

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table
The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

July 8, 2019
Our 221st Meeting



Volume 19
Number 7

<http://www.raleighcwrt.org>

July 8 Event Features James Edward White III, M.Ed., Speaking on His Book **New Bern and the Civil War**

Our upcoming meeting will be on Monday, July 8, 2019 at 7:00 pm in Daniels Auditorium at the NC Museum of History in Raleigh and will feature James Edward White III, M.Ed., speaking on his book **New Bern and the Civil War**. This will be preceded at 6:30 pm by a social "half-hour".

Jim White is an American historian and educator. He holds an Associate of Arts degree from Louisburg College, a Bachelor of Arts degree from UNC-Chapel Hill, and a Master of Education degree from East Carolina University.



Jim spent his entire career in North Carolina education as a teacher, principal, superintendent, and college professor. He is a noted author, having published a number of books on Portsmouth Island and New Bern, North Carolina.

Among his works are **Paradise Lost: An Oral History of Portsmouth Island** (2014), **Portsmouth Island: Walk in the Past** (2014) and **Portsmouth Divided: The Civil War on Portsmouth Island**. Other books include **Fifty Years of Light: A History of Grantham Masonic Lodge** (2013) and **Years of Light: Volume 3, a History of St. John's #3 Masonic Lodge**.

Jim is the winner of the Willie Parker Peace History Book Award and the Claude Hunter Moore Journal Award presented by the North Carolina Society of Historians. Jim's interests include History and Civil War re-enacting.

He is a member of the New Bern History Society, the Association of Colonial Historians, the Association of Southern Historians, and Masonic Lodge St. John #3.

Jim is retired and lives in New Bern, North Carolina, with his wife, Nancy. They have three sons and five grandchildren.

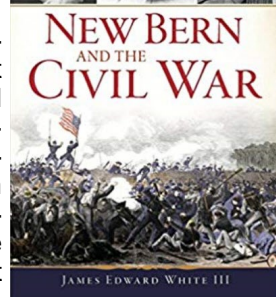
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A Synopsis of James E. White III's Book **New Bern and the Civil War**

On March 14, 1862, Federal forces under the command of General Ambrose Burnside overwhelmed Confederate forces in the Battle of New Bern, capturing the town and its important seaport. From that time on, Confederates planned to retake the city.



D.H. Hill and James J. Pettigrew made the first attempt but failed miserably. General George Pickett tried in February 1864. He nearly succeeded but called the attack off on the edge of victory. The Confederates made another charge in May led by General Robert Hoke. They had the city surrounded with superior forces when Lee called Hoke back to Richmond and ended the expedition.



A review in **Civil War Books and Authors** states: "James White's well-composed descriptive accounts of the several attempts by Confederate forces to retake the strategically important port city of New Bern comprise a very welcome and largely satisfying attempt to fill in long-standing gaps in the North Carolina military history of the mid-to-late Civil War period. Recommended."

Publisher: History Press Library Editions, Charleston, SC.

Hardcover, Feb. 19, 2018. **ISBN-10:** 1540228193;
ISBN-13: 978-1540228192.

Paperback, Feb. 19, 2018. **SBN-10:** 1625859929;
ISBN-13: 978-1625859921.

Available from Quail Ridge Books in Raleigh, NC, Amazon.com, and other book sellers.

Raleigh CWRT Road Trip To Plymouth And Fort Branch, NC

By Dr. Ted Kunstling, Raleigh CWRT President

On April 27, seven intrepid members of Raleigh CWRT led by Jack Milani were blessed by perfect spring weather as we visited significant Civil War sites along the beautiful Roanoke River. After an early morning rendezvous at Sheetz in north Raleigh, we carpooled to the 28th Annual Battle of Plymouth Living History Weekend.

Plymouth was captured by Union forces under Gen. Burnside in February, 1862. Subsequent raids threatened the vital Wilmington-Weldon Railroad leading to the construction of Fort Branch on a bluff overlooking Rainbow Bend further upstream to block federal gunboats.

