



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XV, Issue 3 — MAY 2008

ED BEARSS SETS THE STAGE FOR THE GREAT OVERLAND CAMPAIGN OF 1864

By John McAnaw

We are honored to have as our guest speaker on 8 May the premier Civil War historian, lecturer, tour guide and preservationist – Ed Bearss. In fact, Ed has taken the time, despite his hectic schedule, to speak to our Round Table every year since its founding on 9 May 1991. This upcoming meeting also gives us the opportunity to celebrate the anniversary of Ed's birth slightly ahead of the actual birth date. This June Ed will be 85 years young. To repeat what I wrote a year ago, we are indeed honored to have an American legend as a friend of our Round Table. In addition, members are urged to attend Ed Bearss' presentation on 5 May, 7:00 pm at the Buckland Baptist Church in Fauquier County. His topic will be "The Buckland Races." See the announcement of Page 6 in this issue.

Ed Bearss' presentation to BRCWRT members on 8 May will cover that neglected period of the Civil War in the Eastern Theatre from October 1863 until May 1864. Obviously, he will include one of his favorite Civil War characters – Judson Kilpatrick and his performance during the "Buckland Races" on 19 October 1863. Needless to say, his talk will be excellent preparation for our upcoming Wilderness Tour on 10 May.

During World War II, Ed Bearss served with distinction in the U.S. Marine Corps, first with the 3rd Marine Raider Battalion commanded by Col. Harry (The Horse) Leversedge, and then with the 7th Marine Regiment. While serving with the latter unit, he was severely wounded at Cape Gloucester on the Island of New Britain. Following a convalescent period of 26 months, he entered Georgetown University. After earning an undergraduate degree at that institution, Ed spent three years working at the U.S. Navy Hydrographic Office in Suitland, MD. He then enrolled at Indiana University where he received a Master's Degree in History.

In 1955 Ed joined the National Park Service (NPS) and worked his way up the promotion ladder to become the Chief Historian of the NPS. In that position, he gained the respect of numerous Congressmen and members of the Executive Branch.

Following his retirement in 1998, Ed became a much sought-after guest speaker and tour guide to battlefields where Americans fought. These tours cover

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

THURSDAY, 8 MAY 2008

7:00 P.M. Centreville Library

GUEST SPEAKER:

Ed Bearss

SUBJECT:

**Bristoe Station to the Wilderness:
Prelude to the Overland Campaign
Of 1864**



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

BRCWRT

6:40 PM Refreshments

armed conflict ranging from the French and Indian War through World War II, including both the European and Pacific theatres of operation.

We anticipate a large turnout for Ed Bearss' presentation to our Round Table on 8 May 2008. Members are urged to come early, meet Ed Bearss and participate in our pre-meeting celebration.

CIVIL WAR IMMERSION WEEK COMING UP FOR BRCWRT MEMBERS

See Page 3 For Full Details

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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The Bull Run Civil War Round Table publishes the *Stone Wall*.

General Membership meetings are held at 7:00
p.m. on the second Thursday of the month.

For specific meeting dates and information,
please visit the WEBSITE:

<http://bullruncwrt.org>

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

For JUNE 2008 Issue

E-mail Articles By 9:00 A.M. Monday, June 2

To Sandra Cox at scox@capitalav.com

If you do not receive an acknowledgment of your e-mail article by deadline, please call Sandra at 703.675.0702 (cell) or 540.374.2011 (Capital AV) as it may have been blocked by company software.

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ROUND TABLE BOOK SALES

Please remember to bring your used Civil War books to our meetings to aid in our ongoing book sales. Besides helping to raise money for the BRCWRT, these books help raise our members' understanding of the Civil War.

Thank You.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

8 MAY 2008

GUEST SPEAKER:

Ed Bearss

Subject:

**From Bristoe Station to
the Wilderness:**

**Prelude to the Overland Campaign of
1864**

12 JUNE 2008

GUEST SPEAKER:

Gary Ecelbarger

Subject:

**Stonewall Jackson's Fog of War: The
Operational Triangle of 24 May 1862**

New Book Signing

10 JULY 2008

GUEST SPEAKER

J. Michael Miller

SUBJECT:

**Blood on the Rails: The Battles Of
Bristoe Station and Kettle Run
In Prince William County**



The President's Column

By John P. McAnaw

I hope that members will be able to participate in at least some of the BRCWRT sponsored or supported activities slated for May 2008. To reiterate what I wrote in the column to the right, I do not believe that the Round Table has ever been involved in as many events (five) in such a compressed timeframe (eight days). Included in our May package are two opportunities to listen to presentations by "himself" – Ed Bearss! Details on these events can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Before continuing, I extend my sincere thanks to Tour Guide Peter MacNeill and other members involved in the recon, planning, conduct and administrative logistical support for our profitable Booth Escape Route Tour on 15 March 2008. These individuals include Mark Knowles, Nancy Anwyll, Janet Greentree, Jack Nance, Jim Lewis, Charlie Balch, and Lyle Loveall. Please advise if I left someone's name off the above list.

Forty nine (49) members and guests had the opportunity to travel on a brand new state of the art, Vanhool bus, owned by Haymarket Transportation Co. based in Sterling, VA. Also, by the way, the company staff was courteous and efficient.

At our April meeting, a total of 70 members and guests attended John C. Carter's informative presentation on his ancestor, Pvt. William C. McClellan and the 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment. Our guest speaker provided, *inter alia*, welcome material on the 9th Alabama while it was stationed here in Northeastern Virginia from July 1861 to March 1862. I believe John has enough material to put together an interesting tour on the 9th Alabama presence here in Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

As information, the BRCWRT continues to be proactive regarding the preservation of Civil War sites in Fairfax, Prince William and Culpeper Counties. As of the date of this article, the most pressing issue involves the Bristoe Station Battlefield. According to current information, the Prince William Co. Board of Supervisors will consider on 6 May an applicant's request to rezone a 152.5 acre tract that includes much of the southern part of the battlefield. Read John Pearson's article on this subject. The latest information on the Ox Hill Battlefield provided by Ed Wenzel is also contained in this issue.

In closing, I want to briefly address a matter of great importance to the health of our organization. That subject is membership. If you have not already done so, I am making a ninth inning request for you to pay your 2008 dues. Further, paid-up members are encouraged to get friends and acquaintances to join. By supporting our Round Table, you will help keep our priceless Civil War Heritage alive.

REMINDER: If you have not paid your 2008 dues, please do so without delay. We value your participation.

CIVIL WAR IMMERSION WEEK COMING UP FOR ROUND TABLE MEMBERS

By John P. McAnaw

We are an up-tempo organization, but I do not believe that we have ever had as many events as are slated for the period 3-10 May 2008. All told, four of the five events during this time-frame are sponsored by the BRCWRT and a fifth will wholeheartedly be supported by us.

During this eight-day period, Round Table members will have the opportunity to attend two presentations by our nation's pre-eminent Civil War historian, tour guide and lecturer – Ed Bearss. He has been an invaluable friend of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table since 9 May 1991 – the date our organization was founded by first president Bill Miller.

