



The Newsletter of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table — Vol. XXXIII, Issue 3, MARCH 2026

**AUTHOR AND BRCWRT MEMBER
TIM DUSKIN SPEAKS ON "THE
MEXICAN WAR: TRAINING
GROUND FOR THE CIVIL WAR"
AT THE MARCH 12th,
2026 MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

By Mark Trbovich

Many of the military leaders on both sides of the Civil War had trained at the U.S Military Academy at West Point and had fought as junior officers in the Mexican American War. This list includes military men fighting for the Union: Ulysses S. Grant, George McClellan, William T. Sherman, George Meade, and Ambrose Burnside. Military men who joined the Southern secessionists of the Confederacy included Robert E. Lee, Albert Sydney Johnston, Stonewall Jackson, James Longstreet, Joseph E. Johnston, Braxton Bragg, Sterling Price, and the future Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Both sides had leaders with significant experience in active combat, strategy, and tactics. With the rest of the story, we have a senior member of our Round Table joining us with more insight of the military training for a future Civil War.

Tim Duskin was born in Dallas, TX. His family moved to Fairfax County when he was four and he has lived in various locations there most of his life; he considers Vienna to be his home town. He has lived in Centreville for the past 24 years. Tim graduated from Oakton High School and earned a B.A. degree in history at American Christian College in Tulsa, OK, and an M.A. degree in International Relations at the Arlington campus of the University

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

THURSDAY, March 12, 2026

6 P.M. Social Hour

**7 P.M. In-person at the
Centreville Regional Library &
Streamed on Facebook Live**

GUEST SPEAKER:

Tim Duskin

TOPIC:

**"The Mexican War: Training
Ground for the Civil War"**

of Oklahoma. He also did additional graduate study in history at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, KY.

He first became interested in the Civil War when he studied it in an 8th grade Virginia history class. This eventually spawned a more general interest in history, but the Civil War has always been his favorite period of history. He began attending meetings of the Alexandria Civil War Round Table in 1969. He was also a Civil War re-enactor for nearly two decades. In 1991, he joined a group of members of the Alexandria Round Table in founding the Bull Run Civil War Round Table under the leadership of President Bill Miller. Tim is the past president of the George Washington American Revolution Round Table of the District of Columbia, which meets at Mount Vernon.

(cont on page 4)

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

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For meeting dates and other information, please visit the Web site: <http://bullruncwrt.org>

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 12 Tim Duskin - "The Mexican War: Training Ground For The Civil War"

April 9 Dr. Curt Fields - "LIVE From Appomattox with Gen. Grant and Friends"

May 14 Rich Condon - "Emancipation in the Department of the South"

June 18 Patrick Falci - "30th Anniversary of the Making of the Gettysburg Movie"

July 9 Scott Mingus - "Human Interest Stories from the Gettysburg Campaign"

August 13 Frank O'Reilly - "Last Days of Stonewall Jackson"

September 10 Bill Backus - "Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle of Brawner Farm, 28 August 1862"

October 8 Bryan Cheeseboro - "Early Days of the Civil War Defenses of Washington, from Fort Sumter to 1st Bull Run"

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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By **Melissa A. Winn**

Photos: **Janet Greentree**

As the chill of winter begins to loosen its grip, we can imagine the sense of anticipation that Civil War soldiers must have felt at the first signs of spring. For men in blue and gray alike, spring meant movement — campaign season, renewed marches, budding trees along Virginia roads, and the promise of change. Letters home often reflected that longing for warmth, fresh air, and familiar fields beginning to green again. After months in cold camps, spring offered not comfort exactly, but possibility.

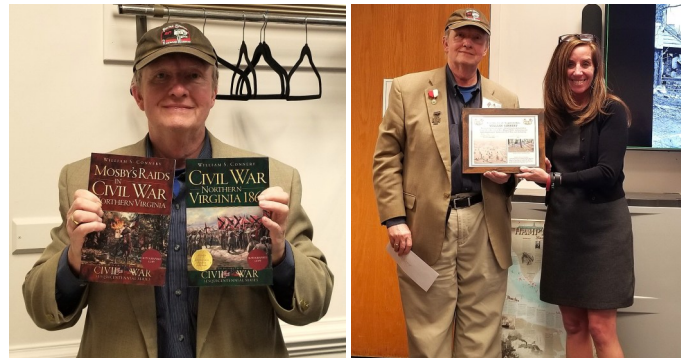
“It is now spring-time... the fields are clothed in living green, and the whole landscape smiles as if war and death had never been,” John Billings, of the 10th Massachusetts Volunteer Light Artillery wrote during the conflict and later remembered in his book *Hardtack and Coffee*.

