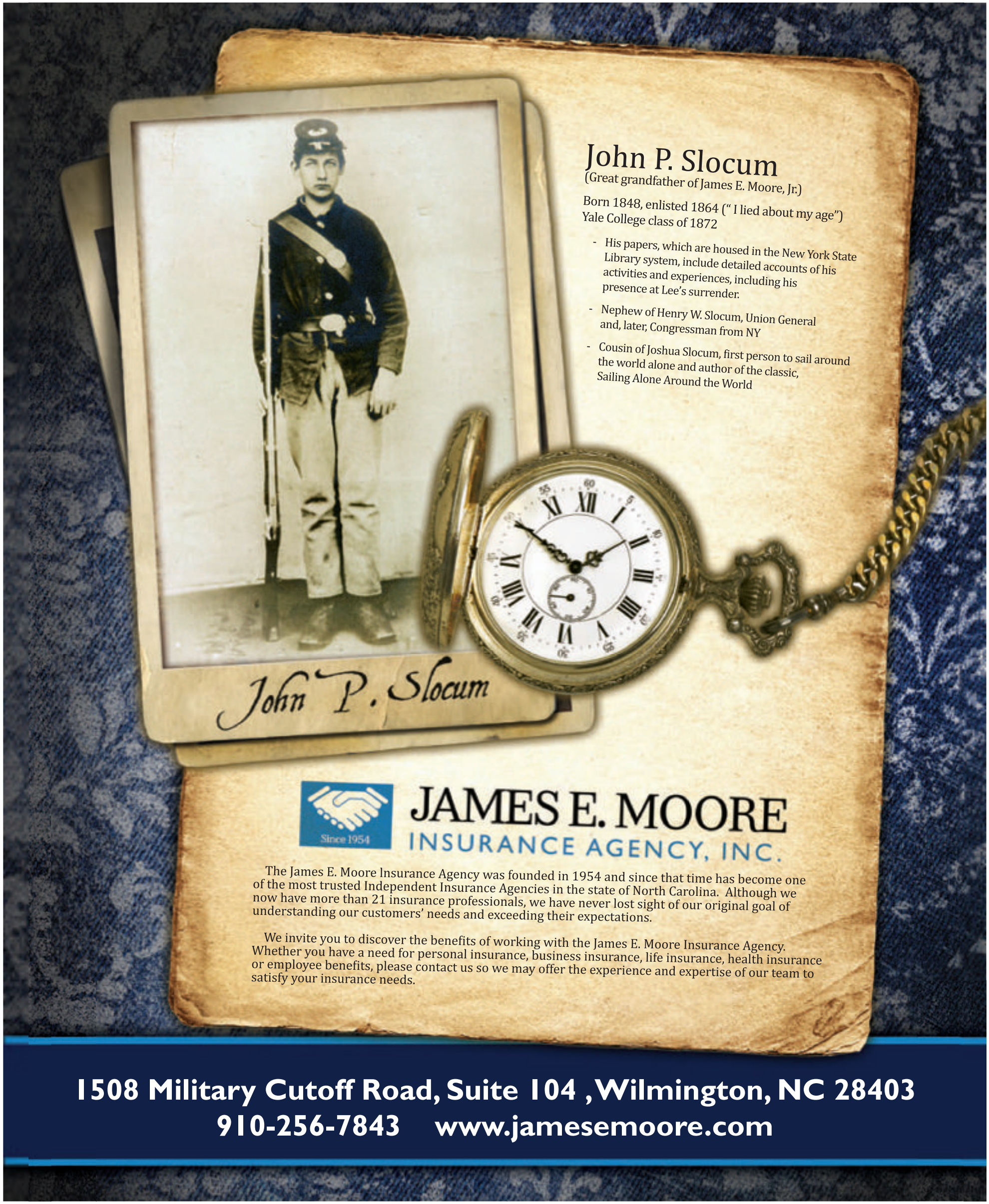
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2015

E extra
A STARNEWS MEDIA PUBLICATION

Civil War

150th anniversary

FALL OF FORT FISHER ◆ PROFILE OF A RE-ENACTOR ◆ WOMEN DURING THE WAR



John P. Slocum

(Great grandfather of James E. Moore, Jr.)

Born 1848, enlisted 1864 (" I lied about my age")
Yale College class of 1872

- His papers, which are housed in the New York State Library system, include detailed accounts of his activities and experiences, including his presence at Lee's surrender.
- Nephew of Henry W. Slocum, Union General and, later, Congressman from NY
- Cousin of Joshua Slocum, first person to sail around the world alone and author of the classic, Sailing Alone Around the World

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This StarNews Media Extra project commemorates Southeastern North Carolina's participation in the Civil War – by any measure, a defining event in our nation's history.

Nearly 150 years after the war's end, we are still coming to terms with it – and in some cases, still divided by it.

The South fought valiantly, but the South lost. And though slavery ended then, the country still struggles to honor the freedom and equality the Emancipation Proclamation promised.

Within the pages of this comprehensive report, you'll find stories that recount the battles fought on local soil. You'll also read about the local characters the war produced. You'll learn about the contributions of women and African-Americans during the war – something all but ignored during the centennial commemoration 50 years ago. And you'll read profiles of the groups that carry on the war's legacy.

We'll test your knowledge of the war, and show you ways to explore history using the latest technology, both here and on StarNewsOnline.com.

Also on the web, you'll find companion pieces – a digital timeline; an interactive map; and then-and-now photos of area landmarks that had their origins in the Civil War.

Over the past several months, longtime StarNews writer Ben Steelman has spent weeks researching the war and hours interviewing historians from all over the state. Like Ben, photo chief Ken Blevins' research spanned months, as he unearthed a compelling look at history through photos and illustrations. We also have more recent photos from commemorations at Fort Fisher, Forks Road and Fort Anderson.

We'll probably never all agree on every aspect of the Civil War. Ultimately, we can only hope that our lives, and those of our children and grandchildren, are better as a result of it.

John Staton,
StarNews Features Editor

INSIDE

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Explore more online at
StarNewsOnline.com/CivilWar

ON THE COVER

1: Northern land defense palisade of Fort Fisher. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Museum. **2:** Cape Fear River pilots. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library. **3:** Maj. James Reilly. Photo courtesy Brunswick Town Museum. **4:** William B. Gould and his six sons. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Museum. **5:** Fort Fisher Interior Land Defense, 16th gun emplacement. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library. **6:** Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman. Photo courtesy Library of Congress. **7:** Confederate Blockade Runner. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library. **8:** Col. William Lamb. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Museum. **9:** Engraving of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. AP file photo. **10:** Fall of Fort Fisher. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library. **11:** Gen. Robert E. Lee. AP file. **12:** Maj. Frank M. Welch. Photo courtesy Library of Congress. **13:** Last Confederate veterans of Wilmington area. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library. **14:** Mary Elizabeth Rose Duclos Barry Smith. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library

Footsteps of history

Retreat from Wilmington

February 1865: After setting fire to Wilmington's shipyards and supply stores, the remaining Confederate troops led by Gen. Braxton Bragg retreated north across Smith Creek and toward Bentonville, where they would join with Gen. Joseph Johnston. The combined force would fight North Carolina's bloodiest battle against Union Gen. William T. Sherman.

Fort Anderson

February 1865: Considered the strongest interior part of the Cape Fear defense system, the fort was built on the ruins of Colonial Brunswick Town. It had earthen fortification, wooden palisades and nine heavy cannons protecting the port of Wilmington. The fort had one major flaw – it was vulnerable from the rear.

Battle of Forks Road

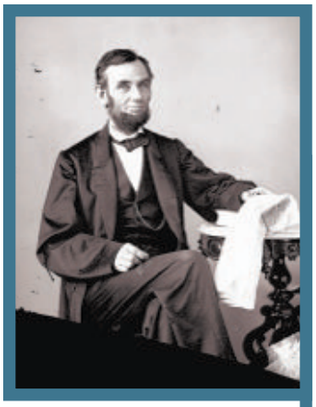
February 1865: After the fall of Fort Anderson, Confederate soldiers retreated from their entrenched position near present-day Carolina Beach State Park and made a stand three miles south of Wilmington, at what is now the intersection of South 17th Street and Independence Boulevard.

Fort Fisher

January 1865: The fort, with earthen embankments and wooden palisades, protected the mouth of the Cape Fear River for Confederate blockade runners. Union troops attacked from the north, near present day Carolina Beach.

Tracing the Civil War

The Civil War in Wilmington was just a small part of a larger conflict. This time line puts events in Southeastern North Carolina into context with wartime events elsewhere.



NOV. 6: Thanks to a split over slavery in the Democratic Party, Republican Abraham Lincoln wins a plurality of the vote for president and, more important, an overwhelming majority in the Electoral College. AP File Photo

1860

DEC. 20: Refusing to accept an anti-slavery president, South Carolina votes to secede from the Union. Other Deep South states soon follow, creating the Confederate States of America in February 1861 at a convention in Montgomery, Ala.

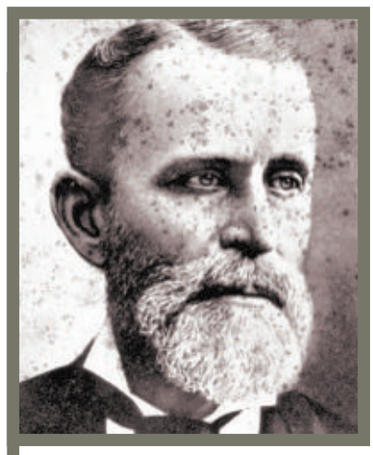
JAN. 8: Armed militiamen from Wilmington and Brunswick County demand the surrender of Fort Johnston in Smithville (modern-day Southport). Ordnance Sgt. James Reilly (above), the caretaker and sole "defender," hands over the keys. North Carolina has not yet seceded, though, and on Jan. 11, Gov. John W. Ellis orders the militia to give the fort back. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Museum

APRIL 12: Confederate artillery, ringing the harbor in Charleston, S.C., opens fire on Fort Sumter, still held by a Union garrison. Hostilities officially begin. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

APRIL 15: President Lincoln calls for 75,000 troops from the states to quell the rebellion. The call tilts North Carolina decisively toward secession.

1861

APRIL 16: Militiamen seize Southport's Fort Johnston again. Sgt. Reilly soon resigns from the U.S. Army and becomes an artillery officer in the Confederate service.



APRIL 28: Maj. Charles Pattison Bolles arrives at Federal Point and begins supervising the building of "land batteries" using slave labor. This marks the beginning of what will eventually be Fort Fisher, a massive earthwork guarding the (now-closed) New Inlet route to Wilmington. Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Public Library

SEPT. 13: The earthworks at Confederate (formerly Federal) Point are officially named Fort Fisher for Col. Charles F. Fisher, who was killed at the first Battle of Bull Run (Manassas). Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Public Library

Civil War

MARCH 14: Having seized Roanoke Island and most of the Outer Banks, Union forces under Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside take the city of New Bern. Confederate defenses in Wilmington are reinforced. AP file photo

AUG. 6: The blockade runner Kate docks in Wilmington. Within weeks, a yellow fever epidemic breaks out.

SEPT. 23: William B. Gould and seven other slaves steal a boat in downtown Wilmington and sail down the Cape Fear River to reach the USS Cambridge on the Union blockade. Gould promptly enlists in the U.S. Navy and serves throughout the war.

JULY 1-3: Battle of Gettysburg, "the high water mark of the Confederacy." Some North Carolina regiments would suffer up to 75 percent casualties, particularly in Pickett's charge on July 3. AP file photo

1862

1863

JULY 4: Col. William Lamb is ordered to take command of Fort Fisher. He will command the fort until its fall in 1865 and will supervise the enhancement of the earthwork network. Right: Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Museum

Below: Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/ New Hanover County Library.

OCT. 24: The yellow fever epidemic reaches its height in Wilmington, with 111 deaths in a single week. In all, more than 1,500 yellow fever cases, and more than 600 deaths, are reported during the outbreak.

MAY 2: Troops of the 18th North Carolina under Maj. John D. Barry (below) – including a number of New Hanover, Bladen and Columbus volunteers – commit the worst "friendly fire" accident of the war, fatally wounding Lt. Gen. T.J. "Stonewall" Jackson as he scouted the lines with his staff during the Battle of Chancellorsville. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library

Civil War

JAN. 2, 1864: Wilmington lawyer George Davis, a former Confederate senator, is named attorney general of the Confederacy. He will serve until the war's end. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library

APRIL 17: Detached from the Army of Northern Virginia, Brig. Gen. Robert F. Hoke surprises the Union garrison at Plymouth, N.C., and captures more than 2,800 prisoners – the second-largest battle of the war on Tar Heel soil. Hoke will be promoted and voted the thanks of the Confederate Congress.

