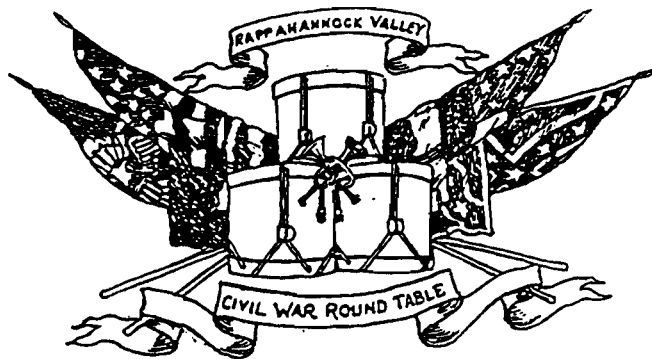


DRUM & BUGLE
Voice of the Rappahannock
Valley Civil War Round Table



Vol. 12, No. 12

December 2001

And Just What Was General Custer Doing with the Widow Lincoln and Mrs. Davis?

Speakers: Tom and Debra Goodrich

Topic: The Wild Side: American History, 1854-1865

When: Monday, December 10, 2001. Social at 6:30 p.m., dinner at 7:00 p.m., meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Location: Aunt Sarah's Restaurant, near Route 3 west of Interstate 95.

Dinner: The cost for dinner is \$14.00. **Reservations are required and must be made by 10 a.m. Thursday, December 6.** To make reservations, contact Mike Stevens in any of the following ways: 371-3115 (telephone), 372-9860 (fax), <drmste@aol.com> (e-mail). If you make a reservation and find that you will not be able to attend the dinner, please call to cancel as soon as possible. If you make a reservation for dinner, then fail to show up, and we have to pay for your meal, you will be billed for it. If you don't call until after the Thursday deadline, or if you just show up for the dinner unannounced, you may or may not eat. We allow the folks who have properly signed up to get their food first.

Tom Goodrich was born in Lecompton, Kansas, and has a BA in history from Washburn University in Topeka, KS. His published works include *Bloody Bill Anderson: The Short, Savage Life of a Civil War Guerrilla*, *War to the Knife: Bleeding Kansas, 1854-1861*, *Scalp Dance: Indian Warfare on the High Plains, 1865-1879*, *Black Flag: Guerrilla Warfare on the Western Border, 1861-1865*, and *Bloody Dawn: The Story of the Lawrence Massacre*. Tom has traveled extensively at home and abroad, and painted watercolors for a living prior to writing history. He is at work on the Lincoln assassination and its impact on the country, an up-close, personal look at the often violent reactions to Lincoln's death on the part of Americans from Philadelphia to San Francisco. He is also following *Scalp Dance* with a work on George Custer and the Battle of the Washita.

Debra Goodrich was born in Ararat, VA, and also has a BA in history from Washburn University in Topeka, KS. Her published works include *Stories in Stone* and *The Commonwealth of Virginia vs. The Allen Clan*. A newspaper reporter for many years, Debra also published a regional magazine serving southwestern Virginia and northwestern North Carolina, and was editor of a weekly newspaper. She is writing the story of Mary Lincoln and Varina Davis, the only two women to serve simultaneously as First Lady, though in a divided nation. Their fall from power and privilege plunged them into a personal hell from which neither would fully recover.

The program will feature interesting and outlandish anecdotes from their books, including the most recent, *The Day Dixie Died: Southern Occupation, 1865-1866*, which they co-authored.

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad: A Visual Tour
by Chuck Siegel
November Program Reviewed by Mac Wyckoff

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad was a vital artery through war-torn Virginia. It was repeatedly used by both sides for transporting supplies to the soldiers at the front and for transporting soldiers from one place to another. At the November meeting, our secretary, Chuck Siegel, presented an excellent program on the history of the railroad. Since his program was largely a visual tour, it is difficult to summarize in words. I have added a few details to make this article more readable.

