



**THE DRUM & BUGLE**  
**Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table**  
**Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Newsletter**  
May 2018, Volume 15, Issue 5

**Speaker:** Tom Perry  
**Topic:** "Brothers in Arms – J.E.B. Stuart and his Brothers"  
**When:** Monday, May 14, 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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**Thomas D. Perry. "Brothers-in-Arms: J.E.B. Stuart and his Brothers"**

Historian and author Thomas D. Perry was born in 1960 and grew up in Ararat, Patrick County, Virginia, just north of Mount Airy, North Carolina. He received a Bachelor's Degree in history from Virginia Tech. He started the J.E.B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust in 1990. This non-profit organization has preserved 75 acres of the Stuart property at Laurel Hill Farm in Ararat, including the house site where the renowned Confederate cavalryman was born on February 6, 1833.

Perry spent many years traveling all over the nation researching Stuart, including two trips across the Mississippi River to visit nearly every place Stuart served in the US Army (1854-1861). He leads an annual Civil War bus tour about Stuart and speaks over fifty times a year on historical topics. He can be seen on Virginia Public Television's *Forgotten Battlefields: The Civil War in Southwest Virginia* with his mentor, noted historian Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr. He is the author of many books, including [Ascent to Glory: The Genealogy of J.E.B. Stuart.](#)

A complete biography and a list of Perry's publications may be found on his website at [www.freestateofpatrick.com/schedule](http://www.freestateofpatrick.com/schedule).

In his presentation, Perry shares a lifetime of research on J.E.B. Stuart and the only preserved site in the nation relating to Stuart's birthplace and boyhood home. He focuses on the Confederate commander's brothers, John D. Stuart, a surgeon in the 54th Virginia Infantry, and William A. Stuart, who ran the saltworks in Saltville, Virginia.

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**"Grant Under Fire -- An Expose' of Generalship and Character in the Civil War"**  
**by Joseph Rose**  
**A Review of the April 2018 Program by Greg Mertz**

This column has typically been a review of the past speaker – hopefully an objective report on what the speaker had to say. Try as I may, I could not figure out a way to simply re-count what Joseph Rose said about Grant, without providing some critique of the points covered. As was noted by two of

our members during the question and answer session, Rose's talk was categorized as "single-minded" and another member questioned the logic of some of his conclusions.

Rose wrote a book that he described as an expose of Ulysses S. Grant. He began by stating that "fake news" was not a new phenomenon, and that Grant was engaged in the practice of spreading it during the Civil War. He indicated that Grant's post-war memoirs differ from what he wrote and what may be found in other documents produced during the war. (Such is almost always the case when dealing with any account written long after the event being recounted.) Grant's memoirs discredited several Union generals that Grant disliked, and he gives a pass to the failures of his favorite generals, namely Sherman and Sheridan. Rose believes that Grant was lacking in both generalship and character.

Four key factors contributed to the high reputation that Grant typically enjoys. The navy provided Grant's forces with excellent support – which Rose believes Grant slighted in his memoirs. Grant benefited from a great deal of "luck." Grant gave preferential treatment to some generals while he discredited others. Rose also cited Grant for "unreliability."

Rose ridiculed Grant for benefiting from political connections through several people, including congressman Elihu B. Washburne, to enhance his career. He censured Grant for stating in his second inaugural address that he sought no political advantage, and for ignoring Washburne in his memoirs.

Rose described many on Grant's staff as "inferior drinking men." He provided many quotes indicating that staff officer John Rawlins was a highly valued member of Grant's inner circles and criticized Grant for slight mention of him in his memoirs.

In September of 1861 Confederate General Leonidas Polk violated Kentucky's neutrality by taking Confederate troops to Columbus, Kentucky. Rose indicated that Grant and John C. Fremont also desired to enter Kentucky and therefore they were just as foolish as Polk who "beat them to it." (Rose failed to appreciate that which-ever side violated Kentucky's neutrality first, risked having the commonwealth favor the side that did not. Furthermore, the consensus view is that the Confederacy would have been much better served if both sides respected the neutrality because Kentucky was a significant barrier to Union invasion routes, including the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, which the Union forces would utilize so effectively. A neutral Kentucky meant that the Confederate-United States border to be defended was essentially just Virginia and Arkansas – a much easier task than one including the entire northern boundary of Tennessee.)

Grant took advantage of the transition of department command between his superiors Fremont and Henry Halleck to make an advance that Fremont had forbidden. The result was the Battle of Belmont, Missouri. Grant routed the Confederates out of their camp, but then lost control of his troops, and Confederate reinforcement made it difficult for Grant to escape to his transport boats. Grant claimed the battle to be a complete victory. Rose indicated that Grant submitted an official report in 1864 back-dated to 1861, justifying his disobedience of orders.

During the Battle of Fort Henry, the Confederate garrison escaped because Grant did not begin the maneuver to cut off the Confederate retreat at the time Admiral Andrew H. Foote indicated was necessary for the joint army-navy venture to achieve a complete victory. Grant claimed the Confederates slipped out the day before he was expected to arrive at the fort.