The events discussed above are:

- 3 May (Sat.)** BRCWRT tour of O&A Railroad sites from Clifton to Fairfax Station. 9:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
- 4 May (Sun.)** BRCWRT tour of recently cleared terrain used by Union forces during assaults in the vicinity of Deep Cut against Jackson's Wing during the Battle of Second Manassas.
- 5 May (Mon.)** Presentation by Ed Bearss on the cavalry engagement 19 October 1863 appropriately called the "Buckland races". Event sponsored by the Buckland Baptist Church.
- 8 May (Thu.)** BRCWRT Meeting at Centreville Regional Library. Presentation by Ed Bearss titled "From Bristoe Station to the Wilderness" in preparation for tour two days later
- 10 May (Sat.)** BRCWRT Tour of the Wilderness Battlefield.

Detailed information about these events can be found elsewhere in this issue of the Stone Wall.



A special thanks to our April speaker, John Carter

Photo by Janet Greentree

MARCHING ORDERS FOR 3 MAY 2008



TOUR OF CLIFTON (DEVEREUX STATION) PLUS OTHER IMPORTANT SITES ALONG THE ORANGE AND ALEXANDRIA RAILROAD INCLUDING SANGSTER STATION, FAIRFAX STATION AND RARELY VISITED BRIDGE SITES

DATE/START TIME: Saturday, 3 May 2008/ 9:30 A.M.

TOUR GUIDES: John McAnaw and Lynne Garvey-Hodge

DURATION: 9:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

ASSEMBLY LOCATION/START POINT: Red Caboose parked on south side of Norfolk Southern RR tracks off Main Street in Clifton. Be there by 9:25 A.M.

NOTE: Do not park in the lot next to caboose.

Parking is available off Chapel Street and elsewhere in town. Also read note at end of this article

LAST TOUR STOP: VFW Blue and Gray Post 8469 in Fairfax Station.

LUNCH: Brown bag or buy at Clifton general Store.

PERSONAL ITEMS: Headgear, sunscreen, water and insect repellent

DEGREE OF EXERTION: Light to slightly moderate.

IN EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Call John McAnaw at 703-978-3371

SIGN UP FOR TOUR: Call John McAnaw at 703-978-3371

NOTE: Members desiring to carpool to Town of Clifton and for the remainder of tour, meet at VFW Post 8469 in Fairfax Station at 8:50 A.M. It is located three houses west of historic St. Mary Catholic Church at intersection of Ox road (Route 123) and Fairfax Station Road. VFW Post Home is located at 5703 Vogue Road (one-way street).

PLEASE RENEW YOUR BRCWRT MEMBERSHIP. WE DON'T WANT YOU TO MISS OUT ON FUTURE ISSUES OF THE STONE WALL.

MARCHING ORDERS FOR 4 MAY 2008

TOUR OF RECENTLY CLEARED TERRAIN INCLUDING THE DEEP CUT, 2ND MANASSAS BATTLEFIELD

DATE/START TIME: Sunday 4 May 2008/ 1:00 P.M.

TOUR GUIDES: Larry Gordon and Ranger Hank Elliott

DURATION: 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

ASSEMBLY LOCATION: Visitor's Center, Manassas National Battlefield Park

PERSONAL ITEMS: Sturdy shoes or boots, headgear, sunscreen, insect repellent, and LOTS of water.

DEGREE OF EXERTION: Moderate with obstacles; felled trees and debris present tripping hazards.

IN EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER: Call Jim Lewis at 703-620-2956

SIGN UP FOR TOUR: Email Jim Lewis at: glewis05@comcast.net

Deadline for signing up is COB Friday, 2 May.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: (Description provided by Larry Gordon) NPS has approved the Sunday May 4th tour for the BRCWRT group. It will be open to all BRCWRT members. We can handle 20-30 people if there is widespread interest. Our biggest concerns are related to the debris, so everyone should be fully aware that there are tripping hazards, etc. With potentially hot weather as well, everyone should be physically fit, dress according to the weather, bring some binoculars if desired, wear sturdy shoes/boots, and bring plenty of fluids.

The interpretive walking tour will be led by Ranger Hank Elliott and me. We will assemble at the Visitor's Center and line our cars up in front, ready to depart sharply at 1:00 p.m. We will then drive about a mile to Stop # 7, to Groveton on Highway 29, where it intersects with Featherbed Lane (at the Confederate Cemetery). We'll park there and walk about a mile north alongside Featherbed Lane, where Union Gen. Fitz-John Porter prepared a corps-sized attack against the right of Stonewall Jackson's Unfinished Railroad position on the afternoon of August 30, 1862. We will walk along the front of Gen. Sykes' division and continue to the front of Gen. Morrell's division (commanded by Gen. Butterfield at the time of the attack) at Groveton Woods.

From there, we will follow the Federal line of attack as they wheeled right up to Deep Cut. Much of this will be on cleared trails, but in some places we will be picking through fallen timber that has yet to be completely removed. Ranger Elliott and I will offer a re-interpretation of some unit locations, both Union and Confederate, that are more apparent now that the trees are down. In particular, the participants will be able to see what we believe to be the true positions of S.D. Lee's and Schumaker's artillery battalions that wreaked so much havoc on the attackers. We will also identify the spot where we believe Gen. Richard Ewell was wounded on August 28.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Note: If you plan to attend an event, please verify the information given. Advance reservation and fee may apply. If you would like an event posted please e-mail Dale Maschino at smasch1@verizon.net.

4 May – Guided Battlefield hike, “Sunken Road” at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. Begins at tour stop 9, at 1:15 pm. Free with park admission. Call 301-432-5124, or www.nps.gov/anti.

6 May – Seminar, “Grant and Lee: A New Perspective,” at the Smithsonian Ripley Center, 1100 Jefferson Drive SW in DC. 6:45 pm. \$35 non-member fee. Link to www.CivilWarStudies.org.

9-11 May – “Politics and Personalities: A Wilderness Battlefield Conference.” Panel discussions, battlefield tour and more. Sponsored by the Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield. For details, Email fowb@fowb.org.

10 May – Lecture, “The Civil War in Loudoun – The Railroad Goes to War,” at Claude Moore Park in Sterling. 10 am. \$5. Reservations suggested. Call 571-258-3703.

10 May – Tours of the Spotsylvania Battlefield near Fredericksburg. “A Different Way of Fighting: Upton’s Attack on Doles’ Salient” begins at 10 am at tour stop 2. “Bloody Angle” tours begin at 1 and 4 pm at tour stop 3. Free. Call 540-373-6122 or www.nps.gov/frsp.

17 May – Driving tour, “Buford Knoll and Yew Ridge” on the Brandy Station battlefield north of Culpeper. 10 am. \$10. Call 540-727-7718, or www.brandystationfoundation.com.

24 May – Walking tours of the First Kernstown Battlefield at the KBA site off Route 11 south of Winchester. 10:30 am and 2 pm. kba@kernstownbattle.org.

24 May – “Ship’s Company”, Civil War sailors on the USS Constellation in Baltimore Harbor. 10 am-5 pm. Free with admission. Call 410-539-1797 or www.constellation.org.

24 May – Luminaria and Memorial Day program at the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. Special program at 1 pm. Candles burning that evening for more than 15,000 soldiers buried here. 8-11 pm. Expect large crowds. Rain date May 25. Free. Call 540-373-6122 or, www.nps.gov/frsp.

