

## BRUNSWICK CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

MEETING – January 6, 2016

### THE LAST DAYS OF STONEWALL JACKSON

**SPEAKER: Chris Mackowski**

Chris is nothing less than stupendous. His standing ovation cemented that feeling. The New Orleans, Louisianan natives have adopted a French word for his style and presentation. *Lagniappe* means getting something extra that you did not expect. Chris resolved to throw in a “little extra” for us. We were rewarded with a performance not just a presentation.

Thomas Jackson is born poor. He perseveres with such *resolve* that this word becomes his lifelong guiding light. He learns and follows a profound adage that becomes his mantra and future demise, says Chris. Here it is: “You may be whatever you resolve to be.”

Jackson’s admission to West Point is marginal and he starts near the bottom. His resolve turns lemons into lemonade and he graduates near the top of his class. He craves lemons for the rest of his life. The pinnacle of his military career comes at Chancellorsville where he prevails over 3-1 odds. Lee does win by attacking and rolling up the flanks of Hooker’s army. The cost, for Lee, is insurmountable. He suffers 23% casualties as opposed to Hookers 13%. Jackson, however, is Lee’s worst loss.

Jackson is hit three times by his own men as that resolve puts him in the wrong place at the wrong time. He eventually loses his left arm but Lee contends he has just lost his right arm with the subsequent death of Jackson. Stonewall is like a son to Lee. Chris will argue that this battle is the high point of the Confederacy.

Resolve, we are told, earned that nickname, Stonewall, at the battle of Bull Run. He held a ridge until General Bee’s retreating troops rallied in his rear. The general remarked in awe, “Look at Jackson standing there like a great stone wall.” It stuck.

**Ya just had to be there** to find out what part an unknown road played in the battle.

Jackson wanted, above all, to be an excellent dad. A ten-day visit gives him a small chance to bond with his six-month-old Julia shortly before his death. Pneumonia finally kills him. His last words are, “Let us cross over the river and rest under the trees.” His resolve bought a costly victory at Chancellorsville for Lee. That same kind of Stonewall resolve, Chris tells us, is used by Grant to finally win.

Chris closes by asking us to try this phrase on for size. “You may ALSO be what you resolve to be.”

By Dan Fink