



MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE

The Official Newsletter of the Lowcountry Civil War Round Table, Inc.

January 15, 2019

Dear LCWRT Members,

Our 2019 monthly presentations will be initiated on January 23, 2019, at Pinckney Hall — please note the change from Magnolia Hall. Jerry Morris will appear as Frank Mixson of Company E of First S.C. Volunteers just after the battle of Fredericksburg, Va. Jerry has a very impressive resume; e.g., President of the Rivers Bridge Confederate Memorial Association.

With the assistance and largesse of Joe Roney, former President of LCWRT, we have presented the Hardeeville Library with a plaque. This states that the +200 Civil War books and pamphlets donated to this library were from LCWRT. It will be placed in the room where the books are on shelves

Joe Passiment is our Chair for Membership and was elected in November election. He is now a Beaufort County council member; 6th District and I am pleased to announce he will remain “with us.”

General William Tecumseh Sherman planned to begin his march into S.C. around mid-January, 1865. He considered this his greatest military achievement. After the war he wrote, *“No one ever has and may not agree with me as to the very great importance of the march north from Savannah. The march to the sea seems to have captured everybody, whereas it was child’s play compared with the other.”* Sherman’s objective was Lee’s army around Richmond, and Sherman’s Westerners intended to have the honor of taking the Confederate capital themselves!

Sherman turned over command of Savannah to Major General John Foster on 1-21-65 and went by boat to Beaufort. Beaufort was the first town in S.C. entered in force by Sherman’s troops. It had been in Federal hands since November 1861 by a garrison of African-American troops. Earlier — December 30, 1864 — the forces moved across the Savannah River and went into camp on Hardee Plantation west of Hardeeville and remained there until January 17, 1865. It took a week to cross because of rain and Confederate pickets.

The troops destroyed the Charleston-Augusta Railroad, and by February 11 most of southern S.C. was in ruins. General H.B. Kilpatrick’s cavalry was responsible for most of the damage. Purysburg, Hardeeville, Robertsville, and Barnwell were destroyed by fire, and a soldier referred to Barnwell as “Burnwell.” Hardeeville churches and homes suffered alike. One of the largest and most beautiful churches was deliberately razed plank by plank. They removed to the pulpit and seats, next to the siding and blinds and then cut the corner posts and the spire crashed to earth. The First Methodist Church on Main Street in Hardeeville was used as a hospital for Federal troops. It is still in service. Usually, when a house was used to house officers, it was spared, but when the troops left, they were often burned. The troops (bummers or forages) lived off the land, so to speak. They said: *“My boys can live on chickens and ham, for everything that we do find, belongs to Uncle Sam.”*

“I am obliged to sweat them tonight; that I may save their blood tomorrow,” Stonewall Jackson.

Your obedient servant, Michael Sweeney

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2019 Lecture Series for the LCWRT

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Jan. 23, 2019	Jerry Morris “Reminiscences of Private” Frank Mixson
Feb. 27, 2019	Jack Davis “Rhett & the Fire Eaters”
Mar. 27, 2019	Dr. Larry Roland “End of Reconstruction in Beaufort-Hampton Counties”
April 24, 2019	Dr. Jim Spirek “Wrecks of Beaufort Sound”
May 22, 2019	Ron Roth “Underground Railroad”

We will meet in Magnolia Hall in Sun City every month except January 2019 when we will meet in Pinckney Hall.

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“Home, Sweet Home”

Frank Mixson, Co. E, 1st SC Volunteers just after the Battle of Fredericksburg, 1862

“...during the afternoon we and the enemy were very near together, with the Rappahannock River only between us, but no fighting was going on. Just before sundown the Yankee band came down to the river bank and commenced to play. Very soon our bands were on the bank on our side. The Yankee band would play the popular airs of theirs amid much yelling and cheering; our bands would do the same with the same result. Toward the wind up the Yankee band struck up “Yankee Doodle.” Cheers were immense. When they stopped our band, struck up “Dixie,” and everything went wild. When they finished this, both bands, with one accord and simultaneously, struck up “Home, Sweet Home.” There was not a sound from anywhere until the tune was finished and it then seemed as if everybody had gone crazy. I never saw anything to compare with it. Both sides were cheering, jumping up and throwing up hats and doing everything which tended to show enthusiasm. This lasted for at least a half hour. I do believe that had we not had the river between us that the two armies would have gone together and settled the war right there and then.

“I saw old weather-beaten men, naked, barefooted, hungry, dirty and worn out, with tears streaming down their cheeks; men who were not afraid to leave their homes, their wives, their families, their all; but men with hearts, who could not restrain the tears when it was so vividly brought to them. Their hearts were touched then, but they were yet men who were willing to do or die.”