24 May – Medical demonstrations and more at the Ellwood house on the Wilderness Battlefield near the intersection of Routes 3 and 20, west of Fredericksburg. Free. Call 540-373-6122 or www.nps.gov/frsp.

24-25 May – Living history, “14th Brooklyn Militia, 1861.” Union Infantry at the Manassas National Battlefield. Free with park admission. Call 703-361-1339, or www.nps.gov/mana.

25 May – Walking tour of the Confederate campsite and Freedman’s Farm at Montpelier, the home of President

James Madison near Orange. 2 pm. Free with park admission. Call 540-672-9272 or link to www.montpelier.org.

25 May – Lecture, “The Atlanta Campaign,” at the Graffiti House on the Brandy Station Battlefield north of Culpeper. 2 pm, \$5. Call 540-727-7718 or link to www.brandystationfoundation.com.

31 May – Driving tour, “Beverly Ford & St. James Church” on the Brandy Station Battlefield. 10 am. \$10. Call 540-727-7718 or www.brandystationfoundation.com.

31 May – Living History, “Civil War Camp Day,” military and civilian demonstrations at Fort Ward in Alexandria. 10 am – 5 pm. \$2 adults. Reservations call 703-838-4848.

31 May-1 June – Living history, military demonstrations and guided tours commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Cold Harbor, part of the Richmond National Battlefield Park. Concert and candlelight tours on Saturday evening. Saturday 10 am-5 pm; Sunday 10 am-4

MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK UPDATE

Submitted by Harvey Simon

Ed Clark assumes duties as Superintendent of MNBP on April 28. Mr. Clark is a 21 year veteran of the NPS, with an extensive background in resource management and law enforcement. A Virginia native, Ed has served in a variety of capacities at the Blue Ridge Parkway, Shenandoah National Park, as manager of the Green Springs National Historic Landmark District, and most recently as acting National Coordinator for the Heritage Area Program in the Washington Office.

April 2008, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) entered into a partnership agreement with the Manassas National Battlefield Park to assist in the development and maintenance of the over 30 miles of hiking/interpretive trails currently located within the park boundaries. Emphasis will be placed on improvements to trail marking system, improvements in trail tread and supporting the park in the event of major storm damage. The Battlefield Equestrian Society (BES) will be working closely with PATC and will continue providing support for the over 20 miles of bridle trails in the park.

A volunteer-based organization, headquartered in Vienna, Virginia, the PATC was founded in 1927 by the men and women who planned and built the Appalachian Trail. With the help of over 3,000 volunteers, the club now manages more than 1,200 miles of hiking trails in the Mid-Atlantic region, along with cabins, shelters, and hundreds of acres of conserved land.

Please Contact: Bud Cunnally, MNBF Park Volunteer and PATC Trails Overseer e-mail: budcunnally@comcast.net or Phone 703-296-0963; For additional information: www.PATC.net"

BRCWRT 2008 SPRING TOUR The Battle of the Wilderness



Germanna Ford, Union Artillery crossing before entering The Wilderness in May 1864

Date: Saturday 10 May 2008

Assembly Location/Time:

If you want to carpool to the battlefield, meet at the **Centreville Library parking lot** – we will depart at **7:45 AM** sharp. If you choose to drive on your own, meet us at the **Chancellorsville Battlefield Visitor Center** on Route 3 at **9:00 AM**. (Driving time from Centreville is about 1 hour). There are rest rooms at the visitor center.

Tour Duration: 9:00 AM until about 3:00 PM.

1 PM Tour and presentation at Ellwood by Carolyn Elstner whose family owned the property when she was a child.

Lunch:

Please pack a lunch and join us for a picnic on the lawn at Ellwood (aka Lacy House). Consider bringing a blanket or lawn chair.

There is also a McDonald's at the intersection of Route 3 & Route 20 within a mile from Ellwood.

Sign Up: Please sign up for the tour using the Wilderness link on the BRCWRT home page.

Inclement Weather: We will send out a weather cancellation notice via e-mail the morning of the tour. If you do not have e-mail call Kevin Anastas.

Chief Tour Guide: Kevin Anastas Cell: (703) 431-2569. E-mail kka2@cox.net

THE BUCKLAND PRESERVATION SOCIETY

is pleased to announce

ED BEARSS,

Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service and noted Civil War historian and lecturer,

will be making a presentation on the

"BATTLE OF BUCKLAND MILLS"

Special guests **J.E.B. Stuart IV** & **Richard Bland Lee V** discuss the significance of this battle—often referred to as

**"THE BUCKLAND RACES" or
"CUSTER'S FIRST STAND!"**

"...I am justified in declaring the rout of the enemy at Buckland the most single and complete that any cavalry has suffered during the war".

Major General J.E.B. Stuart

"This is the only cavalry victory that the enemy can boast over my command".

General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick

MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008

7 PM

**at the Battlefield Baptist Church
4361 Lee Highway
(center of the Buckland Mills Battle-
field)**

***Please mark your calendars for this
exciting event!***

**For further information: Please
contact the Buckland Preservation
Society at 703-754-4000 OR
540-347-5821**

***This Event is made possible by an
American Battlefield Protection
Program Master Planning Grant***

**BRCWRT Members are strongly encouraged
to attend this presentation.**

OX HILL BATTLEFIELD SITE- WORK BEGINS THIS MONTH!

**Conservation Easement Areas Reconfigured;
Site-Plan Changes Cause Surprise;
Off-Site Markers Will be Funded**

By Ed Wenzel

Barring a last minute glitch, Fairfax County Park Authority officials anticipate that the long awaited construction-work, landscape restoration and interpretive work at the Ox Hill Battlefield Park will commence in a matter of weeks. The park will be closed during construction with completion targeted for late August. Park officials hope for a ribbon cutting on the 146th anniversary of the battle, September 1st.

That's the important news. But since the last issue of the *Stone Wall* in early March, the Ox Hill saga has continued with several new surprises. First, the Park Authority produced a plat showing exactly where the three "conservation easements" will be imposed in the 4.9-acre park. As previously reported, these easements, totaling 1.24 acres, are "no mow, no cut, no plant, no touch" zones mandated by environmental regulations. These areas must be left alone and off limits to re-vegetate naturally. The easements cover 25% of the park's area, and provide a phosphorous removal credit of 1% for each 1% of the park covered. Thus, the easements are worth half of the 50% phosphorous reduction required for rainwater falling on the park. The other 25% will be removed by a filtering facility constructed under the visitor parking area.

All that may be great for the environment, but the easement plat now in hand showed a disturbing situation: a part of Easement "A" extending into the "grassy field" adjacent to interpretive Markers #2 and #3; and a second Easement ("B") extending into another interpreted area in the middle of the park. Initial questions about the appropriateness of environmental regulations overriding the historical interpretation on a Civil War battlefield were brushed aside as something that could not be changed or remedied.