I for one am done with winter and quite looking forward to returning to battlefield tromping in fewer layers of winter clothes and on solid, green, ground.

Here in March, as we look forward to longer days and brighter skies, we also mark Women’s History Month, again. It’s a fitting time to reflect on the women whose courage and commitment shaped the Civil War era. While soldiers prepared for spring offensives, women prepared hospital wards, organized relief societies, managed farms and businesses, and in some cases moved toward the sound of the guns themselves.

Figures such as Clara Barton and Dorothea Dix stepped into roles that challenged convention and transformed military medicine. Thousands of lesser-known women

served as nurses, matrons, spies, laborers, and steadfast correspondents, sustaining morale through ink and paper. On the home front, women became the backbone of wartime communities, adapting quickly to shortages, uncertainty, and profound loss. I love to highlight the role of women during this pivotal time, especially as the conflict changed the landscape for them so drastically. There are lot of opportunities for programming in our area and to learn more about women’s roles during this time, including new tours at Congressional Cemetery this month, visiting the Military Women’s Memorial at Arlington Cemetery, and the Women’s History Museum.



February speaker Bill Connery told us about significant events in northern Virginia in 1861

As a Round Table, we continue to explore these stories — not only of battles and generals, but of resilience and resolve. We have a great speaker this month, Tim Duskin, who is one of our most steadfast members, sharing the history of the Mexican War and how it proved a training ground for the Civil War. We also have our “Wolf Run Shoals” tour on March 21, with Jim Lewis leading the way. He’s worked hard to deliver an engaging tour that not only covers Civil War history but also some Revolutionary War history, as well! As we embark on the 250th anniversary celebration, this is a great tour to celebrate all the history those 250 years encompass.

(cont on page 4)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN (cont)

A note about our April meeting: it will be held via Zoom. We'll be Zooming in Dr. Curt Fields as General Ulysses S. Grant from Appomattox, where he will be joined by several friends. We will NOT be meeting at the Library. Please join us on April 9 at 7 p.m. on Facebook Live or Zoom at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2687375206?omn=88103101607>

Huzzah!

SPEAKER INTRODUCTION (cont)

Tim is also a member of the Historic Centreville Society, the Friends of Mount Vernon, the American Battlefield Trust, the Manassas Battlefield Trust, the Overlord Society, and the Virginia Writers Club. Tim earned a certificate in Freelance Writing from Penn Foster Career School in Scranton, Pennsylvania. As well as writing for the *Stone Wall*, he has also written articles for *The Millrace*, the newsletter of the Historic Centreville Society.

Come join us early at our March 12th, 2026 Membership Meeting to have an opportunity to chat with Tim and your colleagues before the meeting begins. Doors open at 6:00 PM; hope to see you there.

TIRED OF THE COLD?

How does California in May sound?

The 3rd Annual Central Coast Conference will be held in Monterey from May 1st to 3rd. It will feature a roster of expert historians presenting on the general theme of "Seldom Heard History of the Civil War Era". You can read all about it here:

<https://whtours.org/seldom-heard-history-2026.html>

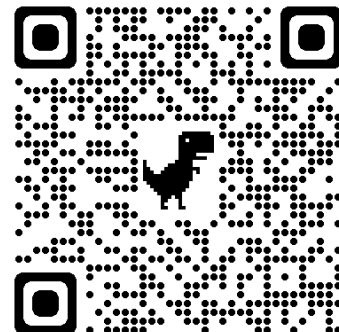
The organizers are offering special discounts for members of Civil War Round Tables. For details, email David Woodbury at: civilwarforum@mac.com

SUPPORT BRCWRT ACTIVITIES

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that relies on your donations to continue our excellent programs and initiatives throughout the year. There are many programs to donate to, including the BRCWRT Scholarship Fund, Preservation efforts, Civil War Trails sign preservation and maintenance, educational programs, and of course the General donation category (which the Round Table uses as a fund to offset various expenses, to help keep our membership dues at a reasonable rate). Please consider your Round Table for tax-deductible donations every year. (We also accept donated Civil War prints to auction for the benefit of the Scholarship Fund.) We appreciate our members very much.

There are a number of ways to make a donation. On the BRCWRT website, click the link labelled "Renew/Donate" and select the link at the bottom of that page. Alternatively, you can give a check to our Treasurer at a membership meeting, or mail it to: BRCWRT Treasurer, PO Box 2147, Centreville VA 20122. Make checks payable to BRCWRT, and be sure to note whether it is for the Scholarship Fund, Preservation Fund, or the General Fund.

