

BRUNSWICK CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2, 2014

JACKSON’S VALLEY CAMPAIGN WITH A LOOK TO THE NORTH

SPEAKER: PETER COZZENS

Our highly respected speaker, Peter Cozzens, brought fresh perspective to the Valley Campaign. He notes that Lincoln and the North gave Jackson all the challenge he could stand and then a bit more. Lincoln is close to political perfection but doesn't play well as a military strategist. He drops (with the help of Sec. Staunton) the cannonball on his own toe. He and Staunton second guess a very wily Jackson with stunning strokes of defeat. They perform more than one "lateral arabesque" (moving sideways and doing nothing). Peter shows us that the brilliant Northern two/three prong attack quickly begins to look like a "Southport Pickle Fork" with one prong jousting at imaginary targets and the other prongs curled neatly out of the way. 110,000 troops will not trump 55,000 well-led and fed troops. Jackson is known to be bold when necessary, break into battle only on his terms, baffle with brilliance, deceive with alacrity and spread very little "bull." He avoids casualties to his troops while inflicting many more on the enemy. He captures many supplies and knows quite well that armies travel on their stomachs. His well supplied troops march rings around a very formidable enemy and effectively hogtie three separate Federal Armies.

Lincoln wants Richmond! He does tactically defeat Jackson at Kernstown but does not destroy him. Brilliant Jackson strategies turn defeat into multiple victories culminating with the capture of the Federal Garrison at Front Royal. Lincoln panics! He makes one of the most stunning strategic mistakes of the whole War.

Ya just had to be there to hear Peter steer us through the tactical details and then forward to strategic analysis of real significance. Just keep in mind: Lincoln intends to completely destroy Jackson and effectively end this horrible War. Jackson just wants to protect Richmond. The collective morale of the South escalates and the War grinds on for three more long years. Peter wants us to view this campaign as far less than one sided. Reality says that 110,000 troops will prevail over 55,000.

