



THE RAMROD

North Carolina
Civil War Round Table

July 2017

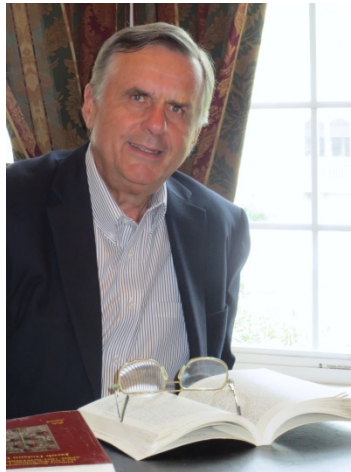
2017 Programs

15 July: Gene Schmiel: “ Jacob Cox: Battle of Wyse Fork and Reconstruction Military Governor of Western NC”

16 Sept: Chris Hartley: “Will the Real D.H. Hill Please Stand Up”

18 Nov: Chris Mackowski: “Jubal Early: Lee’s ‘Bad, Old Man’ and the Beginning of The Lost Cause”

Dinner starts at 6:00 p.m. and program at 7:00 p.m. Please e-mail Membership Secretary Dick Whitaker at dwbiz53@gmail.com or call him at 336-293-3980 to make reservations. Payment of \$20 per person can be made in cash or check at the door. Make checks payable to NCCWRT.



Gene Schmiel will speak on Union General Jacob Cox at the July 15 Meeting

Our next roundtable meeting to be held on Saturday July 15th will feature Mr. Eugene (Gene) Schmiel who will speak about the fascinating life of General Jacob Dolson Cox. Mr. Schmiel book, "Citizen-General: Jacob Dolson Cox and the Civil War Era," was published in 2014 by Ohio University Press. It is the first biography of this highly-respected Union general whose accomplishments in the war belie the myth of the incompetent "political general."



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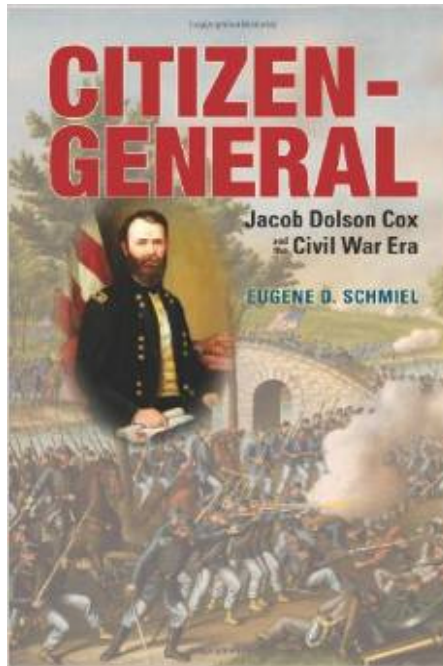
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The NCCWT is dedicated to the study and preservation of the history of the American Civil War. With the exception of January when we meet on the second Saturday, we meet on the third Saturday of these months: March, July, September and November at the K & W Cafeteria (Exit 143 on I-40/85) in Burlington.



Mr. Schmiel is a retired U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer, who now works part-time at the Department of State. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, he was an Assistant Professor of History at St. Francis University (PA) before joining the Foreign Service. Schmiel has a Ph.D. degree in History from The Ohio State University, and he

coauthored with his wife Kathryn a book about life in the foreign service.

The Life of Jacob Dolson Cox, Ohio Citizen-General The wrenching events of the Civil War transformed not only the United States, but also the men unexpectedly called to lead fellow citizens in this first modern example of “total war.” Jacob Dolson Cox of Ohio was among those who rose to the challenge and he is recognized as one of the Union's best “citizen generals.” He did so well that General Sherman offered him a brigadier generalship in the regular army at war's end. He is perhaps one of the best examples of why the stereotype of "political general" is not always a valid one.

Cox's successful military career included helping to secure West Virginia for the Union; co-commanding the left wing of the Union army at the Battle of Antietam; breaking the Confederate supply line, leading to the taking of Atlanta; and commanding the defensive line at the Battle of Franklin, which effectively ended the Confederate threat in the West.

His services at the Battle of Franklin were one of the best examples of the skills a "civilian general" had attained. His last campaign was in North Carolina, where he After the war Cox proved to be a true Renaissance man, with careers as Governor of Ohio, Secretary of the Interior, Congressman, President Of the University of Cincinnati, and President of the Toledo and Wabash Railway. But of Cox's postwar careers, his greatest recognition came from being the best participant historian of the Civil War. His several histories of the conflict are to this day cited by serious scholars as a foundation for the memory of many aspects of the war.