The railroad was authorized in March 1848 to improve the piedmont area of central Virginia. It would extend southwest from Alexandria to Gordonsville, where it would intersect with the Virginia Central Railroad. The tracks reached their destination in 1854. The Virginia General Assembly approved continuation of the railroad line to Lynchburg, and by the eve of the Civil War that section was also complete.

The first wartime use of the O & A was to transport Confederate troops north to Manassas Junction prior to the First Battle of Manassas. However, on May 25 a calamity occurred. As a passenger train carrying a portion of the 2nd South Carolina left the station at Orange Court House, it rounded a bend near the Sarah Bull house and smashed head-on into a southbound train. One soldier thought the train had run over a log and amusedly watched men leaping from the cars and rolling down the embankment. His laughter ended when he saw a car on its side and another smashed. Thomas Reeder thought that it was a sight too "horrible to describe." When the wreck occurred, Privates Joseph Kirkland and J.B. Richburg were sitting with their feet dangling between the tender and the car. Kirkland's foot was "smashed like jelly" and his leg fractured below the knee. Richburg was luckier; he received only bad bruises. Several others also sustained injuries.

During the First Battle of Manassas, for the first time in history, railroad trains brought reinforcements to a battlefield and thereby helped decide the outcome of the engagement. Afterwards, "the cars" were used to transport wounded Confederates south to a hospital in Culpeper. Hospitals later sprang up near the tracks in Gordonsville, Charlottesville, and Lynchburg. The sick and injured were sent to these hospitals from the camps in Northern Virginia, as well as from the hospitals in Richmond. The O and A had revolutionized tactical troop movements, as well as post-battle treatment of the wounded.

Throughout much of the war, there was fighting along and near the O and A. The armies fought twice at Manassas (July 1861 and August 1862), at Bristoe Station (October 1863), and at Rappahannock Station (November 1863). The cavalry forces clashed along the railroad at numerous times and places, the most notable occasion being the June 9, 1863, Battle of Brandy Station. Mosby's Rangers also operated in the area.

In August 1862, "Stonewall" Jackson's command captured a huge supply of food and goods at Manassas Junction. What they couldn't take with them, they burned. After Second Manassas, the war shifted northwest into Maryland. In November, the armies returned to the O and A. George McClellan's army arrived in Warrenton; its commander intended to maneuver southward and supply his force via the railroad. President Abraham Lincoln urged McClellan to stick close to the Rebels and look for a chance to strike. "I would press closely to him, fight him if a favorable opportunity should present, and, at least, try to beat him to Richmond on the inside track. I say 'try'; if we never try, we shall never succeed." When General James Longstreet's

Confederates reached the railroad at Culpeper, Lincoln's patience with McClellan ran out. Little Mac was replaced by General Ambrose Burnside.

The new commander moved his army to Falmouth, where it could strike south along the Telegraph Road, using the R F & P Railroad as its supply line. After the Battle of Gettysburg, the armies again returned to the O and A. Union and Confederate forces clashed on October 13, 1863, at Bristoe Station and on November 7, 1863, at Rappahannock Station. During the winter of 1863-1864, the Army of the Potomac supply base was at Brandy Station. Trains on the O and A tracks delivered 600 tons a day to Union camps in Culpeper County.

In May 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant moved his army away from the Orange and Alexandria into the dense underbrush of the Wilderness. He would subsequently move southeast toward the coast, where ships operating on Virginia's waterways could supply his army. The Union commander preferred to have a short, secure supply line. He had learned that railroads could be torn up by Confederate cavalry and partisan rangers, and that lengthy supply lines required detaching men from his fighting force to guard the railroad.

The last months of the war saw a reduction in the use and importance of the O and A, but that railroad line had played a major role in several important military campaigns. Today, much of the original rail route is still in use, although some sections are now walking trails or have simply returned to the wild. Chuck Siegel's before-and-after slides gave us a visual journey along this historic slice of the Virginia Piedmont while his commentary gave us a better appreciation of its historical importance.