Finally, you can scan this QR code with the camera on your smartphone to make a donation.



Bull Run Civil War Round Table



Upcoming 2026-2027 Program of Events

Date	Event
March 12, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Tim Duskin - "The Mexican War: Training Ground For The Civil War"
March 21, 2026	Spring Tour 1: "Wolf Run Shoals - The Best Kept Secret in Fairfax County" Tour leader Jim Lewis (rain date April 4th)
April 9, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Dr. Curt Fields "LIVE from Appomattox with General U. S. Grant and Friends"
May 14, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Rich Condon - "Emancipation in the Department of The South"
June 13, 2026	Spring Tour 2: "Harper's Ferry: Bolivar Heights Battleground & Kennedy Farm" Tour leader Kevin Pawlak (rain date June 20th)
June 18, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Patrick Falci - "30th Anniversary of the Making of the Gettysburg Movie"
July 9, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Scott Mingus - "Human Interest Stories from the Gettysburg Campaign"
August 13, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Frank O'Reilly - "Last Days of Stonewall Jackson"
September 10, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Bill Backus - "Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle of Brawner Farm, 28 August 1862"
October 8, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Bryan Cheeseboro - "The Early Days of the Civil War Defenses of Washington, from Fort Sumter to 1st Bull Run"
October 17, 2026	Fall Tour: "Civil War Alexandria (AM) / Fort Ward (PM)" Tour leaders Don Hakenson and Chuck Mauro (rain date October 24th)
November 19, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Lisa Samia - "Nameless and Faceless of Manassas And Gettysburg"
December 10, 2026	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Jonathan Jones - "Opium Slavery: Civil War Veterans And America's First Opioid Crisis"
January 14, 2027	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Jared Peatman - "Hell of a Regiment: The 20th Maine"
February 11, 2027	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Edward J. Hagerty - "Soldier of the South: Lieutenant General Richard H Anderson at War and Peace"
March 11, 2027	Monthly Meeting Speaker: Theodore Savas - "Handshakes, Gambling, & Gunpowder: How George W. Rains and Jefferson Davis Changed the Course of the Civil War"

Monthly Meetings in "Black" [Tours/Field Trips & Special RT Events in "Red"](#) [County or outside sponsored events in "Green"](#)

BRCWRT PRESENTS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO ANDREA LOEWENWARTER

By Mark Whitenton

Andrea Loewenwarter has been a tremendous leader in local Civil War education and preservation. She served for over 19 years as the City of Fairfax Office of Historic Resources Manager of the historic Blenheim House site. Andrea retired from that position on December 31, 2025.

During Andrea’s leadership at Blenheim, she always put her tremendous energy into bringing Civil War history to the public through large annual events like a Civil War period “Christmas in Camp” and a “Civil War Weekend” in the spring (several years ago changed to “Fairfax History Day” and finally combined with Earth Day as “HisTree Day”). She also held many educational events throughout the year, especially for children. These events included lectures and presentations, and even dances – often accompanied by the 8th Green Machine Band.

Despite the changes in the political environment regarding Fairfax’s history during the Civil War that have occurred over the past 20 years, Andrea was always looking for opportunities to reach a broader audience through her programs so as to introduce new visitors to the Civil War history of Blenheim and Fairfax.

In honor of Andrea’s steadfast and significant efforts to educate the public and preserve the history of the Blenheim historical site, the BRCWRT presented Andrea Loewenwarter with a Certificate of Appreciation at its February 12 meeting.



(Certificate: Drew Pallo)



The BRCWRT recognized the many preservation contributions of Andrea Loewenwarter during her service at Historic Blenheim (L-R) Melissa Winn, Fred Eckstein, Drew Pallo, Mark Whitenton, Andrea Loewenwarter, Bill Connery, Charles Vannoy, John Myers (Photo: Janet Greentree)

PRINT FOR SALE AT THE MARCH MEMBERSHIP MEETING

At our March 12th Membership Meeting there will be another BRCWRT fundraiser for our Scholarship program by selling a quality Civil War print. We are offering "There Stands Jackson Like A Stone Wall. Rally Behind The Virginians" by the noted historical artist Dick Richardson.

The painted scene is right at the point where Jackson's brigade went into its first action against the oncoming Union army that was in pursuit of some of the retreating Confederates at the Battle of First Manassas.

