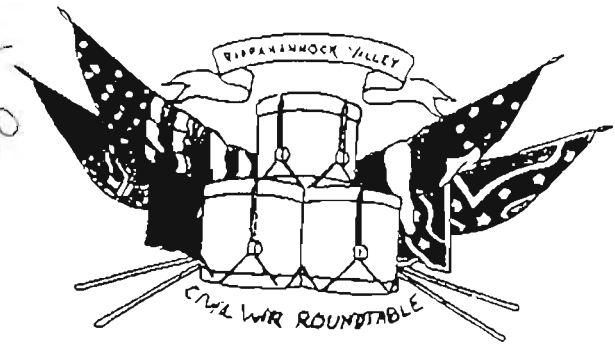


Wed
28th
7:30



DRUM & BUGLE Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table

August 1991

Vol. 2 No. 8

Annual Picnic

- When:** Sunday August 18, 1991 at 4:00 p.m.,
dinner at 6:00 p.m.
- Where:** The home of Betty and Milt Ford, 119 Canterbury Drive,
in Stafford County. (See directions and map in newsletter.)
- RSVP:** Please notify Betty Ford at (703) 659-0128 or Julie Olsen at (703)
786-3427 by August 15, indicating how many will be attending and
what type of food dish you plan to bring.

The annual picnic of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table will begin at 4 p.m. Sunday August 18, at the home of members Betty and Milt Ford at Aquia Landing in Stafford County.

Members are asked to bring either a hot dish, salad, or dessert large enough to feed eight people. Also bring along table service and lawn chairs as well as whatever you need for your favorite riverfront recreation, such as a fishing rod or swimsuit. Food and chicken will be provided at the picnic.

RSVP by August 15, to either Betty Ford or Julie Olsen (phone numbers listed) to let them know what special family recipe you will be sharing with the group, so we can plan accordingly.

The picnic is for the whole family and a variety of activities will be taking place, including lawn games, boating, fishing, swimming, and crafts.

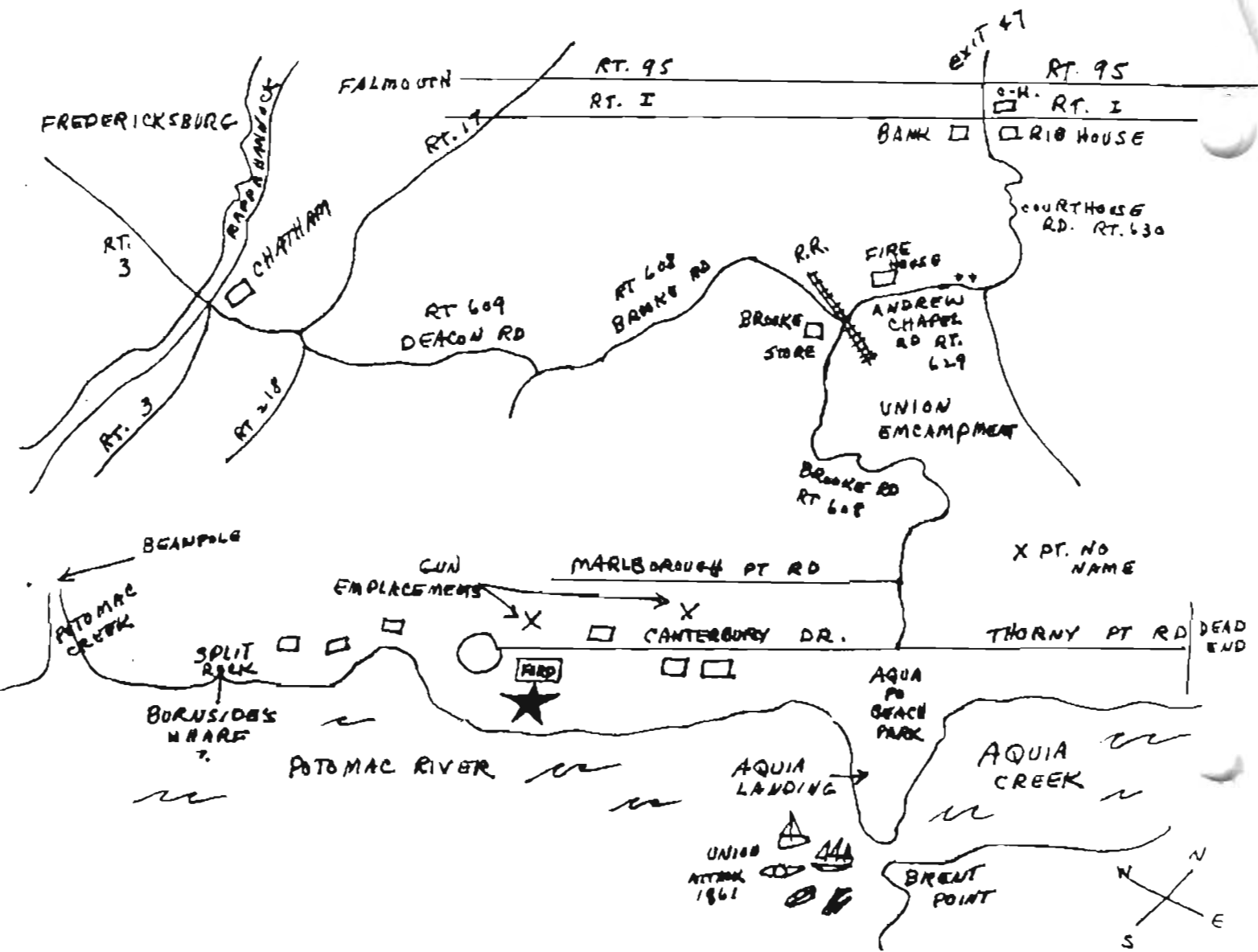
The fund raising drive for assisting the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites to purchase Fisher's Hill will also begin at the picnic. (See inside of newsletter for details.)