While pondering what to do about this, other more pressing matters came to the fore. Bob McDonough of Innovative Projects Inc. had completed all of the wayside markers and kiosk panels except one, the "Other Civil War Sites" panel requested by Fairfax County Board Chairman, Gerald Connolly. The panel will identify the locations of other battlefields, forts, earthworks, monuments etc., and other vestiges of the war remaining in Fairfax County and the nearby region. The Park Authority was supposed to identify the sites and provide information for the contractor, but never did so. Consequently, Mr. McDonough and the writer determined the necessary site criteria, and BRCWRT President, John McAnaw, got us started. John, as everyone knows, is probably the best repository of local Civil War site information anywhere. John shared his knowledge about many suitable sites and recommended others to investigate. The writer then made field investigations at

30 some sites, ranging from Rockville to Leesburg to Brentsville to Freestone Point, noting the condition, amount of interpretation, and accessibility of each. At last count, a total of 89 "other" Civil War sites (excluding those on private property) will be included on the 3 x 4-ft. vertical panel (note: the panel size was reduced to fit in a smaller kiosk. The three kiosk sections had been downsized to create a smaller footprint to satisfy storm water calculations).

With the "Other Civil War Sites" identified, the conservation easements now moved front and center. After consulting with President McAnaw, we determined to send a letter to acting Park Authority Director, Tim White, detailing our objections to environmental regulations and easements interfering with the interpreted parts of the historic battlefield. On April 17, the letter was e-mailed to Park Authority and County officials. Less than three hours later, the wheels were turning, discussions were underway about the problem, and a meeting was set at the park for the following morning.

Site-plans and easement plats in hand, I met Dave Bowden, Director, Planning and Development Division (P&DD) and John Lehman, Project Manager, P&DD at the park. We spread our plans on the ground near the Kearny and Stevens monuments and identified the areas of concern. Both gentlemen understood our complaints and wanted the problem fixed. They admitted that the environmental regulations are rigid and inflexible when applied to smaller sites, but thought a solution could be found. They said that while the law allows these easements to be transferred to a more suitable site, it is *not* Park Authority practice to do so, and to try now would entail delay, and would cost as much as fixing the problem on-site. Park Authority practice, they said, is to keep all solutions to phosphorous reduction on the same site.

I then discovered that Mr. Lehman's site-plan was different than mine. My plan was dated 6-15-06, the same as his, but his plan showed an altered interpretive trail that extended nearly to the corner of the park, at the Monument Drive/West Ox Road intersection. There, the trail made a tight turn and looped back toward the kiosk. The trail had been lengthened and the alignment changed to build a water collection channel (of crushed rock) underneath it. It was an engineering-driven change to bring more water to the filtering facility beneath the parking area. I objected, saying that we couldn't have visitors walk out there for no interpretive reason just to fix an environmental water problem. That's the worst place in the park for visitors, with traffic, noise, engines, gears changing and exhaust fumes. I asked if they couldn't put the old trail alignment back and just use the extended route to collect water. John and Dave agreed that the change could be made, and that the water collection channel could be partly hidden or camouflaged.

See OX HILL UPDATE, Page 11

INTRODUCTION TO THE WILDERNESS

by Ed Bearss

I'm going to set up the situation for the battle of the Wilderness or the Wilderness campaign, whatever you want to call it. Now, I always like to start off things controversially. In my opinion, the battle of the Wilderness is one of the four more important battles or campaigns in the Civil War. And when I say that, I couple certain series of battles together. I think Fort Donelson is one of the more important battles because it broke the back of the Confederate defense line in the West. It forced the Confederates out of southern Kentucky, and cost them middle and much of west Tennessee. The true high-water mark of the Confederacy was not the copse of trees at Gettysburg, but the series of battles that began with Antietam and ended with Perryville in the last two weeks of September and the first week of October, 1862; then the Vicksburg campaign, which cut the Confederacy along the line of the Mississippi; and, finally, the battle of the Wilderness, which seems a strange one to classify as a decisive battle. If you go on numbers and losses, in the battle of the Wilderness General Grant got drubbed much worse than Joe Hooker did at Chancellorsville the previous year. But Grant, unlike Hooker, didn't withdraw.

Let's set the situation as we move to the Wilderness. Probably the most important event to take place in this great winter of 1864 was when Congress passed, and the president signed into law on February 29, 1864, legislation re-establishing the position of lieutenant general to command the armies of the United States. It was very obvious who was going to get this position. He's a man who first appeared on the scene with the name of "Unconditional Surrender" at Fort Donelson; the man that went under an eclipse after Fort Donelson when Halleck telegraphed Washington: "There's rumors that Grant has returned to his old army 'habits'"; the man who was surprised at Shiloh but who came back to capture Vicksburg, then broke the Confederates' back at Missionary Ridge. Grant, in command of the Department of the Mississippi, was called to Washington, and arrived there on the ninth day of March, 1864, to be named "Lieutenant General, Commanding."

Grant looked at the situation, and on being appointed, immediately decided he would not remain in Washington to exercise his command responsibility. The armies in the East had gone into winter quarters after the Mine Run campaign, with the line of the Rapidan and the Rappahannock Rivers dividing them. General Meade had established his headquarters up near Brandy Station, and Grant showed up there on the tenth of March to talk to him. Meade figured that Grant might want his own man to command the Army of the Potomac. Grant, however, was impressed with Meade, and told him so. He remembered Meade slightly from the Mexican War, was impressed by his victory at Gettysburg, but was

particularly impressed with his personality because Meade was not asking for something when Grant showed up.

Grant spent less than eighteen hours at Brandy Station before he caught the train to return to Washington. He then headed out west to Nashville to meet with General Sherman, as he had already decided how he was going to conduct the war in the final year. It would be, in essence, a war of attrition. He looked at the situation and realized that the Confederates had two major field armies. He would direct the attention of the forces in the East at destroying the Army of Northern Virginia and capturing Richmond. General Sherman, with an army group in the West, operating out of Chattanooga, would direct his attention against the Confederate Army of Tennessee, commanded by Joe Johnston, in position at Dalton, Georgia, thirty-five miles southeast of Chattanooga.

Now we'll leave Grant out there, conferring with General Sherman, while we look at the situation in Virginia. Before he took command of the Army of the Potomac, there had been a decision made that, in the ensuing campaigns, the Federals would regret. At the battle of Gettysburg, the Army of the Potomac numbered about 80,000 men and was organized into seven corps. Take a round number of 80,000 divided by seven, and you come up with roughly how many men each corps commander was leading at Gettysburg. Of course, by the time of the battle of Chickamauga and the Confederate success there, they had gotten rid of two of the Union corps in the East when they sent the "ladies" favorite general (Joe Hooker) out West with the 11th and 12th Corps. So this had cut the Army of the Potomac to five corps. Before Grant took command, they had decided to reorganize the army into five corps; then a decision was made to do away with the 1st and 3rd Corps. This would reduce the army from five corps to three corps. The 1st Corps will be incorporated into the 5th Corps, and the 3rd Corps into the 2nd Corps. When the spring campaign commences, however, the army numbers more than 90,000 men. You've now gone to a corps of more than 25,000 men when they take the field. You folks good at arithmetic can see the difference between the size of the corps at Gettysburg and the size of the corps as they enter the Wilderness campaign. As the campaign develops, it will prove very difficult for the Federal corps commanders to command that many men in the rough terrain to be encountered in the Wilderness and Spotsylvania areas. In fact, on the sixth of May at the Wilderness, we're going to find that General Hancock is, in essence, in command of half the Union army in this wooded terrain.

