal right flank was vulnerable, Jackson took two-thirds of the Confederate army on a 12-mile march and launched an assault on the evening of May 2. The last leg of the march carried Jackson's men north on the Brock Road to the Orange Turnpike (modern VA 3) where the combat units turned east toward the Federal flank, but a portion of the Confederate medical staff turned west in search of a good hospital site.

A suitable hospital site required access to roads enabling ambulances to bring wounded men to the facility. Open areas to pitch hospital tents and set up equipment were desirable. A source of water was essential. Nearby civilization that might provide other comforts would be a plus. At the Wilderness Tavern site, the Germanna Plank Road and the Orange Turnpike offered two roads to transport wounded from the anticipated battlefield. Wilderness Tavern was in a rare large open space in the heart of the otherwise densely wooded Wilderness. The Wilderness Run provided critical water. Among the amenities the Confederates would avail themselves of for the convalescent hospital, they would stock the Ellwood icehouse with provisions, and would reimburse the Wilderness Tavern owners for fence palings used to construct beds and for mutton.

The medical treatment provided for the wounded generally consisted of three tiers. The first was an infirmary or aid station a short distance behind the battle lines. They were staffed by the regimental assistant surgeons, whose care of the men ranged from stopping the bleeding of those who were seriously wounded before transporting them to the next stage of treatment, to bandaging the slightly wounded, who might even be able to head back to the front. Among the known Confederate dressing stations as Jackson's Flank Attack progressed were the Talley Farm, the Hawkins Farm, the Wilderness Church and Dowdall's Tavern.

The second tier consisted of the field hospitals, where all the regimental surgeons were ready to perform operations and other procedures. This was

the huge complex around the Wilderness Tavern, including the Woodville Mine. (John Apperson's "Repairing the March of Mars" is a great source for information about the Woodville Mine hospital.)

The third tier was a base or general hospital, with virtually all of the wounded soon moved to one of these hospitals located in cities such as Richmond, Charlottesville or Lynchburg. But for a few of the more seriously wounded – those whose injuries were so severe that it was felt that they could not survive the transportation to the general hospital – they stayed at a convalescent hospital on the battlefield.

Ellwood became such a hospital for 132 soldiers wounded at Chancellorsville. The FoWB researchers wanted to learn more about these men. They found a letter of a captain who walked to Ellwood, writing home about his wounding and care, but died before the letter reached his family. A man in the 10th Virginia wrote of being moved to Ellwood where he rested in a bunk. The doctors reported that most of the patients at the Ellwood convalescent hospital suffered wounds to the upper thigh. Twenty-three of the men never made it to a general hospital, dying at Ellwood and being interred there until eventually being moved to the Fredericksburg Confederate Cemetery.

The researchers obtained the photograph of patient Adam Wilson from descendants. The 10th Virginia soldier lost his right arm at Chancellorsville. When the decision was made that the exhibit should contain mannequins, one was designed to look like Wilson.

After an extensive search for a photograph of the hospital doctor, John A. Graham, three photos of him were found at the Virginia Historical Society, and he is also depicted in one of the four figures in the exhibit. Dr. Graham was from Lexington, Virginia where many of his relatives were doctors or clergymen. Graham worshiped at the same Presbyterian Church as T.J. Jackson, his father sold his home to Jackson, and the doctor is buried in the same cemetery as Jackson. After the war, Graham was the post physician at VMI for twenty years.

FoWB contributed \$20,000 to the exhibit – the last of the many major exhibits in the visitor centers and historic buildings completed under the auspices of park chief historian John J. Hennessy. It was opened to the public with no

fanfare whatsoever during a span when COVID-19 regulations prohibited large gatherings.

Friends of Central Virginia Battlefield Trust

As you know CVBT is a land trust. We focus on purchasing endangered battlefield properties. We do produce a large three-day annual conference, standalone events and need to interpret and maintain our lands, we need help in all of these. In the past, CVBT has had individuals from organizations assist us, and we are grateful, but now we would like to create an official volunteer group who would enjoy being part of CVBT's volunteer core.

We have created "**The Friends of CVBT.**" The intent is for this all-volunteer group is to be the "On Call" core of CVBT's volunteer group assisting in events and battlefield related needs. Active volunteer members will have the unique opportunity to be involved with events hosted by nationally acclaimed historians, assist in tours, and work on preserved battlefields. Participating volunteers will also be enrolled in the membership ranks of CVBT every year they contribute. CVBT will provide each volunteer with a CVBT volunteer staff shirt and CVBT official hat to wear at events or whenever wanted. We will be limiting this new group to 18 volunteers.

CVBT is now beginning our 27th year of preserving our local battlefields, the very battlefields you study and walk upon. We would be honored to have you join the ranks of CVBT volunteers to help us further our mission of preserving our Nation's history.

If interested please email our Executive Director **Terry**

Rensel at executivedirector@cvbt.org .

Office: 540-374-0900

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF FREDERICKSBURG (CWRTF)

CWRTF meets 9 times a year on designated Wednesdays at Mary Washington Jepson Alumni Executive Center, 1119 Hanover Street. They offer a buffet dinner followed by a Civil War-themed presentation. Reservations are required. Speaker/topic schedule can be found on their website at www.cwrtof.org, as well as below. As with our round table, things are subject to change due to the ups and downs of Covid.

CWRTF Schedule

September 27, 2023 - John Vagnetti, THE CIVIL WAR, A POSTAL SYSTEM DIVIDED

October 25, 2023 - Sarah Kay Bierle, THE BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK

November 15, 2023 - Ken Rutherford, AMERICA'S BURIED HISTORY: LANDMINES IN THE CIVIL WAR

March 27, 2024 - Christian Keller, SOUTHERN STRATEGIES

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. The newsletter is available on our website at www.rappvalleycivilwar.org. Yearly membership dues are \$40 for individuals and \$50 for families. Students are free. Membership is open to anyone interested in the military, political and social history of the American Civil War.

Newsletter Editor and Webmaster: John Roos

The RVCWRT Executive Committee

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