John Howard Payne
(1791–1852)

“Home, Sweet Home,” was written by American lyricist John Howard Payne and English composer Sir Henry Bishop for an opera that was first produced in London in

1823. The song became hugely popular throughout the U.S. and was a favorite of both Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War.

Payne, a dramatist, actor, editor, writer, and author spent his early life in lower New York State, where his father taught elocution at the Clinton Academy in East Hampton. After the family's relocation to Boston, Payne, who showed an early interest in the theater, was sent by his father to work at an accounting firm in New York City. There, at the age of 14, he started the newspaper *Thespian Mirror*. He later attended Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., dropping out to work in a theater to supplement his family's income.

He led a colorful life. After early success in the theater in New York, he moved to England in 1813 and was one of the first American actors to earn acclaim there. He traveled to Ireland, lived in France, adapted French plays for the British theater, and spent time in debtors' prison. Payne's friends included Washington Irving, who was his roommate in Paris and an artistic collaborator. Payne was acquainted with Charles and Mary Lamb and Samuel Taylor Coleridge and suffered unrequited love for Mary Shelley. In 1822, Payne wrote the lyrics to "Home! Sweet Home!" for the opera *Clari*, the Maid of Milan. When the song was published separately, it quickly sold 100,000 copies. It is said that Queen Victoria loved the song so much. The publishers made a considerable profit from it, net £2,100 in the first year, and the producer of the opera did well. Only Payne did not really profit by its success. "*While his money lasted, he was a prince of bohemians,*" but had little business sense. In 1852 Henry Bishop "*relaunched*" the song as a parlor ballad, and it became prevalent in the United States throughout the American Civil War and after. The song's American premiere took place at the Winter Tivoli Theater in Philadelphia on Oct. 29, 1823, and was sung by Mrs. Williams. The song's popularity offered him little financial stability, however, and Payne later lobbied in the U.S. for copyright laws on behalf of writers.

Another reason "Home, Sweet Home" became popular, Dr. Wm. Hettrick, the director of Hofstra Univ. Music History program said it was easy to play on the piano, which became a fixture in middle-class households, and untrained voices could sing it comfortably.

Payne moved back to the U.S in 1832. His travels in the South led to an interest in the Creek and Cherokee; he compiled a 14-volume history of the Cherokee and opposed their removal from tribal lands, an effort that led to his imprisonment by the Georgia Militia.

As early as 1827 this song was quoted by Swedish composer Franz Berwald in his *Konzertstück* for Bassoon and Orchestra (middle section, marked *Andante*). Gaetano Donizetti used the theme in his opera *Anna Bolena* (1830) Act 2, Scene 3 as part of Anna's Mad Scene to underscore her longing for her childhood home. It is also used with Sir Henry Wood's *Fantasia on British Sea Songs* and in Alexandre Guilmant's *Fantasy for organ* "Op. 43, the *Fantaisie sur deux mélodies anglaises*," both of which also use "Rule, Britannia!" In 1857 composer/pianist Sigismond Thalberg wrote a series of variations for piano (op. 72) on the theme of "Home! Sweet Home!"

In 1909, it was featured in the silent film *The House of Cards*. In the particular scene, a frontier bar was hurriedly closed due to a fracas. A card reading “Play Home Sweet Home” was displayed, upon which an onscreen fiddler promptly supplied a pantomime of the song. This may imply a popular association of this song with the closing hour of drinking establishments.

The song was reputedly banned from being played in Union Army camps during the American Civil War for being too redolent of hearth and home and so likely to incite desertion.

The song is known in Japan as “Hanyu no Yado” (My Humble Cottage.) It has been used in such movies as *The Burmese Harp* and *Grave of the Fireflies*. It is also used at Senri-Chuo Station on the Kita-Osaka Kyuko Railway.

Payne's tune, though, is perhaps most commonly recognized in the score from MGM's *The Wizard of Oz*. The melody is played in a counterpart to “Over the Rainbow” in the final scene as Dorothy (played by Judy Garland) tells her family, “*there's no place like home.*”

In the 1939 film *First Love*, the song is performed by Deanna Durbin.

In the 1946 20th Century Fox film *Anna and the King of Siam*, as well as in Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1951 musical, *The King and I* (and its 1956 film adaptation), Anna Leonowens teaches her students to sing “Home! Sweet Home” as part of her psychological campaign to induce the King to build her a house of her own.

In 1842, Payne became the American consul in Tunisia. He died in the city of Tunis in 1852.

Chorus and lyrics to “Home Sweet Home.”

