

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table
The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

November 5, 2018
Our 213th Meeting



Volume 18
Number 11

<http://www.raleighcwrt.org>

Nov. 5 Event Features Raleigh CWRT's Project to Conserve the 30th NC Regiment's State Flag as Presented by A. Ballard, C. Knight, & D. Waller

NOTE: The upcoming meeting is being held **November 5th**, the first Monday of the month. This exception to the second Monday rule is due to November 12 being a government holiday [Veteran's Day]. Although the Museum will be open, no Museum staff, including our projectionist, will be present that Day.

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table's November 5, 2018 meeting is focused on its Project to Conserve the State flag of the 30th NC Infantry Regiment.

The RCWRT is sponsoring the conservation of a State flag belonging to the 30th NC Infantry Regiment. Andrew Ballard, Knapsack editor emeritus and originator of the idea for this flag project, will provide an overview. He will also discuss how the funds generated by the sale of the documentary he produced on the the end of the Civil War in North Carolina helps to fund the conservation project.

Charlie Knight, Curator of Military History at the Museum, will talk about the flag's history and about the conservation process, and David Waller will give the unit history of the 30th NC Infantry Regiment.

A raffle, silent auctions, and other events to raise money for the flag's conservation will take place during the meeting.

Please bring in books, maps, art, and other donations for the raffle. Finally, the Demo Gallery at the Museum has been reserved to display "our" flag on Nov. 5 as part of the meeting.



NC State Flag of the 30th Reg. "adopted" for conservation by the Raleigh CWRT (note white bar over blue bar)



NC State Flag showing correct placement of the blue bar over the white bar



Confederate Battle Flag (shown for comparison)

History of the 30th NC Infantry Regiment

Organized on Sept. 26, 1861 at Camp Mangum in Wake County, NC and assigned to the District of the Cape Fear, Department of North Carolina.

Assigned to George B. Anderson's Brigade of D.H. Hill's Division in June 1862:

- Seven Days Battles – June 25 to July 1, 1862
- South Mountain – Sept. 14, 1862
- Sharpsburg – Sept. 17, 1862

After Anderson's mortal wounding at Antietam, assigned to Ramseur's Brigade, Rodes Division, 2nd Corps, Army of Northern Virginia from November 1862 to June 1864:

- Chancellorsville – May 1-4, 1863
- Gettysburg – July 1-3, 1863
- Bristoe Campaign – Oct. to Nov. 1863
- Mine Run Campaign – Nov. to Dec. 1863
- Kelly's Ford, Virginia – Nov. 7, 1863
- The Wilderness – May 5-6, 1864
- Spotsylvania Court House – May 8-21, 1864
- North Anna – May 22-26, 1864

After Ramseur was promoted to Major General in May 1864, assigned to General William R. Cox for the duration of the war:

- Cold Harbor – June 1-3, 1864
- Lynchburg Campaign – June 1864
- Monocacy – July 9, 1864
- Snickers Gap – July 18, 1864
- 3rd Winchester – Sept. 19, 1864
- Fishers Hill – Sept. 22, 1864
- Cedar Creek – Oct. 19, 1864
- Petersburg Siege – Dec. 1864 to April 1865
- Fort Stedman – March 25, 1865
- Saylor's Creek – April 6, 1865
- Farmville – April 7, 1865
- Appomattox Court House April 9, 1865

During the course of the Civil War, 2,255 men served in this unit.



North Carolina Museum of History - Current Exhibits in the Civil War Gallery



By Charlie Knight, Curator of Military History

Sgt. Alfred May, Co. F., 61st NC Infantry

Alfred May of Pitt County followed his two older brothers, Benjamin and Robert, into Confederate service in late August 1862, joining their unit, Company F, the "Trio Guards," of the 61st North Carolina Infantry. Today Alfred May's uniform, weapons, and equipment comprise one of the most complete collections of any enlisted Confederate soldier and is a highlight of the NC Museum of History's Civil War collection.



Sgt. Alfred May



May's uniform, weapons, and equipment

The 61st was one of the more widely-traveled units, serving in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, as part of Brig. Gen. Thomas Clingman's brigade. Their baptism of fire came at Kinston in December 1862, unsuccessfully defending the town during Foster's Raid, and again were engaged at Goldsboro several days later.

The regiment spent most of 1863 defending Charleston, with a brief stint at Savannah. Captain Nathan Ramsey of Co. D later wrote, "Every recollection and association of our sojourn in Savannah is of the most pleasant and delightful character. We were welcomed most heartily by the noble men and women of that most beautiful of cities and royally entertained..."

