



# Call to Arms

Brunswick Civil War Round Table Newsletter

## The President's Corner by John Butler


Spring is almost here and now is the time that all of the Civil War Tours and Seminars are being announced.

Locally you can follow Wade Sokolosky on his Facebook page, **North Carolina Historical Tours**, and see what tours he is conducting. He will be doing many tours around Bentonville, Wyse Forks, and New Bern.



If you want something closer to home, you might try Chris Fonvielle and any of his walking tours in the Wilmington area. You can find what tours Chris has available by going to his website, **[chrisfonvielle.com](http://chrisfonvielle.com)**.

**The Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College** was founded in 1962 and has been putting on a summer conference for over 35 years. This year's conference will take place June 7-June 12. Please contact the CWI Office at [civilwar@gettysburg.edu](mailto:civilwar@gettysburg.edu) or 717-337-6590. They normally offer a discount for Civil War round tables.

Click here for more information: 

**The 10th Annual Emerging Civil War Symposium**. This year's theme for the symposium is "1864: The War in the Balance" which will be held August 2-4, 2024 at Stevenson Ridge, VA. The symposium includes speakers and battlefield tours.

### 27th Annual Civil War Symposium

October 18 - October 20, 2024 at Pamplin Historical Park's Museum of the Civil War Soldier and Education Center in Dinwiddie, VA, and will feature presentations from seven outstanding historians: **Joseph M. Beilein, Jr., Christopher Grasso, Michael C. Hardy, Brian McKnight, Barton Myers, Timothy Smith and Brian Steel Wills.**

Pre-registration is required and space is limited. **[Click here](#)** for more information and for registering information.

### In this Issue

#### Page 1

[The President's Corner](#)  
by John Butler

#### Page 2

[Our Upcoming March 5 Program:](#)  
[with Angela Zombek, "Treated](#)  
[Worse Than Felons Before Prisons](#)  
[Were Reformed"](#)

#### Page 3

[2023 Emerging Civil War Books](#)

#### Page 4 & 5

[A Salute for March: The Irish in the](#)  
[Civil War](#)

#### Page 6

[Change in Speaker for our April](#)  
[meeting](#)  
Cape Fear Civil War Round Table  
Southport Historical Society

#### Page 7

[Updates on Fort Fisher and](#)  
[Wyse Fork](#)

#### Page 8

[Our Volunteers,](#)  
the Sutler's Table Needs Books!

#### Page 9

[Photos from our February Program](#)  
[Meeting](#)

#### Page 10

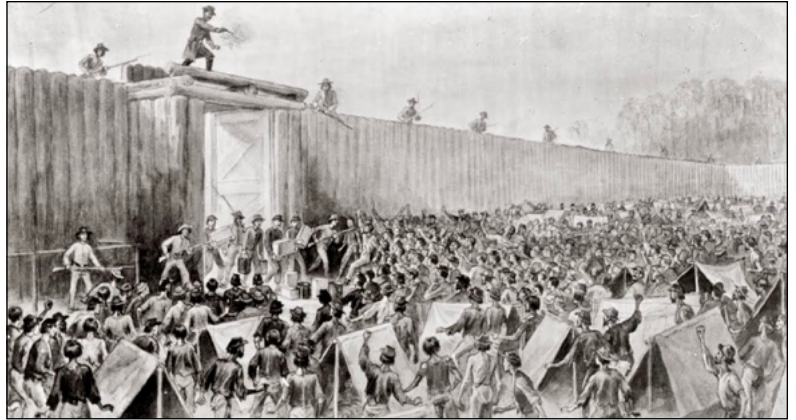
[Muster Notes](#)

# BCWRT Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, March 5, 2024 Program**

## **“Treated Worse Than Felons Before Prisons Were Reformed: The Civil War’s Crisis of Imprisonment”**

The Civil War brought about significant challenges, including the treatment of prisoners of war on both sides. Prisons were a horrible and terrifying place where overcrowding and unsanitary conditions were commonplace. This incredible assessment will be revealed at our March meeting by guest speaker Angela Zombek, Ph.D.



Before significant prison reforms were implemented, conditions in both the Union and Confederate facilities were deplorable - overcrowding, unsanitary conditions,

inadequate shelters which were especially unsatisfactory during harsh weather. Food shortages, primitive medical facilities, physical and psychological abuse by guards and fellow prisoners were also common.

The deadliest prison in the Civil War was Andersonville Prison in Anderson, GA. Of the 45,000 Union soldiers imprisoned, 13,000 died here. The largest Union prison was Camp Douglas in Chicago, IL. Of the 26,000 interned over the four years, roughly 4,000 died from starvation, execution, or exposure.