This signed print is 22" x 17", is unframed and is like new. This 1986 print is not offered on eBay, but a copy is advertised on WorthPoint for \$100. However, the Round Table is asking just \$70 for this print, which has been donated by Blake Myers.



Wolf Run Shoals

Fairfax County's Best Kept Historical Secret

Saturday, March 21



Subject matter: This popular tour spans from the Revolutionary War through the end of the American Civil War in Fairfax County. Walk the road that enabled the transport of supplies to the Battle of Yorktown and see traces of several Union earthworks/camps when this area was the default Mason-Dixon line early in the Civil War. Learn about the Union AOP right wing's onerous march through this area to the Battle of Gettysburg and its ironic connection with J.E.B. Stuart's controversial ride to support Lee's ANV. Finally, envision a war-ending event by Mosby's Rangers that occurred here.

Tour limited to 25 attendees; you can still sign up to get on the waiting list.

Tour Guide: Jim Lewis

Assembly Time / Location: 9:00 AM / Terminus of Wolf Run Shoals Rd.

GPS: Closest address is 8517 Wolf Run Shoals Rd., Clifton, VA

Tour Start Time: 9:15 AM

Lunch: 12-Noonish Los Toltecos [Mexican] @ Fairfax STN - Individual tabs

Tour Duration: Approx. 2 ½ Hours.

Mode of Transportation & Exertion Level: Extensive walking over uneven terrain = **not advisable for anyone with special needs**

Uniform of the Day: Hiking attire / water / walking stick

BRCWRT Contact: Jim Lewis – antietam1862@verizon.net / 703 593-2956

The tour is FREE! If interested, please sign up via BRCWRT's website.

IMAGE OF THE MONTH

Young George A. Custer

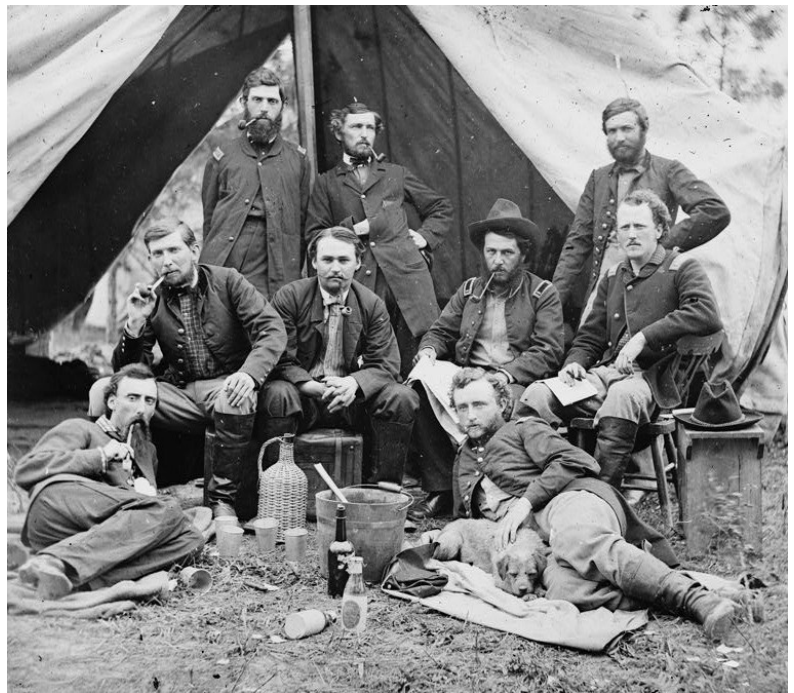
By Don Richardson

George Armstrong Custer always seemed conscious of his image, even at a young age. In one photo, dated August 1862, he poses hatless to display his wavy blond hair, along with displaying his sword and Colt revolver; he is joined by his fellow lieutenants Nicolas Bowen and William G. Jones. Custer was 22 at the time. Bowen was a few years older and an Assistant Topographical Engineer. This picture is interesting because of the lighting - the photographer, James F. Gibson, posed them in profile so they wouldn't be looking into the glare of the setting sun. Bob Zeller of the Center for Civil War Photography revealed that the camera was a stereo camera. Only one of the two sides of the negative survived.

The second image was taken, also by Gibson, in May of 1862. It's a less formal pose of the staff of Fitz John Porter, likely taken on the Peninsula. Lieutenant Jones also appears here (sitting, far right). Custer relaxes while reclining on the ground, a pet dog curled up next to him. The containers of various sizes seem to indicate they were having a round of drinks at the time.