OCT. 1: Confederate spy Rose O'Neale Greenhow drowns off Fort Fisher while trying to escape Union forces after the blockade runner Condor, which she is riding to Wilmington, runs aground. She is buried in Oakdale Cemetery. Photo courtesy Robert M. Fales Collection/ New Hanover County Public Library

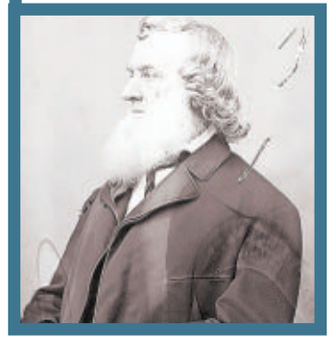
DEC. 26: Despite urging from officers ashore, Union Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler decides to call off a land attack on Fort Fisher and sails back to Hampton Roads, Va. The last Union attackers, ashore since Christmas Day, are evacuated on Dec. 28. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

OCT. 27: A small force under Lt. William B. Cushing blows up a "torpedo" (explosive mine) against the hull of the CSS Albemarle, docked in Plymouth. The Confederate ironclad sinks almost immediately. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

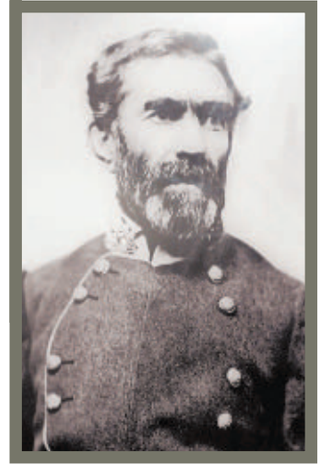
1864

JUNE 14: Wilmington native Capt. John A. Winslow, commanding the USS Kearsage, sinks the Confederate raider CSS Alabama off Cherbourg, France. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

SEPT. 15: The Union capture of Mobile, Ala., in August leaves Wilmington as the last major Confederate seaport open to the world. In a memorandum, U.S. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles writes: "The importance of closing Wilmington and cutting off Rebel communication is paramount to all other questions – more important, practically, than the capture of Richmond," the Confederate capital. Planning for an attack is now under way. Photo courtesy Library of Congress



OCT. 21, 1864: The controversial Gen. Braxton Bragg (below) assumes command of the Cape Fear defenses from Maj. Gen. W.H.C. Whiting. Comments the Richmond Enquirer: "General Bragg is going to Wilmington. Goodbye, Wilmington." Photo Courtesy Fort Fisher Museum



DEC. 24: A Union powder boat, USS Louisiana, explodes off Fort Fisher, rattling nerves but causing little damage. Heavy bombardment by 64 Union warships causes damage but few casualties and fails to dislodge Confederate defenders.

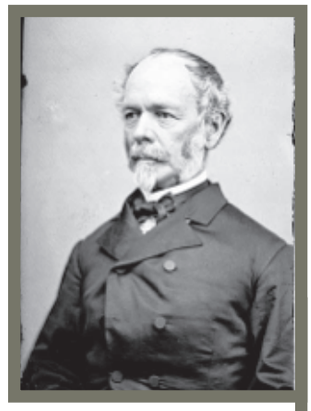
Civil War

JAN. 13: Adm. David D. Porter's fleet resumes the bombardment of Fort Fisher, concentrating on the land front. Confederate telegraph lines are cut, and Confederate communications must be routed through Smithville (now Southport). Photo courtesy New Hanover County Public Library

FEB. 22: Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry (seated without hat) occupies Wilmington as Confederate forces hastily withdraw. Photo courtesy of Library of Congress

MARCH 16: Lt. Gen. William Hardee's corps attacks William T. Sherman's left wing on the Cape Fear River at Averasboro, near Erwin, N.C. The attack barely slows the Union advance. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

MARCH 19-21: Battle of Bentonville, largest and last Civil War engagement in North Carolina.



APRIL 18: Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrenders all remaining Confederate forces to Gen. William T. Sherman at Bennett Place, near modern-day Durham. Sherman's terms are so generous, the federal government objects, and the surrender must be renegotiated on April 26, 1865. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

1865

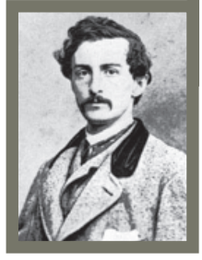
JAN. 6: A new attack force sets out from Hampton Roads, with Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry replacing Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler. Photo courtesy New Hanover Public Library

JAN. 15, 1865: Fort Fisher falls to an assault on its land face. With Col. William Lamb and Gen. W.H.C. Whiting both wounded, Maj. James Reilly is left to surrender the fort officially to the Union – the same Reilly who surrendered Fort Johnston to the Confederacy nearly four years earlier. Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Public Library

FEB. 19, 1865: Outflanked by Union forces marching north from Smithville (Souhport), Brig. Gen. Johnson Hagood is forced to abandon Fort Anderson on the west bank of the Cape Fear River.

APRIL 9: Gen. Robert E. Lee surrenders the Army of Northern Virginia to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in a farmhouse near Appomattox Courthouse, Va. Months earlier, Lee had written to Col. William Lamb that if Fort Fisher fell, he could not maintain his army. AP file photo

APRIL 14: Actor John Wilkes Booth (below) shoots Abraham Lincoln during a performance at Ford's Theater in Washington. Lincoln dies the next morning. AP file photo



Interior land defense, 1st gun emplacement, Fort Fisher. Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Library

'They outnumber us heavily ...'

Union capture of Fort Fisher opened way to Wilmington

By Ben Steelman
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The shelling from the federal armada, which had bombarded Fort Fisher on Christmas Eve 1864, resumed about a half-hour after sunrise on Jan. 13, 1865. Thousands of shells rained down on the earthworks and, by the evening of Jan. 14, most of the guns along the fort's northern battlements were in ruins.

Telegraph lines were cut, so Confederate signalman had to row over to Smithville, now Southport, to keep communication lines to Wilmington.

Meanwhile, Union troops from Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry's XXIV Corps landed some four miles north of the fort.

Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg marched south to the Sugar Loaf dune (modern-day Carolina Beach State Park) with a 5,000-man division under Maj. Gen. Robert Hoke. Bragg refused to go farther, though, for fear of leaving the way open to Wilmington. Col. William Lamb, Fort Fisher's commander, was left with little more than 1,500 men to oppose Terry's forces.

Terry's men threw out a line, largely

Col. William Lamb (left) assumed command of Fort Fisher on July 4, 1862, and spent most of the next two years turning the fort into the Confederacy's largest bastion. Maj. James Reilly (above right) took command of Fort Fisher after Gen. W.H.C. Whiting and Col. William Lamb were injured during the Union assault. Photo courtesy of Fort Fisher Museum

An interior view of the 'pulpit', which was later destroyed by the ocean, at Fort Fisher. Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Library

Civil War

These are the last Confederate veterans of the Battle of Fort Fisher who were living in the Wilmington area are pictured in 1925. Richard M.V.B. Reaves, who died in 1930, is fifth from the left in the back row. Photo courtesy Louis T. Moore Collection/New Hanover County Library

manned by U.S. Colored Troops, to hold off Bragg in case he attacked. Meanwhile, the rest of his corps prepared for an attack of their own.

On Jan. 14, a few hundred South Carolinians landed at Battery Buchanan, near where the Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry is today, raising the fort's defenders to about 1,800. Gen. W.H.C. Whiting, inside the fort with Lamb, sent out one last, desperate message to Bragg: "The enemy are about to assault. They outnumber us heavily ... Attack! Attack! It is all I can say and all you can do."

At 3:26 p.m. Adm. David D. Porter ordered federal warships to cease fire. Sailors, armed mostly with cutlasses and pistols, and U.S. Marines came ashore and attacked the fort's Northeast Bastion. The Confederates mounted a withering fire, and the naval contingent was forced to pull back with heavy losses.

At the same time, however, Union soldiers led by Brig. Gen. N. Martin Curtis launched an attack on the fort's landward wall. Heavy hand-to-hand fighting soon broke out. By 4 p.m. more than 4,000 Union soldiers were pouring onto the fort's parade ground.

By 4:30 p.m. Whiting and Lamb were both wounded, and Confederate defenders were being pushed farther south. Maj. James C. Reilly assumed command.

Fighting continued long past sunrise as Confederates were pushed toward Battery Buchanan. Gen. Terry accepted the fort's surrender shortly before 10 p.m. At 1 a.m. on Jan. 16, Bragg wired Gen. Robert E. Lee: "I am mortified to report the unexpected capture of Fort Fisher."

About 500 Confederates and more than 650 Union soldiers were killed or wounded in the battle. Another 200, on both sides, died the next morning when Fort Fisher's main powder magazine accidentally exploded.

Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

The Union gunboat Mackinaw and the monitor Montauk (above) shelled Fort Anderson. Brig. Gen. Johnson Hagood (right), the fort's commander in 1865, estimated that the gunboats fired more than 2,700 rounds.

By February 1865, Fort Anderson was the strongest interior part of the Cape Fear defense system, with nine heavy cannons similar to the 32-pounder pictured above. Photos courtesy of Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson Museum

Fall of Fort Anderson left no barrier to Wilmington

By Ben Steelman
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Built largely over the ruins of Colonial Brunswick Town, Fort Anderson was the Confederate cork that bottled Wilmington.

The Confederates had been working on it since early 1862. Col. William Lamb, who would later command Fort Fisher, studied earthwork fortifications as one of Fort Anderson's early commanders.

In the end, historian Mark A. Moore judged it as formidable a defense as Fort Fisher. A heavy earthwork that's still visible today lined the west bank of the Cape Fear River for about a mile in a backward-L shape, opposite the Sugar Loaf dune in modern Carolina Beach State Park.

Nine large cannon – 32-pounder rifles and smoothbores – guarded the river, supported by a lighter battery of Whitworth guns. Smaller breastworks guarded the southern landward approaches. Brig. Gen. Johnson Hagood, the fort's commander in 1865, could muster about 2,700 effectives.

The fort, however, had a fatal flaw. It was vulnerable from the rear, on the opposite side of Orton Pond.

Nearly a month after taking Fort Fisher, the U.S. Navy began ferrying troops across from Federal Point to Smithville (now Southport) on Valentine's Day. Three days earlier, on the night of Feb. 11, Lt. Cmdr. William B. Cushing led a daring small-boat reconnaissance up the Cape Fear to Fort Anderson – where, he later told Northern newspaper correspondents, he got close enough to hear a band concert in the fort and a colonel's pep talk to the soldiers.

After delays from a heavy rainstorm, Maj. Gen. Jacob D. Cox and his Third Division, XXIII Corps, began marching north from Smithville toward Fort Anderson. Roads were primitive, and the land was swampy and covered in pine trees. On the other hand, unlike Federal Point, there was plenty of wood for cook fires, and morale was good.

Cox made slow but steady progress, brushing aside feints by South Carolina cavalry. Soldiers recalled how the slaves from adjoining plantations "came running out ... singing and shouting with joy and thanksgiving."

Meanwhile, Rear Adm. David D. Porter sent a flotilla of 15 riverboats, led by the heavy monitor Montauk, upriver to bombard the fort. Shelling was heavy. Hagood reported that more than 2,700 rounds landed in the fort, mostly on target. The Confederates responded with just 53 shots. But while damage was heavy, casualties were light.

Union Lt. Cmdr. W. B. Cushing led a reconnaissance mission up the Cape Fear River to evaluate the defenses of Fort Anderson. He claimed he was close enough to hear a band concert in the fort and a colonel's pep talk to the soldiers. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

The gunboats did not steam past Fort Anderson, though. The Confederates had laid a chain of submerged "torpedoes," what we would call mines, across the Cape Fear, which could be triggered by electrical charges from within the fort.

Late on the night of Feb. 18, though, Cushing struck again. Confederates spotted the silhouette of a large ship seemingly slipping by the fort. Mine after mine was detonated, but the "ship" – actually, a sham float camouflaged to look like a monitor – went on, powered only by the tide.

By late on Feb. 18, Hagood learned that the worst had happened – the federals had slipped around Orton Pond and seized the crossroads to one of the two roads heading north.

"The enemy are on my right and rear," he telegraphed to Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hoke across the river. "I must abandon this post or sacrifice my command."

Reluctantly, Hoke approved plans to withdraw, ordering Hagood to head north eight miles and re-form on the north side of Town Creek, the last natural obstacle between Union forces and Wilmington.

The garrison hurried out at dawn. In the rush, a garrison flag apparently fell off a wagon. It was later claimed as booty by a soldier in the 140th Indiana. Almost 140 years later, the flag was bought from a collector by the Friends of Fort Anderson and returned to the Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site.

Later that day, Union forces entered Fort Anderson unopposed, and Gen. Cox and Adm. Porter toured the earthworks.

Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

Civil War

Wilmington surrendered to Union army in 1865

By Ben Steelman
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The loss of Fort Anderson forced Confederate Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hoke to abandon his strongly entrenched position at Sugar Loaf, the large sand dune in what is now Carolina Beach State Park.

Hoke had been able to pin Union forces at Federal Point since the fall of Fort Fisher on Jan. 15, but by early February, reinforcements were streaming in, chiefly from Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield's XXIII Corps of the Army of the Ohio. Meanwhile, Hoke's forces were evaporating as hundreds of Confederate soldiers, sensing the end, began to desert.

By Feb. 19, Confederate forces were in full retreat. Hoke halted along the Forks Road, three miles south of Wilmington, and began digging in again for a last stand. Some of those trenches can still be seen on the grounds of the Cameron Art Museum off South 17th Street.