Michael Hardy Spoke In May



Our May 20th meeting featured North Carolina Humanities Council speaker Michael Hardy.

Michael Hardy provided an engaging and informative presentation of North Carolina role as the last Confederate capital. He began his presentation with several interesting facts on the formation of the Confederate government. In the case of Jefferson Davis, Hardy explained that Davis

defeated Braxton Bragg at the Battle of Kinston/Wyse Fork.

was actually not present at the first meeting of the succeeding states. Nevertheless, was elected president in absentia. Fast-forwarding to the end of the war, he described the cabinet's effort to delay the departure of Richmond upon hearing of the Union breakthrough. As well as, Robert E. Lee's frustration at their not being more prepared. Particularly, since Lee had been warning of the inevitable.

Upon leaving Richmond, The Cabinet departed for Danville, VA where they remained for eight days before leaving for Greensboro. Davis brief time in Greensboro was consumed with his delusions of victory while the city was overrun with confusion and refugees fleeing the advancing Union forces. When General Joseph E. Johnston ultimately surrendered at The Bennett Farm, Davis fled to Charlotte where he held a final meeting of the Confederate cabinet on April 26, 1865. He left Charlotte eventually passing through South Carolina and into Georgia where he was captured on May 10.

In summary it was a fascinating presentation. We sincerely hope to have Michael as a returning guest and speaker.

NC Civil War Round Table Meeting Minutes May 20, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Report

The balance in the treasury is \$7301.95.

Introductions

New members and guests were welcomed and introduced.

Raffle

The raffle made \$38.

Announcement

Frank Ward with approval from the Executive Committee will send a letter of support to the state representatives. The letter will express support for the national parks and keeping the budget for park maintenance. The NCCWRT will add its name to the list of supporters.

Program

Dave Richardson introduced our guest speaker for the evening, Michael Hardy. Michael is a professional historian and author of numerous books. Michael's topic was on North Carolina as a Confederate Capital. While doing research in a public library in Charlotte, Michael discovered that very little information had been published on Charlotte in the war. There were no books linking capitals like Greensboro and Charlotte together.

Michael started with the first Confederacy capital, Montgomery AL. On May 20, 1861, Jefferson Davis signed a resolution to move

the capital to Richmond, VA. Jefferson Davis led the Confederacy for four years. Richmond was considered to be the most important city in the Confederate states due to the Tredegar Iron Works and its industrial outlet for the Confederate states.

On April 2, 1865 the dream of a Confederate victory came crashing down when Richmond was destroyed by fire of an unknown origin. Jefferson Davis took the train out of Richmond to Danville, VA. Danville was widely recognized as a capital.

With the surrender on April 10, 1865, Jefferson Davis and five members of his cabinet traveled to Greensboro. He met with military officers and his cabinet members and makes a decision to travel from Greensboro to Charlotte.

Jefferson Davis asked Joseph Johnston to negotiate with William Sherman the same terms General Grant offered to General Lee to spare North Carolina the destruction. On April 17, 1865 they met but William Sherman rejected Jefferson Davis' terms and redrafted the terms of surrender. The cabinet agreed that Jefferson Davis should accept William Sherman's terms. On April 24, 1865 Jefferson Davis surrendered at Bennett Place.

General Grant rejected the Davis/Sherman terms so they renegotiated. On April 26, 1865 Jefferson Davis met one more time with his cabinet and then rode out of town. From April 11 – April 26, 1865 North Carolina served as the last Confederacy capital. On May 10 Jefferson Davis was captured.

Next Meeting

Gene Schmiel will be the speaker at the next meeting on July 15, 2017. His topic is “Jacob Cox: Battle of Wyse Fork and Reconstruction Military Governor of Western NC.”



NORTH CAROLINA CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Frank P. Ward

CHANCELLORSVILLE AND THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE

He was being looked at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a columnlike tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that had once been blue, but now was faded to a melancholy shade of green . . . The youth gave a shriek as he confronted the thing. He was for a moment turned to stone before it. He remained staring into the liquid-looking eyes. The dead man and the living man exchanged a long look.

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE by Stephen Crane

*The rest must pass to men who never knew
(But on a written page) the strike of armies,
And never heard the long Confederate cry
Charge through the muzzling smoke or saw the bright
Eyes of beardless boys go up to death.*

LEE IN THE MOUNTAINS by Donald Davidson

As a boy, I was introduced to Stephen Crane's **Red Badge of Courage** courtesy of Classic Comic Books. Afterwards, I saw John Huston's idiosyncratic cinematic version, starring genuine war hero Audie Murphy portraying the timorous protagonist, Henry Fleming. Not, however, until I was an undergraduate did I read Crane's masterful novel itself – and not until then did it occur to me to marvel that a writer could so vividly portray a bloody battle from a war that ended six years before his birth.