The Peninsula, Va. Lts. George A. Custer, Nicolas Bowen, and William G. Jones (LOC)



Staff of Gen. Fitz John Porter (LOC)

MEDALS OF HONOR AT BRISTOE STATION

By Jeff Joyce

Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park is the site of two Civil War engagements: the Battle of Kettle Run (August 27, 1862) and the Battle of Bristoe Station (October 14, 1863). Six Medals of Honor were awarded to Federal soldiers as a result of their actions at or near Bristoe Station. Often referred to as the Congressional Medal of Honor because it's awarded in the name of Congress, the Medal of Honor was established during the Civil War. In December 1861 efforts to inspire sailors to valorous service led to the creation of the Navy Medal of Honor. Legislation soon followed authorizing a similar medal for soldiers in 1862. There have been over 3,500 Medals of Honor awarded since the medal's creation, with 1,524 awarded for actions during the Civil War. Many of the Civil War Medals of Honor were not awarded until years after the fighting as recommendations were made by surviving soldiers and officers.

The first Civil War Medals of Honor were presented to six soldiers (the "Andrews Raiders") on March 25, 1863 by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. Private Jacob Parrott, a volunteer from Ohio, became the first Medal of Honor recipient for his participation in the raid on a Confederate train in Georgia on April 12, 1862. The last Civil War Medals of Honor were awarded on July 3, 2024 by President Biden to Privates Philip Shadrach and George Wilson, two of the "Andrews Raiders" mistakenly overlooked when the first Medals of Honor were awarded in 1863.

Sergeant John H. Haight was awarded the Medal of Honor on June 8, 1888 for his actions at the Battle of Kettle Run as well as at the Battles of Williamsburg (May 5, 1862) and 2nd Manassas/Bull Run (August 28-30, 1862). John was born in Westfield, New York, on July 1, 1841. He and his younger brother, George, enlisted in the 72nd New York Infantry (George in Company E in June 1861 and John in Company G in July 1861). John was wounded at Williamsburg on May 5, 1862 and George was killed at Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862. The citation for John's Medal of Honor reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Sergeant John H. Haight, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on May 5, 1862, while serving with Company G, 72d New York Infantry, in action at Williamsburg, Virginia. Sergeant Haight voluntarily carried a severely wounded comrade off the field in the face of a large force of the enemy; in doing so was himself severely wounded and taken prisoner. He went into the fight at Bristol [sic] Station, Virginia, August 27, 29 and 30, 1862, although severely disabled. At Manassas, he volunteered to search the woods for the wounded.



Recalling his experience at the Battle of Kettle Run, John wrote:

On August 27, 1862, at the battle of Bristow Station, I was suffering greatly from a severe carbuncle [note: a carbuncle is a cluster of painful boils under the skin] on my neck. On this account I was ordered to the rear before the battle commenced. From my dreary position I could

(cont on page 11)

BRISTOE MEDALS OF HONOR

hear the distant rattle of musketry, and longed to be with my comrades. Soon I began to formulate schemes whereby I could rejoin my regiment. I gave this up and decided simply to forget my orders and join my company. Here I fought until the battle was over, when I fainted and had to be carried from the field.

John was honorably discharged due to his wounds on March 1, 1863. He returned home to Westfield, New York, and worked as a tinsmith. John died in Westfield on April 8, 1917 and is buried at East Ripley Cemetery.

Four Medals of Honor were awarded for actions at the Battle of Bristoe Station.

Corporal Moses C. Hanscom was awarded the Medal of Honor on December 1, 1864. He was born in April 1842 in Auburn, Maine, and enlisted in Company F, 19th Maine Infantry, in August 1862. The citation for his Medal of Honor reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Corporal Moses C. Hanscom, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 14 October 1863, while serving with Company F, 19th Maine Infantry, in action at Bristoe Station, Virginia, for capture of the flag of the 26th North Carolina (Confederate States of America).

Moses mustered out in May 1865. He died in Auburn, Maine, on July 26, 1873 and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery. His Medal of Honor is on display in the Maine State Museum in Auburn, Maine.



Corporal Thomas Cullen was awarded the Medal of Honor on December 1, 1864. Thomas was born in Ireland on February 26, 1839 and enlisted in Company I, 82nd New York Infantry, in May 1861. He was wounded at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. The citation for his Medal of Honor reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Corporal Thomas Cullen, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 14 October 1863, while serving with Company I, 82d New York Infantry, in action at Bristoe Station, Virginia, for capture of the flag of the 22d or 28th North Carolina (Confederate States of America).