The Knapsack

Going from Savannah, Ga., to James Island, SC, was...very much the same as dropping out of Paradise into Hell!" In addition to the insects, lack of fresh water, and "very scanty supply of devilish poor beef, that a respectable Charleston buzzard would not eat...[and] totally unfit for the stomach of a cannibal," the Tar Heels found themselves looked down upon by many of the South Carolina troops.

The 61st served around the harbor on James Island, Sullivan's Island, and Morris Island including at Fort Wagner on the latter, although they did not participate in the attack made famous by the charge of the 54th Massachusetts. Capt. Ramsey likely spoke for many in the regiment, "During the four years of my experience in the army I found no place so uninviting as Battery Wagner on Morris Island." All three of the May brothers were present with the 61st at Charleston; youngest brother Alfred became 1st Sergeant of Company F during that time.

Late in the year, Clingman's Brigade was sent to Wilmington and then brought to Petersburg by P. G. T. Beauregard in the Spring of 1864. It fought against Benjamin Butler's Army of the James at Drewry's Bluff in May and served with Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Cold Harbor in June. Clingman's troops fought around Petersburg and Richmond as each side tried to break the stalemate; Benjamin May appears to have been wounded at Petersburg in July and Robert May died of an unknown cause at a hospital in Richmond in October.

Clingman's Brigade was sent back to Wilmington as part of Maj. Gen. Robert Hoke's Division, remaining along the Cape Fear until the city finally fell to Union forces. The 61st fought again at Kinston in March 1865, trying to slow another Union advance from New Bern. Little more than a week later they fought at Bentonville and were included in Joe Johnston's surrender at Bennett Place the following month.

There is no indication in their service records that Alfred May or Benjamin May received their paroles at Greensboro, and in fact Benjamin may have been captured at either Wyse Fork or Bentonville, as a blank form in his record lists him as a POW of the Army of the Ohio. That Alfred managed to retain his weapons and equipment strongly suggests that he did not surrender at Greensboro with the rest of the 61st.

(continued on p. 3)

Sgt. Alfred May, Co. F., 61st NC Infantry (continued)



Sgt. Alfred May's uniform



May's wife, Ida, painted the flags on his canteen in 1891

After the war Alfred took up farming in his native Pitt Co.; in 1875 he married Ida Wooten, with whom he had eight children. May died in 1906 and is buried on his farm. His wartime things remained in the family for more than a century and were donated to the museum in the 1990s, where they comprise one of the most intact and complete Confederate groupings anywhere.

New Members

We welcome one new member this month:
Lloyd Townsend of Raleigh, NC.

From the Editor

If you would like to be profiled in a future issue of the Knapsack as to your particular Civil War passion, e.g., reenacting camp life, drills, and battles, delving into genealogy, collecting Civil War-related items, playing Civil War boardgames, etc., please email me at bob.graesser@gmail.com. I think other Knapsack readers would be very interested in your story.

Bob Graesser
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster, Raleigh CWRT
Oct. 29, 2018

Did You Know?

- The average weight of a Union soldier was 143.5 lbs.
- Henry Heth is said to be the only general addressed by first name by Robert E. Lee.
- In spite of major and minor wounds, Bedford Forrest would survive the Civil War, only to die of diabetes in Memphis on October 29, 1877, at the age of 56.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 3 & 4, 2018. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. 32nd Annual Battlefield Re-enactment. Fort Branch Confederate Earthen Fort Civil War Site, Hamilton, NC. Located 3 miles southeast of Hamilton, N.C. Just off NC Hwy 125/903 at 2883 Fort Branch Road in Martin County on the Roanoke River. Parking: \$10. Battles at 1:30 pm both days. For details, go to www.fortbranchcivilwarsite.com or send email request to Don Torrence at recreb@suddenlinkmail.com.

Nov. 17, 2018. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Civil War Saturday. CSS Neuse Civil War Interpretive Center, 100 North Queen Street, Kinston, NC 28465. The CSS Neuse Civil War Interpretive Center will be providing the public with demonstrations of the many aspects of naval, military, and civilian life. Demos will include navigation techniques, small arms, artillery, steam engines, rope and knot work, cooking, spinning, weaving, dyeing, Civil War medicine, and nineteenth century toys and games. Musket and artillery demonstrations will take place throughout the day. This special event is free, and open to the public. For details, go to <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/neuse/neuse.htm> or call (252) 522-2107.