Confederate forces under Gen. Robert F. Hoke coordinating with the newly completed ironclad ram C.S.S. Albemarle recaptured Plymouth after an April 17-20, 1864 battle. The Albemarle, in connection with her sister ship, C.S.S. Neuse at Kinston then threatened Union control of New Bern and the sounds until she was sunk on October 27, 1864 with a spar torpedo at her pier in Plymouth in a daring commando raid led by Union Lieutenant William B. Cushing. Federal naval gunboats soon returned and Plymouth again fell under United States control.

(Ed. Note: Heroism ran in the Cushing family. William Cushing was the younger brother of Alonzo H. Cushing, who was an artillery officer in the Union Army. Alonzo commanded a Union battery on Cemetery Ridge during the Battle of Gettysburg. During the high water mark of Pickett's Charge, despite being grievously wounded, he continued commanding his battery until fatally shot in the head. He was only 22. In 2014, one hundred fifty years after Alonzo Cushing's death, he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama.)

Like much of NE North Carolina, Plymouth has experienced economic hard times, but the town is situated in a gorgeous setting on the south bank of the Roanoke River and is lovingly maintained by a warm, friendly, enthusiastic population. There is a fine little Port O' Plymouth Museum, a picturesque riverside park, and, on the river, replicas of the C.S.S. Albemarle (3/8 scale) and a Union launch which doomed her.



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I held my breath watching an XXL size Confederate sail- or squeeze down the hatch and was amused by watching the crusty old Coast Guardsman who commanded



the launch whip his tars into action. Once the vessels were out on the river, cannon fire generated very satisfyingly loud booms and smoke across the water.



An army encampment and small reenactment were also part of the program for the afternoon, but we chose to move on to a delicious lunch in Williamston at the Red Herron Restaurant. (It was operated by a very hospitable African American airborne veteran and his wife named Herring, but they decided against the name Red Herring.)



Members from the Raleigh CWRT enjoying lunch at the Red Herron Restaurant in Williamston, NC. From left to right: Beverly Thomas, Jack Milani Jr., Jim Wilder, Roger Gilles' grand daughter, Roger Gilles, Ted Kunstling, Eric Baker, and Surry Roberts

Plymouth and Ft. Branch Road Trip (cont.)

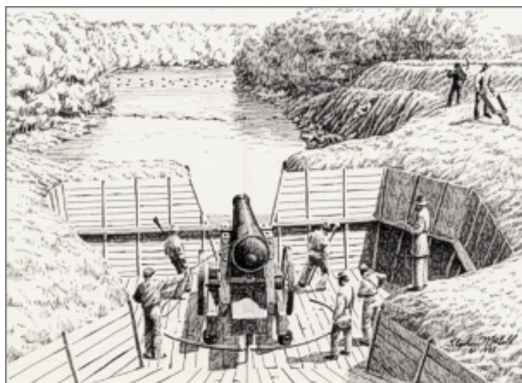
Crossing flat cotton and peanut farmland adorned with occasional neat farm houses, we arrived at Fort Branch which is located on private property. We were surprised to find the gate closed and locked. Happily, we quickly located the property owner, Frank Winslow, who graciously dropped what he was doing, hopped into his truck, took us back to the fort, opened the museum and visitors' center, and gave us an informal tour.

Confederate troops abandoned the fort on April 10, 1865 after learning of Lee's surrender and pushed their artillery into the river. Most of these cannons, much heavier than field pieces, and their carriages were recovered in 1977 and are on display in the museum – quite impressive.

The fort and environs, once cleared of vegetation during the war, are now shaded by towering pines and oaks.



We had plenty of opportunity to clamor over very well-preserved earthworks looming 70 feet over the Roanoke River's Rainbow Bend and marvel at the river vistas.



Drawing (possibly from a photo) showing the same gun emplacement at Ft. Branch as it appeared during the Civil War

The Knapsack (REVISED)



Same view from above the gun emplacement overlooking Rainbow Bend on the Roanoke River as it appears today

Finally, we arrived back in Raleigh about 6:00 p.m., very satisfied by our adventures.