The mystery endured for decades until a midsummer trip to Chancellorsville with my son. In the mist generated by a sudden summer shower, as we stood near Fairview I was struck by a shock of recognition: at the base of “a columnlike tree,” I imagined the orthogonal agony of a soldier “dressed in a uniform that had once been blue, but was now faded to a melancholy shade of green.” Surely, Stephen Crane had summoned up Chancellorsville as the topographical, psychological, and martial theater for **Red Badge of Courage**.

As I inevitably discovered, the insight was not original to me, and it was gratifying to find cogent corroboration in the leading contemporary account of the battle, **Chancellorsville**, by Stephen Sears.

As to the ambiguity of setting, Sears believes that Crane was deliberately nonspecific about the battle experienced by his anti-hero Fleming. It was essential to his purpose, Crane wrote, “that I should make my battle a type and name no name.” (Furthermore, in reality, none of the characters, especially privates such as Henry Fleming would have then known that their battle would become known as Chancellorsville, and the name would have been irrelevant to the “fresh fish” snared in the fierce maw of their first fight.)

Sears elaborates that, “the setting and scenes have such a ring of authenticity about them that it was hard to believe that they could be made up, and veterans who read the novel quickly recognized Chancellorsville as the battle,” a surmise explicitly confirmed by Crane in his subsequent story, “The Veteran.”

Sears and other commentators have provided both solid documentation and persuasive surmises of the correlation between Chancellorsville and Henry Fleming’s fight; For example, it is known that Crane closely read the pertinent volume of **Battles and Leaders of the Civil War**, paying particular attention to the photographs of Alexander Gardner, Matthew Brady, and Timothy O’Sullivan and to the sketches of Alfred Waud, Edwin Forbes, and W. L. Sheppard.

Apparently, however, Crane found the volume’s contemporaneous accounts of combatants, primarily officers, unsatisfactory and lacking in emotion. Crane was able to remedy that deficit when he moved to the lodge of his brother William in Port Jervis, New York, where the 124th New York was largely raised, the acknowledged model for Henry Fleming’s regiment, the 304th New York. Furthermore, William was a recognized

“expert” on the battle of Chancellorsville, with an extensive library of pertinent resources. In Port Jervis, Crane also had access to the files of a local wartime newspaper that had published soldiers’ letters from the battlefield. More tellingly, Crane came to know some of the veterans and listened to their reminiscences, which often concerned Chancellorsville. As Sears emphatically puts it, “There can be little doubt that Crane modeled Henry Fleming’s regiment on the 124th New York.”

Other commentators have noted the correspondence between the actual weather, place names, and date of the Chancellorsville campaign, as well as the topographical and tactical similarities. For example, the movement of the “vast blue demonstration” of the novel’s Union army mirrors the maneuvers of Joseph Hooker’s forces crossing the Rappahannock and “comin’ in behind “

Lee’s troops. Specifically, the actual charge of the 124th New York near Fairview on May 3, 1863, replicates the similar movement of its fictional counterpart, Henry Fleming’s 304th New York. Most impressively, Henry sustains his eponymous head wound, his red badge of courage, during what is certainly the rout of O.O. Howard’s XI Corps when Jackson’s celebrated flank march disintegrated the right flank of the Union army.

To acknowledge the accuracy of Crane’s sources and influences, however, is not to gainsay his artistry in transmuting them into art. As Sears has it, Crane absorbed what he could from the present, then “transcended what he learned into his own vision.”

In resolving the paradox of the absent yet reliable eyewitness, Crane demonstrates that even if he were not present at Chancellorsville, in Sears’s phrase, “Henry Fleming,” his arguable alter ego, “certainly was.”

Crane’s remarkable artistic accomplishment implicitly anticipates and successfully challenges Donald Davidson’s eloquent doubts regarding chroniclers

... who never knew/

(But on a written page) the strike of armies,

And never heard the long Confederate cry

Charge through the muzzling smoke or saw the bright

Eyes of beardless boys go up to death.

It is perhaps an unequalled account of what Crane called an episode of war.

Frank P. Ward, Jr.

Financial Report for July 2017

NC Civil War Round Table Financial Report - May 2017

	Dues/Dinner Fees	Raffle Donations	Other Income	Cash	Checks	Total Deposit	Expens
Beginning Balance	\$645.00	\$38.00		\$393.00	\$330.00	\$683.00	KW Tip KW C Canad fe

Final Balance=7,577.81