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Now let's take a brief look at the commanders that Grant and Meade will have. The commander of the 2nd Corps will be General Winfield Scott Hancock, who has been off duty ever since Gettysburg when a Minie ball struck theommel of his saddle and drove nails into his groin. Hancock remarked at the time in an air of bravado, "The Confederates must be in bad shape because they are even shooting nails." He spent the whole winter recuperating, and reported back to duty just as the campaign was beginning. Now Hancock is a solid commander. He looks like a general, talks like a general, acts like a general, and has a lot of charisma. The commander of the 5th Corps is the opposite. He is the hero of Gettysburg, the engineer, General Gouverneur K. Warren. But General Warren, as the campaign develops, is the weak link of the Union corps commanders. In my opinion, he should have been fired long before. As it turned out, he fired at the wrong time and the wrong place. He should have been fired about two or three weeks into the campaign, definitely at the Totopotomoy. The other corps commander, of course, is General John Sedgwick, who had been a senior corps commander and man who will be killed at Spotsylvania. So there we have the new corps commanders, Grant and Meade's new order of battle.

Grant spends his time out there with Sherman, planning what they are going to do, setting deadlines, setting schedules. In the third week of March, Grant comes back to Washington, and immediately stops very briefly to meet with the president, then heads down to the area between the Rapidan and the Rappahannock, and establishes his headquarters at Culpeper, Virginia. He will spend the next five weeks at Culpeper, with an occasional trip back to Washington to confer with the president. At the end of March, he goes back to Washington, and they start discussing the cavalry situation. Grant does not like the way the Army of the Potomac's cavalry has operated. He figures it's too fragmented, and decides they must have a new cavalry commander. While they are discussing it, General Halleck suggests Phil Sheridan. I don't know if Grant had planted the seed in Halleck's mind or not, but Grant remarks, "That's a wonderful idea." They reach out for General Sheridan, and order him from Chattanooga to Washington, then to Culpeper to command the Cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, which will be organized into three divisions. Grant, also, has a favorite, a man who more or less has been Grant's "fair-haired boy" from the time he was Grant's chief topographical engineer at Vicksburg--James H. Wilson. Grant brings him in and gives him one of the cavalry divisions under General Sheridan.

The Army of the Potomac is now about 99,000 men, but there is going to be another equation enter into this--General Ambrose P. Burnside. He, of course, after Fredericksburg, had been shipped out West and placed in command of the Department of the Ohio, an

administrative command. In the late summer of 1863, he had taken the offensive and had occupied Knoxville, and, while there, had won a victory over General Longstreet; so you can't say that Burnside always loses. They decided that they don't want Burnside as an army commander out West. They want to give the Army of the Ohio to General John Schofield, so they decide to transfer the 9th Corps back to the eastern theater of operation, where they had left in January, 1863, and they bring them back in late March. When the campaign commences, we'll have Grant as a commander of the armies, and if you people like to draw charts, you'll draw an arrow going from Grant down to Meade and the Army of the Potomac, then you'll draw another arrow going down from Grant to General Burnside and the 9th Corps because Burnside will technically not be integrated into the Army of the Potomac until the 23rd of May. With Burnside's men this will give Grant, when he takes the field, a force of about 120,000 men.

Now Grant, as he looks at the situation in Virginia, is thinking of total war. He wants to concentrate all the Union efforts on destroying the two major Confederate armies, but he's also been stuck with a "hangover" from a previous administration before he took over command of the army. By this time the Federals had already committed General Nathaniel Banks to his famed Red River expedition in Louisiana before Grant took charge. Now Grant's initial plan was that Sherman will go for General Joe Johnston and drive Johnston back, force him to fight for Atlanta. At the same time, General Banks, having completed the Red River expedition, will attack Mobile, Alabama. But, of course, Banks fails in the Red River expedition, loses his job, and will not be joining in an attack on Mobile, which won't occur until General E. R. Canby leads that attack in 1865. So one of Grant's columns will not be participating.

Now, in Virginia, Grant orders that General Ben Butler, with his Army of the James, leave the Fort Monroe area, ascend the James River, and attack Richmond from the south and threaten Petersburg. Generals George Crook and W. W. Averill will leave the area around the mouth of the Gauley River in West Virginia and strike south and cut the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad near Dublin, Virginia. Unfortunately for the Yankees and fortunately for the Confederates, Crook starts too late. He cuts the New River bridge and destroys it, but General James Longstreet has already passed over the bridge on his way back and is now in camp near Gordonsville. Averill embarrasses himself on a dash toward Saltville, and then goes back into West Virginia. General Franz Sigel will go up the Shenandoah Valley, keeping pressure on the Confederates.

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Now there are two ways that Grant can attack General Lee and his Confederates. He can attack with his right, which will be simply advancing along the Orange & Alexandria Railroad from his bases at Culpeper and Brandy Station, seize Orange, seize Gordonsville, and then turn Lee's left flank. This has the advantage because, except for the mountains to the west of Gordonsville and Orange, it's a more open country, less woods. But Grant rejects this because it will force him to move and to support his army by railroad. He does not think he can keep the rail line open. His army of 120,000 men will require a massive wagon train of 4,000 wagons, which will only support them fifteen days away from the railroad. So if he moves with his right, he will have to take this 4,000 wagon train, which they calculated would reach all the way from Fredericksburg to Richmond if you put them on one road. So Grant, due to the supply problem, rejects this alternative.

His other alternative is to move with his left around General Lee's right, and try to get out of the Wilderness in a one-day march. Although his men start at midnight, it will turn out that the wagon trains will lag too far behind. Although Hancock will reach Chancellorsville by noon of the fourth of May, when he's almost out of the Wilderness, he will have to halt. "Uncle John" (General Sedgwick) is lagging too far behind. The wagons trains are too far behind, and Grant will be caught by Lee in the Wilderness. So that is basically the Union plan.

Grant will be overall commander of all the Federal armies and have his own staff. General Meade will command the Army of the Potomac and will have his own staff. Their respective headquarters will generally be in close proximity to each other. Grant will be in strategic command, and Meade will be in tactical command. Occasionally, as we are going to find out, particularly when they get into trouble at Spotsylvania due to Grant's personal relationship with Sheridan, it is going to cause them problems, as it does on the march on the night of the 7th and the 8th. We've looked basically at General Grant, the Union army, the chain of command, and Grant's overall plan.

Now let's briefly focus on General Robert E. Lee. He established his headquarters, following the Mine Run campaign, in the Orange area. At the time of the Mine Run campaign, Lee has with him just the 2nd and the 3rd Corps. Two divisions of the 1st Corps are out in Tennessee, under General Longstreet, as Longstreet searches for glory on his own out in the western country. After short service with Grady McWhiney's "favorite" general, he finds that he prefers being under General Lee rather than being the right-hand man to General Braxton Bragg. However, Longstreet will be

back with General Lee. As I said before, Federal General Crook was supposed to start earlier on his dash to cut the Tennessee & Virginia Railroad at the New River bridge. Heavy rains, however, had delayed him. So by the time Crook moves out, Longstreet, with his two divisions has returned and is approaching Lee. He goes into camp near Gordonsville, and when he arrives with his two divisions, he'll be more or less Lee's reserve. Longstreet's other division, under General Pickett, is with Lee at this time, but is scattered. Lee's other two corps are now covering the line of the Rapidan, with General Ambrose Powell Hill on the left, General Richard S. Ewell on the right. The cavalry is camped downstream in the Fredericksburg area and below. Lee's army will number approximately 62,000 men when the campaign begins, so Grant outnumbers him by approximately two to one, and has about seven to five numerical superiority in artillery.