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Raleigh CWRT Gets Write-up in the June 2019 Issue of Raleigh Magazine

Members of the Raleigh CWRT were recently interviewed by Megan Dohm, a writer for Raleigh Magazine. The subsequent article, entitled "**What's in a War**" appears on page 58 of the June 2019 issue.



From left to right: Founder Bob Farrell, Jack Milani Jr., Griff Bartlett, Josephine Walker, Beverly Thomas, Bob Graesser, and current president Ted Kunstling

The article can be accessed from the following link:
http://raleighcwrtsquarespace.com/storage/WhatsInAWar_0619.pdf

Did You Know?

Today, July 1, 2019, the anniversary of the start of the Battle of Gettysburg, represents 56,330 days since the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. According to the Library of Congress, as of 2002, approximately 70,000 books had been written about the Civil War. Extrapolating to today, that figure is about 72,000, not even factoring in the increased interest during the sesquicentennial. This means that 1.3 books a day every day have been published on the Civil War since Lee's surrender. It's estimated that over 40% of these alone have been written about the Battle of Gettysburg or its campaign.

Gettysburg by the Numbers

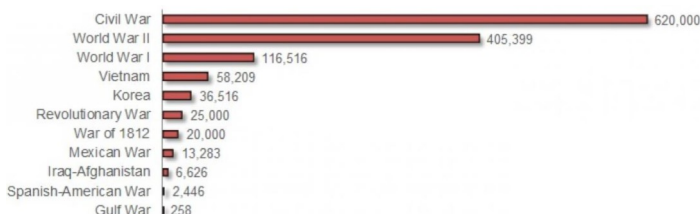
Today, July 1, 2019, marks the 156th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, fought between July 1-3 in 1863. The website, Bookshelf (<https://atkinsbookshelf.wordpress.com/2013/07/02/gettysburg-by-the-numbers/>), in an article entitled **Gettysburg by the Numbers** by Alexander Atkins presents some of the remarkable numbers behind this pivotal battle:

Number of deaths at Gettysburg: 51,112

Total number of deaths during Civil War: 620,000

Total number of casualties in Civil War: 1.5 million (620,000 killed; 476,000 wounded; 400,000 captured/missing)

According to the American Battlefield Trust website, "the numbers of Civil War dead were not equaled by the combined toll of other American conflicts until the War in Vietnam." The same website has the following graphic comparing the number of deaths in all U.S. wars:



About 2% of the total U.S. population of 31 million in 1861 (North plus South) lost their lives in the line of duty. Comparing that to today's U.S. population, if the Civil War were fought today, all things being equal in percent deaths of total population, there would be more than 6 million deaths.

Rate of death for soldiers (from all causes, i.e., disease, wounds, accidents, etc.): 25%

Population of Gettysburg (before battle): 2,400

Population of U.S. in 1863: 33.4 million

Percentage of the loss at Gettysburg:

- 0.15% of total U.S. population
- 0.30% of all males

Estimated wartime cost of Civil War: \$2.3 billion

Comparison to cost of other U.S. wars:

- Revolutionary War: \$100-140 million
- War of 1812: \$1.5 million
- WWI: \$23.7 billion
- WWII: \$260 billion
- Vietnam War: \$140.6 billion

Horses killed: 3,000

Average age of soldier: 25 (ages ranged from 12-80)

Soldier farmers : Union - 50%; Confederates - 75%

Number of African-American soldiers: about 1,000

Generals killed on the Confederate side:

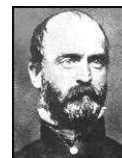
Brig. Gen. Paul Jones Semmes, Brig. Gen. William Barksdale, Brig. Gen. Lewis Addison Armistead, Brig. Gen. Richard Brooke Garnett, and Maj. Gen. William Dorsey Pender (plus Brig. Gen. James Johnston Pettigrew during the retreat)



Semmes



Barksdale



Armistead



Garnett



Pender



Pettigrew

Generals killed on the Union side:

Maj. Gen. John Fulton Reynolds, Brig. Gen. Samuel Kosciusko Zook (brevet promotion to Maj. Gen. awarded as of July 2, the day of his death), Brig. Gen. Stephen Hinsdale Weed, Brig. Gen. Elon John Farnsworth, and Brig. Gen. Strong Vincent (promoted posthumously).