Short Takes

Mac Wyckoff, Frank O'Reilly, and your editor are planning a mini field trip to cover Stonewall Jackson's Romney, WV, Campaign on Thursday January 3, unless the weather turns ugly. Anyone wishing to take part should contact Mac (540-786-2470, mwyckoff@erols.com).

Funding to help preserve Civil War battlefields sites in the Shenandoah Valley, including Winchester, cleared the House of Representatives in mid-October. The House appropriated \$1.2 million for land acquisition and \$500,000 for management plans for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. The money is part of a conference report for the fiscal year 2002 Department of the Interior appropriations bill. The bill provides \$100,000 for Rose Hill Farm in Winchester to assist in efforts to make the site of the First Battle of Kernstown accessible to the public. The money will be used to help create 1.5 miles of accessible walkways and install five interpretive signs at the site. The remainder of the \$1.2 million will be used for land acquisition and resource protection, working with willing sellers based upon the recommendation in the management plan.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation has announced that it is joining with Shenandoah County to purchase 22 acres of Fisher's Hill, where Union troops drove Confederate General Jubal Early from the lower Valley in 1864.

Twelve acres where intense fighting occurred during the Civil War have been added to the Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site in Kentucky. Perryville, in Boyle County, is the site of Kentucky's largest Civil War battle. Nearly 500 acres of it have been protected in the last several years. Both flanks of the Union army fell back to the new property on October 8, 1862. At nightfall, the battle ended around the site, which is historically known as the Dixville Crossroads. More than 7,500 soldiers were killed and wounded in the Battle of Perryville. The battlefield's preservation association paid \$65,000 for the property.

Earl J. Hess. *Banners to the Breeze: The Kentucky Campaign, Corinth, and Stones River*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. xvi, 252 pages. Illustrations, maps, chapter notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$35.00.

While it is sometimes difficult for Virginians interested in the Civil War to shift their focus from events that took place sometimes literally in their own back yards, it is important to understand that many significant battles were fought outside the Old Dominion. We all know about the Army of Northern Virginia's 1862 excursion into Maryland and the unfortunate events that befell it in Pennsylvania the following year. Many will recall that the Confederate victory at Chickamauga, just south of Chattanooga, Tennessee, in September 1863 was due in no small part to the presence of General James Longstreet and two infantry divisions detached from service in Virginia.

What we Virginians sometimes fail to remember is that there was another major theater of war in which Confederate and Union forces contended. Indeed, it was the inability of the Confederacy's western armies to defeat their opponents that ultimately doomed the Confederate war effort. With the exceptions of the Battles of Shiloh, Chickamauga, and perhaps Vicksburg, the campaigns that took place between the Appalachian mountain range and the Mississippi River have been little studied.

Banners to the Breeze, by Earl J. Hess, is an effort to redress this unfortunate lack of knowledge about a significant portion of the war, that part which was played out in Kentucky, Tennessee, and northern Mississippi in the second half of 1862 and the first few days of January 1863. More specifically, the book covers the Kentucky Campaign, which included the Battles of Richmond, Munfordville, and Perryville; the Battles of Iuka and Corinth in northern Mississippi; and the Battle of Murfreesboro, also known as Stones River.

The book's title is derived from an announcement made to the Confederate Army of the Mississippi in June 1862 by its new commander, General Braxton Bragg. Declaring that "great events are impending," Bragg promised that after a few days of preparation and organization, he would "give your banners to the breeze." Translated into modern English, Bragg was promising his men that they would soon be marching into decisive battle. Whatever else might be said about Braxton Bragg, he indeed kept his promise, but not in the way he expected.

After Confederate President Jefferson Davis relieved General P.G.T. Beauregard of his command, Bragg took over the Confederate force that had fought at Shiloh and had retreated south from Corinth in late May. Federal forces under General Henry Halleck held Memphis, the western terminus of a railroad that ran through northern Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia all the way to Charleston, SC. The Union Army of the Ohio, commanded by General Don Carlos Buell, was slowly making its way eastward along this railroad, its objective being Chattanooga, a major transport hub. The loss of Chattanooga would be a heavy blow to the Confederate war effort. Bragg's immediate task was to prevent Buell from reaching Chattanooga.

