



Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

The President's Corner by John Butler



I hope you enjoyed last month's meeting with Kevin Pawlak speaking about "Never Such a Campaign: The Battle of Manassas." This was our largest meeting since we returned from Covid Quarantine. We had 404 in the audience and another 57 watching on Zoom.

The second highest attendance was on February 6, 2024, when Wade Sokolosky presented, "Sherman's March Towards Fayetteville." That presentation had 364 people in attendance and 47 on Zoom. This year we are averaging 345 people in person and 44 on Zoom. We thank you all for your support.

If you want to view any of our previous presentations since Covid, simply our website, click on the YouTube tab, and make your selection. It's a free benefit included with your membership.

Our March meeting brings the return of Judkin Browning and Tim Silver talking about the Weaponizing of Food during the Civil War. At their last appearance at Generations Church in February 2023, they gave an entertaining talk on the environmental impacts of the Civil War.

March is packed with activities, starting with our monthly meeting on the 4th, followed by the Ladies' Forum on Monday, March 10, and finally Wade Sokolosky leading a guided tour of the Bentonville Battlefield on Saturday, March 15.

Teaser alert - May 2025 is our 15th Anniversary. We will have a special guest performance at the meeting which will start at 5:45 pm followed by our scheduled speaker presentation. So plan to come early. More details to follow...

John

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BCWRT Upcoming Events

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 Program

“Weaponizing Food: From Antietam to Vicksburg”

The During the Civil War, “weaponizing food” referred to the strategic use of food as a tool of war. This involved tactics aimed at disrupting the enemy’s food supply, thereby weakening their forces and undermining their war effort. Many tactical options became reality. Like simply cutting off enemy supply lines; foraging and raiding farms and businesses; using scorched-earth tactics by destroying crops and livestock; or, surrounding cities or fortifications to cut off access to food supplies. In essence, weaponizing led to hunger, malnutrition and suffering, leading to overall deteriorating battle morale and effectiveness on both sides.

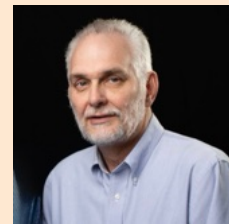


As summarized by guest speakers Browning and Silver, “it might well be said that food, as much or more than military strategy, decided the outcome of the Civil War.”



Dr. Judkin Browning is Professor of Military History and serves as the Director of Appalachian State University’s Master of Arts in History degree program. He is a prolific writer, editor, and author of three books, including “An Environmental History of the Civil War,” published in 2020. He is currently working on projects that explore North Carolina deserters during the Civil War, as well as the long-term effects of battles on soldiers and their families and communities. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Florida State University, earned his M.A. in public history from North Carolina State University, and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Georgia.

Dr. Timothy Silver holds a Ph.D. from the College of William and Mary. He is another prolific author, as well as an award-winning author given by the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association, and the Phillip D. Reed Memorial Award for Outstanding Writing on the Southern Environment conferred by the Southern Environmental Law Center. He currently teaches courses focused on the environmental histories of areas, including the South and Southern Appalachia, as well as national and state parks.



You are encouraged to attend the meeting either in person or via Zoom.

If participating via Zoom, simply use the following link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/89945879218?pwd=L4nfQDbIURPatyHv6lfpVNbzxErVdY.1>

Meeting ID: 899 4587 9218

Passcode: 68257

Ladies' Forum



The Ladies' Forum

Monday, March 10, 2025

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Murrow Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church

Nash St., Southport

Liz Fuller Presents

Mrs. Mary Duffy



We invite you to meet Mrs. Mary Duffy, a tavern owner in Smithville during the 1800s. Actually, Mary is **Liz Fuller**, president of the Southport Historical Society, who will portray Mary. Mary was a widow whose only grandson fought for the Confederacy. She has a wealth of stories about life in Smithville (Southport's original name until 1887) during the War of Southern Independence. Through those difficult years, she and her friends experienced numerous hardships. Mary is looking forward to telling you tales of the spirit, resolve, and determination of Smithville's women.

Liz Fuller is a popular local historian and a frequent speaker at civic historical and civic organizations on a wide variety of topics relating to Southport's history and the author of the recently published Southport's Secret Suffragist: The Story of Anna Alene Clemons.

We are also pleased that our March Ladies' Forum will feature **Carolee Morris** whose long interest in history has included graduate studies as well as oratorical and speaking contests. Carolee will be reading a selection from Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer. The selected story, its time frame, subject matter, and Twain's inimitable humor jibe with Liz Fuller's well-chosen topic.