Now let's look at the Confederate army. Of course, General Lee is in command. He, like Grant, needs no introduction. There are two great captains in the Civil War. Using my definition, a great captain is a man that has successfully commanded a major army. Of these two great captains in the Civil War, we don't have to go into much detail. The command and the organization of Lee's army is generally the same as it was at Gettysburg. We have General Ewell still in command of the 2nd Corps, and his division commanders remain Robert Rodes, "Alleghany" Johnson, and Jubal Early; so there's no change in organization there. Longstreet has two new division commanders because Lafayette McLaws has now parted. The long friction between the two that surfaced at Gettysburg came to a breaking point out in east Tennessee, and General McLaws has been sent back to Georgia. General Hood, wounded again at Chickamauga, is now a corps commander under General Johnston in the Army of Tennessee. So when Longstreet comes back, he will come back with two new division commanders--Brigadier General Joe Kershaw and newly appointed Major General Charles W. Field. Hill is still in command of a corps, somewhat, but after he commits his corps in the Wilderness, he might as well have not been there. And again, as division commanders, Hill has Dick Anderson, but of course, he has had to replace Dorsey Pender, who was killed, with Cadmus Wilcox. Jeb Stuart still commands the cavalry. So this is the cast of characters, the *dramatis personae*, as the sanguinary drama of the Wilderness campaign begins.

I think it interesting, in looking at the Army of Northern Virginia, to see the analogy between the two situations when General Lee goes up on Clark Mountain. In the third week of August, 1862, Lee went there to plot the destruction of General Pope's Army of Virginia.

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At that time, the Confederacy was moving toward its high tide, which, in my opinion, crested in September and early October, 1862. He had reorganized his army, gotten rid of a bunch of the deadwood by shipping them out West; and as he looked over the scene on the 20th General Pope's army was in retreat from the Rapidan to the line of the Rappahannock. The events that were then triggered by the Confederates crossing the Rapidan led to the battles of Second Manassas and Antietam. When Lee goes up onto Clark Mountain on the second day of May, 1864, to look out again from that commanding elevation over the countryside to his front, he can see the great camps of "those people," as Lee called them, the entire Army of the Potomac: the camps of the 2nd Corps in the Stevensburg area, the camps of the 5th Corps near Culpeper, the camps of the 6th Corps near Brandy Station. Of course, it's too far out for him to see the camps of the 9th Corps along the railroads between Rappahannock Bridge and Warrenton Junction.

As Lee goes up there, however, he makes an interpretation of the situation and a correct decision of what to do. He assumes, correctly, that Grant is going to pass around his right. So, on the morning of the fourth when the signal stations report the Union army gone, Lee moves rapidly. Although badly outnumbered, with Longstreet and his corps still not having arrived on the field, Lee, in the early morning hours of the fifth, will make wonderful use of the two parallel east-west roads down which he will hurl Ewell's and Hill's corps, all that he has, intercepting and smashing into Grant's army, now somewhat strung out and bogged down trying to pass through the Wilderness.

In the Wilderness, Lee will make use of the terrain and the hard fighting of his troops to bring Grant to battle, and inflict terrible losses--two to one losses--on the Union forces. But as we will find out, the Union army does not turn back. It will come on and on. These two great armies will be locked in continuous mortal combat from this date until Grant finally prevails on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox. I hope this brief account has adequately sketched the situation as of the evening of the 3rd of May, 1864, as we move into the terrible battle of the Wilderness.

NOTE: On 21 January, 1986, Ed Bearss spoke to the Civil War Round Table of Long Beach, CA. Ed's presentation, *Introduction To The Wilderness*, was printed in full in their newsletter *Grape-shot*. It is a very informative article and is reprinted again, with Ed's permission, for your edification and enjoyment.

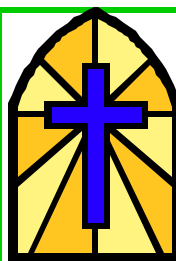
OX HILL UPDATE**[Continued from Page 7]**

Next we toured the park and looked at possible sites near West Ox Road where the objectionable parts of Easements "A" and "B" could be relocated. John identified two sites, one in the low ground east of the parking area, and another along the park boundary south of the parking area. The sites are large enough so that the part of Easement "A" in the "grassy field" can be removed. This will allow the field southwest of Markers #2 and #3 to be maintained in pasture grass. A second area in Easement "B" near the center of the park can also be removed.

That afternoon, John called to say that he had a new plot of the easements, and had eliminated about 80 feet of crushed rock water channel from the northern portion of the extended trail loop. The south most part of the return loop will remain for water collection only. For visitors, the trail from Marker #8 to the kiosk will be put back on the plan using the original alignment.

On April 21, after viewing a reworked easement and trail plot, I noticed that the parking area was much smaller than it should be. John checked prior revisions and found that the original ten-car parking area had been downsized (without our knowledge) to six cars, and that this had occurred before the project was transferred to his office. John agreed that a large tour bus would be too big to maneuver in the smaller lot, and so will put the original 10-car area back on the plans. His budget is based on the six-car plan, but the elimination of eighty feet of trail and crushed rock water channel will probably off set the four additional parking spaces. John also said he believes that enough money will remain in the budget to *fully fund* the six off-site markers, and will recommend to Michael Rierson that the markers be produced.

One last concern, coming right before the news-letter deadline, is that the turn radius from the park's entrance road into the parking area might be too tight for large tour buses. The dimensions and wheelbase of the bus used on our "Booth Escape Route" tour have been sent to John's engineer for parking and turn radius verification. If his calculations show that a large bus cannot make the turn, then more changes may have to be made to the site-plan. Stay tuned.

**IN MEMORIAM****BRCWRT MEMBER****THOMAS A. COURTNEY, SR.**

"My husband, Tom, went to be with the Lord on March 29. He was a true lover of history and especially the Civil War period. Please convey his passing to those in the CWRT for there were those who knew him personally."

Donna Courtney

COMMISSION ASSAILS BRISTOE STATION DEVELOPER

By John Pearson

The Prince William Planning Commission recently voted unanimously to recommend denial of a request to rezone 150 acres of the Bristoe Station Battlefield for a commercial office/warehouse project. The developers, Bristow Manassas LLC, plan to resume their request before the Prince William Board of Supervisors on May 6.

The April 2, 2008 public hearing featured many joining the Bull Run Civil War Round Table in opposition to the rezoning request including the Civil War Preservation Trust, the American Battlefield Protection Program, the Friends of the Manassas Battlefield, The Prince William Historic Commission, Mr. David Blake of Buckland, and many more citizens. The main objections to the development were:

1. Detrimental impacts to the Bristoe Station Battlefield & neighborhood
2. Threatened destruction of unmarked battlefield graves

The rezoning of this project would inject a commercial development with all its attendant infrastructure into a residential and agricultural area incompatible with such a neighborhood. Forty-five feet tall buildings would be perched on "Webb Hill" disrupting the viewshed of the battlefield. An additional 2,500 vehicle trips per day would be generated to join already overcrowded roads.

The developers have offered to give the county about 20 acres of the battlefield for preservation. This includes several critical areas such as where the Union line was outflanked and the position of Ricketts's battery. But the hill where General Webb first established his defense line would be bulldozed.