The Confederate commander detached sizeable forces under Sterling Price and Earl Van Dorn to defend Mississippi. Using the railroad network at his disposal, he shifted his army to Chattanooga and, after conferring with Major General Edmund Kirby Smith, who commanded a smaller Confederate force in East Tennessee, embarked upon a campaign that threatened the gains won by Union forces in Middle Tennessee and Kentucky earlier in the year. Smith's troops, reinforced by units of Bragg's army, moved into Kentucky, won a decisive victory over Union forces at Richmond, and occupied Lexington, from which Smith sent Bragg glowing reports of Kentucky's enthusiasm for its Confederate liberators. Bragg, who probably would

have been content to liberate Nashville, instead took his larger army into the Bluegrass. However, Bragg had no authority over Smith until their forces were united, something which Smith avoided.

Fearful of having his line of retreat cut by Bragg, Buell hastened north toward Louisville. At Munfordville, Bragg captured the garrison of a fort defending a major crossing point on the Green River and found himself firmly astride Buell's path. Bragg could have made Buell fight at a place and possibly a time of his choosing, with the Union commander cut off from reinforcements and supplies. However, the Confederates had little food themselves, and Bragg chose instead to move toward Smith's force at Lexington and gather supplies in the Bluegrass. Buell sidestepped Bragg and made his way to Louisville. Reinforced and resupplied, the Army of the Ohio soon set out in pursuit of the Confederates.

The two forces met at Perryville on October 8, when Bragg's Confederates fell upon Major General Alexander McCook's First Corps of the Federal army. In terms of sheer fighting, the Confederates inflicted a crushing blow on McCook. But Bragg had not realized that the other two corps of Buell's army were close at hand; discovering their immediate proximity, he determined to withdraw in the face of superior numbers. Bragg's and Smith's forces finally were united during the ensuing retreat from Kentucky.

Meanwhile, Confederate forces in northern Mississippi under Sterling Price and Earl Van Dorn were having similar command problems. Price, with instructions from Bragg to prevent Union General William S. Rosecrans at Corinth from detaching troops to aid Buell in Middle Tennessee, moved against a Union outpost at Iuka, on the railroad east of Corinth. Price's force captured Iuka on September 13 and held it for almost a week. General Ulysses S. Grant, in charge of all Union forces in the area, tried to trap Price near Iuka on September 19, but the latter escaped after mauling three brigades that confronted him.

Van Dorn then moved to join Price and, as senior officer, took charge of their combined force. He resolved to attack Rosecrans in Corinth, but first made a feint into southwestern Tennessee, forcing Grant to employ his forces defensively. The Confederates approached Corinth from the northwest, attacking the town's outlying defenses on the morning of October 3. Rosecrans lacked the forces to man the extensive defensive works around Corinth, but managed to concentrate enough troops in the right sectors to hold off the Confederate onslaughts on October 3 and 4. Meanwhile, Grant rushed reinforcements to Rosecrans, and the combined Union forces effectively harassed Van Dorn's retreat southwest into Mississippi.

In the aftermath of the Kentucky Campaign, Rosecrans replaced Buell in command of the Army of the Cumberland, formerly the Army of the Ohio, and set about refurbishing it in Nashville. Bragg melded his own and Smith's troops into a new entity called the Army of Tennessee, undertaking this task at Murfreesboro, some 30 miles southeast of Nashville. On the day after Christmas, Rosecrans, under pressure from Washington to do something to relieve the negative impact of the Union defeat at Fredericksburg, set out to attack Bragg's army. Bragg struck first, on December 31, rolling up the right wing of Rosecrans' forces, again commanded by Alexander McCook. However, Bragg did not have enough men to cut Rosecrans off from his base at Nashville. After a day of rest, the Confederates attacked Rosecrans' left wing on January 2, but ran into massed artillery fire that shredded their assault. Out of options, and knowing that he was outnumbered, Bragg once again chose to retreat.