Union Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry ordered an attack on the afternoon of Feb. 20. U.S. Colored Troops – many of them former slaves, including a number of Medal of Honor winners – under Brig. Gen. Charles J. Paine attacked, but could not push the Confederates out of their defenses. They withdrew after taking heavy losses.

Meanwhile, on the west bank of the Cape Fear River, Maj. Gen. Jacob Cox, fresh from taking Fort Anderson, succeeded in flanking the Confederates holding Town Creek near modern-day Winnabow. Town Creek is deep and can be difficult to cross, but an elderly black man in the area had pointed the Federals to a rice barge that the Confederates had forgotten.

After a sharp fight on Telegraph Road on Feb. 20, Cox's men succeeded in surrounding and capturing nearly all of Col. Henry Simonston's force of South Carolinians. Random stragglers managed to escape into the swamps. By Feb. 20, virtually nothing stood between Cox's forces and Wilmington.

This drawing shows the earthworks and position of Union Maj. Gen Alfred Terry's troops on the east banks of the Cape Fear River, about 3 miles north of Fort Fisher. Photo courtesy New Hanover County Library

With that, Gen. Braxton Bragg concluded that he would have to fall back or lose his entire force. At 1 p.m. – as skirmishing continued along the Forks Road line – Bragg ordered a complete withdrawal.

For days, Confederates had been shipping supplies and Union prisoners out of town by rail. Now, cotton, tobacco and naval stores were put to the torch to keep the Federals from getting them. Cassidey's Shipyard, at the foot of Church Street, was burned. So was Beery's Shipyard, across from Wilmington on Eagles Island. With it burned a number of Confederate vessels, including the Wilmington, an almost-complete Confederate ironclad, and a primitive submarine.

Easterly winds spread the fires, and a number of warehouses, wharves and piers on the waterfront went up in smoke as well. If the winds had been coming from the west, all of Wilmington might have burned.

Early on the morning of Feb. 22, federal scouts probing the Forks Road line found the Confederate trenches empty. Civilians, who had already been shelled by Cox's forces, raised a white flag over H.B. Eiler's store at Market and Water streets.

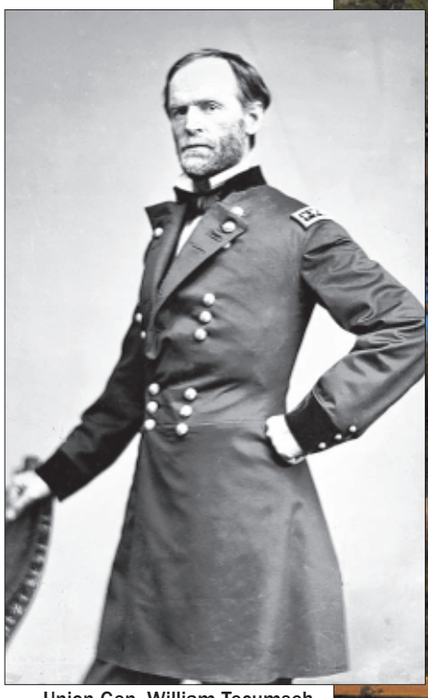
About 9:15 a.m., just as the last Confederate cavalry galloped out of town, a Union cavalry detachment rode up Front Street. An officer approached some civilians and asked for the mayor. "I am the man," said Mayor John Dawson. The officer asked Dawson and the town commissioners to wait at City Hall for Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry.

About 15 minutes later, Terry arrived leading a column of Union soldiers up Front Street, with banners waving and a bugle corps playing "Yankee Doodle." White soldiers of the 3rd New Hampshire led the way, followed by Colored Troops who sang "John Brown's Body."

Terry dismounted at City Hall, where Mayor Dawson and the others were waiting on the steps. The general and the mayor doffed hats, shook hands, then turned into the building to work out the details of the city's surrender. Meanwhile, other Union troops pushed forward, pursuing Bragg's forces toward Smith Creek.

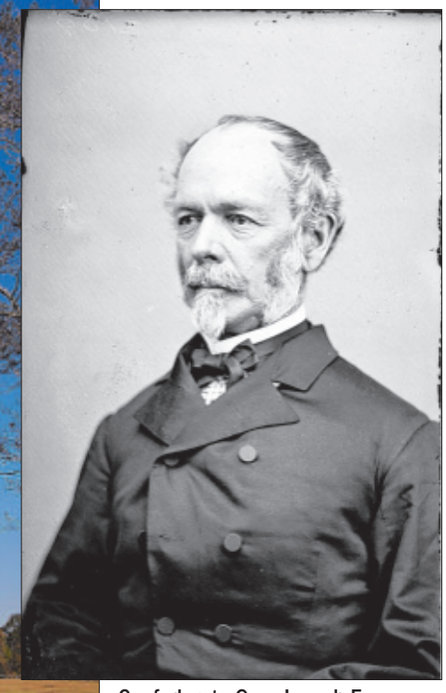
Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

Civil War



Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman shown sometime between 1860 and 1875. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

This marker was erected in 1893 on the spot where 360 Confederates killed in the battle of Bentonville were buried. Photo by Erin Whittle



Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston shown sometime between 1860 and 1865. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Blue and gray generals faced off in N.C. battles

By Ben Steelman
Ben.Steelman@StarNewsOnline.com

While Union forces pushed out of Wilmington and New Bern, Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's armies crossed from South Carolina into North Carolina on March 7, 1865. Sherman's troops occupied Fayetteville on March 11 and burned the old federal arsenal.

For the most part, Sherman avoided the scorched-earth policy he'd followed in Georgia and South Carolina, believing the Tar Heel State harbored widespread pro-Union sentiment. His troops, however, continued to forage, seizing crops and livestock, as supply lines were still uncertain; some railroads were torn up.

Some historians, such as John G. Barrett, believe Sherman grew careless as he moved north, with victory in sight. As he slowly advanced toward Goldsboro and Raleigh, his left and right wings grew widely separated.

At this point, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the remnants of three Confederate armies, prepared to strike.

On March 19, elements of the Union left wing under Maj. Gen. Henry W. Slocum ran into Confederate forces across the Goldsboro road, about a mile south of Bentonville, a small Johnston County community west of Goldsboro.

The Harper House, built in the 1850s, served as a Union hospital during part of the Civil War, including the Battle of Bentonville. Photo by Erin Whittle

The furnishings and medical equipment in the Harper House are Civil War-era pieces, but were not necessarily used at that location during the war. Photo by Erin Whittle

Slocum thought he was facing only a cavalry screen and pushed ahead with the blessings of Sherman, who didn't think Johnston would attack.

In fact, Johnston did. Two Union divisions were turned back, and the Confederates pushed forward. Maj. Gen. D.H. Hill's corps was briefly able to exploit a breach in the Union line. The Federals recovered, however, and after repeated failed assaults, the Confederates withdrew and began entrenching their lines.

Sporadic fighting followed on March 20 as Union reinforcements arrived. On March 21, Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Mower's division followed a wood path and managed to attack the Confederate rear. The Confederates pushed back, however, and Johnston was able to withdraw that night.

Bentonville was the bloodiest battle fought on North Carolina soil. Official casualty lists showed more than 1,500 Union soldiers killed, wounded or missing, versus 2,600 Confederate dead and wounded.

Bentonville was the bloodiest battle fought on North Carolina soil. Official casualty lists showed more than 1,500 Union soldiers killed, wounded or missing, versus 2,600 Confederate dead and wounded.

It was called the "Battle of Generals and Babes." The Confederates had two four-star generals on the field, Johnston and Braxton Bragg, still officially commanding "the Department of North Carolina," and three lieutenant generals. At this stage in the war, however, their "armies" and "corps" were often no larger than brigades. In all, Johnston fielded fewer than 22,000 men, compared with Sherman's 60,000. Many of the Confederates were North Carolina Junior Reserves, composed mainly of 16- and 17-year-olds.

The Union claimed Bentonville as a victory since Sherman occupied the field in the end and suffered fewer casualties. On the other hand, Johnston was able to escape with his tiny force intact and Sherman was forced to withdraw to lick his wounds at Goldsboro, where he was joined by Maj. Gen. Jacob Cox's and Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield's forces on March 23.

Union forces did not occupy Raleigh until April 13, and Johnston did not surrender to Sherman until April 18, 1865, at James M. Bennett's farmhouse near modern-day Durham.

Civil War

Meeting in Durham effectively ended the war

Generals convened twice to discuss terms of surrender

By Ben Steelman
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On April 13, at the request of Mayor William H. Harrison, Kenneth Raynor, a former Whig congressman and leader of a peace party, formally surrendered Raleigh, North Carolina's capital, to the cavalry of Union Maj. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick.

Later in the day, Gen. Sherman took over the governor's mansion – described as "musty" and "skinned" of furniture – as his headquarters.

With Richmond fallen, Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House in Virginia on April 9 and Confederate President Jefferson Davis fled south with his Cabinet. The end was near.

On April 12, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the last substantial Confederate force in North Carolina, met with Davis and Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard and Cabinet officers in Greensboro. Davis favored continuing the fight, but Johnston knew he was outnumbered by Sherman by at least 12 to 1, with more troops deserting by the day. He told the president that the people were tired and could not fight any more.

The following day, Davis authorized Johnston to contact Sherman for surrender terms.

On April 17, the two generals met at a halfway point between their two armies and began negotiating in a log house belonging to James Bennett, not far from Durham, which was then little more than a railroad station.

Both Sherman and Johnston assumed they were arranging the terms, not just for Johnston's army, but for the submission of all the seceded states. Johnston invited John C. Breckinridge, the former Confederate secretary of war, to join the talks.

On April 18, after a hefty swig of whiskey, Sherman dictated generous terms. The remaining Confederate forces would be allowed to disband in an orderly fashion. "The Executive of the United States" would recognize the Southern states' governments and a general amnesty would be declared.

This was far more than the government of the new U.S. president, Andrew Johnson, could accept. (Lincoln had been assassinated on April 15, and Johnson, the vice president – and a North Carolina native – had succeeded.) On April 24, Gen. Grant arrived in Raleigh with the news that Washington had rejected the terms, so on April 26, Sherman and Johnston reconvened at Bennett's cabin.

This time, Johnston agreed to lead his few remaining men to Greensboro, where they would turn in their arms and supplies and then be paroled. Both officers and enlisted men would be allowed to keep their horses and personal effects. Sherman ordered Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield to supply the surrendering soldiers with rations and wagons to haul them, so they would not be forced to forage the countryside on their way home.

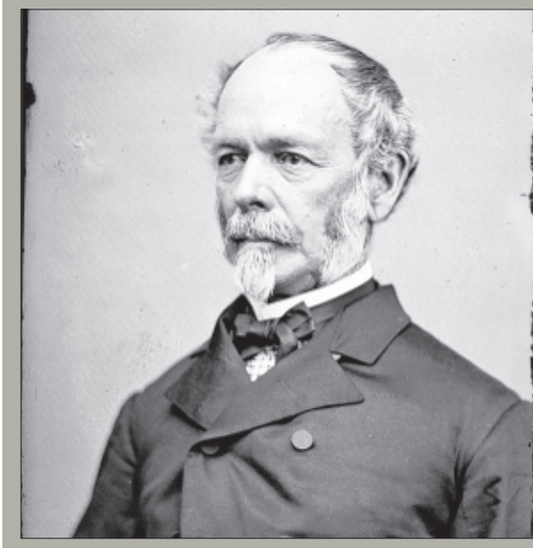
Grant approved the terms – joking only that he would have preferred to see Sherman's name ahead of Johnston's – and headed back for Washington.

Although remaining Confederate units in Alabama, Mississippi and Texas would not officially surrender until May 1865, the war was effectively over.

Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

KEY PLAYERS IN CONFEDERATE GEN. JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON'S SURRENDER

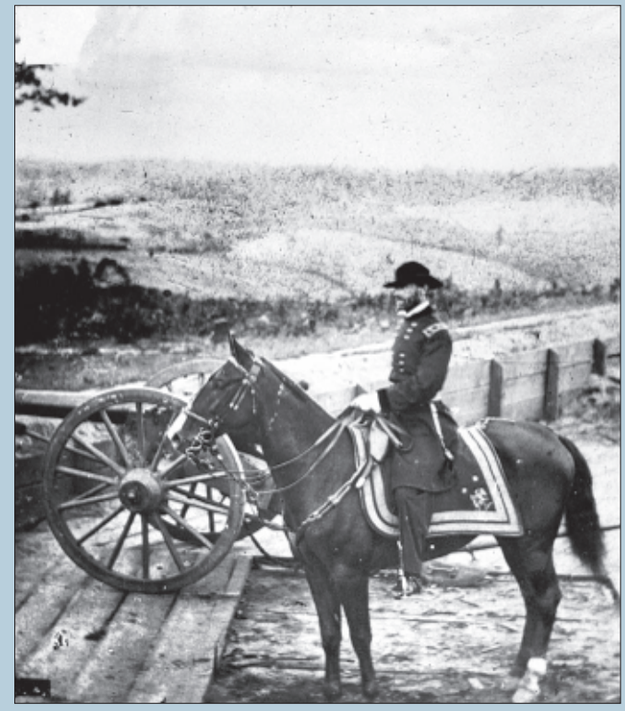
Confederates



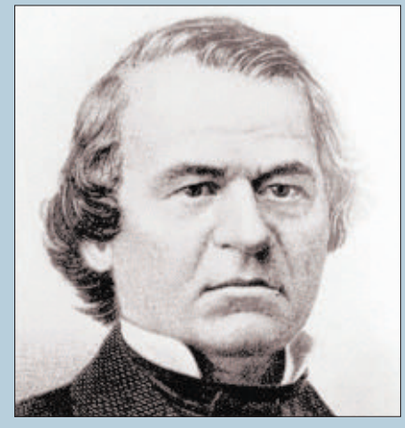
Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, who commanded the last substantial Confederate force in North Carolina, met with Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard and cabinet officers in Greensboro on April 12, three days after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered his force in Richmond, Va. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky was the former Confederate Secretary of War and presidential candidate in 1860. Gen. Johnston, thinking that he was negotiating surrender terms for all Southern states, invited Breckinridge, the former Confederate secretary of war, to join the talks. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Union



Gen. William T. Sherman, shown here inspecting the battlements at Atlanta in 1864 prior to his March to the Sea, outnumbered the remaining Confederate troops at least 12 to 1. Sherman met with Johnston to discuss his terms of surrender. AP file photo



President Andrew Johnson, who succeeded to the presidency after Lincoln's assassination, rejected the initial terms of Johnston's surrender. AP file photo

Union soldier re-enactors stand on the front porch of the Bellamy Mansion Museum, on Market Street in downtown Wilmington, during an encampment. The home of planter John D. Bellamy served as Union headquarters during the occupation of Wilmington. StarNews file photo

Wilmington controlled by 'the damned Yankees'

By Ben Steelman

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As most Union forces marched north in pursuit of Gen. Braxton Bragg's Confederates, the four regiments of brevetted Brig. Gen. Joseph C. Abbott remained behind as a provost guard of Wilmington.

On March 2, 1865, Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Hawley, a North Carolinian who had spent most of his life in Connecticut, assumed command of the District of Wilmington, while Abbott took over as commandant of the Post of Wilmington. Hawley moved into John D. Bellamy's house at Fifth and Market streets (known today as the Bellamy Mansion Museum) as his headquarters.

At first, the occupation was calm. "The fire-eaters have vanished or turned Quaker," one Union soldier joked. Many of the white locals expressed Unionist sentiments and a few U.S. flags appeared. A pro-Republican newspaper, The Herald of the Union, soon appeared, edited by H. H. Munson, who as late as January 1865 had been making Confederate uniform caps and buttons.

Stores began to open by early March, and the 8 p.m. curfew was soon extended to 11 p.m. so theatergoers could get home from shows at Thalian Hall. On March 14, 1865, Mayor John Dawson organized a "Grand Rally of the People" at which "The Star-Spangled Banner" was sung and patriotic speeches given. More than a thousand people attended.

Some resistance remained. Stephen Walkley, in a postwar history of the 7th Connecticut, recalled how a Union officer called on a Wilmington family. He turned to one small boy and asked, "Sonny, where is your pap?"

"The damned Yankees have got him," the boy replied.

More seriously, the Rev. Alfred A. Watson, the rector of St. James Episcopal Church, refused to offer prayers for President Lincoln, claiming he had no authority to do so from his bishop. Gen. Hawley, refusing to acknowledge ecclesiastical chain of command, sent soldiers to throw the pews into the streets and convert St. James into a hospital. The chapel was not returned to parishoners until December.

Such seizures were rare, according to historian Richard Everett Wood. Katherine DeRosset Meares complained that she had to expel a "perfectly drunk" Unionist from her house, but even she agreed the occupation was orderly and, against her will, found herself forming a friendship with the U.S. Army surgeon who was quartered with her family.

Nonetheless, Hawley found himself facing serious problems. On Feb. 26, 1865, on the Northeast Cape Fear River, Union and Confederate forces began to exchange prisoners. Many of the Union ex-P.O.W.s had come from as far away as the notorious Andersonville camp in Georgia, and many were described as being starved and sickly. Hawley soon found himself having to feed more than 7,000 ex-prisoners, thousands of whom required hospital attention.

The city was also flooded with newly freed ex-slaves and refugees, all while food supplies had been growing scarcer. Hawley had to organize a "Commissary of Subsistence" empowered to seize stocks of rice and other foodstuffs to feed the hungry. By July the relief committee was distributing food to more than 1,000 people.

Another conflict arose on Feb. 26, 1865, when African-American members of Front Street Methodist Church met for a sunrise service and voted to form their own congregation, with an African-American Army chaplain as pastor. Nearly 80 percent of the church's congregation was black, but slaves and free blacks were exiled to separate services or the balconies.

Gen. Hawley brokered an arrangement under which white members (and some black adherents) would worship in the church on Sunday mornings, while the African-American congregation, which would eventually reorganize as St. Stephen AME Church, used the building on Sunday afternoons.

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Civil War

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF FORT ANDERSON

Confederate soldiers reload while firing at the oncoming Union soldiers during a battle re-enactment at the Brunswick Town Fort Anderson Historic Site in Winnabow on Feb. 14. Photos by Matt Born

Members of the 11th North Carolina and the 1st North Carolina line up prior to the battle re-enactment during the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Anderson.

Jake Stalls plays the drums prior to the battle re-enactment.

Tom Oliver with the 151st Pennsylvania carries the American flag following the battle re-enactment.

Bobby Joe Etzler (facing forward), with the 13th North Carolina Company B, sits with fellow soldiers in the Confederate encampment during the 150th anniversary observance of the Second Battle of Fort Fisher in January at the Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach. Photo by Matt Born

History and family fuel passion for re-enactments

By Paul Stephen
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In ways big and small, history often has a way of repeating itself.

Pacing the Fort Fisher State Historic Site grounds, Bobby Joe Etzler cast an eye downward, scooping up any branches and twigs that might serve as kindling. A 2nd sergeant with the 13th N.C. Company B, Etzler was one of the first uniformed re-enactors to pitch a tent during the 150th anniversary of the Second Battle of Fort Fisher in January, and he had no intention of shivering through the night.

"That was one of the complaints during the war," Etzler said. "There wasn't enough firewood then, either."

It was a love of history that sparked the Rural Hall, N.C., resident's interest in re-enacting, but a stronger love of family soon overshadowed what was initially an academic pursuit.

> 'I live to get into uniform. Once I get in and get set up, this becomes 1865 to me.'
>
> **Bobby Joe Etzler,** 2nd sergeant with 13th N.C. Company B

"I went and saw a Gettysburg re-enactment and just said, 'I have to do this,'" Etzler said. "I really didn't know much history of the family then, but I've since learned that I had three ancestors from Maryland that fought for the South and three from Pennsylvania that fought for the North there."

Etzler's tent, measuring 6-feet-by-6-feet, is generous compared to the knee-high dog tents many soldiers slept in, but his creature comforts end there.

"I live to get into uniform. Once I get in and get set up, this becomes 1865 to me. No cell phones, no flashlights," Etzler said, noting he'd later prepare a simple meal of grits peppered with a bit of sausage. "Some people go a little more modern with food intake, but I like to keep it lean to feel a little of the hunger those men would have experienced."

A re-enactor's passion can keep them on the road, and Etzler is no exception. In addition to previous Fort Fisher re-enactments, he's participated in events from Pennsylvania to Florida. He owns a closet of uniforms to be dressed correctly for each re-enactment, in this case a historically accurate peculiarity featuring blue British army pants and a two-panel jacket of an ashy gray wool with more than a subtle blue hint. The duds stay true to the last-ditch compromises Confederates were faced with in the war's waning days.

"At a distance, this looks like a Federal soldier," Etzler said. "Some of the men wearing this uniform would turn the jackets out to show the liner so they wouldn't be fired upon."

Calling North Carolina home for the past 37 years, the Maryland native is proud of his heritage and the legacy of his ancestors serving on both sides of the war.

But it's his adopted state – and birthplace of five other Confederate ancestors in his family tree – that has earned his enduring loyalty.

"It's said about every war that the victor tells the story," Etzler said. "What they don't ever tell is why the Southern soldier goes to war. The mindset back then, each state saw itself as a sovereign country. We swore an allegiance to North Carolina."

Civil War

Being a re-enactor means dressing the part

By Paul Stephen
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With a monthly take home pay of $11, the average Confederate foot soldier would have been grateful for any cloth covering his back, let alone the sometimes dozens of uniforms modern Civil War re-enactors sport.

Matt Garris is a fixture on area battlefields, occasionally switch hitting for the Rebels or Yankees as the situation demands. Outgrowing the closet of his Wilmington home, Garris now hauls his wide array of historically accurate duds in a trailer to events.

Prices for a re-enactor's uniform can vary dramatically, but for buffs who take their history seriously, acquiring appropriate pieces will run about $1,500 per outfit. (Prices on this page reflect current values.)

Garris walked us through some details of the clothes that make the man.

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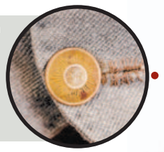
CONFEDERATE

Hat: Many soldiers abandoned their standard-issue headgear, favoring wider-brimmed civilian models like this felt slouch hat; $100.

Knapsack: English contractors Isaac & Campbell made many of the South's packs in the style of this painted canvas model; $275.

Jacket: A two-panel construction, the standard North Carolina jacket didn't fit as snugly as the more stylish four-panel Virginia version; $175.



Buttons: North Carolina's troops sported a distinctive starburst pattern on their buttons; $1.25 apiece.

Rifle: The 1853 Enfield rifled musket was British-made and weighed nearly 10 pounds; $700.

Cartridge box: This leather ammunition bag is made in Enfield's pattern; $80.

Belt and buckle: Troops kept their gear close with a leather belt featuring a double-headed snake buckle imported from England; $50

Trousers: North Carolina troops wore Richmond-Depot-style pants made of a wool and cotton blend; $100.

Haversack: This shoulder bag made from painted canvas held rations, a mess kit and other personal items; $35.

Shoes: Confederate troops wore leather brogans with a metal, horseshoe-shaped heel plate; $175.

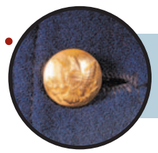
Hat: The 1858 Federal Forage Cap was made of wool and sported numbers indicating unit; $100.

Rifle: Union troops used several arms, including this Model 1861 Springfield rifle; $700.

Trousers: Made of kersey wool in the Deering pattern; $100.

UNION

Blanket roll: Union troops slept more comfortably thanks to heavy wool blankets rolled and bound with a small leather strap; $100.



Jacket: This flannel sack coat has a more refined feel than the confederate counterpart; $150.

Belt and buckle: With a bold "US" stamped in the buckle, some have joked that the Confederates should have sported buckles emblazoned with "THEM"; $55

Shoes: The Jefferson-style brogan was standard issue from 1851-1872, with more than 6 million made for the Civil War; $150.

Almost 1,600 black Union soldiers, including U.S. Colored Troops 1st Regiment Infantry above, fought in several key battles in Southeastern North Carolina. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Black troops were key to taking control of Wilmington

By Phil Fuhrer
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The United States Colored Troops, more than 10 percent of all Union forces by the end of the Civil War, helped keep the nation together.

In mid-February of 1865, on the site of what is now the Cameron Art Museum, almost 1,600 of those USCT soldiers not only sent the Confederates packing for good, but also birthed their own mini-nation in Wilmington.

It was the Battle of Forks Road, fought on Feb. 20-21, 1865, on 10 acres where Independence Boulevard and 17th Street now intersect. The Cameron Art Museum memorializes the battle with an annual re-enactment that includes trails and markers illustrating the site.

But Martha Burdette, the museum's curator of education, is promoting what happened after the battle, not during it.

"The colored troops were mostly from this region, and, when the war was over, they stayed, making Wilmington their home," she said. "Because of that, other blacks coming north as freed slaves with General Sherman's Union troops, maybe as many as 20,000, stopped and settled here. In a short time blacks were the majority population in Wilmington. Wilmington suddenly had an intelligent, industrious and ambitious Africa-American population … Had it not been for that little skirmish on Forks Road, I believe things would have been different."

The little skirmish had large implications. The Confederate army was retreating north and near exhaustion after failing to hold Fort Fisher. Confederates dug in across Forks Road to block Union troops advancing north to Wilmington.

Five regiments of USCT arrived at the scene, most of the 1,600 men having enlisted and trained in New Bern when the Emancipation Proclamation allowed them to escape slavery and join the military two years earlier. The two sides skirmished for two days until the Confederates were ordered to withdraw and took the last supply train north to Richmond. The Union had captured Wilmington, its railroad, its seaport and the Cape Fear River.

"Those colored troops and their families stayed, energized by the victory," Burdette said. "After all, two years before they had been slaves. Here they had the experience winning and earning the prize."

The abolitionist Frederick Douglass saw it right then, saying, "Let the black man get upon his person the brass letters 'U.S.' Let him get an eagle on his button and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship."

It was 12 years after the battle that the Wilmington National Cemetery was founded. Among the first burials were 92 USCT soldiers who had fought at Forks Road and other actions in the Wilmington campaign.But it wasn't until 2011 that a highway marker was erected on the 2100 block of Market Street to commemorate members of the United States Colored Troops buried in the nearby cemetery.