At Fort Donelson, Grant pressured Foote into a premature attack, and Rose blamed the navy's defeat on Grant. During a subsequent meeting with Foote on his boat, Grant was absent from his army at the time when the Confederate army launched an attack. Most of the commanders in Grant's army did not react promptly because they had no orders from the missing Grant. Eventually Lew Wallace decided on his own to counterattack, successfully halting the Confederates. But Grant withheld crediting Wallace with being a key to turning the tide because Wallace was a non-West Point, political general, whom Grant disliked.

In the aftermath of Fort Donelson, Halleck removed Grant from command because his army was undisciplined, because Grant left the department boundaries by going to Nashville for a meeting, and for not filing reports. (Though the reports were indeed dutifully submitted, a Confederate sympathizing telegraph operator purposely did not forward the reports to the next station. Halleck was

forced to restore Grant to command after being unable to produce any evidence of wrong-doing, including drunkenness accusations, to General-in-Chief George B. McClellan). Some on Grant's staff were involved in gross improprieties in the purchase of supplies, including Reuben Hatch. But Grant interfered with the officer's court-martial because his brother had been one of the people whose political connections helped Grant to obtain his high position. Hatch later overloaded the Sultana with prisoners of war at the conclusion of the war, and its sinking was the worst Civil War maritime disaster.

Even though the Shiloh Union encampment was chosen during Charles Smith's tenure commanding the army, Rose blamed all of the deficiencies of the camp on Grant. So, while Rose points out that the two most inexperienced divisions in the army were placed on the outskirts of the camp and would be the first to eventually be attacked -- indeed a bad decision -- Grant did not make the choice. In the subsequent advance on Corinth, with Halleck in command, Grant was content with the slow but steady advance at the time, yet when he wrote his memoirs, he complained that Corinth could have been taken in two days. During the war, Grant credited Rosecrans with a victory at luka, but in his memoirs called the same battle a defeat. Grant and his friend William T. Sherman tried to make sure that the troops under political Gen. John McClernand, whom Grant disliked, would not be the command to take Vicksburg.

While I enjoy hearing programs that challenge my understanding of various aspects of the Civil War and presume that other members of the round table do the same, it is difficult to give any argument much credence when it is overwhelmingly adversarial toward the subject, or when it is difficult to see the of line of reasoning for the assertions. A different tactic would have better served Rose, who seemed to prefer to provoke rather than convince his audience.

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### **Contributions to CVBT By Bob Jones**

At the April 9th dinner meeting, the Round Table announced that the CVBT had recently purchased 14.4 acres off of Brock Road, scene of fighting in the 1864 Wilderness Campaign. CVBT established a fund drive to assist in that land purchase, and the EXCOM of the RVCWRT thought that a special donation drive at the dinner would be helpful to the CVBT. Two RT members then announced that they would match the donations collected that night. At the April 9th dinner meeting, the Round Table announced that the CVBT had recently purchased 14.4 acres off of Brock Road, scene of fighting in the 1864 Wilderness Campaign. CVBT established a fund drive to assist in that land purchase, and the EXCOM of the RVCWRT thought that a special donation drive at the dinner would be helpful to the CVBT. Two RT members then announced that they would match the donations collected that night.

I am very pleased that we collected \$156 in donations on the 9th and that we will send a check for \$468 to be used for the Brock Road land acquisition.

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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 [cwrtinner@yahoo.com](mailto:cwrtinner@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 Melanie Jordan

Melanie A. Jordan is a founding member, past secretary and past president of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table. Ms. Jordan graduated from Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington) in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in American History. She worked as a seasonal interpreter at both Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park and George Washington's Birthplace National Monument in the mid-1980s. Ms. Jordan worked for the Defense Logistics Agency from 1991-2016, retiring in September 2016. Her interests include Civil War history, Jane Austen, volunteering at a horse sanctuary, and raising her two fur kids (Pumpkin and Pita).

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## The 2018 RVCWRT Bus Tour

On Saturday, May 19th, the RVCWRT will conduct our 2018 Bus Tour to Fort Monroe. We will start with a guided tour of the Casemate Museum; followed by lunch at the historic Chamberlin Hotel overlooking the water; then a behind-the-scenes tour of Fort Monroe. The cost of the tour is \$80 for members and their guests; \$100 for non-members. More detailed information will be available soon on the web site and in the next newsletter.

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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](http://1119HanoverStreet.com), 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

May 23	Rob Orrison/Bill Backus	"War on the Potomac"
June 20	Ryan Quint, NPS	"The Battle of Portland Harbor"
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"

**On this day in Virginia during the Civil War  
May 14 (our meeting date)**

1861 – Robert E. Lee is appointed Brig. Gen.

1862 – Skirmish at Gaines Cross-Roads with McClellan advancing on Richmond

1863 – Skirmish at Marsteller's Place near Warrenton Junction

1864 – Skirmishes at Rude's Hill and New Market as Sigel marches his troops through the Shenandoah Valley contested by Imboden and Breckinridge

1865 – All is quiet in Virginia

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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
Membership Chair:	Paul Steir	Past President:	Marc Thompson
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster:	Dan Augustine		

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