It is important to note that as the war progressed, both the Union and Confederate took steps to improve the treatment of prisoners. In fact, the establishment of the Geneva Conventions in 1864 marked an international effort to establish standards for the treatment of prisoners of war during armed conflict.



Angela Zombek is currently Associate Professor of Civil War History at UNCW. She has experience with the National Park Service at Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park, and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Angela has published several articles on prisons, and is author of *Penitentiaries, Punishment and Military Prisons: Familiar Responses to an Extraordinary Crisis during the American Civil War*. In addition, she has appeared in TLC’s celebrity genealogy show, “Who Do You Think You Are?” and helped Jessica Biel learn about the history of her Civil War ancestor!

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

**If participating via Zoom**, simply use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83173979676?pwd=WVFqeEZQNfcrKzdpMTg3NkxkxTm5QZz09>

**Meeting ID:** 831 7397 9676

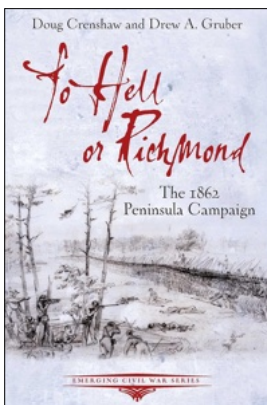
**Passcode:** 113906

# 2023 Civil War Books

## *The Emerging Civil War Series*

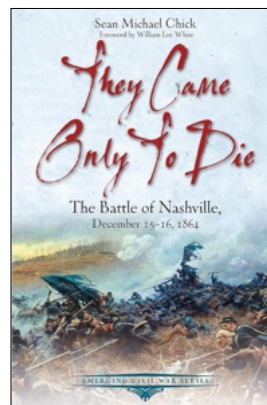
*The Emerging Civil War Series, published by Savas Beatie LLC, offers compelling and easy-to-read overviews of some of the Civil War's most important battles and issues. Each volume features more than a hundred-and-fifty photos and graphics, plus sharp new maps and visually engaging layouts.*

*To order any of these titles, visit their individual pages or the [Savas Beatie website](https://www.savasbeatie.com). Signed copies are available. The following books were published in 2023.*



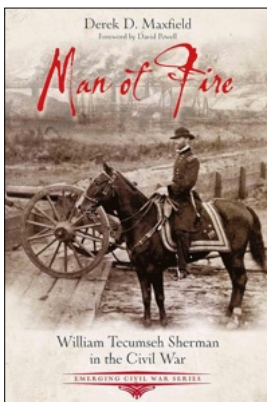
*To Hell or Richmond:  
The 1862 Peninsula  
Campaign*

by Doug Crenshaw and  
Drew Gruber



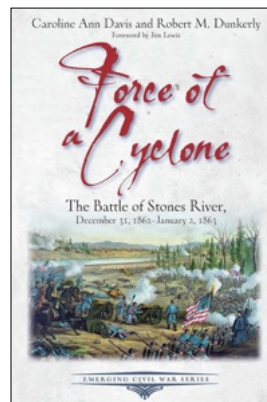
*They Came Only to Die:  
The Battle of Nashville,  
December 15-16, 1864*

by Sean Michael Chick



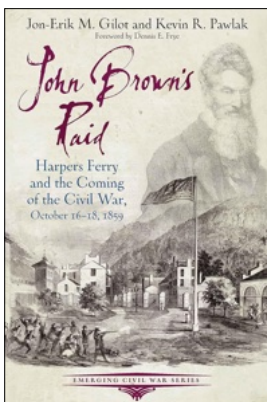
*Man of Fire:  
William Tecumseh Sherman  
in the Civil War*

by Derek D. Maxfield



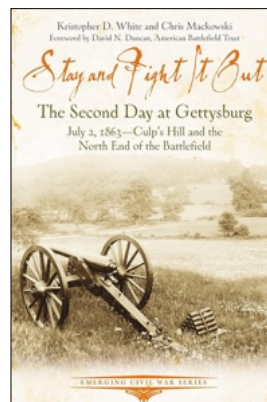
*Force of a Cyclone:  
The Battle of Stones River,  
December 31, 1862-January 2, 1863*

by Caroline Ann Davis and  
Robert Dunkerly



*John Brown's Raid:  
Harpers Ferry and the  
Coming of the Civil War,  
October 16-18, 1859*

by Jon-Erik Gilot and  
Kevin R. Pawlak



*Stay and Fight it Out:  
The Second Day at Gettysburg,  
July 2, 1863 Culp's Hill and the  
North End of the Battlefield*

by Kristopher D. White and  
Chris Mackowski

# BCWRT - A Salute for March

## The Irish in the Civil War



The Flag of the 69th Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry

The Irish fought in the American Civil War, from 1861 to 1865, in large numbers and with great distinction. Over 150,000 Irish immigrants and thousands more Americans of Irish descent fought for the Union; and more than 30,000 (perhaps as many as 40,000) Irish fought for the Confederate States. Their service in the American military -- North and South -- more than anything else, helped to transform the Irish from unwelcomed and often despised immigrants into accepted and respected Americans.