William B. Gould (seated), a veteran of the Civil War, is shown with his six sons, all veterans of various wars. Gould was a slave on the Nixon plantation, just north of Wilmington, who escaped and made his way behind Union lines during the Civil War. Picked up by the USS Cambridge in September 1862, he joined the Union Navy and kept a diary of his service. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Historical Museum

A little history

The success African-Americans found in Wilmington was not particularly long-lasting.

At the turn of the 19th century, blacks in Wilmington lost an undeclared war. After a heated election fought on the issue of "white supremacy" in 1898, white insurgents rallied in Wilmington to burn a black newspaper office.

City officials, part of a biracial Republican-populist coalition, were forced to resign. Dozens of black and white citizens were marched to the railroad station and ordered out of town. Estimates of the death toll range from 14 to more than 60.

A relatively open political climate, which had seen dozens of African-Americans hold state and local offices, ended.

Within two years, thousands of black voters were purged from the rolls, and Wilmington became solidly Democratic territory until the 1960s. Thousands of African-Americans left Wilmington

over the next few months, most heading to the North. Memories of "the Wilmington race riot" poisoned local race relations for decades.

In 1971, weeks of racial violence sparked by tensions from school desegregation came to a climax in Wilmington when two people were shot and killed. Eight African-American teenagers and two activists, including Ben Chavis, who would later go on to lead the NAACP, were convicted of setting firebombs and of shooting at first responders. The conviction of the "Wilmington Ten" was overturned in 1980.

> 'In 1898, the blacks were the majority who governed Wilmington. They had the vote and the power.'
>
> **Martha Burdette,** Cameron Art Museum curator

Burdette thinks that the events of 1898 and 1971 are obstacles that block local African-Americans from reaching back and celebrating the success of the USCT at Forks Road, including, potentially, their ancestors.

"In 1898, the blacks were the majority who governed Wilmington," she said. "They had the vote and the power. The only recourse against their new status was violence. It's why the museum today wants to tell the story of what those colored troops did here and emphasize the opportunities it gave to African-Americans in Wilmington. Those troops were fighting for their way of life."

A lost legacy?

Burdette and others haven't been able to locate any descendants of the Forks Road heroes. James White, a veteran reenactor, has asked around, but "I don't know any descendants in the battle."

It's a story that might take on more significance if people living in the area today had a direct connection to the outcome. "The legacy that we celebrate here each February isn't a glorification of war," Burdette said. "It's not just about hoop skirts and swords or the antebellum South. It's about honoring the courage and sacrifices of everyone who struggled here and allow(ing) people to understand (that) the success of those colored troops at Forks Road helped make Wilmington a place of success for all races."

Features: 910-343-2343

Pvt. Bruce Anderson, Medal of Honor recipient, was born on July 27, 1845, in Mexico. By 1863, he was a naturalized citizen working on a farm in Ephratah, N.Y. He served as a member of Company K 142nd New York Volunteers in the Union Army. Photo courtesy Fort Fisher Historical Museum

Black soldier persevered for Medal of Honor

By Ben Steelman
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Bruce Anderson was the only African-American soldier to earn the Medal of Honor in the Wilmington campaign. Nearly a half century would pass, however, before he could claim his award.

Born a free person of color on June 10, 1845, in Oswego County, N.Y., Anderson was a teenage farmer when he went to Schenectady on Aug. 31, 1864, to enlist in Company K of the 142nd New York Infantry. Unlike most black Union soldiers, Anderson did not serve in the "U.S. Colored Troops" but in a predominantly white state volunteer regiment.

Like the rest of the 142nd, Anderson landed north of Fort Fisher on Christmas Day 1864, but was reboarded a few days later when the first attack was called off. He would return, however, on Jan. 13, 1865, and as part of Brig. Gen. N. Martin Curtis' brigade would join in the attack on Fort Fisher's land face.

Anderson was among a small force of volunteers sent forward ahead of the main assault and armed with axes to chop down the palisades, the fence of wooden stakes in front of the Confederate earthworks.

Fire from Confederate sharpshooters was withering. Many of the volunteers fell, but Anderson and 12 others succeeded in opening a gap their comrades could charge through.

Maj. Gen. Adelbert Ames, who commanded the Union assault, was so impressed that he recommended all 13 volunteers be awarded the Medal of Honor. Somehow, his report was mislaid.

After discharge, Anderson moved to Illinois, then returned to New York. In 1914, he hired a lawyer to petition for the medal he had never received. The adjutant general of the U.S. Army opened an investigation, during which Ames' letter of recommendation was finally found. Anderson received his medal on Dec. 28, 1914, along with two other survivors of the palisades mission.

Anderson died on Aug. 22, 1922, and was buried in Amsterdam, N.Y. His descendants carried on a tradition of service. One became a Montford Point Marine, one of the first African-Americans to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II.

Several of Anderson's relatives attended a reunion of Fort Fisher descendents in January 2015.

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Civil War

Cape Fear women survived Civil War disruptions

Many took on new roles, responsibilities

By Cammie Bellamy
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Rose O'Neal Greenhow was nearly back in the safety of the South when her ship ran aground 500 yards off Fort Fisher Oct. 1, 1864. The Maryland-born Confederate spy had already been jailed once, and as Union forces approached the stuck blockade runner she begged the captain to help her escape.

"He finally gave in and put his panicky passenger in a little boat," said Chris Fonvielle, a University of North Carolina Wilmington professor and Civil War scholar. "Heavy waves came in and capsized the boat, and she disappeared."

Dragged down by burdensome clothing – Fonvielle said her death is often incorrectly blamed on the weight of gold she was allegedly carrying – her body later washed ashore and was buried at Oakdale Cemetery in Wilmington. She had been returning from a diplomatic tour of Europe to try to win British and French support for the Confederacy.

A violent end was unusual for women during the Civil War, when they were more likely to suffer the deaths of sons and husbands who left for battle. But the war disrupted the lives of Cape Fear women in extreme and permanent ways. Some lost everything. Many learned new responsibilities as heads of the household. Others were freed.

Kate Stuart was born in 1844 in a waterfront inn in Smithville (Southport). In 1862, Stuart was the main help for her mother in running what became known as the Stuart House. Before occupation by Union troops, Stuart House social gatherings were attended by many of the servicemen stationed at Forts Johnson and Caswell. Stuart also was known as 'the heroine of Smithville' for saving the life of a friend's daughter who had fallen off the inn's pier. When Stuart died in 1929, she was mourned as 'the Grand Old Lady of North Carolina.' Photos courtesy New Hanover County Public Library.

Portrait of Catherine, Eliza, and Alice de Rosset, who were members of a prominent local family. The family home still stands at 23 S. Second St. in Wilmington. All three women are buried in Oakdale Cemetery, which was incorporated in 1852.

Early exodus

Wartime Wilmington saw its busy port become a lifeline for the Confederacy, with blockade runners hauling in supplies and drawing businessmen and crooks alike.

"Wilmington was transformed from a backwater seaport into a sort of bawdy, rough-and-tumble town," Fonvielle said. "Downtown residents were horrified."

In 1862, the boats brought something worse: yellow fever. Wealthy families fled inland, including the Bellamys of 503 Market St., who "refugeed" with their children to Floral College, a Robeson County women's school.

"If you had the means to get out of town during (the epidemic), you did," said Brooks Murphrey, administrative assistant at the Bellamy Mansion Museum.

The family left its head slave, a woman named Sarah Miller, in charge of the home, but when Wilmington fell it became the property of Union Gen. Joseph R. Hawley. In her memoir, "Back With the Tide," Ellen Douglas Bellamy, still a child during the war, wrote about her mother Eliza visiting the home after the Hawleys had moved in.

"It was most humiliating, and trying, to be entertained by Mrs. Hawley in her own parlor," Bellamy wrote.

On the home front

Duke University professor Laura Edwards said the Southern home was a place of conflict during the Civil War.

"There's a perception that somehow the home front is separate from the battlefield," Edwards said. "What you have to understand about the Confederacy is it's built around the defense of a certain type of household, one that relies on slavery."

Women in the South, Edwards said, were tasked with maintaining the Southern way of life while men were at war, many taking charge of household business – and slaves – for the first time.

Homes also became production sites for the war effort as women like Wilmington's Eliza Jane Lord DeRosset organized soldiers' aid societies.

"Ladies would meet these trains at the depot as they came through and provide words of comfort – hand out ice tea, ham biscuits, fried chicken – to let the soldiers know what they were fighting for," Fonvielle said.

One passionate fundraiser was Mary Ann Buie, who collected goods for soldiers and their families, taking out ads nearly daily in The Wilmington Daily Journal to thank her donors.

While Buie was gracious to the helpful, Fonvielle said she could be spiteful if snubbed. When a local blockade-running businessman refused her a donation, she told him she hoped his next ship to come into Wilmington would founder. Sure enough, the ship sank, and some in town gave Buie credit for jinxing him.

There was a huge local need for charity like Buie's. Everything from sugar to cloth to cooking pans became scarce, and things grew desperate for many Wilmington women. Fonvielle said some turned to prostitution.

"If your husband is killed or wounded on the battlefield, how are you going to support your family?" he asked. "Given (women's) limited opportunities under the best of circumstances, they did what they could to survive."

After the war

The women whose lives were changed most radically by the Union victory were slaves. Unlike in many Southern cities, Wilmington did not see an exodus of former slaves immediately after the war. Jobs rebuilding the city and opportunities for advancement quickly made Wilmington a majority black town.

After years of waking at 4 a.m. to cook breakfast for the Bellamy family and managing their household, newly freed Sarah married and moved to Chestnut Street.

Ellen Bellamy returned to the family mansion, where she lived until her death in 1946.

"The rumor is that she never walked under the American flag downtown," said Murphrey, of the Bellamy Mansion Museum. "She would cross the street."

"We have a photograph of her casket covered in a Confederate flag arrangement," said museum operations manager Ashley Relf. "She held on to that until the last day of her life."

Cammie Bellamy: 910-343-2339
Twitter: @cammiebellamy

Martha Watson of the United Daughters of the Confederacy Cape Fear Chapter (in mourning dress) leads a tour down a luminary-lighted path through Oakdale Cemetery. StarNews file photos

Group brings honor to ancestors who wore the gray

By Phil Fuhrer
Phil.Fuhrer@StarNewsOnline.com

For well over a century, Wilmington and New Hanover County have been associated with the United Daughters of the Confederacy, one of the local groups that strives to keep Civil War history alive.

For Pat Gasson, a Wilmington native and the North Carolina division president for the UDC, it's all about family.

"The war was fought on our soil and a terrible, terrible burden on Southern families," Gasson said. "It was a horrible position to be placed in."

The UDC has 50 chapters with more than 1,300 members in North Carolina. Three chapters operate locally, and they include Confederate descendants from Brunswick and Pender counties. Cape Fear 3, representing Wilmington, is the third-oldest chapter in the United States, having just turned 120. Combined with the Carolina Beach Fort Fisher and Wrightsville Beach Blockade Runner chapters, there are more than 125 members locally.

The group's daily mission is to bring honor to the ancestors who wore the gray – educating the public where invited; raising money for scholarships; beautifying Confederate graves at Oakdale Cemetery; maintaining the dignity of the memorial at Third and Market streets to George Davis, attorney general of the Confederacy; raising funds for hospitals to support U.S. veterans of all conflicts; and always participating in memorials and re-enactments when asked.

"We sometimes ask to use a public meeting hall somewhere and get turned down," Gasson said. "And we have over 350 Confederate soldiers buried at Oakdale Cemetery under the Confederate Mound because they aren't allowed to be buried at the Wilmington National Cemetery. It's our mound, and we maintain it."

Gasson said she understands why the UDC sometimes gets pushback.

"It still is somewhat of a struggle today," she said. "People seem to relate the Confederacy with hate, and we aren't as readily received as we once were or as other historical groups are today. We do not want to be associated with hate groups. We are defending and supporting the pride we have in our Confederate heritage, and with nothing to regret in the defense of our Southland."

Any young woman who is 16 can join the UDC if she has a Confederate ancestor (grandfather or uncle, but not a cousin) who "fought honorably for the Confederacy (or) gave civil or material aid to the Confederacy," Gasson said. "It might not be a soldier. It might be a family member who provided material aid to the effort: sold horses to the Confederacy, or corn, or was a doctor or a judge."

Some members are christened at birth. "When a baby girl is born, upon receipt of her birth certificate she would be eligible to join the Children of the Confederacy providing she has the proper lineage and Confederate ancestor service proof," Gasson said. "Mothers and grandmothers are sometimes anxious to have their offspring become a member."

Gasson emphasized that "we are not a group of little old ladies who sit around discussing the war … We are proud of all of our servicemen and women and this includes our Confederate ancestors."

THE LAST 'REAL' DAUGHTER

In 2002, Wilmington lost its last direct connection to the Confederacy when Lilla Esther Godwin McGwigan Bullard passed away. She was the daughter of Confederate soldier William Henry McGwigan, Company C, 40th Regiment, North Carolina Troops.

A member of Cape Fear 3, Bullard died May 15, 2002 and is buried in Columbus County's Western Prong Baptist Church Cemetery.

North Carolina's last living "real" daughter is Rachel Elaine Blackwell South. She is a member of the Madison-Mayodan Grays Chapter in Mayodan.