The Ladies' Forum is for women only and is a free event each year for members of BCWRT. Guests are always welcome and pay only \$5. Light Civil War era refreshments are served.

Reservations are strongly recommended.

Please contact BCWRT at brunswickcwr@gmail.com to sign up.

There will also be a sign-up table near the stage with Robbin Smith before our next meeting.



Civil War Travels

A Good Day at Chickamauga Civil War Show and Sale

Recently member E. Gifford Stack took his grandson to the Chickamauga Civil War Show and Sale in Dalton, Ga. With over 160 vendors, taking up every inch of the 45,000 square foot Dalton Convention Center, it is one of the largest such two-day events in the Southeast.



"I think you could fit into one of these Civil War uniforms, but not me," Stack tells his grandson Thomas.



Gifford examines several of the hundreds of Civil War rifles on display.



The show offered every kind of Civil War memorabilia for sale.



Perhaps the most interesting exhibitor was Reverend Robert Miller, a retired Catholic priest, who writes books and gives talks on North and South Civil War chaplains.

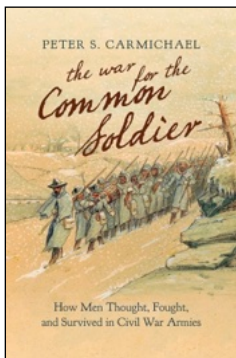
Favorite Civil War Books - Tim Talbott

Emerging Civil War asked members of their community to share their favorite Civil War books. The books were put into one master list [which you can see here](#).

This is the list provided by Emerging Civil War's Book Review Editor, Tim Talbott.

As much as I read, I have many, many, many favorite books. Narrowing them down to my five most favorite is extremely difficult, if not impossible. However, if I make this list "five of my favorite books" instead of "my five most favorite books," that helps take off some of the pressure to cull it down. So, here we go: the following are five of my favorite books - in no particular order:

Tim Talbott



The War for the Common Soldier: How Men Thought, Fought and Survived in Civil War Armies

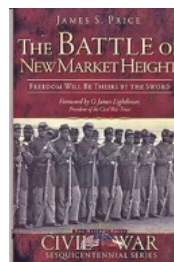
By Peter Carmichael

From the earliest days of my interest in the Civil War—which now dates back about 45 years—I've been much more intrigued by the war's common soldiers than the "big wig" generals and politicians. The first Civil War book I ever bought was the *Barefoot Brigade* by Douglas C. Jones. It is a well-told novel that weaves a story around a fictional soldier in the 3rd Arkansas Infantry and a few of his comrades. That work of fiction had a huge influence on me and my Civil War interests. I soon followed it with Bell Irving Wiley's classics, *The Life of Johnny Reb* and *The Life of Billy Yank*; Gerald Linderman's *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the Civil War*; James I. "Bud" Robertson's *Soldier's Blue and Gray*; Reid Mitchell's *Civil War Soldiers*, along with dozens of others. But all of these books were missing the something that I found in Carmichael's *The War for the Common Soldier*. It gives readers a real sense of the deep complexity of Civil War soldiers' lives through Carmichael's use of topical case studies and his keen analysis more effectively than I've found in any single volume. *The War for the Common Soldier* is truly a remarkable book for those of us who can't get enough of the common soldier.

Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South *by Stephanie McCurry*



I am a huge social history fan. Exploring original topics like the ones this book does gives us incredible insights into the worlds of 19th Century Americans; plus it just plain fun to read. White dives deep into the archive for the evidence he uses of soldiers and civilians from many walks of life, their dreams, and what they made of them. But he goes much further than just the telling. He also provides excellent analysis and interpretation by showing how dreams could serve as temporary and comforting escapes from the horrors of war in some cases while in others they served as constant reminders of the terrors, separation, and death the conflict so often brought.

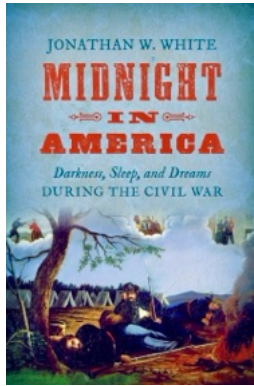


The Battle of New Market Heights: Freedom Will Be Theirs

by James S. Price

Having spent a good deal of the last eight years or so thinking about the Battle of New Market Heights and the United States Colored Troops soldiers who fought there, I've read just about everything I can get my hands on associated with the battle. In my humble opinion, no one provides more thorough and correct coverage than Price does.

