

Lowcountry Civil War Roundtable Inc

February 2003 Edition Issue 24



February 19th 2003 -Note Date Change-

Military Prisons in the Civil War

Presented by Edwin C Bearss, Renowned Historian

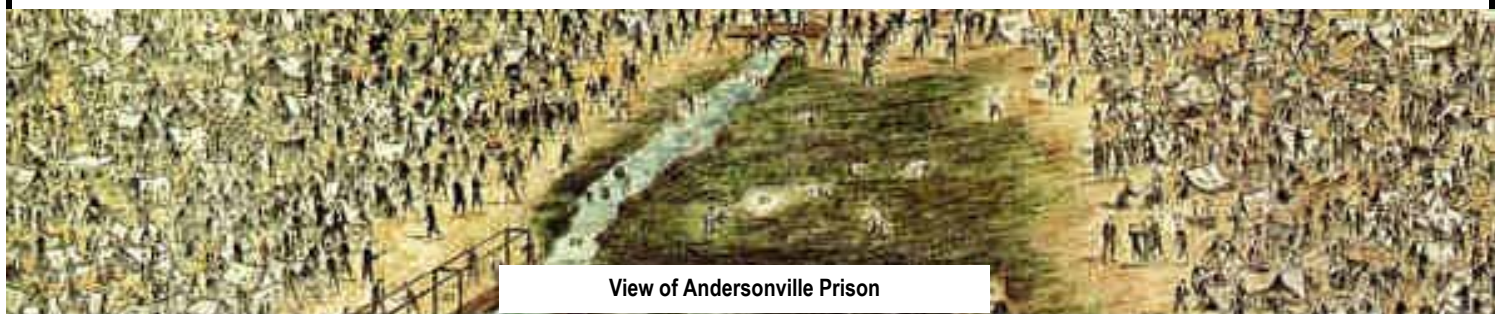
'TIS A HARD CHRISTMAS FOR US

These words, uttered by a starving soldier imprisoned in the Confederate military prison at Salisbury, North Carolina in the winter of 1864, were echoed by tens of thousands of prisoners-of-war during one of the darkest chapters of American history. While suffering and deprivation were commonplace throughout the Civil War, the plight of those soldiers captured in combat

ditional: *Every man we hold, when released on parole or otherwise, becomes an active soldier against us at once either directly or indirectly. If we commence a system of exchanges which liberates all prisoners taken, we will have to fight on until the whole South is exterminated.* Once the exchange of prisoners was halted, the populations of prisons on both sides swelled. Andersonville is the best-known example of a prison utterly over-

Ed Bearss

On February 19, we will have an unparalleled opportunity to learn more about prisons and prisoner life during the Civil War when Ed Bearss returns to the Lowcountry. Mr. Bearss is the nation's pre-eminent battlefield historian and tour guide. Those of you fortunate enough to have heard Ed's talk on First Manassas last year will remember what a dynamic speaker he



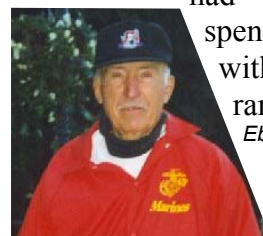
View of Andersonville Prison

during the latter years of the war was particularly tragic.

In the early part of the war, captured soldiers were quickly exchanged (paroled) pursuant to an understanding between the National and Confederate governments known as the Dix-Hill Cartel. This arrangement worked reasonably well until General Grant effectively abrogated it. Grant's reasoning was coldly ra-

whelmed by numbers. Lack of food and safe drinking water, combined with horrifying sanitary conditions, produced an appalling mortality rate there. It was hardly unique in this regard. Salisbury was its less well-known equal, and Northern prisons were seldom much better. The plight of Confederate prisoners held at Elmira still evokes bitter memories among their descendants.

is. Those of you who have not yet had the pleasure of spending an evening with Ed are in for a rare treat. *By Bob Eberly*



Edwin Bearss

It's getting so people think Ed Bearss may

(Continued on page 2)

Things You Need To Know

During 2002 your Round Table donated \$3100 to organizations dedicated to preserving history and educating future generations. In some cases our donation was leveraged and resulted in a much larger donation. In 2002 we donated money to; the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, the Civil War Preservation Trust (where \$1000 became \$8200), the Museum of the Confederacy, and the Costal Discovery Museum.