Reynolds



Zook



Weed



Farnsworth



Vincent

No other battle claimed as many general officers.

Range of weapons:

- rifles – 1,200 feet
- muskets – 375 feet
- cannon – 1-1.5 miles

Monthly salary (<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/military-pay>):

- Private: Confederate - \$11; Union - \$13
- Colonel: Confederate - \$195; Union - \$212
- Brig. Gen.: Confederate - \$301; Union - \$315

No. of Civil War soldiers buried at Gettysburg: 3,706

At the November 19, 1863 dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, PA:

- No. of words in Abraham Lincoln's speech: 272
- No. of words in Edward Everett's speech: 13,607

News of the RCWRT



Upcoming 2019 RCWRT Meetings

Date	Speaker	Topic
Jul. 8	James White, M.Ed.	New Bern in the Civil War
Aug. 12	Philip Gerard, M.F.A. in Creative Writing	The Last Battleground — The Civil War Comes to NC
Sep. 9	Amy Bauer	135th Infantry Regiment U.S. Colored Troops
Oct. 14	Wade Sokolosky, U.S. Army Col. (ret.)	NC Confederate Hospitals in 1865
Nov. 4	Ron Roth, M.T. in Museum Studies	Desperate Hours: Understanding the Battle of Gettysburg Through the Art of its Battlefield Monuments
Dec. 9	Holiday Party	Location and entertainment to be announced

Did You Know?

The late actor Lee Marvin and his brother Robert were both named after General Robert E. Lee, alleged by some to be their first cousin five times removed (<https://www.wikitree.com/g2g/615343/i-connected-actor-lee-marvin-to-general-robert-e-lee>).

Lee Marvin, born in 1924, became a U.S. Marine in 1942 after the U.S. entered WWII. He served with the 4th Marine Division in the Pacific Theater and was wounded during the taking of Mt. Tapochau in the Battle of Saipan in 1944, earning a Purple Heart. When he passed in 1987, he was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

This is ironic since Arlington National Cemetery was carved out of the grounds of Arlington House, which had been the estate of Confederate general Robert E Lee's wife Mary Anna Custis Lee (a great-granddaughter of Martha Washington). The site was established partly out of spite by Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs. Meigs also thought that this made a suitable burial space for the large number of Union soldiers killed during the Wilderness Campaign of 1864 since it was on high, flood-proof grounds overlooking the Potomac River and Wash., D.C.

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table was formed on March 12, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization."

We meet on the second Monday of most months at 6:30 pm, at the N.C. Museum of History (located at 5 Edenton Street, across from the State Capitol). The programs begin at 7:00 p.m. Check the RCWRT website (<http://www.raleighcwr.org>) for program dates and timing.

Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Student membership is free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20. Dues should be submitted to the Treasurer by **September 15** each year.



The Knapsack

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Readers are encouraged to submit photos, events, & articles for publication to Bob Graesser, Editor (bob.graesser@gmail.com; 919-244-9041)

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Beverly Thomas	Member	919-859-4474	bhthomas@nc.rr.com

Paying Memberships / Total Members: 134 / 214

New members: None

Donated Books Now on Sale

Some 20 of the best titles from Jim Brenner's collection of Civil War-related books were raffled off at the June 10th meeting. The proceeds will seed a new pool for funding future educational and preservation activities related to North Carolina and the Civil War.

Dr. Ted Kunstling is currently in possession of the collection and has inventoried it. Tables listing the books are in the process of being placed on the Raleigh CWRT's website. When ready within the next week or two, the link <http://raleighcwr.org/squarespace.com/civil-war-book-collection/> will appear on the main webpage.

Prices will be \$5 per hardcover book and \$2 per paperback book. Buy three books and get a fourth free regardless of type. Contact Ted at trkunstling@aol.com or (919) 787-5282 to place your order once the link is up.

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