Favorite Civil War Books - Tim Talbott



Midnight in America

Darkness, Sleep, and Dreams During the Civil War

By Jonathan W. White

I am a huge social history fan. Exploring original topics like the ones this book does gives us incredible insights into the worlds of 19th Century Americans; plus it just plain fun to read. White dives deep into the archive for the evidence he uses of soldiers and civilians from many walks of life, their dreams, and what they made of them. But he goes much further than just the telling. He also provides excellent analysis and interpretation by showing how dreams could serve as temporary and comforting escapes from the horrors of war in some cases while in others they served as constant reminders of the terrors, separation, and death the conflict so often brought.

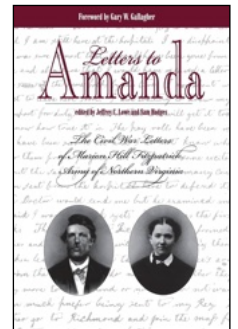
The Civil War is one of the most documented events in American History. There have been more than 60,000 books written about it covering a wide range of subjects and views, fiction and non-fiction. Having lists of favorite books from the Emerging Civil War community may help you find your next selection.

Letters to Amanda:

The Civil War Letters of Marion Hill Fitzpatrick Army of Northern Virginia

Edited by Jeffrey C. Lowe and
Sam Hodges

Just as I am a big fan of social history, I am also an avid reader of published soldiers' letter, diary, and journal collections. There is no better way to get at what soldiers experienced than to read their thoughts and desires from their own minds and hands. Fitzpatrick, a relatively new husband and father when he enlisted in the 45th Georgia Infantry, writes with an insight and style that makes readers wish they could meet him. If you only read one published collection of letters from an Army of Northern Virginia soldier in your lifetime, read this one.



American Battlefield Trust Prize for History

In 2024 the American Battlefield Trust initiated an award to recognize an "outstanding published work on military history or a biography central to the nation's formative conflicts - the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Civil War.

The prize was awarded to Elizabeth Varon for *Longstreet: The Confederate General Who Defied the South*. This biography was selected from nearly 100 entries.

Honorable mentions included D. Scott Hartwig's *I Dread the Thought of the Place: the Battle of Antietam and the End of the Maryland Campaign* which was also the recipient of the 2024 Emerging Civil War Book Award.

BCWRT Profile and an Anniversary

As was done in the September 2023 issue with a profile of newly elected Advisor, Skip Maxwell, we will include a profile of BCWRT volunteers in an effort to get to know them better.

John Butler, President and Director BCWRT

I've been a member of the BCWRT since 2013. I started with attending meetings at Trinity United Methodist Church, then at St. James Community Center, and finally at Hatch Auditorium once we grew too large for any other location.



I started volunteering in the registration area for several years, then became a Director on the Board and finally the President in April 2023. What I like best about volunteering with the BCWRT is hearing from the members how much they enjoy the speakers and tours, and how they enjoy learning something new at one of the meetings or tours.

I am originally from Indianapolis, Indiana, and a Purdue graduate. I served 20 years in the Army, retiring in 1995 and then served as the head of human resources for several companies in manufacturing and high tech.

I have always had an interest in history. While in the Army, I toured all the major Civil War and Revolutionary War battlefields on the East Coast and Midwest. I also participated in a three-day Staff Ride of the Chickamauga Battlefield with several Army majors as part of the Army's Command & General Staff College. I have also toured the WWII battlefields of Bastogne and D-Day.

The only battlefields still on my bucket list are Shiloh and Vicksburg. Each battlefield does a good job of telling their story and allowing you to immerse yourself in that struggle. There have been many memorable battlefields for me - Pickett's Charge and Little Round Top at Gettysburg, the Sunken Road at Antietam, and Jackson's maneuver at Chancellorsville. I find one of the most moving sites is the battle for Fredericksburg. It is hard to imagine what it was like for the Union soldiers charging across the open field and the Confederate forces behind the stone wall, continuous attacks with no success and then the dead and wounded having to remain on the battlefield through the night suffering in the cold weather.

If I am not doing something related to the Civil War you will find me golfing, fly fishing, or bowling.

Bentonville 160th Anniversary

On March 15-16, 2025, thousands of living historians from across the country will descend on Bentonville Battlefield for the 160th Anniversary Reenactment of North Carolina's largest battle. Over 2,000 reenactors are expected for the two-day event, which will make it one of the country's largest reenactments in 2025. In addition to the daily battles, the event will feature free lectures, 19th living-history displays, period music, and dozens of "sutlers," selling Civil War-related items.