Brenda Shadrick of the United Daughters of the Confederacy dresses in mourning as she serves as a tour guide during Oakdale Cemetery's annual Luminary Walk.

Civil War

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF FORT FISHER

Confederate and Union troops line up during the opening ceremonies of the 150th anniversary observance of the Second Battle of Fort Fisher at the Fort Fisher State Historic Site in Kure Beach. Photos by Matt Born

Confederate soldiers fire on Union soldiers during the battle re-enactment.

Union troops (right) storm through the palisade and fire on Confederate troops

Civil War

Union troops fire onto Confederate troops from atop the earthworks.

Rob Lavis with the 48th New York lights a fire in the Union encampment following the battle.

Confederate troops talk in their encampment following the opening ceremonies.

Huckleberry Brothers Band plays during the 150th anniversary observance.

Crowds watch the battle re-enactment.

Union troops walk through the woods to the Union encampment following the battle re-enactment.

Civil War

Sons of Confederate Veterans preserving history

By Terry Reilly
Star News Correspondent

Glenn Kye of the Sons of Confederate Veterans NC Division discusses civil war history at his booth where he flies a Confederate North Carolina flag during the 148th anniversary of the Second Battle of Fort Fisher, the largest land-sea battle of the Civil War. StarNews file photo

When Justin Warddiscovered that three of his ancestors were Confederate soldiers who served at Fort Fisher during the Civil War, his interest was piqued.

Today, Ward, a full-time firefighter in Shallotte, is the commander of the Wilmington "camp" for The Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The national organization has more than 29,000 members, with 3,000 in North Carolina at 96 camps throughout the state.

The Sons of Confederate Veterans was formed in Richmond, Va., in 1896, and the Wilmington camp is the fifth oldest in the entire nation. According to the North Carolina SCV's website, the group "continues to serve as a historical, patriotic and cultural organization dedicated to insuring that a true history of the 1861-1865 period and our Confederate American heritage and culture are preserved and transmitted intact to future generations."

Ward's team is active in preserving history by participating in battle re-enactments.

"We do school re-enactments at various sites," Ward said. "Fort Fisher, Fort Anderson and Cameron Art Museum re-enactments are keeping us busy in the first part of 2015."

Glen Kye, adjutant for the Wilmington Camp, described the group's ongoing cemetery work.

"Grave restoration is ongoing and not just for the War Between the States. We also work on grave markers from the American Revolution, World War I, World War II and Vietnam," Kye said. "We're a veterans organization, not unlike the American Legion, but with a different mission."

Kye's reference to the Civil War as the War Between the States continues to provoke impassioned debate. Most historians view the term as an attempt to recast the war as a war over states' rights instead of the preservation of slavery.

"The Sons of Confederate Veterans assert that the Southern states first withdrew legally from the United States, leaving the U.S. government entirely intact, and then formed their own confederation," Kye said. "The official name is the War Between the States because 22 northern states made war on 11 southern states. Every meeting I have to remind our new folks that it was not a civil war."

> 'We're a veterans organization, not unlike the American Legion, but with a different mission.'
>
> **Justin Ward,** Sons of Confederate Veterans camp commander

Others dispute this view.

In "Confronting Civil War Revisionism: Why The South Went To War," David Barton writes that "official Confederate documents ... affirm that slavery was a primary issue that drove the secession movement and was indeed central in the rebellion. The majority of Confederate states included slavery as a reason for secession in their proclamations to secede from the union."

Wilmington historian Chris Fonvielle, a professor at the University of North Carolina Wilmington who has Confederate ancestors, has discussed the slavery issue at SCV meetings.

"No matter how you peel the layers of the onion away, it always comes back to slavery," Fonvielle said. "You can couch the cause of the war as 'states' rights.' But what Southerners mean by states' rights is their right to defend their way of life – their cultural, economic and social institutions. And that means the institute of slavery."

Still, many agree with the SCV's position. A 2011 Pew Research survey revealed that 38 percent of Amercians believed the war was fought over slavery and the associated economics, while 48 percent thought the battle was over interpretation of constitutional law (states' rights).

During a 2013 episode of "Jeopardy," a contestant gave the answer, "What is the War Between the States?" Host Alex Trebek accepted the answer but noted that he'd been looking for "the Civil War."

Regardless of the motivation for war, by some counts North Carolina sent more men into battle and suffered more losses than any Confederate state. More than 125,000 North Carolina men departed for battle and 35,000 never returned. Thousands more were crippled and maimed for life.

For Kye, the SCV is about honoring those lost lives and helping the local community. The group just concluded an annual food drive to help homeless veterans.

"We're not out to wave the flag and make a big splash," Kye said.

Some of the work requires persistence. Ward recently discovered that three brothers, all Confederate war veterans, were buried in unmarked graves in a Shallotte cemetery.

"We did all the paperwork, jumping through hoops for several months," Ward said. "But the federal government finally shipped us new grave markers."

In 1929, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs declared that each Confederate veteran was entitled to a grave marker. Kye said the U.S. and Confederate grave markers differ in that the U.S. marker has a rounded top while the Confederate marker has a peak at the top. Both are the same dimensions and represent individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice.

And while some disagreements are likely to remain, "today's SCV (members) are not nearly as focused on the causes of the war as they are (on) honoring their Confederate ancestors," Fonvielle said.

This 1865 photo shows the northern land defense palisade at Fort Fisher. Col. William Lamb would extend the fort's sea face from less than 100 yards to more than 1,300 yards, according to federal surveyors. Huge mounds, which some observers compared to haystacks, guarded batteries with dozens of heavy cannon.

The war's Gibraltar

Lamb transformed Fort Fisher into stronghold using Crimean War defenses

By Ben Steelman
Ben.Steelman@StarNewsOnline.com

In December 1861, while on a payroll mission to Charleston, S.C., Maj. William Lamb paused to buy a book about the Russian defenses at Sebastopol during the Crimean War.

It was an inspired moment. Seven months and one promotion later, Col. William Lamb would take command of Fort Fisher and begin to transform it into "the Gibraltar of the Confederacy."

As historian Chris Fonvielle noted in "Faces of Fort Fisher," Lamb was hardly a born warrior. Born Sept. 7, 1835, in Norfolk, Va., to an old Virginia family, he had graduated Phi Beta Kappa from William and Mary, trained for the law and wound up running a Norfolk newspaper. He was captain of the Woodis Riflemen, a stylish militia company, but this mainly involved marching in parades in snazzy uniforms. His only real military experience came in 1859 when the company was mustered to provide security for the hanging of John Brown.

He was able and energetic, though, and seems to have been well-liked by almost all the soldiers he worked with. Early in the war, Lamb was promoted to major and assigned as a quartermaster to the commander of North Carolina coast defenses. In April 1862, he took command of Fort St. Philip (later Fort Anderson), where he apparently studied the principles of fortifications with Lt. Thomas Rowland, a West Point cadet.

It was a good time to be a talented novice. Early battles of the war had proved that old-fashioned brick-and-mortar forts – like Fort Sumter at Charleston or Fort Macon near New Bern – were no match for modern naval guns. Earthwork mounds, however – like the ones the Russians had used against the British Royal Navy in Crimea – could easily stand heavy bombardment.

On assuming command of Fort Fisher, on July 7, 1862, Lamb apparently resolved to put those lessons to good use.

The Confederates had been digging shore batteries at Fort Fisher almost since the beginning of the war. Lamb, however, considered the fort "a small work," largely made with "perishable" sandbags and argued that a single Union frigate could have finished off the fort in a few broadsides.

William Lamb, who died in 1909, turned Fort Fisher into the 'Gibraltor of the Confederacy' by using tactics he learned while reading about Russian defenses during the Crimean War, which ended in 1856. Photos courtesy Fort Fisher Historical Museum

With strong support from Maj. Gen. W.H.C. Whiting, the West Point-trained engineer in charge of the Cape Fear defenses, Lamb set to remedy those deficiencies.

Over the next two years, with the labor of hundreds of soldiers and "impressed" (drafted) slaves, Lamb would extend the fort's sea face from less than 100 yards to more than 1,300 yards, according to federal surveyors. Huge mounds, which some observers compared to haystacks, guarded batteries with dozens of heavy cannon. Lamb could use his artillery to drive off blockaders and often salvage blockade runners that ran aground in the beaches near the fort.

In 1857, Lamb had married Sarah Ann Chaffee, better known as "Daisy," from Providence, R.I. When the war broke out, Daisy stood by her husband. She followed him to Wilmington, and in the spring of 1863 moved to what Lamb called a "quaint abode constructed in the most primitive style" nearby so she and her two older children could stay with her husband. (No longer standing, the house was probably on what is now the Fort Fisher Air Force Recreation Area.)

Lamb did not consider Fort Fisher finished when a Union armada first attacked on Dec. 24, 1865, and it stood well under two separate barrages. In the end, the fort would fall to an assault from its northern land side. Lamb would fall wounded while rallying his men.

Recovering from his wounds, Lamb returned to Norfolk, where he aligned with the new Republican Party. From 1880 to 1886, he served as mayor of Norfolk, like his father and grandfather before him.

In later years Lamb grew close to Union Brig. Gen. N. Martin Curtis, who had been wounded in the land attack at Fort Fisher. He called Curtis "my friend, the enemy." The two toured the remains of Fort Fisher during a 1907 veterans' reunion.

Lamb died two years later, on March 23, 1909, and was buried in Norfolk.

Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

Civil War

In books, on TV, centennial fired interest in past

By Ben Steelman
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Re-enactors fire rifles in 1962 during the 100th anniversary of the Civil War in Wilmington. StarNews file photos

If anything, the Civil War centennial of 1961-1965 drew even more public attention than the 150th anniversary.

Life magazine ran a six-part series on the Civil War with contributions by such writers as Robert Penn Warren and Gen. James Gavin.

On television, NBC ran a 1961 series called "The Americans" about two Virginia brothers fighting on opposing sides of the war. Southern TV stations carried reruns of "The Gray Ghost," starring Todd Andrews as a romanticized version of Confederate guerrilla leader Col. John Singleton Mosby. ABC aired two seasons of "The Rebel" starring Nick Adams as an ex-Confederate cavalryman who roamed through the West.

On the comics pages, Linus in "Peanuts" headed to school wearing a Union infantryman's cap. Cartoonist Charles Schulz occasionally had his strip's characters break into Civil War songs, such as "Just Before the Battle, Mother" and "The Bonnie Blue Flag."

Civil War histories filled the best-seller lists. Mississippian Shelby Foote released the second volume of his massive Civil War history in 1963. Bruce Catton, who'd already won the Pulitzer Prize for "A Stillness at Appomattox," followed up with his centennial history of the war, including "The Coming Fury" (1961), "Terrible Swift Sword" (1963) and "Never Call Retreat" (1965). Youngsters devoured "The Golden Book of the Civil War," an illustrated, simplified version of Catton's "American Heritage History of the Civil War."

Civil War historian Chris Fonvielle, a University of North Carolina Wilmington professor, said it was one of his boyhood inspirations.

The N.C. 100th

North Carolina, like many other states, set up a 25-member Centennial Commission to oversee Civil War observances. The commission kicked off its efforts with a "Confederate Ball" fundraiser in May 1961 at Raleigh's Reynolds Coliseum preceded by a parade and a devotional service.

Seventy-seven of North Carolina's 100 counties, including New Hanover, organized their own centennial commissions. The New Hanover Confederate Civil War Commission seemed especially active. It staged a re-enactment

Close-up of three buglers during the 100th anniversary in 1962.

of the Washington Peace Conference of Feb. 4-27, 1861, in which state delegates tried to negotiate a settlement to head off the war. George Davis of Wilmington, later a Confederate senator and Confederate attorney general, represented North Carolina at that conference.

On July 4, 1962, the commission joined other local groups in celebrating a "Colonel William Lamb" day at Fort Fisher, honoring the longtime commander of the fort.

In 1965, the commission organized a week of activities in conjunction with the fall of Fort Fisher. Among the events was the staging of a historical play, "This is How It Happened," with students and faculty from Wilmington College participating. Fonvielle's mother was among the actors.

An exhibit on Civil War interior design was mounted at the Latimer House, and the county museum, then at 115 Red Cross St., showed an exhibit titled "Trying Times."

A high point came in 1965 when Vice President Hubert Humphrey spoke at the Bentonville battlefield on the centennial of the conflict. Humphrey delivered a message of reconciliation, saying, "We must never permit vengeful radicals to dominate the American scene."

A centennial's legacy

Much was accomplished during the centennial, said Michael Hill, a research supervisor with North Carolina's Office of Archives and History who co-chairs the state's ad hoc committee for observance of the Civil War's 150th anniversary.

In 1960, the state acquired title to the Fort Fisher site and erected its first interpretive signs. In 1965, the Fort Fisher visitor's center opened, along with a similar center at the Bentonville battlefield.

The commission began publishing "North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster," containing the names and records of those who served the Confederacy. The series now runs to 18 thick volumes, with more being compiled by Archives and History. Eventually, the set will reach 22 volumes, indexing more than 125,000 names.

Meanwhile, in 1963, Archives and History began publishing the papers of Zebulon B. Vance, North Carolina's wartime governor.