Directions to the picnic and a map are on the second page of this newsletter.

In case of inclement weather the picnic will be held indoors, so come rain or shine.

Our first annual picnic was held last year at "Stirling" the anti-bellum home of members Carolyn and Carroll Hayden. The historic ambience of the annual picnic is being continued, as the Fords reside at the site of a naval-land battle, with fortifications located right across the street from their home. They also live within site of Burnside's Wharf. For more information on the wealth of history around Aquia Landing, see the article inside the newsletter and come to the picnic prepared to do a bit of sightseeing as well as some serious eating!

The Drum and Bugle is published monthly by the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table. Memberships are \$5.00 per year and open to anyone interested in the study and preservation of Civil War Sites. Officers are: Bill Wyckoff, president; J. Dane Hartgrove, Treasurer; Betty Ford, Secretary; Greg Mertz, Editor; Julie Olsen, Editor; Allabout, Robert Williams, Lee Ann Williams, Milt Ford, Mike Vice and Frank O'Reilly, executive committee members.



Directions to the Picnic at the Ford's

Betty and Milt Ford
 119 Canterbury Drive
 Stafford, Virginia 22554
 703-659-0128

From Interstate 95, take exit #47 East onto Courthouse Road, Route 630.

Go straight through the traffic light at Route 1, past the Rib House, continuing along the Courthouse Road.

Turn right on Andrew Chapel Road, Route 629. Go past the firehouse and under the Railroad bridge.

Turn left onto Brooke Road, Route 608, going past the grocery store.

Follow winding road to dead end at Aqua-Po Beach Park. Turn right at dead end onto Canterbury Drive. The Ford's live at the third house on the left, #119 Canterbury Drive.

Aquia Landing

by Milton Ford

The map supplied by the Fords to show how to reach their home, also shows the location of most of the landmarks mentioned in Milt's article, and it would be helpful to refer to the map while reading the following article.

"Quiyough," the Indian name for Aquia, means "place of gulls," and during the winter period, it is very appropriately named.

In 1842, Aquia Landing was the northern terminus of the R. F. & P. Railroad from Richmond. Here passengers left the train to board steamboats bound for Washington.