Visitors are strongly encouraged to purchase tickets well in advance of the event. Organizers also suggest arriving early and making a day of it at Bentonville. The battle scenarios on Saturday and Sunday are the only events that require tickets. Visit bentonvillereenactment.com to purchase tickets or for more information.



Ticket Prices: Single Day \$15
Weekend Pass: \$25

Children 10 and under are free

Candy Civil War Style



Everyone loves candy, and people during the Civil War period were no different. Recipe books of the time feature numerous recipes for sweets of all kinds. *Mrs. Cowan's American Lady's Cookbook*

(1847) includes recipes for coconut, lemon, rose, horehound, and rock candy as well as peppermints and molasses twists.

Commercial candy was also widely enjoyed. Peppermint sticks, licorice, lollipops, Jordan almonds and jelly beans were sold in most general stores. In 1847, Oliver Chase invented the first lozenge cutting machine and produced the first penny candy, called hub wafers, (renamed NECCO wafers) in 1901 when the Chase Company merged into the New England Confectionary Company.

These proved highly popular with soldiers because they were small in size, hard to break, and didn't spoil. During the Civil War (and later WWI and WW2), they were issued as part of soldier's rations.

Here is a recipe from Mrs. Cowan's for you to try:

COCOANUT (sic) CARE OR CANDY

Take cocoanut meat from the shell, pare off the black rind and grate it on a course grater, or chip it fine, have half a pound of it; to half a pound of loaf sugar, put 2 tablespoonfuls of water; when it is dissolved put it over the fire, let it become boiling hot then stir in the cocoanut, continue to stir it until it is thick, take care not to burn it; pour it on a well-buttered pan or marble slab, cut it in whatever forms you think proper when nearly cold. Pp. 321-322

Too busy to make your own? Give NECCO wafers a try. They are sold in wax paper-wrapped packages in the all-natural, original flavors of orange, lemon, lime, clove, chocolate, cinnamon, licorice, and wintergreen.



[American Civil War Voices - Civil War Candy](#) Shared by Robbin Smith

Women in the Civil War

Becoming a Woman Doctor During the Civil War

There is a contemporary perception that women could not become doctors during the Civil War period because they were banned from medical college. But while their paths were not “strewn with flowers”, at the time of the Civil War, there were places women could go to study medicine.

The Boston (later New England) Female Medical College was founded by Samuel Gregory in 1848. Gregory believed that women in childbirth were most modestly served by fellow women. Harriet Beecher Stowe was one of the first supporters. Originally a school of midwifery, in 1850 it expanded to offer a full medical degree program which emphasized a good English education and a thesis on some medical subject.

Ninety-eight women earned medical degrees over the next 20 years. Brief biographies of many of these graduates are available [here](#). Rebecca Lee Crumper graduated in 1864 and became the first African-American woman to earn a medical degree.



Rebecca Lee Crumper

After several mergers over the last century, the Boston Female Medical College is now Dimock Community Health Center.

The Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, founded in 1850 and supported by Lucretia Mott, was the first medical institution in the world to offer M.D.s to women. Ann Preston was in the

first graduating class and became a professor of physiology and hygiene at the college.

Another graduate was Hannah Longshore who at the age of thirty-two graduated alongside Preston in 1850 and became the first female medical professor at the college. Her specialty was anatomy instruction using cadavers, and she gave popular lectures on sexual health illustrated with life-size papier-mache models of the body and the actual preserved organs. This college closed in 1861 for the period of the Civil War, but its place was taken by the co-ed Pennsylvania Medical College founded by Hannah Longshore’s brother-in-law. This college allowed women in on an equal basis with men where they attended the same classes. Here, Hannah Longshore taught co-educational anatomy classes.



Hannah Longshore

Both schools were met by fierce opposition from male doctors. The Boston medical establishment insisted women did not have the stamina to be physicians and would be incapable of acting in an emergency. The Pennsylvania Medical Society did not allow its members to consult with female physicians. Women students at the Female College of Pennsylvania were banned from clinical practice at public hospitals until Ann Preston founded the first Women’s Hospital of Philadelphia in 1861. Even though she had over 300 patients, Hannah Longshore could not get pharmacists to fill her prescriptions so she prepared her own medicines by hand.

Today the Female College of Pennsylvania, which opened its doors to men in 1970, is part of Drexel University College of Medicine.