Chorus: Home! Home!/ Sweet, sweet home!/ There's no place like home./ There's no place like home.

Verses: 'Mid pleasures and palaces / Though I may roam/ Be it ever so humble / There's no place like home.

A charm from the sky/ Seems to hallow us there/ Which seek thro' the world /Is ne'er met with elsewhere.

(chorus)

To thee, I'll return /Overburdened with care/ The heart's dearest solace/ Will smile on me there.

No more from that cottage/ Again I will roam /Be it ever so humble/ There's no place like home.

SOURCE: Mixson, Frank: REMINISCENCES OF A PRIVATE (1910), John Reuben Thomas “Music in Camp,”
www.balladofamerica.com/music, www.historynet.com/home

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Saint John's Bluff Fort

Duval County, Florida - Oct. 1 - 3, 1862

**Principal Commanders: Brig. Gen. John M. Brannon (US);
Lt. Col. Charles F. Hopkins (CS)**

Florida voted to secede from the United States and to join with other Southern states in the Confederacy in 1861. Although few actual battles were fought in Florida during the Civil War, the state nonetheless played an important role for both sides in the conflict.

The St. Johns River was important in the Union effort of taking Florida. If the Union could raid Confederate positions in the interior of Florida, they could control the east. The Union wanted to control North Florida and use its position to initiate Reconstruction for Florida. Federals operated up and down the southeast coast. (The St. Johns River has been a strategic waterway for centuries.)

Adding to the difficulties of blockading and engaging the Confederates along the St. Johns was the limited range and endurance of the Union ships as well as a lack of provisions. Blockade duty regularly took the Union gunboats more than 70 miles upriver to Palatka, placing wear on the engines and expending coal which had to be acquired from larger bases such as Ft. Clinch or Port Royal, S.C. Additionally, striking the ships on the shallow sandbars and the constant firing of the cannons loosened the seams along the ship's hulls. A Union commander reported the toll the St. Johns took on his boat stating, “since she has been in this locality she has very much increased in her disability.” Provisions for these sailors also came from the larger bases or could be acquired onshore through the sailor's own labor. In 1863, a visiting Union commander described the Navy's efforts to raise food on Batton Island as “a rather pathetic little garden...indulging a dream of vegetables” which at this isolated station caused them to “linger over the little microscopic sprouts, pointing them out tenderly, as if they were cradled, babies.” As a relative backwater in the war, the St. Johns lacked a significant and permanent Army garrison until 1864. This made the blockade fleet the main Union force in the area early in the war. The runaway slaves fleeing to the safety of the gunboats would both exacerbate and help to alleviate some of these challenge faced by the Union Navy stationed on the St. Johns.

Although President Lincoln had avoided talk of abolishing slavery early in the war, slaves increasing took flight from plantations in hopes of gaining their freedom as the Union took control of coastal areas. This contraband would make their way to the shoreline and hide in isolated swampy areas until sighting a patrolling Union ship, which they would then signal from shore or access by taking small water craft out into the river. Though potentially dangerous, this still represented a much easier way to escape bondage than prewar routes that required long overland distances to the North. At the start of the war, the Lincoln Administration and the Department of the Navy were not prepared for the influx of contraband into Union-controlled areas. This left Naval commanders unsure of procedure on how to deal with these peoples and lacking a coherent plan to address needs such as food, shelter, and medical care. Therefore, contraband policy and practice along the St. Johns were formulated in response to local conditions.

The First Confiscation Act in Aug. of 1861 allowed for the seizure of slaves, although not technically freeing them, whose owners had employed them in the construction of Confederate defenses. However, it did not apply to slaves belonging to owners still loyal to the Union or slaves in areas under occupation. The Navy further complicated policy by encouraging its officers to retain fugitive slaves but did not prevent their return if the individual officer saw fit. Though numerous examples of contraband from the Jacksonville area being returned to their owners during the first half of 1862, the difficulty of disproving a fugitive slave's claim of conscripted labor often left Union Naval commanders on the side of protecting the contraband that approached them. Regardless of their moral view of slavery, the Navy along the St. Johns increasingly saw slavery as a cause of the war and thus slavery's end as a way to likewise end the conflict. A report from a Union vessel patrolling the river remarked, "the whole banks of the river as far as one can see is planted with corn...enough is in Florida for all the southern rebel states... if we carry their slaves off they cannot gather it." Further strengthening of this local contraband policy came from the actions of Confederate guerrilla forces along the St. Johns who were under orders to hang any captured sailors as "kidnappers." By mid-1862, questions about contraband policy were cleared up when news of the Second Confiscation Act reached the St. Johns. This act no longer required the return of any fugitive slaves and granted freedom to those of disloyal Confederate owners, while the Emancipation Proclamation following a few months later, granted all North Florida slaves their freedom.