Thomas was captured at the Weldon Railroad near Petersburg on June 22, 1864. After his parole in July 1864, Thomas transferred to the 59th New York Infantry and mustered out in June 1865. He died in Coudersport, Pennsylvania, on August 17, 1913 and is buried at Saint Mary's Cemetery.



(cont on page 12)

BRISTOE MEDALS OF HONOR

Private Michael Emmet Urell was awarded the Medal of Honor on June 6, 1870. Michael was born in Ireland on November 8, 1844 and enlisted in Company E, 2nd Regiment New York State Militia in April 1861 (the 2nd Regiment was re-designated as the 82nd New York in December 1861). The citation for his Medal of Honor reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Michael Emmet Urell, United States Army, for gallantry in action on 14 October 1863, while serving with Company E, 82d New York Infantry, in action at Bristoe Station, Virginia. While detailed as Color Bearer, Private Urell was severely wounded.

After recovering from his wounds Michael returned to the 82nd New York as a 2nd Lieutenant. He was discharged in May 1864 and went to work as a War Department clerk in Washington, D.C. When war with Spain was declared in April 1898 Michael was commissioned a Major in the District of Columbia National Guard and accompanied the District's 1st Volunteer Infantry Regiment to Cuba. Arriving in July 1898 he and the 1st Infantry participated in the last stages of the Santiago Campaign. After his return from Cuba, Michael became colonel of the 2nd District of Columbia Volunteer Infantry and retired in 1909 as a Brigadier General in the National Guard. In 1910 he traveled to Ireland and died in Cork on September 6, 1910. Before leaving for Ireland, Michael had left instructions that he wanted to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery next to his wife Isabelle, who had died in 1892. His final wish was honored and today he rests with Isabelle at Arlington.



Assistant Surgeon Joseph Kirby Corson was awarded the Medal of Honor on May 13, 1899. Joseph was born in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, on November 22, 1836. While studying medicine at the University of Pennsylvania he enlisted in Company K, 4th Pennsylvania Infantry, in April 1861 and mustered out as a sergeant in July 1861. Returning to the University of Pennsylvania, Joseph served as a medical cadet at an army hospital while continuing his medical studies. He enlisted in the 6th Pennsylvania Reserves (35th Pennsylvania Infantry) as an assistant surgeon in March 1863 after graduating with a medical degree. The citation for his Medal of Honor reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Assistant Surgeon Joseph Kirby Corson, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 14 October 1863, while serving with 35th Pennsylvania Volunteers, 6th Pennsylvania Reserves, in action at Bristoe Station, Virginia. With one companion Assistant Surgeon Corson returned in the face of the enemy's heavy artillery fire and removed to a place of safety a severely wounded soldier who had been left behind as the regiment fell back.



(cont on page 13)

BRISTOE MEDALS OF HONOR

Brevetted as a Major for distinguishing himself in the Wilderness, Joseph mustered out in June 1864. In November 1864 he became medical officer at Camp Discharge in Philadelphia. Joseph mustered out in May 1865 and returned to Plymouth Meeting to join his father's medical practice. He was appointed an assistant surgeon in the regular army in October 1867, promoted to Major in November 1888 and retired in November 1897. Corson died in Plymouth Meeting on July 24, 1913 and is buried at West Laurel Hill Cemetery.

A sixth Medal of Honor was awarded for actions near Bristoe Station.

Private Nathan Mullock Hallock was awarded the Medal of Honor on September 10, 1897. Nathan was born in Middletown, New York, on August 23, 1844 and enlisted in Company K, 124th New York Infantry, in August 1862. In June 1863 Nathan and the 124th New York were marching north through Bristoe Station in pursuit of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Nathan Mullock Hallock, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 15 June 1863, while serving with Company K, 124th New York Infantry, in action at Bristoe Station, Virginia. At imminent peril Private Hallock saved from death or capture a disabled officer of his company by carrying him under a hot musketry fire to a place of safety.

Nathan mustered out in June 1865. He died in Los Angeles on March 21, 1903 and is buried at Hillside Cemetery in Middletown, New York.



The Army Medal of Honor that was awarded during the Civil War, 1862-1865

A DAY IN RICHMOND

By Don Richardson

So, on the last day of February, I had a choice: stay home to watch my Virginia Cavaliers go up against Duke? Or join my wife on a one-day jaunt to Richmond?