The proposed 573,000 sq. ft. of office and warehouse floor space and associated "improvements" will likely destroy the graves of men killed August 27, 1862 and October 14, 1863 who were buried where they fell. Of the nearly 300 men buried on the battlefield less than 30 were recovered and placed in the mass grave of Unknown Union Dead in Mrs. Lee's Rose Garden at Arlington National Cemetery. The developers have made little serious effort to find battlefield burials and rely on bulldozer operators to brake for graves during earth-moving operations.

Your help is needed to protect the Bristoe Station Battlefield. Please attend the public hearing of the rezoning case scheduled for 7 PM, May 6 at the Prince William Government Center or e-mail expressions of concern to the P. W. Supervisors: Corey A. Stewart, Chairman of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors email: cstewart@pwcgov.org and Brentsville District Supervisor Wally Covington email wcovington@pwcgov.org



BRCWRT Members pause for a group photo at the Dr. Samuel Mudd House during our March 'John Wilkes Booth Escape' Tour.
Photo by Janet Greentree.

LEE'S BIGGEST VICTORY BEING FOUGHT AGAIN THIS WEEKEND

Re-enactors from the Blue and the Gray will stage the 145th Anniversary of the Battle of Chancellorsville on the very ground the battle was fought [former Mullins Farm] May 1, 1863 this weekend Saturday, May 3 and Sunday, May 4.

Tour Guides and lecturers include Erick Mink, Georgia Meadows, Kim Waldron, John Hennessy and Robert Szabo.

There is an admission fee of \$8 per person with children 12 and under free. The ticket is good for both days.

For ticket locations and full schedule, please see spotsylvania.org/battle_inforamtion.htm.

Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park is also featuring special events and tours including "Chaos in the Night: The Wounding of Stonewall Jackson"; **Stacy Humphreys'** tour "You Can Go Forward, Then: Jackson's Flank Attack"; **Janice Frye's** tour "Infantry & Iron in the Wilderness: Catherine Furnace to the Unfinished Railroad"; **Greg Mertz's** tour "Courage Beyond Measure: the Fight from Hazel Grove to Fairview"; **Mac Wyckoff's** tour "Decoying the Yanks" and **Janice Frye** and **Don Pfanz** tour "A Soldier's Story: The Fighting of Fairview".

See the NPS website for times and locations: www.nps.gov/frsp/special.htm

SITE OF “MOSBY’S ROCK” SEVERELY COMPROMISED BY TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT



Mosby’s Rock at rear of McNair Station townhouses. A fine example of award winning planning by Fairfax County.

By Ed Wenzel

A tragedy and a travesty. Those are the only two words I can think of to describe what has happened to “Mosby’s Rock”, just south of Herndon. The historic rock where Laura Ratcliffe left messages for Confederate partisan leader, John S. Mosby, and where Mosby’s Rangers met to plan their raids, is now hidden behind the McNair Station townhouse development, just a few feet outside the backyard fences. The natural wooded setting surrounding the rock has been destroyed and replaced with lawn grass; and a concrete catch basin now intrudes on the historic site.

I had never visited Mosby’s Rock before, though I’d seen pictures of it many years ago. But with the rock now on my list of “Other Civil War Sites” being considered for Ox Hill’s kiosk, now was the perfect time to see it. I learned from Chuck Mauro that a Virginia historical marker, titled “Mosby’s Rock”, was on McNair Farms Drive, and was thus able to find the marker. But I was misled by the marker’s wording and location, which is only a few feet from a small wooded area containing several large boulders. Thinking that one of the boulders was the historic rock and meeting place referred to on the marker, I took several photographs. And though the site is right next to the McNair Station entrance, I thought “Well, that’s not too bad, they can fix it up, add a wayside marker, and make it nice for Civil War tourists.” It wasn’t until I went to the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church across adjacent Squirrel Hill Road and talked to the pastor, that I learned the real location of the rock.

Mosby’s Rock, it turns out, is about 250 yards down Squirrel Hill Road from the state marker, past the church and behind the adjacent townhouses. I went down there

and was dumbfounded by what I saw. Over in a corner, only a few feet from backyard fences, was the famous “rock” (or rocks—there are two protruding from the ground; which one is the “rock”, I’m not sure). A plaque entitled “Mosby’s Rock” is mounted to a stone pedestal that is cemented to the lower rock. Who erected the plaque is not stated. A few feet to the right is the catch basin and an underground electric utility box. The site appears to be either on Homeowner’s Association land, or on adjacent private property.

Note to members of the BRCWRT: This is a classic example of a lost opportunity, a horrible planning fiasco, and a squandering of a small piece of historic ground that could have been preserved as the centerpiece of a neighborhood park. Saving the historic rock, but totally destroying the natural setting around it, is an insult to the history, heritage, and people of Fairfax County. I don’t know when this development was approved. Some say five years ago, some longer; but this is the kind of mindless planning and development that should have been protested vehemently by the Civil War community and county historians; and regardless, the Fairfax County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors should have rejected it out of hand. That this didn’t happen is a tragedy and a travesty. Shame on everyone.

CIVIL WAR TRAVELS WITH MS. REBELLE

Booth Escape Route by Car or Ten New Things I Learned



By Janet Greentree

Can you believe after three bus tours, Ms. Rebelle actually wanted to do another Booth Escape Route tour by car? Not only that, Yankee Nan [Nancy Anwyll] agreed to go along. Since this seems to be my main focus now, I wanted to do this at as close to the exact time as possible to April 14th. So Yankee Nan and I took off for that foreign country, Washington, DC, on April 12th to start the tour. Most of you know who I am, but in that foreign country, people of authority tend to think I look like a terrorist. Our first stop was 10th Street to take a picture of Ford’s Theatre and the Peterson House. To steady my camera I brought along my monopod. I was busy setting up the shots when a policeman from Ford’s came up to me and asked me what I was doing. Always being honest, I told the truth, and told him I was working on a documentary of the Booth Escape Route. Right away he asked if I had a permit. It seems a common citizen cannot use a tripod on the street, and it wasn’t even a tripod. Finally I said it was just a dream, so he let me keep taking my pictures.

The next stop was Baptist Alley. We drove the car right down the alley. How cool is that? There was a whole crowd of people there on a tour. Guess who the

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tour guide was? None other than Michael Kauffman, author of *American Brutus*. How both Yankee Nan and I wished we could just hop on their bus. The tour was through the Surratt Society. The front of the bus said “*John Wilkes Booth Tour*.” Since I’ve read so much about John Wilkes Booth’s personality, somehow I think he would really enjoy his notoriety, and the fact that 143 years later, people are still interested in him and his escape.

Now comes the real terrorist threat. The Washington Navy Yard seemed to be the best vantage point for taking a picture of the 11th Street/Navy Yard Bridge. This was the bridge that both Booth and Davy Herold crossed over into Uniontown, now known as Anacostia. I contacted three people at the Navy Yard. One of them was the head of Public Affairs. Again, I was honest about what I wanted to do. All three of them said it wouldn’t be a problem. So I presented my license, insurance card, and my car registration to two young Marines at the gate. They didn’t have me listed as a visitor and said they would have to call their Sergeant. It took forever for the Sergeant to appear. Yankee Nan and I knew we were in trouble just by his demeanor when he came walking up, studied my license plate, and his tone. Being honest didn’t help one bit here. He said the bridge was right there if I wanted to take a picture of it – that is – **outside** of the Navy Yard. Needless to say, we didn’t get in there. We just crossed over the Navy Yard Bridge, went into Anacostia Park, and I got a decent picture there.