About 1845, four new boats could be found at Aquia, a fine new depot with a large waiting room was built at the end of the wharf, and the rail line itself was upgraded. Aquia Landing flourished until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Less than a week after the fall of Fort Sumter, the four steamboats were seized by the Federal government for use as transport and naval vessels. Shortly after this seizure, the State of Virginia took possession of Aquia Landing and General Daniel Ruggles was appointed commander. The South feared the U. S. government might try to take over the railroad facilities there and thus obtain a direct route to Fredericksburg and Richmond. Ruggles and Captain William F. Lynch, commander of the naval defenses on the river, immediately fortified the landing. Troops from the Fredericksburg area were sent to man its defenses. A heavy battery was built on the end of the landing, behind the wharf. The battery was discovered by a U. S. naval reconnaissance into Aquia Creek by the "Sprotson," one of the four steamboats captured earlier at the landing, a vessel formerly known as the "Mount Vernon." No exchange of fire took place between forces.

On May 31, 1861, the first significant battle between the Potomac Flotilla and the Confederate batteries at Aquia Creek was fought. During the 3-hour engagement, the battery was severely damaged, but was rebuilt during the night.

On June 1, 1861, Federal gunboats named the "Pawnee," the "Thomas Freeborn," the "Resolute," the "Anacostia" and the "Yankee" returned for action. Five hundred rounds were fired by the Federals, twice silencing the Confederate guns, while the "Pawnee" and the "Freeborn" both suffered some damage.

Capt. Lynch, believing the buildings at the end of the wharf were being used by federal gunners to sight on the battery, ordered the structures to be burned. By the end of the battle, only charred pilings remained of the landing. While there were no fatalities reported, the important landing was in ruins. Expecting the flotilla to return, the Confederates repaired the batteries and constructed additional works.

In March of 1862, while George B. McClellan approached Richmond along the Peninsula, and force under Irvin McDowell moved south from Washington, Confederates abandoned Aquia Landing, pulling back to the south bank of the Rappahannock River, destroying three miles of track and other significant structures as they went. But the Union Army soon restored the railroad to Fredericksburg, accomplished via some remarkable railroad bridge building feats performed by General Herman Haupt, including the bridge Lincoln said looked like it was constructed of beanpoles and cornstalks.

The Federals would evacuate the landing just prior to the 2nd Manassas Campaign, when they in turn destroyed the landing to render it useless to the Confederates. The task of destroying it fell to General Ambrose E. Burnside. The cinders had barely cooled before Burnside, now commanded the army, realized the need for the railroad to take Fredericksburg. Consequently, the wharf, bridges and track were restored. At this time, a deep-water wharf was constructed 1 1/2 mile south of Aquia and a support village erected, known as Burnside's Wharf and/or Youbedam. The rebuilding of the supply line was

once again expedited by an innovation of Haupt who had two Schuylkill River barges boited together, upon which eight loaded railroad cars could be placed, and towed down the Potomac River to Aquia Landing. The already loaded cars could be removed from the barges and hooked to the railroad engines.

After Burnside was defeated at Fredericksburg, Joseph Hooker continued to use Aquia Landing for the Chancellorsville Campaign. But when the Union Army marched north for the Gettysburg Campaign, it was determined that Aquia Landing had served its purpose, and the wharf, tracks and bridges were destroyed once again.

The following year, General Ulysses S. Grant, pushing toward Richmond, decided that the landing would again be needed. The U. S. military railroad construction corps rebuilt the facilities, and it once more funneled supplies to the army, and later transported the sick and wounded from the battlefields of Grant's Overland Campaign enroute to hospitals in Washington.

After the war, Aquia Landing and the rail lines were returned to the R. F. & P. Railroad. By 1870, a direct rail route from Richmond to Washington was completed, and service at Aquia Landing was discontinued.

Many physical remains of Aquia Landing's Civil War history may still be found today. Brooke Road, Route 608, was the bed of the railroad line running from Aquia Landing to Brooke Station, present day Brooke. It has been reported that a few years back the bumps caused by railroad ties could still be felt as cars drove along the paved-over rail line. On the ridge across the street from our home are remains of two of the three gun emplacements shown in the Official Records Atlas, used to defend the landing. The railroad spur from Burnside's Wharf to link up with the track to Falmouth, ran across the property and the raised bed is still discernable today.

Gordon's Flank Attack--Review of the July Program

by Mac Wyckoff

On July 8, Historian Greg Mertz led a superb walking tour of the Wilderness Battlefield for 24 members and guests of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table. Concentrating on General John B. Gordon's flank attack, Greg discussed Gordon's previous career and experiences as well as summarizing the battle along the Turnpike prior to Gordon's attack. Greg emphasized Gordon's superb speaking ability and extreme personal bravery, important characteristics for a Civil War leader. He also thoroughly explained Gordon's actions on the first day of the battle.