Thankfully, I chose the latter option. Watching Duke crush my Cavs would have been way too painful. Instead, my wife joined her son and daughter-in-law at a seminar on growing orchids at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, while I took the opportunity to visit a number of Civil War sites in the immediate area.

Stop #1 was Drewry's Bluff, which saw two battles almost exactly two years apart. On May 15, 1862 a Union flotilla of five gunboats under Commodore John Rodgers headed up the James River to test the defenses of Richmond, while George McClellan's Army of the Potomac was moving up the Peninsula. The Confederates had fortified a position on a bluff 90 feet above the James, at a point where the river made a dogleg to the left. It was perfectly sited for artillery to stop the Union boats – which they did. After a four-hour fight, the Union commander broke off the action. The northerners referred to this position as Fort Darling.



Two years later, Gen. Ben Butler landed at Bermuda Hundred, determined to drive to Richmond by land rather than by river. After the earlier battle the Confederates had expanded Fort Darling and made it a permanent installation, including a chapel, barracks, and officers' quarters. It served as the Confederate Naval Academy and their Marine Corps training camp, but the fort itself played no part in what became known as Second Drewry's Bluff.

On May 16, 1864 the Confederates attacked elements of the Union 10th and 18th Corps, turning the Federal right and eventually forcing Butler's forces to retreat. The battle occurred about 3 miles south of Fort Darling, and while there is not much left to see there, it was noteworthy to me because my great-great-grandfather's older half-brother, Capt. Edgar Kissam of the 9th New Jersey, fought here and was captured as the Union troops retreated.



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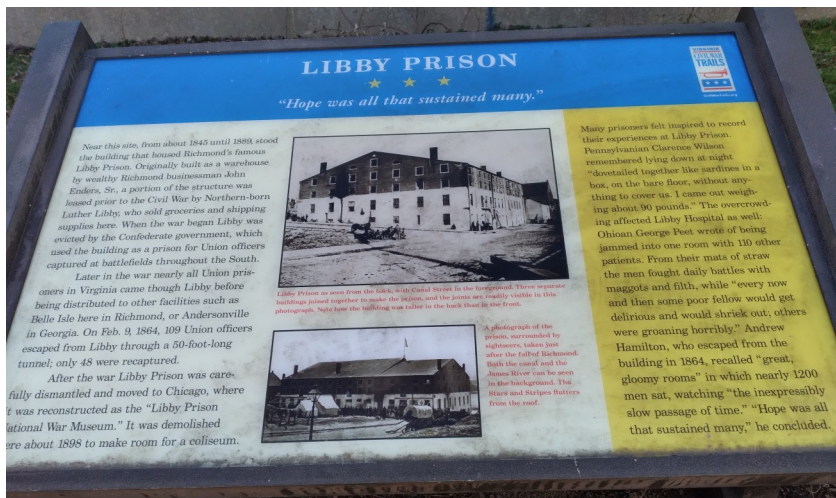
A DAY IN RICHMOND

Stop #2 was the NPS Visitor Center at Chimborazo. While nothing remains of the vast Confederate hospital complex, the visitor center does host a small medical museum, a short but informative film about the care provided to the wounded in Richmond's many hospitals, and this diorama showing the hospital complex as it looked in wartime. It's located on East Broad St, a few miles east of downtown Richmond.

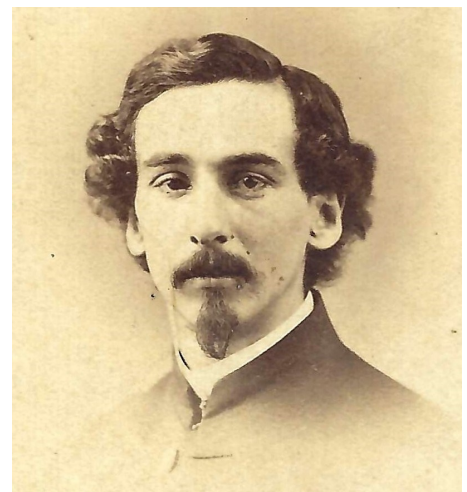


Stop #3 was a quick one – historic St. John's Episcopal Church, also on East Broad St. While not strictly speaking a Civil War site, it's Patrick Henry, after all: "give me liberty or give me death". You need to pay respects.

Stop #4 was even quicker since there is nothing to see at the site where Libby Prison stood, apart from a historic marker. The warehouse district here is long gone and has been replaced by a long, tall flood barrier. But I had to stop by because my relative, Capt. Kissam, spent a week or two in Libby before being sent south with other men to an officer's POW camp in North Carolina. Sadly, he contracted tuberculosis while imprisoned, and died in 1868.