Over one million Irish Catholics came to America because of the Potato Famine in Ireland. Most of the Catholic Irish went to the major ports and cities in the Northeast, especially New York, Boston, Philadelphia. In the South most of the Irish Catholics went to New Orleans, a major port city and the most populous city in the South just before the Civil War.

The Irish immigrants, who were usually unskilled and uneducated, found employment doing the dangerous and difficult work no one else wanted such as digging canals with picks and shovels, mining coal, or working as stevedores and "screwmen" who loaded bales of cotton and other cargo into the holds of ships on the waterfront. But there was another thing the Irish had proven they could do and do very well -- fight.

When the American Civil War started, it was no surprise that the ranks of the American armies, both North and South, were filled by the Irish and Irish Americans. They were sometimes undisciplined, rowdy, and reluctant to respect authority. But when the battle started, they were among the very best soldiers and always



The Louisiana Tiger Battalion, who were mostly Irish, wore imitation Zouave uniforms provided them by New Orleans businessmen.

# BCWRT - A Salute for March continued

ready for a fight. Wise army officers understood this and after a while just let them be.

This was certainly the case with the Irish in the Louisiana Tigers from New Orleans who served with Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee.

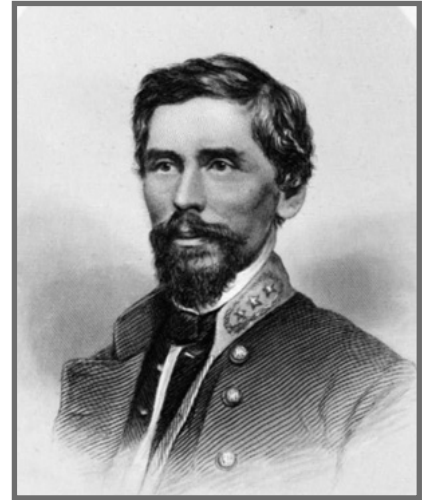
Probably the most famous of all the Irish units during the war was the 'Fighting 69th of New York led by Irish born General Thomas Meagher (pronounced as MAHR). It was part of the Army of the Potomac's Irish Brigade and saw combat throughout the war but notably at Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Gettysburg.



General Thomas Meagher

the South saw the act of secession by the Rebels as similar to the Irish attempt to gain independence from Britain.

Some Irish were against slavery like General Patrick Cleburne who became known as the "Stonewall of the West." He even advocated freeing the slaves and allowing them to join the Confederate Army. But other Irish feared that



General Patrick Cleburne

if the slaves were freed they would compete for working class jobs, while others felt the Abolitionists ignored the harsh conditions under which the Irish immigrants suffered in factories up North or in the dangerous work they had to do as a result of discrimination.

Most scholars agree the Irish served with distinction, and an estimated 23,000 died fighting for their cause.



Michael Corcoran

Philadelphia had the 69th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry (Irish Regiment). It was deliberately named after the famous New York 69th to honor them. One Irish officer, Michael Corcoran of New York's Irish Legion, encouraged the Irish in Philadelphia to join the Union Army by telling

them their training would help in one day forming a unit of veterans to fight the British in Ireland.

Between 30 and 40 thousand Irish served in the armies of the Confederacy. Many of the Irish in



Celtic Cross with Irish bloodhound at its base. Memorial to the Irish Brigade at Gettysburg.

Credit for excerpts from [irishamericanjournal.com](http://irishamericanjournal.com)

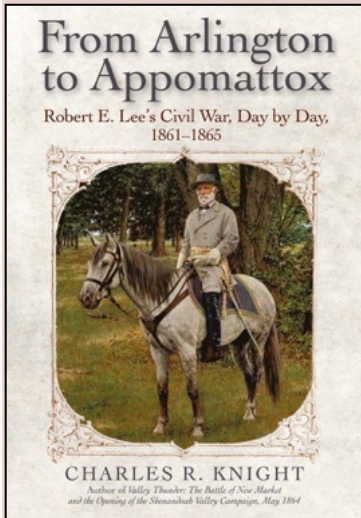


## BCWRT Announcement

We have a change in our program speaker for  
April:

### **“From Arlington to Appomattox:**

**Robert E. Lee’s Civil War, Day by Day, 1861 - 1865”**



Presented by the author,

Charles R. Knight,  
the Military Curator of  
the North Carolina  
Museum of History

Published by Savas Beatie, *From Arlington to  
Appomattox* was the winner of the 2022  
Richard Harwell Award

## Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Emerging Civil War historian, Sarah Kay Bierl, will present **“From California to Gettysburg: The Hancock Family.”** Winfield Hancock and his wife and children were living in California at the time the Civil War began and they were faced with challenging choices. The decision they made would help keep the Golden State in the Union and also impact one of the great eastern battles of the war.