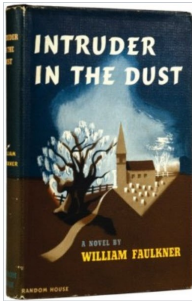
Dec. 1, 2018. 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. "A Civil War Christmas" Holiday Open House. Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site, 5466 Harper
When: Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018 10:00 AM
Where: 5466 Harper House Rd, Four Oaks, NC 27524
Come celebrate a Civil War Christmas during this Holiday open house event. Costumed interpreters will decorate the kitchen in festive themes using natural materials such as holly, magnolia, fruits, & popcorn strands. Visitors can enjoy cookies and cider while listening to period music. Costumed military interpreters will be available to discuss how the common soldier spent his time on furlough with friends and family.
Online Access: <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/bentonvi/bentonvi.htm>
Cost: Free!
Organizer: Bentonville Battlefield
Contact: Amanda Brantley, amanda.brantley@ncdcr.gov, (910) 594-0789
House Rd., Four Oaks, NC 27524
<http://www.fobb.net> or (910) 594-0789 ext 203

Dec. 1, 2018. 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Fort Branch Christmas. Fort Branch Confederate Earthen Fort Civil War Site, Hamilton, NC. Located 3 miles southeast of Hamilton, N.C. Just off NC Hwy 125/903 at 2883 Fort Branch Road in Martin County on the Roanoke River. The Fort holds a candlelight tour of recreated Christmas scenes. Visitors enjoy refreshments, sharing an interest in history with the participants and caroling around the campfire. For details, go to www.fortbranchcivilwarsite.com or send email request to fort.branch.nc@gmail.com.

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Alternate Civil War History

Some Thoughts by Bob Graesser, Editor



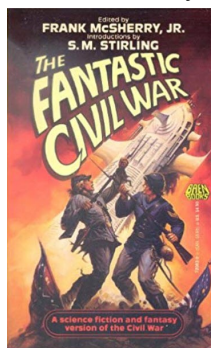
Intruder in the Dust, published in 1948, is a novel by the Nobel Prize-winning American author William Faulkner. The novel includes a number of sections on the Southern memory of the Civil War, one of which pertains to Pickett's charge and was quoted by Shelby Foote in Ken Burns' documentary *The Civil War*:

"For every Southern boy fourteen years old, not once but whenever he wants it,

there is the instant when it's still not yet two o'clock on that July afternoon in 1863, the brigades are in position behind the rail fence, the guns are laid and ready in the woods and the furled flags are already loosened to break out and Pickett himself with his long oiled ringlets and his hat in one hand probably and his sword in the other looking up the hill waiting for Longstreet to give the word and it's all in the balance, it hasn't happened yet, it hasn't even begun yet, it not only hasn't begun yet but there is still time for it not to begin against that position and those circumstances which made more men than Garnett and Kemper and Armstead and Wilcox look grave yet it's going to begin, we all know that, we have come too far with too much at stake and that moment doesn't need even a fourteen-year-old boy to think This time. Maybe this time with all this much to lose and all this much to gain: Pennsylvania, Maryland, the world, the golden dome of Washington itself to crown with desperate and unbelievable victory the desperate gamble, the cast made two years ago...."

It is such musings that have led authors to pen American Civil War alternate histories. This alternate history fiction focuses on the Civil War ending differently (or never having happened at all). Most commonly, these portray the victory and survival of the Confederate States of America. Where the "history" diverges from the actual event can either be natural or realistic (such as one General making a different decision than he did in real life), or else it can be an unnatural fantasy/science fiction plot device such as time travel, which usually takes the form of someone bringing modern weapons or hindsight knowledge into the past. That being said, I understand that alternate histories are not everyone's cup of tea.

Authors of alternate Civil War history include Peter G. Tsouras, Jeffrey Evan Brooks, Harry Turtledove, and



George Byram (see <https://www.newsmax.com/fastfeatures/civil-war-alternate-history/2015/07/18/id/657845/>).

Examples of alternate history can be found in the anthology *The Fantastic Civil War* by Frank McSherry (Editor), S.M. Stirling (Introduction), published May 1, 1991, ISBN: 0-671-72063-5 [SBN-13: 978-0-671-72063-6]. This book of ten American Civil War science fiction/fantasy stories includes George

Byram's short story *The Chronicle of the 656th*.