We Need Your Help

Were half way through the program years and it's time to think about next year. The Round Table doesn't just happen – you, by volunteering and working on committees, make the Round Table what it is. How about it? We need help on the Program, Communication, Hospitality, and Membership committees - no experience necessary. Some tasks are only an hour once a month!

I know there are some folks who are uncomfortable volunteering but if asked will say yes, so please consider this your personal invitation - we need your help! Please fill out the form below and return it to Tom. or give me a call at 705-7217 or send an email to tkoliver@davtv.com with the info as below.

Yes I'm interested in working on the following committees. Tell me more:

Program _____ Communications _____

Hospitality _____ Membership _____

I'm interested in an elected position:

President _____ Vice President _____ Treasurer _____

Secretary _____ Member At-Large _____

Name _____ Phone _____

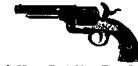
Return to: Tom Oliver, 305 Hampton Place, Bluffton, SC 29909 or e-mail to tkoliver@davtv.com

Need Memorabilia Help?

Bob Zabawa, a club member and a collector of civil war memorabilia for over 20 years, will be happy to assist any members of the club, *free of charge*, in authenticating or valuating paper items that they may have. While his expertise is paper and autographs primarily, he will try to help, through his contacts, with any other items. Feel free to call him at 843-341-9142.

THE MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE
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Editors: Mitch & Marian Sackson

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(Continued from page 1) Bearss

have *been* in the Civil War. Not so, he says, though he will admit to meeting a few survivors. *By Tom O'Brien Special to the Washington Times*

Mr. Bearss is an independent scholar and historian whose public career began at the National Park Service in 1955 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. While there, he conducted research leading to the recovery of the long-lost Union gunboat *Cairo*. He also located two forgotten forts at Grand Gulf, Mississippi, and was instrumental in having Grant Gulf named a State Military monument. In 1966, he transferred to Washington, D.C., and in 1981 he became the National Park Service chief historian for military sites. Mr. Bearss conducts detailed battlefield site tours and seminars for the Smithsonian Study Tours program. In 1990, he was a featured commentator for Ken Burns' PBS series, *The Civil War*, the most popular program broadcast by that network to date. *From The Smithsonian Associates Civil War E-Mail Newsletter*



2002-2003 Presentations

- February 19th Edwin C Bearss, renowned military expert, will discuss *Military Prisons* in the Civil War. He is an eminent preservationist and lectures throughout the country.**
- February 20th ***Morning After Details***
Edwin C Bearss will be at the **MORNING AFTER** Round Table on Thursday morning, from 10-12, at the Palmetto Electric Building at **RIVERWALK** on Route 278. **CALL BERNIE COVERT 705-7808 TO RESERVE A SEAT.**
- March 12th Jim Adams: ***Robert E. Lee*** impersonator. He will be discussing Lee's 1862 campaign strategies as he became General of the Confederate Army. **
- April 9th Speakers from the National Park Service Staff from **FORT PULASKI**, located at the mouth of the Savannah River, will discuss the importance of the Fort in 1862.
- May 14th ***Stonewall Jackson and the Valley Campaign***. This will be discussed in detail by noted historian Robert Krick.**

** There will be a *Morning after* meeting for this event..

coming in 2003-2004 (subject to change)

Civil War Women
Battle of ***Shiloh***
The Western Campaign
Medicine during the Civil War

2nd Manassas/Bull Run
Civil War Weaponry
Antietam
The Seven Days Battle

February's Trivia Question

Port Hudson was of great importance because

- A. It was a major dock for the Northern goods coming into New York City
- B. It was a Confederate fortification on the Mississippi River
- C. Britain shipped aid to the Confederacy thru this port on Hudson Bay

Answer on Page 8

WILLIAM H. CARNEY, First Afro-American Medal of Honor

Rank and organization: Sergeant, Company C, 54th Massachusetts Colored Infantry

Place and date: At Fort Wagner, S.C., 18 July 1863

Entered service at: New Bedford, Mass

Birth: Norfolk, VA.