March 14, 2024, 7:00 pm

St John’s Episcopal Church

1219 Forest Hills Dr., Wilmington

## Southport Historical Society Program

### Stede Bonnet, “The Gentleman Pirate”

Presented by Tom Milner

March 28, 2024, 6:30 pm

Southport Community Bldg at 223 E. Bay St.

Free. Reservations required. RSVP at  
[southporthistoricalsociety.org](http://southporthistoricalsociety.org).

Stede Bonnet, AKA “The Gentleman Pirate,” had an incredible career during the gold age of Piracy (1690-1725) that ended with his defeat and capture in the brutal “Battle of the Sand Bar” that took place on September 27, 1718 within a stone’s throw of current day Southport.

This presentation will give a summary of the life of the Gentleman Pirate, attempt to separate pirate fact from fiction and explain why Southport was the site of this historic battle.

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### “North Carolina’s Royal Governors and the Building and Burning of Fort Johnston ( 1731-1775)”

Presented by Bob Surridge

Tuesday, March 12, 10:00 am, Harper Library

In the early morning hours of July 19, 1775, a Patriot militia force of 300 to 500 men seized and burned Fort Johnston to the ground. Royal Governor Josiah Martin later wrote that: “all the buildings in the fort, which being of wood, burnt like tinders (kindling) and were entirely consumed.”

Join Bob Surridge as he examines the role that the five royal governors of North Carolina played in the construction and destruction of Fort Johnston.

The program is free and open to the public.

# Local News

## Fort Fisher



The new visitor center and museum are well underway.



Reproduction twelve-pound Napoleons and a front pintle carriage for the earthworks project were delivered in February.

## Wyse Fork Battlefield

Wade Sokolosky, our speaker at the February meeting, posted this update on Feb. 19, 2024.



“I want to thank Senator Norman W. Sanderson who personally took the time to visit me at my home today to discuss the status of our efforts to save a portion of the Wyse Fork Battlefield near Kinston.



Senator Sanderson

It was a positive meeting and I very much appreciate his help in our preservation fight. I'm okay with the new interstate, just move the Wyse Fork interchange a 1/4 mile to the east toward New Bern and it will save Hallowed Ground, where U.S. Army soldiers fought and died.”

[Save Wyse Fork Battlefield](#)

## Volunteers & the Sutler's Table



### Our Volunteers

We appreciate all of our volunteers who make our meetings run smoothly - getting everyone checked in, signing up new members, handling renewals, selling at our Sutler's Table and the 50/50 tickets. *Thank you, all!*

Have *you* thought about volunteering? We could always use your help and hope you join us. Contact John Butler at [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com)



### Civil War Books

Our sales at the Sutler's Table have gone so well that we are now in need of books to replenish our stock.



If you have any Civil War books that you can donate, we would be most appreciative to have them.

Please contact John Butler at [jlbutler2007@gmail.com](mailto:jlbutler2007@gmail.com)



Photos by Naomi Macey



# BCWRT Photos

## February 2024 Meeting Photos



Photos from our February meeting and the presentation by Wade Sokolosky:  
*"A Great Race Between Two Rivers: Sherman's March Toward Fayetteville"*



Photos by Pat de Barros and Chuck Roedema



# Muster Notes and Notables

**The March BCWRT meeting is Tuesday, March 5, 2024.**

**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.)

## 2024 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

John Butler: President & Director

Ann Birdsall: VP & Director

(Vacant): VP & Director

Jim Kane: Secretary & Director

Tom Kehoe: Treasurer & Director

Bruce Jordan: Director

Chuck Roedema: Director

Peter Carmichael: Advisor

Gar Dowell: Advisor

Jim Dunn: Advisor

Charen Fink: Advisor

Chris Fonvielle: Advisor

Jim McKee: Advisor

Chris Mackowski: Advisor

Skip Maxwell: Advisor

Roy Pender: Advisor

Woody Petchel: Advisor

Steve Rauschkolb: Advisor

Wally Rueckel: Advisor

Wade Sokolosky: Advisor

John Wall: 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.

**Call to Arms** Editor: Jennifer Chapman ([jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com](mailto:jennifer.chapman3@icloud.com))