It is this short story that has prompted me to write this article. I was reminded of it by the presentation of our October 2018 speaker, Amanda Brantley, who spoke of Carrie McGavock and of her tending to the Confederate wounded and dying on her family plantation near the Battle of Franklin, TN.

The Chronicle of the 656th also takes place around Franklin, TN. On November 18, 1944, "the 656th Regimental Combat Team went on maneuvers in middle Tennessee in anticipation of operating behind Japanese lines in northern China. It was a self-contained infantry outfit with mule transport and carrier pigeons instead of radio, but with the most modern weapons and demolition supplies." One of the characters in the story is the great-grandson of Carrie McGavock.

The story offers a science fiction explanation as to how Union General Schofield, in command of the IV and XXIII Corps (22,000 men), was able to elude a trap set by Confederate General John B. Hood and his 38,000 men at Spring Hill and retreat to Franklin. It also explains the massive, unheard-of firepower that Schofield's army threw against Hood's army the next day, November 30, 1864, causing over 6,000 Confederate casualties in a little less than five hours -- one of the bloodiest one-sided disasters of the War. Fourteen Confederate generals (six killed, seven wounded, and one captured) and 55 regimental commanders were casualties.

These alternate histories of the Civil War were written, not to promote the continuation of slavery, but to show what a close run thing the War was. Outnumbered in every resource except enslaved labor, the Confederacy's only hope for its continued existence rested on other countries (e.g., England and France) recognizing the Confederacy as legitimate coupled with the North growing sick of the carnage and suing for peace. The only tool to bring this about was Confederate victories in the field. These alternate histories show how a tweak here or there in the outcome of battles could have led to such a result.

Like these Civil War alternate histories, Civil War board games allow one to ask "what if" questions and explore the realm of possibilities. But that's another thought for another time.



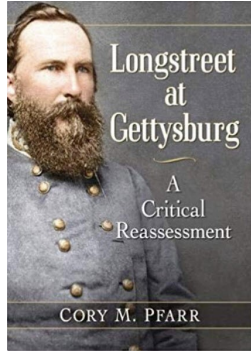
A Reminder to All Members:
Please bring in books, maps, art, and other donations for the raffle at our Nov. 5th meeting to help pay for the conservation of our "adopted" 30th NC Infantry Regiment's State flag.

As of Oct. 29th, thanks to proceeds from sales of Andrew Ballard's documentary DVD covering the end of the Civil War in North Carolina, plus generous donations from the Raleigh CWRT Board, we have already raised \$6,560 toward the estimated \$7,500 - \$8,000 conservation cost!

New Civil War-Related Book Release

A new book titled "Longstreet at Gettysburg: A Critical Reassessment" is due to be published by McFarland Publishers this Winter (2019).

This is the first book-length, critical analysis of Lieutenant General James Longstreet's actions at the Battle of Gettysburg. The author argues that Longstreet's record has been discredited unfairly, beginning with character assassination by his contemporaries after the war and, persistently, by historians in the decades since. By closely studying the three-day battle, and conducting an incisive historiographical inquiry into Longstreet's treatment by scholars, this book presents an alternative view of Longstreet as an effective military leader, and refutes over a century of negative evaluations of his performance.



The author, Cory M. Pfarr, is an American History writer who works for the Department of Defense. He lives in Pikesville, Maryland.

Two "dust-jacket blurbs":

"Cory M. Pfarr provides the most detailed analysis to date of James Longstreet's actions at Gettysburg, the motivations of his postwar critics, and the manner in which bias against Longstreet has influenced histories of the battle down to the present day. This is a welcome addition to the historiography of the most-studied military engagement in American history."

—William Garrett Piston, author of *Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant; James Longstreet and his Place in Southern History*

"About once each decade an honest work concerning James Longstreet is published. Cory Pfarr has this decade covered."

—Richard Pilcher, past president, the Longstreet Society

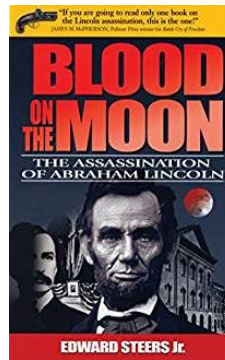
The book is available on pre-order from the following locations: Quail Ridge Books in Raleigh, NC (<https://www.quailridgebooks.com/search/site/Longstreet%20at%20Gettysburg>), McFarland Publishers (<https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/Longstreet-at-Gettysburg/>), Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1476674043/>), as well as other book stores. The softcover version has ISBN 978-1-4766-7404-9 while the eBook version has ISBN 978-1-4766-3499-9.