The Civil War was less than a year and a half old when Confederates under the command of Brig. Gen. Joseph Finegan first occupied St. Johns Bluff, on the south side of the St. Johns River, to protect their access to Jacksonville, 18 miles upriver. On Sept. 9, 1862, guns were positioned atop hastily erected fortifications.

On Sept. 17, acting on a tip from a runaway slave that the Confederates had occupied the bluff, six Federal gunboats under the command of Charles Steedman assembled at Mayport Mills, approached to within 600 yards of the bluff, and quickly opened fire on the fortifications, raining shot and shell on the fixed positions atop the bluff for the next five hours.

Steedman soon realized that the Confederates could "not be dislodged except by a combined land and naval attack." On Oct. 1, the Federal gunboat squadron once again approached the bluff, while a force of 1,500 Federal troops landed and began advancing on the Southerners through the almost impassable swamp-like terrain. Outflanked, the Confederates on top of the bluff hastily evacuated, leaving their camp fully intact. While the gunboats waited on the river, Federal soldiers entered the Confederate camp, removed the guns, razed the fortifications, and raised the Stars and Stripes over the bluff. The Federals had taken the bluff without a fight.

St. Johns Bluff took a severe pounding during the Civil War. The Confederates built a nearly impenetrable fortification on the ridge, which rises 75 feet above the St. Johns River. Brig. Gen. John Finegan established a battery on St. John's Bluff near Jacksonville to stop the movement of Federal ships up the St. Johns River. They hoped that their stronghold could help keep the Federals from cruising up the river to Jacksonville. It ultimately failed to do so, but the fort did withstand a couple of powerful attacks.

At daybreak on Sept. 11, 1862, a flotilla arrived at the mouth of the St. John's River on Oct. 1, where Cdr. Charles Steedman's gunboats - *Paul Jones*, *Cimarron*, *Uncas*, *Patroon*, *Hale*, and *Water Witch* - joined them. Two Union gunboats hammered the bluff with about 200 rounds. Brig. Gen. John M. Brannan embarked with about 1,500 infantry aboard the transports *Boston*, *Ben DeFord*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Neptune* at Hilton Head, S.C. on Sept. 30.

The bombardment would've easily drowned out the noise made in Jacksonville on New Year's Eve, 1999. Of course, the Confederates blasted back at their attackers. One shell whooshed into a gunboat's ammo storeroom, but it didn't go off. Had it done so, the boat would've been blown into matchsticks and metal shavings.

By midday, the gunboats approached the bluff, while Brannan began landing troops at Mayport Mills. Another infantry force landed at Mt. Pleasant Creek, about five miles in the rear of the Confederate battery, and began marching overland on the 2nd.

When the thunder died down, the opponents tallied up their losses. The gunboats had suffered some damage, yet no casualties, while the Confederates lost one dead and eight wounded.

Outmaneuvered, Lt. Col. Charles F. Hopkins abandoned the position after dark. When the gunboats approached the bluff the next day, its guns were silent.

The Southerners held the bluff until a week later when five Union gunboats began another assault. For five hours, shot and shell fell like hail on the Confederates. As before, the Union vessels took some damage, but no casualties. The Southerners lost two killed and three wounded.

With gunboats in front and Union soldiers threatening from the rear, the Confederates made a tough decision: They abandoned the bluff shortly after the second attack. The Southerners tried to blow up their ammo and breastworks as they retreated. A faulty fuse fizzled, though, and their foe captured the fort intact.

During the attacks, the gunboats accidentally fired low at times, striking the face of the bluff below the Confederate fortification. According to local legend, these shots occasionally erode out of the hill, splashing into the water below.

The abandonment of St. Johns Bluff by the Confederates opened the way for Federal gunboats to move up the St. Johns River and for Federal troops to once again occupy Jacksonville. While the city changed hands several more times during the war, Federal gunboats maintained control of the bluff and the river for the rest of the war."

