

# ***The Knapsack***

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

***November 14, 2011***  
***Our 129th Meeting***



***Volume 11***  
***Number 11***

## **Maj. Gen. George G. Kundahl (Retired)** **To Discuss Ramseur at November 14 Meeting**

Our November presenter, George G. Kundahl, retired from the U.S. Army as a major general.

George is an independent scholar and author who lives in both Alexandria, Va., and France. He holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Alabama.



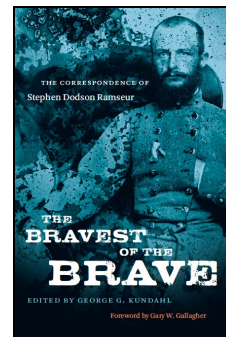
George is the author of *Alexandria Goes to War: Beyond Robert E. Lee* and *Confederate Engineer: Training and Campaigning with John Morris Wampler*. His November presentation is based on his most recent book, *The Bravest of the Brave: The Correspondence of Stephen Dodson Ramseur*, a collection of more than 180 letters penned by the Confederate general.

The letters collected and transcribed by George provide incisive observations about the major battles in which Ramseur was involved. In his personal letters, the general also reveals candid thoughts about the political, social, and military issues of the time.

George's book will be available for purchase at our November event.

### **~ Stephen Dodson Ramseur ~**

Born in Lincolnton, N.C., in 1837, Stephen Dodson Ramseur rapidly rose through the ranks of the Confederate army and led troops in most of the major battles in the eastern theater of the Civil War.



Ramseur attended Davidson College for two years before graduating from West Point. He would become a major general in the Army of Northern Virginia and was killed at the Battle of Cedar Creek in October 1864.



# The Sesquicentennial



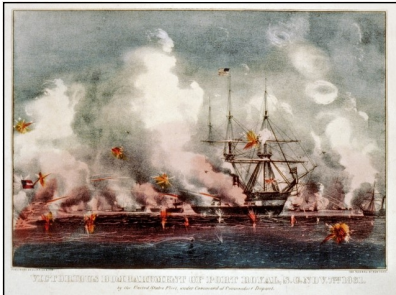
November 1861

## Assault on Port Royal

On Nov. 7, 1861, as part of the Union strategy of blockading the Southern coastline, the U.S. Navy bombarded and captured two forts at Port Royal Sound, S.C.

Port Royal was located between Savannah, Ga., and Charleston, S.C., and control of the sound would help support Union efforts at blockading those two major ports.

In one of the earliest amphibious operations in the Civil War, 77 navy vessels representing the largest group of ships ever assembled under the American flag left Hampton Roads, Va., on the mission. A heavy storm would sink some of the vessels, and others would have to turn back.



U.S. Navy Bombards Port Royal Forts

Flag Officer Samuel F. DuPont commanded the U.S. naval forces, and Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Sherman led the Union soldiers on the mission.

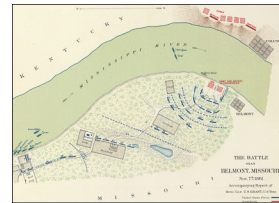
The bad weather delayed the attack and resulted in the Union army not participating in the battle, as it had lost landing craft and ammunition. Ft. Walker and Ft. Beauregard, the two Confederate forts on either side of the sound's entrance were shelled by the Union fleet.

Ft. Walker was heavily damaged and abandoned first. Fearing that troops in Ft. Beauregard would be cut off, the commander withdrew from that fort soon thereafter. After the victory, Union forces occupied Beaufort, S.C., and the territory south of Charleston.

Despite the heavy firing, losses on both sides were relatively low, with fewer than 100 total casualties.

## Grant's First Real Test

Also on Nov. 7, 1861, Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant would lead Federal forces at the Battle of Belmont in Mississippi County, Mo.



The battle would be the first test of the future head of the Union Army's ability to lead a large force into combat. Although Confederate forces drove off Grant's assault, the battle was largely inconclusive. Union Casualties totaled 607, and Confederate losses numbered 641.

## The Trent Affair

On Nov. 8 1861, the *U.S.S. San Jacinto* stopped the British mail steamer, the *Trent*. Aboard the *Trent* were two Confederate commissioners travelling to Europe to seek diplomatic recognition for their country.

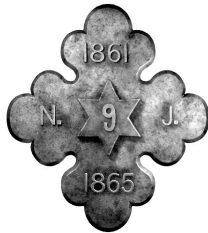


*San Jacinto's* Captain Charles Wilkes seized the two diplomats, James Mason and John Slidell, bringing the United States to the brink of war with Great Britain, which viewed the matter as a violation of international law.

Although Northerners generally supported the actions of Wilkes, Mason and Slidell were released several weeks later, ending the international crisis.

## New Jersey Monument Sought

An effort is underway to create a monument to the 9th New Jersey Volunteers at the New Bern, N.C., battlefield. The battle, a Union victory, was fought on March 14, 1862.