Yankee Nan and I both heaved a huge sigh of relief to be out of DC into Maryland. Yankee Nan had been studying internet topo maps trying to find Soper’s Hill where Booth and Herold met up. There had been some discussion on the tours as to exactly where it was. Just after going under the Beltway on Route 5, we turned right on Linda Lane, and right again on Old Branch Avenue. You go down a long hill, and that is Soper’s Hill. Henson Creek is at the bottom. I remember reading that Herold “halloed” for Booth at the top of the hill there.

Then it was on to the Surratt House, and the tour bus was already there. We got to talk to Michael Kauffman. That was awesome. We fought the raindrops both there and in Anacostia Park. Then the sun came out – for a time anyway. We went on to T.B. – named

for Thomas Brook. The ruins of his house sit at the intersection of Route 5 and Brandywine Road. Davy Herold spent the night there on his March visit to Southern Maryland. The nightshirt he wore is in the Surratt House Museum.

We decided to follow the Surratt Society’s route and went to the Mudd House after a quick stop at St. Peter’s Church, Dr. Mudd’s home church. We found the grave of Edman Spangler, one of the conspirators who is buried in the Old St. Peter’s Cemetery. The Surratt and Mudd Societies have placed a nice stone on his grave.



The cemetery is at the intersection of Brandywine and Gardiner Roads. The road must have been named for the Gardiner family. George Gardiner was a close neighbor of Dr. Mudd and sold Booth the one-eyed horse that he rode. We found the site of George Gardiner’s farm at the intersection of Malcolm and Poplar Hill Roads.

When we got to the Mudd House, who should be there but the Surratt Society bus. The sky was a dark, deep cloudy blue from the impending rainstorm, which showered us again when we got to the Bryantown Tavern. It rained from there to the site of Oswell Swann’s house. Swann guided Booth and Herold through the Zekiah Swamp. We stopped at Rich Hill, the home of Colonel Samuel Cox who aided them and sent them on to Thomas Jones, his adopted son, who hid them in the Pine Thicket for six days and nights. We actually found the Pine Thicket across from a house at 9185 Wills Street in Bel Alton. I have to give my cousin, Alan Norris (our Ohio member), credit for this one. We didn’t venture in the woods but were certainly close to where Booth & Herold were.

Huckleberry was our next stop – the home of Thomas Jones. We took the road down to the river where the Loyola Retreat is. With 95% certainty, I would say we found the road that leads down to Dent’s Meadow where Booth and Herold got into the flat-bottomed 12-foot skiff to cross the Potomac. We verified this by an old picture on a CW Trails sign across the street from Captain Billy’s about Dent’s Meadow. Yes! We had a nice lunch at Captain Billy’s again, and guess who appeared after we pulled up? The Surratt Society tour bus. This was the last time we saw them however.

Now it was on to see Thomas Jones’ other house, sitting 80 feet up on a bluff over the Potomac

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River near the Route 301 bridge. Zooming in on the house gave me a nice photo. It's a lovely house. It would have been nice to see it close up. We crossed the Route 301 Bridge into Virginia. We felt like we were shadowing Booth and Herold all day. Mrs. Quesenberry's house on Machadoc Creek was the next stop. We checked out Gambo Creek where our Round Table bus had to turn around. Booth and Herold landed there on their second attempt at crossing the Potomac. We went on to Dr. Stuart's Cleydael for more photo ops. From there it was on to Port Conway, which we are pretty sure we found as well. There is a gravel road parallel to the northbound lane of Route 301 just before the Rappahannock Bridge. It goes down to the water across from Port Royal. There is a sign there "*Warning, keep out, snake sanctuary.*" We got a kick out of that but I suppose if you don't want people around, having a sign like that will do the job. We checked out Port Royal and the Peyton-Brockenbrough House before heading to Bowling Green. We found the location of the Star Hotel at Bowling Green next to the Caroline County Courthouse. The Star Hotel is now gone but a new building which houses an insurance agency has taken its place. It's a charming little town.



Our last stop – the Garrett Farm site - where John Wilkes Booth was killed. It's always sad and a little creepy to go in there. Every time I go, something else has been added. Someone has placed a small metal cross at the stone and pipe there. Thus ended our trip closest to the actual time as possible.

What I have learned is: Ms. Rebelle looks like a terrorist, you can't use a tripod or monopod in DC, I look too suspicious to get into the Navy Yard, **but** we found Soper's Hill, the house in T.B. where Herold spent the night, Ned Spangler's grave, George Gardiner's farm, the Pine Thicket, Port Conway which is full of snakes, and Bowling Green, site of young 18 year old Private Willie Jett's squealing on Booth's whereabouts. It was an awesome day.

DEAR EDITOR:

A few questions were asked at the March meeting of the BRCWRT when I spoke on "The Federal Invasion of Florida: The Battle of Olustee, 20 February 1864". Now that I have my references, is there a place in the newsletter for such a response?



Commander of the 54th Mass at Olustee was LTC Edward N. Hallawell, 27 year-old merchant from Medford, MA. Col Fribley was the commander of the 8th USCT and killed on the field at Olustee.

The bibliography I presented included the doctoral dissertation by David J. Coles, and it can be found through the web – Google "Florida Heritage Collection" and search for Coles. Coles has one chapter devoted to the treatment of black soldiers. Schmidt's history lists several letters from Confederate soldiers stating that negroes and white prisoners were first taken to Tallahassee, then to an arsenal at Chattahoochee. Coles states that the negroes were first held at Lake City and then sent by rail to Andersonville (page 169). Their treatment on the battlefield and in the hospitals was less than that accorded white prisoners.

The 8th USCT "was raised in Philadelphia (Sept '63 to Jan '64) and sent to Hilton Head Island in January 1864 after only recently being issued equipment and rifles and conducting rudimentary training and drill. It left New York on Jan 16th. Barely one month out of training camp, many of its troops were unfamiliar with proper procedures for loading their rifles." [Coles, Men and Arms.] I think I was incorrect in saying they had never fired their rifles – Coles indicates that "the troops, many of whom had not yet even loaded their rifles, double-quickened to where the Union artillery was deployed." A bit further into his chapter, he quotes a Lt Norton, a white officer with one of the companies: "...and here was the great trouble – they could not use their arms to great advantage. We had very little practice in firing...." They were thrust into battle as raw troops and when their colonel was killed, the regiment fragmented and took many casualties – 300 out of 554.

There were a fair number of engagements and skirmishes in Florida during the Civil War. The Battle of Olustee was not the only one, but it was the largest one with roughly 11,000 troops engaged on the field of battle. Paul Taylor, "Discovering the Civil War in Florida", 2001, Pineapple Press, Sarasota, FL, lays out descriptions of many of the battles that took place, naval and ground included. A listing of all the engagements in Florida was culled from the Official Records and is included at pages 212-222 of the book.

BRIAN MCENANY

Photo by Janet Greentree

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

The Stone Wall

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Centreville, VA 20122

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