[American Civil War Voices - Women Doctors](#)
Shared by Robbin Smith

Meeting Photo Gallery

Photos from our February meeting with speaker Kevin Pawlak and his presentation "*Never Such a Campaign: The Battle of Second Manassas.*"



Board Notes & Local Events

Notes from the February 2025 Board of Directors Meeting

1. Our balance as of the end of February is \$7,607.
2. Our February meeting was the best attended of our program year: 404 in person and 57 via Zoom.
3. The Bentonville tour will be held on March 22, the week after the March 15-16 reenactment. 40 people have already signed up.
4. The Ladies' Forum will be held March 10. A woman impersonator, recommended by Kurt Fields who portrayed U.S. Grant, has been booked for the Forum in October.
5. Plans are being made for the May 2025 meeting, our 15th Anniversary.
6. Fort Anderson and Town Creek tours will be lead by Chris Fonvielle, and Jim McKee will lead tours of Fort Caswell. These tours will be in the next season.

Our next Board meeting is Tuesday, March 11, 2025. Meetings are held monthly to discuss items that will make our round table more interesting, run better, and keep our membership engaged. President John Butler leads the two-hour meeting that includes interested Advisors and members. The meetings are held at Trinity United Methodist Church in Southport one week following our gathering at Hatch and begin at 10:00 am. If you wish to attend or have suggestions for the Board, please contact John at jlbutler2007@gmail.com.

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

“The Confederate States Navy”

The speaker for the March 13 meeting will be Sion Harrington III. Si is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel with service from 1970 - 2000. He is a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill and holds a masters in history from N.C. State. He worked as a teacher, ROTC instructor and military collection archivist with the NC Division Historical Resources. He is also the vice president of the N.C. Military Historical Society.

Si's topic will be the the Confederate States Navy, including material relating to the roster of North Carolinians in the Confederate Naval Service, a special research project of Si's during his career.

March 13, 2025, 7:00 pm

St John's Episcopal Church
1219 Forest Hills Dr., Wilmington

Irish Songs of the Civil War

In the 1863 song *Pat Murphy of Meagher's Brigade*, “honest Pat Murphy” sings ballads at the Irish Brigade campfire the night before battle. The following day, “a hole through his head from a rifleman's shot” ended Murphy's life. The Brigade lamented that “no more in the camp will his laughter be heard, or his voice singing ditties so gaily.” The fictional tragic story was depicted through Murphy's own medium. His imagined tale captured the spirit of front-line singing culture and reflected the experience of the Irish in the Civil War. [Listen here.](#)



Over 200,000 Irish- born soldiers and thousands more second generation fought in

the war. Their exploits were celebrated in Pat Murphy and 150 other songs written between 1861 and 1865. Catherine Bateson's 2018 doctoral thesis *The Culture and Sentiments of Irish American Civil War Songs* explores what these ballads said about Irish loyalty and devotion to the Union. Bateson found that support for the Irish nationalist cause was complicated. What pervaded was an American identify. Fighting and living through the war, the Irish showed through song that they were committed to the United States “as Americans first and foremost.”



[From “Pillars of Fire: Irish Songs of the American Civil War](#)



Muster Notes and Notables

The March BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

Hatch Auditorium, NC Baptist Assembly, Fort Caswell, Oak Island, NC.

See page 2 for details to attend via Zoom.

Registration begins at 6:15 pm and the meeting starts promptly at 7:00 pm.

Mail Dues Checks to: BCWRT, PO Box 10161, Southport, NC. 28461.
(Please include your current phone number, street address, and email.)

2025-2026 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

John Butler: President & Director
Ann Birdsall: VP & Director
Jim Dunn: VP & Director
Jennifer Chapman: Secretary & Director
Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director
Bruce Jordan: Director
Chuck Roedema: Director
Gar Dowell: Advisor
Charen Fink: Advisor
Chris Fonvielle: Advisor

Jim McKee: Advisor
Chris Mackowski: Advisor
Skip Maxwell: Advisor
Roy Pender: Advisor
Wally Rueckel: Advisor
Wade Sokolosky: Advisor
Robbin Smith: Advisor
Len Trizinski: Advisor
John Wall: Advisor
Angela Zombek: Advisor

Connect with us



We Welcome Your Suggestions for our Speakers, Website, Meeting Procedures, Membership Retention, etc.

BCWRT is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization,
co-founded by Tom O'Donnell and Wally Rueckel and organized in May 2010.

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