Banners to the Breeze is an excellent summary of the events it covers. Hess provides new insights into the thinking of the various commanders, especially Bragg and Buell, and has managed to pack a lot into a relatively small number of pages. Highly recommended.

Student Book Offers a Twisted History 'Coarse'

by Sarah Tippit

Experience history from the Stoned Age to the Blitz Krieg! From Middle Evil Times to the Age of Now, from the Land of Milk and Chocolate to the Iran Hostess Crisis and the fall of the Berlin Wall! Welcome to the wonderful world of *Non Campus Mentis* (Workman), a book of mangled moments of Western Civilization culled from actual term papers and exams of today's "brightest" students by incredulous college professor Anders Henriksson who, while grading exams, chose to laugh, rather than cry, at his students' most egregious mistakes.

History, after all, is nothing more than "the behind of the present," according to one student, who aptly added: "This gives incites from the anals of the past." The once-mighty British Empire is in a "state of recline. Its colonies have slowly dribbled away leaving only the odd speck on the map." Chairman "Moo" has passed away, as has former President "Franklin Eleanor Roosavelt," and civil rights leader "Martin Luther Junior" was slain in the 1960s, shortly after making his famous "If I Had A Hammer" speech.

Hitler, a depressed "Nazi leader of a Communist Germany" who spurred a huge "anti-semantic" movement through a terrifying "Gespacho," launched "Operation Barbarella" while the English "vanely hoped for peas." The war began turning around when the "Allies landed near Italy's toe and gradually advanced up her leg." Hitler ultimately "shot himself in the bonker."

'CRETINALIA HISTORICA'

At its best, the 150-page book "illustrates the ingenious and often comic ways we all attempt to make sense of information we can't understand because we have no context or frame of reference for it," according to Henriksson, chairman of the history department at Shepherd College in West Virginia. He began compiling samples 20 years ago at the University of Toronto where he also taught. Shortly after he began his collection, he published an article in the *Wilson Quarterly* titled "College Kids Say the Darndest Things," which prompted amused colleagues at more than two dozen universities in the United States and Canada, including West Point, the University of Alberta, and McMaster, to regularly send him their own inane prose collections. Last year, when he realized his office overflowed with funny samples of "cretinalia historica," the idea for a book was born.

While Henriksson declined to identify all the schools involved, he said they ranged from moderately to highly competitive, about half were in Canada, no Ivy League schools were represented, and that one of the entries came from Oxford in England. At its worst, the book may reflect a generation raised in ignorance by bad schools and disengaged parents. "This is not the norm," Henriksson told Reuters in an interview. "What you have here is almost 30 years of my collecting from students' (works) at various institutions. This really represents sort of the creme de la creme of the creatively inane."

Did he make it up? "No!" he said. "Who could make this stuff up except Mel Brooks. I'm not Mel Brooks." Which prompts the question: Should people sound the alarms and search for an "escape goat?" Maybe. Hundreds of student contributors received passing grades with such statements as: "When the Davy Jones Index crashed in 1929 many people were left to political incineration. Some, like John Paul Sart, retreated into extraterrestrialism. The New Deal was an idea inspired by Franklin Eleanor Roosavelt." (The Boston Tea Party, by the way, was held at Pearl Harbor.)

Gravity of the misstatements aside, the bloopers make a great reference whether one seeks information on the Canadian Missile Crisis, clashes between Israelis and Parisians, or the

Gulf War, in which, according to one scholar: "Satan Husane invaided Kiwi and Sandy Arabia." (No doubt an act of "premedication.")

'NEW INCITES'

Henriksson said the errors fall into three major categories. Some are simply caused by bad spelling or a lack of proofreading, and come out funny. Some were prompted by a "profound lack of preparation," while others, just seem to be "really out at sea," he said. "You get the ones who don't really even seem to understand there's a line between past and present, and they tell you that the first airplane was flown by the Marx Brothers. I had this one kid who wrote that Spartacus led a slave rebellion in ancient Rome and then appeared in a movie about it later."