The organizer's goal is to raise \$5,000 for the monument. Any extra funds received will be used for battlefield preservation at the site. Checks should be made payable to "9th NJ Memorial Fund" and be mailed to Alexander Platt, 315 Venture Path, Hiram, GA 30141. (770) 222-4645.

## Upcoming Events

**November 12:** At the state capitol in Raleigh, Matthew R. Poteat lectures on Henry Toole Clark, the state's "forgotten" Civil War governor. Call (919) 733-4994 or see <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/capitol> for details.

**November 12:** At 3 p.m., the N.C. Maritime Museum will host a free presentation on the *U.S.S. Monitor* by Jim Craig, geological artifact analyst. Call (252) 728-7317 or go to <http://www.ncmaritimemuseums.com> for more.

**November 14:** From 10:30-11:30 a.m., the N.C. Office of Archives and History in Raleigh presents a lecture by Debbi Blake, "A Thorn in the Union's Side: Rose O'Neal Greenhow, Confederate Spy" First of two parts. Dial (919) 807-7090 or visit <http://www.history.ncdcr.gov>.

**November 17:** At 7 p.m., Tryon Palace historical site in New Bern, N.C., hosts a lecture about the experience of freedom by African Americans following the war by UNC professor Reginald Hildebrand. Call (252) 639-3500 or go to <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/tryon/tryon.htm>.

**November 19:** At the Duke Homestead in Durham, N.C., at 2 p.m., UNC professor Heather Williams gives a lecture on the practice of slave hiring. For details, call (919) 477-5498 or visit <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/duke/duke.htm>.

**November 19-20:** The C.S.S. *Neuse* site in Kinston, N.C., holds presentations on uniforms of Confederate sailors and marines. Call (252) 522-2091 or see <http://www.nchistoricsites.org/neuse/neuse.htm>.

## N.C. Civil War License Plate

North Carolina is making available a license plate to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Funds from the sale of the plate will help pay for commemorative and preservation efforts.



The license plate will be marketed through 2015, and costs \$30 per year. A personalized Civil War plate also can be ordered at an annual cost of \$60.

After 300 have been ordered, the plates will be made and distributed. Orders are due Dec. 1. Send checks to: Bridget Jordan, N.C. Historic Sites, 4620 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4620.

See <http://www.nccivilwar150.com> for details.

## Preservation News

The Civil War Trust has launched a new effort aimed at preserving an important piece of the Gaines' Mill battlefield in Virginia. The targeted land is the site of Robert E. Lee's first victory.

On June 27, 1862, in the largest assault of the war, Confederate brigades under James Longstreet charged the Union left flank across the property the Trust aims to save.



The Trust's preservation campaign at Gaines' Mill targets 285 acres.

The Trust's goal in this campaign is to raise \$1.2 million. Donations will be matched 2.67 to 1.

For more information on the Trust's effort to save historic ground at the Gaines' Mill battlefield, see <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/gainesmill/gaines-mill---longstreet-attack-2011>.

# News of the RCWRT



## Upcoming RCWRT Meetings

**December:** Arch T. Allen III, pardon Gov. Holden  
**January:** Ed Bearss discusses Gettysburg and Vicksburg  
**February:** Lerae Umfleet, N.C. women on the homefront  
**March:** Kevin Milus, the Irish experience during the war

## Artist Strain at Ashley's Art Gallery!

Ashley's Art Gallery in Fuquay-Varina, N.C., will host famed artist John Paul Strain from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 12. Strain will sign and embellish his artwork. Once again, owner Rick Mullen will generously hold a raffle for a framed canvas by Strain, donating proceeds to the Raleigh Civil War Round Table! Call (919) 552-7533 or visit <http://www.ashleyart.com> for details.

## Gatton Award Nominations Sought

Each year, the Raleigh Civil War Round Table honors an individual who has distinguished themselves through their work or efforts related to the study of the Civil War through its T. Harry Gatton Award. Make nominations by Nov. 30 to: President Steve Savia at 10409 Leslie Dr., Raleigh, NC 27615 or via email to [ssavia@nc.rr.com](mailto:ssavia@nc.rr.com).

## Have You Renewed?

Annual dues (\$30, individual or family) should have been remitted in September for the next year. If you have not renewed, please either mail your check to:

David June, Treasurer  
3912 White Chapel Way  
Raleigh, NC 27615

or, bring your check to the November meeting. You must have renewed to receive your December newsletter!

## Two New Members

The RCWRT welcomes our two newest members, Ellen Brown (Apex) and Wayne Miller (Henderson). If you know someone with an interest in the Civil War, please bring them to a meeting and encourage them to join!



## The Knapsack

*is the official newsletter of the RCWRT and is published on Wednesday before each meeting.*  
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### RCWRT Score Card

Members 130

### September 2011 Attendance

Meeting 40

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 7:00 pm, at the N.C. Museum of History, (5 Edenton St. across from the State Capitol). Members and guests are encouraged to meet for supper at K&W Cafeteria (511 Woodburn Rd, Cameron Village) at 5:15; and for further discussion at The Mellow Mushroom (Glenwood Avenue & Peace Street) immediately after the meeting. Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$15 for students. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20.