Libby Prison Marker



Capt. Edgar Kissam, 9th NJ Volunteers

Stop #5 was Hollywood Cemetery, resting place of a host of famous people, located high on the hills overlooking the James. I visited the graves of Presidents Monroe and Tyler, Jefferson Davis, Fitzhugh Lee, J.E.B Stuart and his family (four generations of Jeb's are buried here, and his living descendants include Jeb Vth and Jeb VI), Matthew Fontaine Maury, Harry Heth, Dr. Hunter McGuire, Eppa Hunton, and George Pickett. There were a lot of other notables, but these were all I had time for. There's also a massive stone pyramid honoring the Confederate soldiers.

(cont on page 16)

A DAY IN RICHMOND



President James Monroe



President John Tyler



President Jefferson Davis



General Fitzhugh Lee



General J.E.B Stuart & family



Dr. Hunter H. McGuire

Stop #6 was a monument at the site where Stuart was mortally wounded at the battle of Yellow Tavern on May 11th, 1864. The site is in a quiet suburban neighborhood, on a cul-de-sac road just north of the I-295/I-64 bypass and just east of Route 1. You would not think to look at the place that a battle had been fought here.

Time did not permit me to visit the White House of the Confederacy or the Civil War Museum at the old Tredegar Iron Works. It was, however, an unusually nice day (for February) and a great way to check off a number boxes on my must-see list. I'll try to feature those two sites in a future article, as well as the driving tour of the Seven Days battles of 1862.

(cont on page 17)

A DAY IN RICHMOND



General George Pickett



Confederate Soldiers Monument



Markers at the site where J.E.B. Stuart was mortally wounded

45th Annual Spring Civil War Mosby Bus Tour

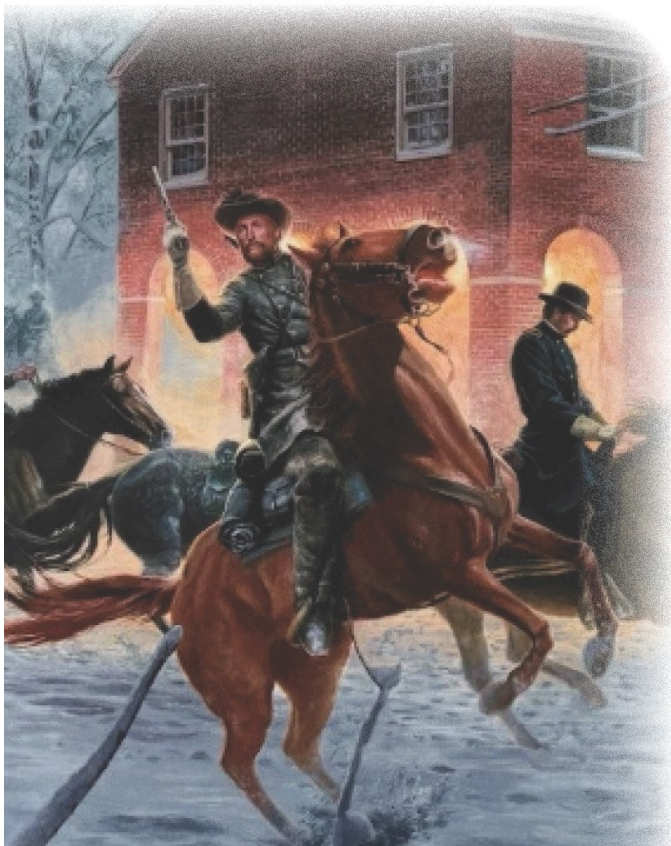
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March 26

Shipwreck on the Potomac: Disaster in Pursuit of Lincoln's Killer

Karen E. Stone
Old Manassas Courthouse, 9248 Lee Ave, Manassas

May 28

'Better Known than Acknowledged': The Lees of Stratford and the Cause of Liberty

Dr. Gordon Blaine Steffey
Williams Ordinary, 17674 Main St, Dumfries

July 23

Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle on Brawner's Farm, August 28, 1862

Bill Backus
Pat White Center at Ben Lomond
10501 Copeland Dr, Manassas

September 24

Cold War Virginia

Francis Gary Powers Jr. and Christopher Sturdevant
Old Manassas Courthouse, 9248 Lee Ave, Manassas

November 19

True Crime Prince William County in the 1950s

Zachary G. Ford
Occoquan Town Hall, 314 Mill St, Occoquan
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