Date of issue: 23 May 1900

Citation: When the color sergeant was shot down, this soldier grasped the flag, led the way to the parapet, and planted the colors thereon. When the troops fell back he carried off the flag, under a fierce fire in which he was twice severely wounded.

Now For The Rest of The Story

Carney was the first black soldier to receive the Medal of Honor although he would have to wait over three decades for it. Born a slave in Virginia, he was studying for the ministry when he learned that the first regiment of black soldiers, the 54th Massachusetts, was being formed, and decided that he "could best serve my God by serving my country and my oppressed brothers." During the 54th Massachusetts' assault on Fort Wagner, the color bearer was fatally shot, and

... I could best serve my God by serving my country and my oppressed brothers...

only did my duty." He died in 1908.



Carney grabbed the flag before it fell and then carried it throughout the remainder of the battle. Although the citation reads that he was twice severely

wounded, he actually suffered multiple gunshot wounds in the head, chest, legs and one arm. He ended up carrying the flag to safety when the 54th was driven back by a Confederate counterattack. When a soldier from another regiment offered to take the flag so Carney could seek medical aid, he replied, "No one but a member of the 54th should carry the colors!"

Upon carrying the flag back into camp after the battle, he received rousing cheers from other units but simply replied, typically for a Medal of Honor recipient, "I

The Confederate Prison Camp in Salisbury North Carolina

Salisbury Civil War prisoners are buried in 18 trenches 240 feet in length with estimates placing the number in the trenches at 11,700 and the individual graves of another 412 prisoners of which 283 are unknown. *Report by COL. Oscar Mack, August 18, 1871*



Hospital conditions in the Salisbury Prison, North Carolina. Note that in the background the dead being loaded onto a cart for burial in the trenches with a swing and a heave.

The most ambitious escape attempt from Salisbury took place on Friday, November 25, 1864. Owing to lack of food, very little shelter, the extreme winter of 1864 and overcrowding due to transfers from Andersonville the prisoners rushed the gates. The gate cannon was fired three times killing 65 persons outright and wounding an unknown number. Official reports put the number of prisoners who died from wounds and cannon fire at over 250.

The *Baseball* (as it was referred at that time) was played at Salisbury in the early part of 1862 when POWs from New Orleans and Tuscaloosa were sent to Salisbury. Prisoner Gray mentions that baseball was played nearly every day the weather permitted. Claims have been made that these were the first baseball games played in the South.



Richard McMurry's South Atlantic Civil War Symposium at Holiday Inn Oceanfront Hilton Head Island March 27 -29, 2003

Once again the Blue & Gray Education Society is presenting a Civil War Symposium on Hilton Head Island. It's not to be missed, last years symposium was terrific. Here's what you get:

10 Presentations, 3 Panel discussions, 3 Lunches, 1 Optional Tour, 1 Dinner (BGES members only)

The cost is \$288 if you register **before** February 1, 2003 or \$320 **from** February 1, 2003. You can also sign up for individual days. See the registration form for more details or call Tom Oliver (705-7217) or Bernie Covert (705-7808). The Faculty & their topics are:

Richard McMurry: Freelance historian, will speak on *Aspects of the Atlanta Campaign*

James I. "Bud" Robertson: Director, Virginia Tech Civil War Center, will speak on *The Common Soldier*

Joe Glatthaar: University of Houston, will speak about *Harsh Realities, Joe Johnston and the Army of Northern Virginia to Seven Pines*

Jackie Campbell: University of Connecticut, will speak about *Fear, Fire and Fortitude: The Reality of Sherman's March through the Carolinas*