Through his effective analysis and use of quotes and maps, Greg explained the Confederate reconnaissance which detected the weakness in the Federal right, Gordon's proposal to launch a flank attack, General Richard Ewell's decision to wait until he could make a personal examination and the circumstances surrounding Lee's decision to make the attack. As we walked the ground where many of these events took place, Greg continued his narrative by explaining the attack itself. While the assault was initially successful, darkness and Union reinforcements halted Gordon. Gordon's attack ended the fighting at The Wilderness, but his performance was noted by General Robert E. Lee, who immediately promoted him from brigade to division command.

Superb examples of Civil War trenches remain largely undisturbed on this portion of The Wilderness Battlefield. When mixed with a little knowledge of the events, the earthworks offer a vivid example of how the historic resource can further our understanding of the battle. Greg thoroughly and interestingly explained how the trenches we were seeing related to the battle action.

This was a truly superb tour which will not soon be forgotten by the participants. For nearly two hours, as we walked approximately two miles, Greg's narrative of the chronology of events held our attention. Those in attendance will surely argue with the often heard statement that there is nothing to see on The Wilderness Battlefield.

Round Table to Purchase 1/2 Acre of Fisher's Hill

At the picnic, the Round Table will kick off a drive to assist the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites to purchase the Fisher's Hill Battlefield, one of the significant actions in the 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign. This is our first opportunity to make a profound impact on the preservation front. Tax deductible donations should be made by check payable to "APCWS," but should be turned in to our treasurer, Dane Hartgrove, because our contribution is to be made as a group. Artist Don Troiani has generously offered a print to any group which can purchase 1/2 acre of the battlefield. The executive committee has voted to use the print for future fund raising efforts. The following excerpt is from the resolution passed unanimously by the executive committee:

"Whereas, the tenets of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table (RVCWRT) include active participation in the preservation of historic Civil War sites;

Therefore, RVCWRT wishes to provide to the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) the sum of five hundred and seventy two (\$572) dollars for the purchase of 1/2 acre of land at the Fisher's Hill battlefield.

Accordingly, it is proposed that donations be solicited, from the RVCWRT membership and from interested parties, by means of the RVCWRT newsletter, at RVCWRT meetings, and in news releases, until and including the regular RVCWRT October meeting.

Further, it is proposed that should the solicited donations not reach the desired sum, that the RVCWRT treasury commit up to three hundred (\$300) dollars to supplement the donations.

Additionally, it is proposed that should the solicited donations and the treasury commitment not reach the desired sum, that our 'anonymous generous benefactor' be requested to make up whatever differences may remain.

All donations received, for the purchase of the Fisher's Hill land, are to be made out to APCWS.

After the regular RVCWRT October meeting, all of the money collected for the purchase of the Fisher's Hill land will be turned over to APCWS."

Bull Run Civil War Round Table Has Formed

Do you know of someone living north of Fredericksburg interested in joining our Round Table, but the drive is just too far from their home? If so, tell them that a new Round Table, only a few months old, has begun in Manassas. Call Bill Miller at 955-1176 for more information.

Calendar of Events

- August 18 Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table Annual Picnic.
August 18 Chatham Historical Concert, Quantico Marine Corps Band,
7:00 p.m., call 373-4461.
- August 23-25 Reenactment and Living History Encampment featuring the 1st
Battle of Manassas, call 703-335-7060.
- August 25 Chatham Historical Concert and 75th Anniversary of the National
Park Service activities, 11th North Carolina Regimental Band,
and C.S.A. Maryland Signal Detachment demonstrations,
6:00 p.m., call 373-4461.
- August 25 Second Manassas guided hike, led by John Hennessy, begins at
9:00 a.m. from the Manassas National Battlefield Park visitor
center, lasts five hours, call 703-361-1865.
- September 7-8 Civil War Show hosted by North-South Trader's Civil War
Magazine, held in Dale City, call 703-67-CIVIL.
- September 9 Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table and National Park
Service presentation "Putting the 'War' Back Into the Civil
War" by Dr. Gary Gallagher, Chancellorsville Battlefield
Visitor Center, 7:30 p.m.

Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table
P. O. Box 7632
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22404