Union Naval commanders had little firsthand knowledge of the St. Johns River when they arrived in Mar. of 1862. Therefore the blockading fleet relied on three main sources to get their bearings; United States Coast Survey navigational maps, local pilots, and fugitive slaves. Although Kingsley Plantation was clearly listed on their navigational charts, a Dec. 27, 1862 Union Naval report of an overland expedition on Ft. George Island seemed to indicate surprise when they "discovered quite an extensive plantation." The unexpected locating of the plantation shows that the Union ships had been busy in the eight months since their arrival with their primary duties of blockading, preventing Confederate attempts to establish control of the river, and aiding the increasing numbers of fugitive slaves that approached them for help. Had the Union Navy accessed the Ft. George River to the north of the island, the plantation would have been easily viewed from the water. However, the Union's lack of experience along the St. Johns often prevented them from being able to effectively negotiate the shallow waters around Ft. George and Batton Island. Two Union ships ran aground at Sisters Creek, along the western border of Ft. George and Batton Islands, while engaging Confederate forces entrenched at nearby Yellow Bluff in October 1862. Even with the use of local pilots these waterways could be dangerous.

A Union soldier remarked in his memoirs of the "many wrecks" along Batton Island "which had been strewn upon the beach, victims of the most formidable of the Southern river-bars." Regardless of the treacherous waters surrounding Ft. George Island, it is still curious that the plantation's location was not known to the Union due to the common practice of gathering local intelligence from fugitive slaves and even enlisting them into military service. For example, two local contraband helped in the establishment of the blockade in Mar. of 1862 by informing the Union about the Confederate defenses near the mouth of the river. Considering that the impetus for the Union excursion on Ft. George Island had been to ensure the safety of nearby contraband against Confederate attack, it is strange that the

locating of Kingsley Plantation was unanticipated.

Whatever knowledge the Union possessed of Kingsley Plantation's existence was quickly lost. In early 1863, a joint Union Army-Navy operation with the purpose of raiding plantations along the St. Johns paused for several days at the river mouth. Although this expedition used local Jacksonville area contraband as soldiers and had men posted on Ft. George and Batton Islands, Kingsley Plantation was not disturbed. Likely this was the result of the mission focus on plantations in areas to the south of Jacksonville as well as the plantation being obscured from view along the St. Johns. From Mayport, a Union soldier described climbing the lighthouse "to see what there was about," revealing "a fine view out to sea, but there was little to be seen on land as the ground seemed to be higher on both shores of the river and was covered with forest."

The Union expedition that stumbled upon Kingsley Plantation in Dec. 1862 had sought to prevent a Confederate attack originating from Ft. George Island. The previous summer and fall had witnessed the construction of Confederate forts to contest Union control of the river at nearby Yellow Bluff and St. Johns Bluff. Confederate forces had also become distressed about the large number of fugitive slaves seeking Union protection around the river mouth, resulting in the formation of small guerrilla units to serve as slave patrols. In addition to returning captured contraband, these guerrilla units used violence and intimidation against loyal Unionist whites suspected of aiding fugitive slaves as well as joining with conventional Confederate forces to attack the Union base at Mayport. Though no existing Confederate records explicitly place these irregular units around Kingsley Plantation, the indirect evidence of their presence abounds. Concerned Unionist whites and contraband had abandoned or been removed from Ft. George and Batton Island several times during the war and Union accounts on the island throughout 1862 record a near constant fear of "surprise attacks." In the two months before the mission on Ft. George Island, a Union Naval commander echoed this anxiety reporting several times to superiors that "guerillas are still in numbers on each side of the river" and "they have even approached the vicinity of the entrance of the harbor." The exact amount of Confederates in the area would have been difficult for the Union to ascertain. The accurate firepower that Union gunboats could deliver often kept Confederate forces out of sight and operating just inland of the river, making an attack from the interior of Ft. George Island a likely scenario. - cwk

Sources: www.civilwaralbum.com, www.visitjacksonville.com, npplan.com/parks, www.floridamemory.com, www.nps.gov

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LOWCOUNTRY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE, INC.
MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2018/2019
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1, 2018 to AUGUST 31, 2019

Please **Print** All Information Below

Last Name First Name Badge Nickname

Additional Household Member Last Name First Name Badge Nickname
Address: _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____
Phone () _____
E-Mail: _____

(We will keep this confidential!)

CURRENT MEMBER _____ NEW MEMBER _____

Household: Annual Membership (to Aug 31, 2018): \$40.00

We always need volunteers to continue making the LCWRT successful.

Please check the area(s) for which you are willing to volunteer:

___ Program Committee: help select topics & speakers ___ Assist in

Production/Distribution of the *Minie Ball Gazette*

___ Assist on Program Night (Greeter, Collect Tickets or Guest Fees, Tally Program Attendance)

___ Historian ___ Maintain Membership Roster ___ Work at Sun City Club Fair

___ Web Site Maintenance

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Make Check Payable to: **LCWRT Inc.** Any questions, please call **Joseph Passiment**
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MINIÉ BALL GAZETTE

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education and battlefield preservation.

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