A windfall came in 1962, when, thanks to sand shifting after a severe storm, divers rediscovered the wreck of the blockade runner Modern Greece off Fort Fisher. With aid from U.S. Navy divers, excavations began on the wreck, and in 1962 and subsequent seasons, thousands of artifacts were recovered. These led to the founding of what is now the state Underwater Archaeology Branch at Fort Fisher.

North Carolina's Confederate Centennial Commission received a bronze medallion from the White House in recognition of its efforts, the first state agency to be so recognized.

Limited remembrance

The centennial observance had its shortcomings, Hill said. Commemorative activities focused almost entirely on military affairs, neglecting the home front and the war's impact on African-Americans. Notably overlooked were the thousands of North Carolinians in the U.S. Colored Troops, escaped slaves and freedom fighters who served in the Union Army.

One exception to this trend came in 1963, when a civil rights group in Greenville staged a program to commemorate the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation.

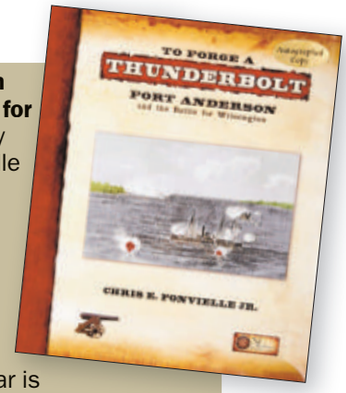
Officials such as Lloyd Larson, the executive secretary of the commission, worked hard to keep commemorations nonpartisan.

Nevertheless, the centennial played out at the height of the nation's civil rights campaigns, culminating with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Those opposed to desegregation often used the Confederate battle flag as a rallying symbol. South Carolina, for example, began raising the battle flag over the state capitol building in Columbia in 1962. It remained there until 2000, when the flag was moved to a pole near the Confederate monument on the capitol grounds.

Delve deep with Civil reads

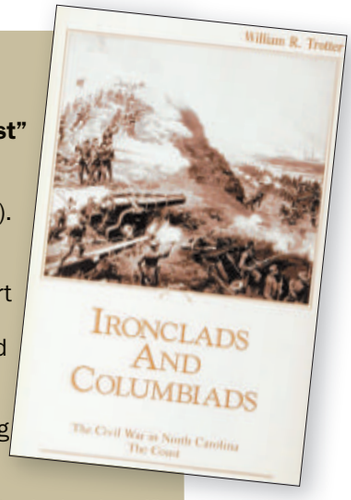
For those who'd like to learn more about the Civil War in Southeastern North Carolina, these books provide a good start. We relied on many of these volumes for much of the historical information in this publication.

– Ben Steelman



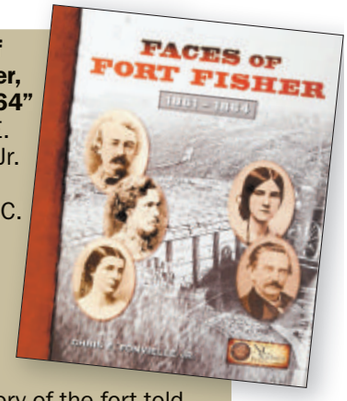
"Fort Anderson and the Battle for Wilmington" by Chris E. Fonvielle Jr. (Da Capo Press, 1999). This account of the main Confederate fort on the west bank of the Cape Fear is out of print. Fonvielle's updated history, "To Forge a Thunderbolt: Fort Anderson and the Battle for Wilmington," is due out early this year from N.C. Starburst Press.

"Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running during the Civil War" by Stephen R. Wise (University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Definitive academic account of the adventuresome trade, with primary emphasis on Wilmington.

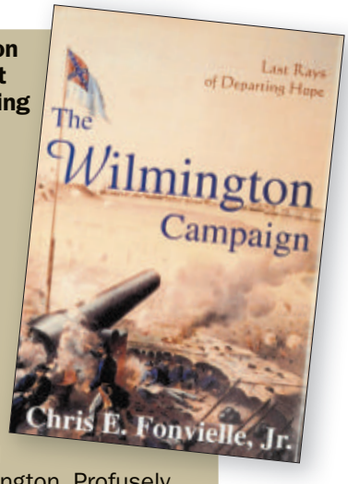


"Ironclads and Columbiads: The Civil War in North Carolina, The Coast" by William Trotter (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1991). Lively narrative of the war in Eastern North Carolina. Part of a three-volume set: "Silk Flags and Cold Steel" covers the war in the Piedmont (including the battles of Bentonville and Averasboro) and "Bushwhackers!" covers the war in the mountains.

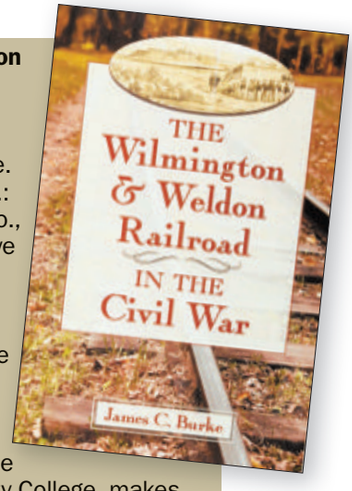
"The Fire of Freedom: Abaraham Galloway and the Slaves' Civil War" by David Cecelski (University of North Carolina Press, 2012). Biography of an escaped slave from Brunswick County who became a spy and a recruiter for Union forces in the Civil War. During the peace, Galloway became a state legislator and founder of the state's Republican Party. Much material on freedmen and African-American soldiers in the Union army.



"Faces of Fort Fisher, 1861-1864" by Chris E. Fonvielle Jr. (Carolina Beach: N.C. Starburst Press, 2013). A popular account of the early history of the fort told through character sketches of key individuals on both sides. A companion volume that includes the two attacks is promised.

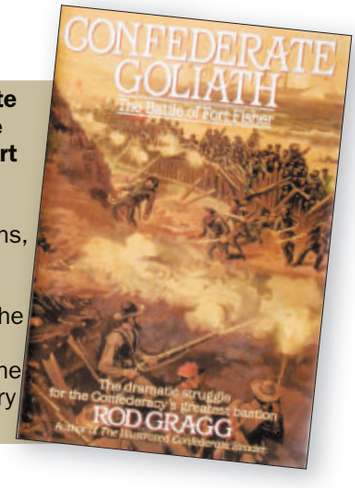


"The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope" by Chris E. Fonvielle Jr. (Stackpole Books, 1997). The definitive academic account of the war in Southeastern North Carolina, from the first attack on Fort Fisher until the fall of Wilmington. Profusely illustrated, with many maps.



"The Wilmington and Weldon Railroad in the Civil War" by James C. Burke. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2012). Definitive account of the rail line that made Wilmington "the lifeline of the Confederacy." Burke, who teaches at Cape Fear Community College, makes the point that the railroad was just as important for shipping foodstuffs and goods from farther south as it was for ferrying blockade runner cargoes to Richmond.

"War on the Waters: The Union and Confederate Navies, 1861-1865" by James M. McPherson (University of North Carolina Press, 2012). Extensive information on the naval war in Wilmington, blockade running and Fort Fisher, from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of "Battle Cry for Freedom."



"Confederate Goliath: The Battle of Fort Fisher" by Rod Gragg (HarperCollins, 1991). A readable account of the Fort Fisher attacks by the noted military historian.

"Wild Rose: Rose O'Neale Greenhow, Civil War Spy" by Ann Blackman (Random House, 2005). Best single biography of the famed spy, with details on how she ended up buried in Wilmington's Oakdale Cemetery.

Civil War

Wilmington brothers battled at Forks Road

By Ben Steelman
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The Civil War, as the old cliche goes, was a conflict of brother against brother. In New Hanover County, at least, this was literally true.

On Feb. 19, 1865, Gen. Robert F. Hoke's Confederates were marching up Federal Point Road, on their way to take position for the last stand to protect Wilmington at Forks Road.

Cpl. Hosea Horne, of the Wilmington Horse Artillery, asked permission for a brief leave to say goodbye to his mother, Katherine Lanier Horne, who lived in a small house along the way, near modern-day Monkey Junction.

The next day, Feb. 20, Mrs. Horne had another visitor – another son, Cpl. Jacob Horne.

Jacob Horne had enlisted in the U.S. Army at occupied Beaufort. He seems to have been acting as a scout for Union Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry's corps, which was now marching north toward Fort Fisher.

A Philadelphia Inquirer reporter, riding with Terry's force, reported on the incident for his paper. He quoted Mrs. Horne as saying, "Your brother was here yesterday; he stopped as the Confederates marched past."

Wilmington historian Chris Fonvielle said he learned the story from a descendant, the late Robert C. Horne, and from Hosea Horne's grandson, Louis Horne.

The late Bruce B. Cameron also retold the family story for the book "The Camerons of Wilmington." Katherine Latimer Horne was his maternal great-great-grandmother.

The Horne house no longer stands. It was located not far from the intersection of modern Carolina Beach Road and South College Road.

Hosea and Jacob Horne both survived the war and later reconciled. Jacob lived until 1894 and Hosea, until 1911. Both are buried a short distance from each other in the Horne family cemetery in rural New Hanover County.

Ben Steelman: 910-343-2208

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF FORKS ROAD

Jonathan Nunnery demonstrates how to load a cannon Feb. 8 during the 10th annual Civil War Living History Weekend at Cameron Art Museum. The events commemorated the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Forks Road. Photos by Jason A. Frizzelle

Jeffery Palese and Tabatha Palese brought their infant daughter Hailey to the event. Jeffery has participated in re-enactments most of his life and Tabatha began participating when they got married. 'I kinda drug her into it,' admitted Palese. Their daughter Hailey's first re-enactment was at 1 month for the Battle of Fort Fisher.

Steven Coley (from left) Mike Reynolds and Donnie Shannon, re-enactors with the 13th Battalion N.C. Light Artillery, talk in their camp

Civil War

Jonathan Schleier, an archeologist with Public Archeology Corps, talks about a Civil War-era trench he excavated during the 10th annual Civil War Living History Weekend at Cameron Art Museum.

Gary Brown demonstrates how a Civil War-era pistol works to Keith Hardison, 9.

Re-enactor Capt. Derrick Smith with the 20th K N.C. State Troopers demonstrates a pistol for Mark Blanchard.

The Union Army's Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry. H. Terry (seated at center) and his staff. Terry led his forces in the capture of Fort Fisher and then on to the Union occupation of Wilmington (quote right). Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Eyewitnesses to history

For those who lived it, Wilmington's fall was dramatic. When the Union army marched into Wilmington, some were heartbroken while others were joyous. Some period letter-writers and memoirists describe the scene.

"Those immense fires on each side of town were fearful. Contrary winds blew the immense black smoke of both directly toward the town, and when the … clouds met in the center, it seemed as if a black oppressive smoke encompassed the town."

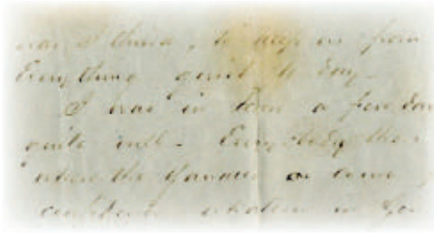
Katherine DeRosset Meares, IN A LETTER TO ELIZA JANE DEROSSET MARCH 28, 1865

"A very quiet man … stood on a street corner watching the (Union) column pass without a word until the Negro troops, beside whom streamed a shouting mass of ex-slaves, appeared. Then he turned away and with both hands raised and an indescribable expression of mingled horror and disgust, exclaimed, 'Blow, Gabriel, blow, for God's sake, blow!' "

Alfred Moore Waddell, "SOME MEMORIES OF MY LIFE"

"You have no idea, Mother, of my feelings knowing that our old town was doomed. The shops are all closed, government property being destroyed, huge piles of cotton and rosin being set afire, tobacco being dumped in the river. You can't imagine anything like it."

Confederate Lt. Zaccheus Ellis, IN A LETTER TO HIS MOTHER, MARCH 1, 1865. ELLIS WOULD BE KILLED MARCH 19, 1865, AT THE BATTLE OF BENTONVILLE



Maj. Gen. Robert Hoke

"(At City Hall) we stood for perhaps half an hour, during which time horsemen were dashing in hot haste through all the streets, picking up the Confederate stragglers who had fallen behind Gen. Hoke's retreating veterans. Then came (Union) Gen. Terry at the head of a column up Front Street with the strains of martial music and colors flying. Leaving the main column at Market Street, heading a column of splendidly equipped men mounted on superb chargers – every horse a beautiful bay – he dashed up to the City Hall, instantly dismounted and said, 'Is this the mayor?' The mayor replied, 'It is.' Whereupon Gen. Terry took off his hat, the mayor did likewise, and they shook hands with formal and graceful cordiality and together ascended the steps of the City Hall."

The Rev. L.S. Burkhead,
PASTOR OF FRONT STREET METHODIST CHURCH, IN AN 1865 CHURCH REPORT

"I am completely heartbroken, can't eat or sleep. God have mercy on me. I feel that it will kill me."