Brian Steel Wills: University of Virginia, College at Wise, will speak on *The River Ran Red with Blood, Forrest and the Fort Pillow Affair*

Stephen Wise: University of South Carolina, Beaufort, will be speaking on *The Gate of Hell*

Craig Symonds: Professor at the United States Naval Academy, will speak on *Old Buck, Anchor of the Navy*

Alan Downs: Georgia Southern University, will speak about *Westward Ho! The Confederates, Post War Expansion and the Native Americans*

Gail Stephens and Gloria Swift: The former is a free lance historian, the later an NPS historian at Monocacy Battlefield, they will divide a presentation on "Greater than Ben Hur--The Interesting Career of General Lew Wallace."

Cathy Barton and Dave Para: A talented pair of folk music historians from Boonville, Missouri. They will give a musical presentation entitled *Civil War Songs from the Western Theater*.

South Atlantic Civil War Symposium Registration Form

Name: _____ Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

_____ Registration for Wednesday March 26th tour of Port Royal Sound and selected dockings **Lowcountry CWRT Members \$95 until Feb 1 then \$110; BGES members and partner organizations: \$100. General Public: \$125. This tour is optional and an additional cost.**

_____ **Pre registration for Entire Program March 27, 28 and 29, lectures, lunches, panels** (payment must be received by February 1st) *LCWRT and BGES members/partner organization members only \$ 288 Save \$87! General Public: \$320 save \$55!*

_____ **Registration for Entire Program, March 27, 28 and 29, lectures, lunches, panels** from February 1, 2003: *LCWRT only \$ 320 Save \$55! General Public: \$375*

_____ **BGES Members and partner organizations: Registration for Entire Program, March 27, 28 and 29, lectures, lunches, panels** from February 1, 2003: **\$300**

A La Carte Registrations

_____ Registration for Thursday only, March 27th Lectures, lunch, panel \$150.

_____ Registration for Friday only, March 28th Lectures, lunch, panel \$150

_____ Registration for Saturday only, March 29th Lectures, lunch, panel \$150.

_____ **BGES Annual Meeting, Saturday March 29: 5 PM, buffet BBQ, State of Society report and guest lecturer (will be announced). Dues-paying BGES members only. Must pre register by March 24th. FREE, but, donations for dinner will be gratefully accepted.**

Form of Payment: _____ Check enclosed _____ Charge my _____ Am Express _____ VISA _____ MasterCard (circle)

_____ Exp: _____

Signature: _____

You may cancel your registration with a full refund until March 21st. Your money will be refunded in full if you are not completely satisfied.

Mail this registration form to **BGES Hilton Head Symposium**; 416 Beck Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23503 or fax this form to **434-836-3292** or call Toll Free 888-741-BGES (2437)

Culinary department

Java!

Coffee was an essential item in the diet of men of both armies. Legends suggested that men who drank coffee didn't contract dysentery, which was probably true so long as they drank coffee exclusively and didn't drink from polluted streams. As William Holden said in *The Horse Soldiers*, "Get the water upstream from the latrine. Besides, it makes the coffee taste better." Union forces were rarely without coffee and often traded it for Virginia tobacco when Confederate troops were in a trading mood, which they usually were because the blockade had severely restricted the importation of coffee.

Various unpalatable substitutes abounded. Interestingly, a rifle with a coffee grinder built into the butt was issued to many Union regiments, one per company. Coffee beans were best slow roasted over a low fire and not burnt, then boiled briskly for two minutes, then taken from the fire at once and filtered through a piece of flannel after settling for 5 minutes. One hopes the union suits were washed first. The grinds were often chewed to extract the last remaining power of the beans.

Whence Okra Afrikaner?

Once they were in the New World, the slaves did have the comfort of a few of their native foods. The slave traders brought with them a few of the staples of Africa, and these types of foods were sometimes a part of the rations that were given to the slaves by their masters. For example, field peas, okra, eggplant, peanuts and yams are all native African foods and became an integral part of the diet in the South.