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Classic Civil War-Related Book

The website of the Raleigh Civil War Round Table, <http://www.raleighcwr.org>, features a weekly quiz. The recent Quizzes #35 and #36 (Oct-14-2018 and Oct-21-2018) concerns Lincoln's Assassination and John Wilkes Booth, respectively. The information in those quizzes found their inspiration in this month's classic book selection.

Blood on the Moon —The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln, by Edward Steers, Jr. ***Blood on the Moon*** reveals that John Wilkes Booth was neither mad nor acted alone in his act of murder. He was helped by many, including Dr. Samuel Alexander Mudd, the Maryland physician who has been portrayed as an innocent victim of circumstances. Booth was also aided by the Confederate leadership in Richmond. As he made his plans to strike at Lincoln, Booth was in contact with key members of the Confederate underground in Canada, and after the assassination these same forces used all of their resources to abet his escape.



Edward Steers Jr. is a noted Lincoln authority, who after completing an acclaimed career as a research scientist at the National Institutes of Health, turned his research skills to the Lincoln assassination. He is the author of several books about the president, including *The Trial*. He lives in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.

Blood on the Moon was the winner of The Lincoln Group of New York's 2001 Award of Achievement and was a History Book Club Selection as well. *Blue & Gray Magazine* stated the following: "Immediately takes its place as the standard by which all other books dealing with Lincoln's assassination will be judged: it is must reading for anyone interested in the Civil War or American history."

This paperback edition was published by University Press of Kentucky (Sept. 15, 2005). ISBN-13: 978-0-81319-151-5. Available at Quail Ridge Books, Raleigh, NC, as well as other book stores and online at Amazon.com.

For the Record

The longest and most expensive telegram ever sent occurred in 1864. Lincoln was trying to win re-election and thought that he needed every vote he could get. The territory of Nevada was heavily Republican and every effort was made to make Nevada a U.S. state prior to the election.

A Nevada convention drafted a constitution which was overwhelmingly approved by Nevada voters on September 7, 1864. Before Lincoln could proclaim Nevada a state, however, he had to receive Nevada's constitution. The only way to get it to Washington, D.C. in time was via telegraph. This telegram, which contained 16,543 words, cost \$4,303.27 in 1864 dollars, which is equivalent to \$69,073.24 in 2018 dollars! Ironically, Lincoln would have won re-election without Nevada's votes!

News of the RCWRT



Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

Date	Speaker(s)	Topic
Nov. 5	Andrew Ballard, Charlie Knight, & David Waller	Special 30th NC Infantry flag conservation event
Dec. 10	Betty Vaughn	Holiday Party at Church of the Holy Cross, 2301 W. Millbrook Rd., Raleigh, NC.
2019		
Jan. 12	Ed Bearss	Vicksburg Campaign; 2019 T. Harry Gattton Award winner announced
Feb. 11	Susanna Lee	Motivations of the Civil War Soldier
Mar. 11	Harold Knudsen	Modern War Methods of General Longstreet

Preservation News



Help the American Battlefield Trust in their 2018 projects.

Vicksburg

Demolition and removal of residence, near the "Railroad Redoubt" at Vicksburg. \$25,000.

Chancellorsville

Demolition and removal of a turn-of-the-century residence that has been abandoned for more than 20 years; structure is collapsing in on itself in places, eyesore, and dangerous, as it is near the Trust's "First Day" walking trail. \$25,000.

Harpers Ferry

Demolition and removal of a former auto repair shop and commercial office structures. The higher cost is due to the large amount of asphalt that needs removal as well as restoring the soil to be able to grow grasses. \$49,000.

For more information on donating, go to <https://www.battlefields.org/help-restore-battlefields-their-wartime-appearances>.



The Knapsack

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Griff Bartlett
Charlie Knight

Readers are encouraged to submit photos, events, & articles for publication to Bob Graesser, Editor
(bob.graesser@gmail.com; 919-244-9041)

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Paying Memberships / Total Members: 128 / 201

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table was formed on March 12, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization."

We meet on the second Monday of most months at 6:30 pm, at the N.C. Museum of History (located at 5 Edenton Street, across from the State Capitol). The programs begin at 7:00 p.m. Check the RCWRT website (<http://www.raleighcwr.org>) for program dates and timing.

Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Student membership is free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20. Dues should be submitted to the Treasurer by **September 15** each year.