The book offers fresh new "incites" on history from "prehistoricle" times through "King Toot" and the birth of "monolithic" religion. ("Judyism had one big God named Yahoo.") The book goes on to "chronicle" the birth of Christianity ("Just another mystery cult until Jesus was born") and his pronouncement, later, that "The mice shall inherit the earth." The book sheds new light on the lives of Martin Luther (he nailed 95 theocrats to a church door), "Florence of Arabia," and General George "Custard" who managed to stand up anyway. ("Martian Luther King's" four steps to direct action, by the way, included "self purification," when you "allow yourself to be eaten to a pulp.")

In its final pages, the book includes students' geographical misconceptions as represented on several world maps bearing such labels as "The Land of Milk and Chocolate" and "Home of Golden Fleas" (in the Ancient World) to "Bulemia," "Whales," "Roam," the "Eel of France," and the "Automaton Empire" (as they were known in the "Middle Evil" Times). And it notes that, yes, there has indeed been a change in America's "social seen," over the centuries. The last stage, according to the book, is "The Age of Now. This concept grinds our critical, seething minds to a halt." Until then, however, we Americans, "in all humidity" are nothing less than "the people of currant times."

Calendar

Monday, December 10 - RVCWRT meeting. Tom and Debbie Goodrich speak on "The Wild Side: American History, 1854-1865."

Thursday, December 13 - Kelly O'Grady speaks on the Battle of Fredericksburg/Confederate Memoirs of Prison Life. FoFAB education program, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, 1201 Caroline St., Fredericksburg, 7-9 p.m. For information, call 540-972-9954.

Monday, January 14 - RVCWRT meeting. Dr. Mike Stevens speaks on "Preserving the Land, Preserving the Stories: CVBT and Its Fight to Save America's Sacred Soil"

Monday, February 11 - RVCWRT meeting. Dr. Jim Bryant speaks on African-Americans in the Civil War.

Monday, March 11 - RVCWRT meeting. Elsa Lohman speaks on women in the Civil War.

Saturday, March 23 - RVCWRT's spring field trip covering the end of the Petersburg Campaign, led by Will Greene.

Monday, April 8 - RVCWRT meeting. Chris Kolakowski speaks on New York City in the Civil War.

Drum and Bugle is published monthly by the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Roundtable, P.O. Box 7632, Fredericksburg, VA 22404. Dues are \$15 per year for individuals, \$25 for families, and \$7.50 for students. Membership is open to anyone interested in the study of the Civil War and the preservation of Civil War sites. Jack Barnes, President; Mac Wyckoff, Vice President; Chuck Siegel, Secretary; Mike Stevens, Treasurer; Elsa Lohman, Immediate Past President; Dane Hartgrove, Newsletter Editor; Richard DiNardo, Dorothy Emery, John Graham, John Griffiths, Brad Henderson, Tom Quigley, and Conway Richardson, Executive Committee members.

Reminder # 1

RVCWRT will hold its annual election of officers at the January meeting. The slate for next year is as follows: Jack Barnes, President; Mac Wyckoff, Vice President; Brad Henderson, Secretary; Conway Richardson, Treasurer; Elsa Lohman, Immediate Past President; Dane Hartgrove, Newsletter Editor; Dorothy Emery, John Graham, John Griffiths, Tom Quigley, Chuck Siegel, and Mike Stevens, Executive Committee members. Nominations from the floor are also welcome.

Reminder # 2

It's time to renew your membership. Please see Mike Stevens or (after the January meeting) Conway Richardson ASAP.

Rappahannock Valley Civil War Roundtable
P.O. Box 7632
Fredericksburg, VA 22404



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Don't Forget: Dinner Meeting, Monday, December 10.
Contact Mike Stevens by noon on Thursday, December 6, for reservations at:
371-3115 (voice)/372-9860 (fax)/<drmste@aol.com> (e-mail)