Kate Fulton, LETTER TO A FRIEND ON FEB. 16, 1865

Excerpts from "The Wilmington Campaign" by Chris Fonvielle, "The Civil War in North Carolina" by John C. Barrett, "Ballots and Fence Rails" by W. McKee Evans and "Port Town at War: Wilmington, N.C. 1860-1865" by Richard Everett Wood (doctoral dissertation, 1976, Florida State University).

Civil War

Civil War goes digital in Port City walking tour app

By Hunter Ingram
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A horse-drawn cart passes by Thalian Hall on Third Street around 1900. The story behind the building's use during the war and the Union occupation is told through audio and visual storytelling within the app. Photo courtesy of the New Hanover County Public Library.

Did you know that Wilmington was home to 39 saloons during the Civil War years? Or that Thalian Hall staged more than 250 performances during one of the most brutal years of the war?

These morsels of Antebellum-era history are just two of the gems packed into Wilmington historian Beverly Tetteron and self-proclaimed history buff Dan Camacho's latest history excursion: the Civil War Wilmington walking tour.

Released through the pair's Wilmington History Tours smart phone app, the interactive, self-guided tour threads through downtown and out to select historical locations to detail the Port City's involvement in the war effort.

The in-depth expedition concentrates on 13 downtown locations, all within walking distance – provided you have the right shoes and enough stamina to trek from Nutt Street to Orange Street and places in between.

GO WALKIN'

What: Civil War Wilmington walking tour
Download: From the Apple App Store or Google Apps
Price: $5.99
Details: www.WiHi.info

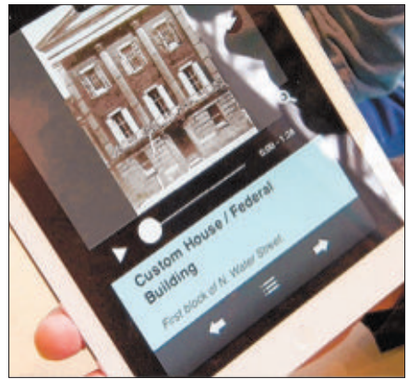
Also featured are five additional stops outside the historic district, including Fort Fisher, Fort Anderson and Oakdale Cemetery. The 18-stop tour was born from what the pair termed "healthy debates" between "content genius" Tetterton and "technical wizard" Camacho.

"If you want to read an article, there are a lot of great articles out there," Camacho said. "But we wanted the tour experience to be something different, something where you are actually there. We want to broaden the story."

As a transplant to Wilmington, I've spent the last 16 months strolling past many places Tetterton and Camacho highlight on their tour. But I've rarely paused long enough to read the plaques and displays detailing the significance of my surroundings, the historic equivalent of stopping to smell the roses.

To educate myself, I embarked on the Civil War walking tour to get a sense of just how intertwined Wilmington and the bloody war actually were. Let's just say it was eye-opening.

The app has three components to make it accessible to visual or listening learners alike. At each stop, the app offers a 4- to 6-minute audio recording with narration provided by Camacho and the corresponding text if you prefer to read at your own pace. A selection of pictures to scroll through appears, although on a sunny day the pictures can be a little difficult to see on a phone.



Several mini tours are available in the app created by Dan Camacho and Beverly Tetterton.

A light flickers on the main floor of the Bellamy Mansion's restored slave quarters. The story of Sarah Miller, a slave entrusted to look after Bellamy Mansion after the family sought refuge at Floral College, is traced from the Civil War to her life as a free woman. StarNews file photo

At first blush, the app's content strides an impressive range from the broad-stroke stories of the city's role as "lifeline of the Confederacy" and its place on the railroad lines to more intimate tales of individuals whose lives were shaped by the war.

"The personal stories are the best," Tetterton said. "(We) just look at each other and say, 'We couldn't make this up.'"

I've spent many a day pacing Thalian Hall at events like the Cucalorus Film Festival and the Wilmington Theater Awards, but not until standing outside of the famed building with my smart phone in hand did I learn about tidbits like that bustling 1863-64 season in the thick of the war. Or about how the upstairs ballroom got its name from the Union ball that was held there after Wilmington fell.

There's also the story of Sarah Miller, a slave entrusted to look after Bellamy Mansion after the family sought refuge at Floral College, near Maxton. Through two sections, Miller's story is traced from her time in the war to her later life as a free woman.

It's little facts like this that make the app less heavy-handed history lesson and more storytelling guide while keeping the onslaught of information more digestible.

Despite a suggestion that the downtown part of the tour takes two hours, it's best to set aside a full day to take it all in. Some stops beg to be perused further, while others include museums, which cost extra, so bring your wallet.

In this way, the app provides a perfect primer for an immersive Civil War experience.

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Wilmington's history in plain sight

Plenty of Civil War history still exists in Wilmington – if you know where to look

Thalian Hall

310 Princess St.

1 Built in 1858 – and referred to during the war as "the Wilmington Theatre" – it remained open throughout the entire conflict, presenting 285 performances (including blackface minstrel shows) during its 1863-1864 season. Mayor John Dawson formally surrendered the city to Maj. Gen. Alfred Terry on the front steps Feb. 22, 1865.

St. James Episcopal Church

Third and Market streets

2 Built in 1840, the present sanctuary was seized by federal troops and used as a hospital for much of 1865 after its rector, the Rev. Alfred Watson (a native of New York State), refused to pray for President Abraham Lincoln.

George Davis monument

Third and Market streets

3 Unveiled in 1911, the sculpture by Francis Herman Packer honors Wilmington native George Davis (1820-1896), a Confederate senator and the last attorney general of the Confederacy. The monument was commissioned by the United Daughters of the Confederacy with funds from James Sprunt, the cotton broker, who served as a purser on blockade runners during the war.

Map by Stacie Greene Hidek

Confederate Memorial

Third and Dock streets

4 This 1924 statue was also commissioned by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and executed by Francis Herman Packer. The granite base, however, was designed by Wilmington native Henry Bacon, the architect of the Lincoln Memorial. Honoring the sacrifice of Confederate soldiers in the Civil War, the memorial bears the Latin inscription "pro aris et focis," which translates as "for altar and hearth" or, more generally, "for God and country." The statue was damaged by traffic in 1954 and again in 1999. The standing soldier's bayonet often falls victim to vandals or passing vehicles and has been frequently replaced.

Burgwin-Wright House

224 Market St.

5 The colonial structure, occupied by the British during the Revolutionary War, became a boarding house for British blockade runners during the Civil War. According to historian Robert J. Cooke, a number of raucous parties were thrown there.

DeRosset House

Second and Dock streets

6 Unlike many families in the Wilmington elite, the DeRossets remained in their Wilmington residence throughout the war. When Confederate spy Rose O'Neale Greenhow drowned off Fort Fisher in 1864, Eliza Jane Lord DeRosset bathed her body before its burial in Oakdale Cemetery. The house is now the City Club, a private club.

Bellamy Mansion

Fifth and Market streets

7 Completed just before the war for planter John D. Bellamy, the imposing residence was used as Union headquarters during the city's occupation. The signature of William B. Gould, a slave plasterer, has been found in the plaster work.

Foot of Orange Street

On the Cape Fear River

8 Near this spot on Sept. 21, 1862, eight slaves hijacked a small sailboat and rowed it, under cover of darkness, 22 miles down the Cape Fear River and out to the Union blockade ship USS Cambridge. One of the eight, William B. Gould, promptly enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served for the remainder of the war. His wartime diary was edited as "Diary of a Contraband" by his descendant, William B. Gould IV.

Oakdale Cemetery

520 N. 15th St.

9 More than 360 unknown Confederate dead from Fort Fisher and the Wilmington campaign are buried under the monument on the "Confederate Mound," dedicated by the Ladies Memorial Association in 1872. The ladies were careful to buy North Carolina granite, so no Yankee materials would be used, but they commissioned a Northern architect to design it. Virginian William R. O'Donovan sculpted the standing portrait of a Confederate soldier. On the base appear bas reliefs of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

A number of Confederate veterans are buried in the cemetery. Among the notable figures interred are Maj. Gen. W.H.C. Whiting, longtime commander and architect of the Lower Cape Fear coastal defenses, Confederate spy Rose O'Neale Greenhow and Col. John D. Barry. As a major in the 18th N.C. Infantry during the Battle of Chancellorsville, Barry gave the order to fire on suspected Union cavalry in the most notorious "friendly fire" accident of the war. The volley fatally wounded Gen. Stonewall Jackson, who had been scouting his lines.

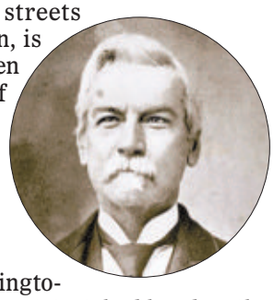
Civil War

Think you know everything there is about the Civil War? Prove it.

15 things you should have learned while reading this section

Test your local Civil War knowledge with this quiz. Stumped? If you read the stories in this publication carefully, all of the answers are there. Or, you could just look at the bottom of the page, where they're upside down.

1. Wilmington native George Davis, whose statue is at Third and Market streets in downtown Wilmington, is best known for having been the Confederate States of America's:



A. President
B. Vice-president
C. Attorney general
D. Secretary of war

2. In decades past, Wilmingtonians used to say that the outstretched hand on the statue of George Davis at Third and Market streets, which was erected in 1925, was pointing the way toward:
A. The Cape Fear River
B. The ABC store
C. The shops and restaurants of downtown
D. Heaven

3. By the end of the Civil War, U.S. Colored Troops accounted for what percentage of Union forces?
A. Over 10 percent
B. Over 15 percent
C. Over 25 percent
D. Over 40 percent

4. The Wilmington National Cemetery was founded in 1877, when former United States Colored Troops were among the first interred. What year did a highway marker honoring the colored troops buried there go up on Market Street?
A. 1877
B. 1898
C. 1965
D. 2011

5. After the fall of Wilmington in 1865, St. James Episcopal Church at Third and Market streets was turned into a hospital after the Rev. Alfred A. Watson refused to offer prayers for:

A. God
B. Gen. William T. Sherman
C. President Abraham Lincoln
D. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant

6. The town known during the Civil War as Smithville is now known as:
A. Belville
B. Kure Beach
C. Southport
D. Caswell Beach

7. Fort Fisher's Battery Buchanan was located nearest to what modern-day landmark:

A. The Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry landing
B. N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher
C. Sugar Loaf
D. Zeke's Island

8. A severe outbreak of this disease occurred in Wilmington during the Civil War, causing more than 600 deaths:
A. Plague
B. Yellow fever
C. Influenza
D. Ebola

9. The bloodiest Civil War battle on North Carolina soil was fought at:

A. Fort Fisher
B. Bentonville
C. Fort Anderson
D. Fort Macon

10. During the Civil War, they called them "torpedoes." We call them:
A. Rockets
B. Mines
C. Cigars
D. Cannonballs

11. Confederate spy and diplomat Rose O'Neal Greenhow met her end during the Civil War in Southeastern N.C. in what way:
A. Yellow fever
B. Gunfire
C. Hanging
D. Drowning

12. The construction of the military installation at Fort Fisher began in what year:
A. 1859
B. 1860
C. 1861
D. 1862

13. After the war, Fort Fisher commander Col. William Lamb become mayor of which Southern city:

A. Raleigh
B. Richmond
C. Charleston, S.C.
D. Wilmington

14. Bruce Anderson was the only African-American soldier to earn the Medal of Honor in the Wilmington campaign. What did he do to earn it?
A. Led a charge of U.S. Colored Troops during the Battle of Forks Road
B. Almost single-handedly captured Fort Anderson, killing dozens of Confederate troops with his bare hands
C. Under withering fire, hacked through (with 12 others) the "pallisade," or fence, at Fort Fisher so that a Union ground assault could commence
D. Took a bullet at Fort Fisher for Maj. Gen. Adelbert Ames

15. Maj. James Reilly, an Irishman by birth who surrendered Fort Johnston to the Confederacy and, later, Fort Fisher to the Union, went by what nickname?

A. Old Tarantula
B. Old Hossenfeffer
C. The Lucky Leprechaun
D. Old Ironsides

NUMBER CORRECT

14-15: Congratulations! You're a true historian.
11-13: You're so smooth – you must be a (history) buff.
8-10: When it comes to local Civil War history, you really know your stuff … sometimes.
7 or fewer: You may want to bone up on your local history.
See page 31 for a reading list to get you started.

Answers: 1-C; 2-B; 3-A; 4-D; 5-C; 6-A; 7-C; 8-B; 9-B; 10-C; 11-B; 12-D; 13-C; 14-B; 15-A

Civil War

SCENES FROM THE WAR

This photo shows the routines of camp life of the 31st Pennsylvania Infantry (later, 82nd Pennsylvania Infantry) at Queen's farm in the vicinity of Fort Slocum, Washington, D.C., during the Civil War in 1861. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Slaves prepare cotton for the gin on Smith's plantation on Port Royal Island, S.C., in 1862. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

The Confederate Reunion Parade marches down Market Street in Wilmington on Aug. 3, 1911. Photo courtesy Dr. Robert M. Fales Collection/New Hanover County Public Library

President Abraham Lincoln's funeral procession makes its way on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., on April 19, 1865. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

Confederate prisoners captured at the Battle of Fisher's Hill, Va., in September 1864 sit to the rear under guard of Union troops. Photo courtesy Library of Congress

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