Your Favorite Civil War Recipe

Did your granny hand down a *hard times* recipe for making when under siege? Do you know what the homes in the South fed their troops, as well as the Northerners? Please submit any to the Editor for inclusion in a future issue. Emeril could relive the past!



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**RESERVATION FOR FEBRUARY 19TH MEETING
AT MCCrackEN MIDDLE SCHOOL
DINNER @ 5:45PM—PROGRAM @ 7:00PM**

Menu for February 19, 2003

Roast beef • fried chicken
Rice • butter beans • Sugar peas
apple salad • Broccoli casserole
Macaroni salad • peach cobbler
German chocolate cake • rolls
Ice Tea • Coffee
Catered by duke's

TO ATTEND PROGRAM ONLY
(no dinner) Make your reservation by calling 705-9898

Number of Dinners: _____ @ \$11 each = _____

Names: _____

Phone: _____ Ck# _____ Date _____

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO *LCWRT Inc*

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**DINNER FORM & CHECK MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN
FEBRUARY 14, 2002**

Bud Robertson & Last Month's Presentation

A standing room only crowd greeted Virginia Tech Professor James I. "Bud" Robertson as he returned to the Lowcountry for what has become an annual event eagerly awaited by the members of your Civil War Roundtable. Professor Robertson, one of the nation's preeminent Civil War historians, spoke on a subject near and dear to his heart: the revered Confederate Army General, *Stonewall* Jackson.

Having recently completed what will surely rank as the definitive biography of Jackson for all time to come, Robertson noted that two factors, Jackson's lonely childhood (he was orphaned at age seven) and his Christian faith, were of overwhelming significance in molding the man Jackson would become. He also discussed Jackson's relationships with his fellow officers and his views on how best to wage the war. Robertson also spoke at length about the forthcoming Hollywood movie, *Gods and Generals*, for which he served as a technical advisor. He noted that Stephen Lang, the actor who portrays Jackson in the film, said that it was an easy role to get into because he kept a Bible in his left hand and a copy of Robertson's book in his right. At the end of the

evening, Professor Robertson autographed copies of a number of his books for Roundtable members. *By Bob Eberly*



Current LCWRT Statistics	
Total Members	440
New for 2002-2003	128
Jan 8 th Dinners Served	217
Jan 8 th Non Dinner	80
<i>Morning After Meeting</i>	61
Web Site Hits for Dec.	3870



Three Confederate Prisoners




Bluffton, SC 29910


P.O. Box 2252

Lowcountry Civil War Round Table Inc.

THE MINIE BALL GAZETTE



Next Meeting
 March 12th, 2003
 Jim Adams: *Robert E. Lee*
 impersonator



Answer to Trivia Question
 Don't Peek Until You Read Page 3

A very heavily fortified town in Mississippi which, General N. P. Banks started siege operations on May 21, 1863 and attacked with 13,000 men. This was repulsed by 4500 Confederates under Major General Franklin Gardner. On June 14 Banks attacked again with 6,000 men against about 3700 Confederates and failed again to take the Port. When Gardner learned of Vicksburg's fall to General Grant on July 4, he surrendered his garrison to Banks on July 8.

NEGRO SOLDIER DISCOVERED

Prison officials, while engaged in paroling the prisoners on Belle Isle, in order to send a body away by flag of truce, discovered among the enlisted men a negro, who had cropped his kinky hair short, and by the aid of a light olive complexion, and a regulation uniform, had escaped notice. He gave the name of Hascall, (intended rascal,) and said he enlisted in Massachusetts. The black sheep was removed from the white flock, and provided with quarters becoming his importance. *From the Richmond Examiner, 7/21/1863*

Our Web Site lowcountrycwr.com

Civil War Sites of Interest

mariah.stonemarche.org/livhis/music.htm

mariah.stonemarche.org/livhis/women/index.htm

rootsweb.com/~tntipton/confpris.html