

1-2015

Bowling Green Civil War Round Table Newsletter (Jan. 2015)

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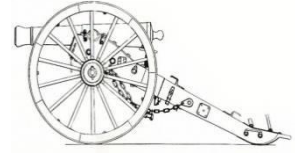
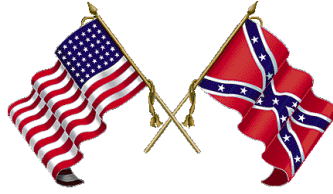
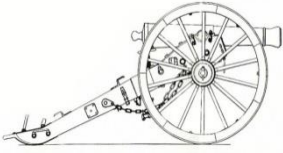
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Founded March 2011 – Bowling Green, Kentucky

Bowling Green Civil War Round Table

President –Tom Carr; Vice President - Jonathan Jeffrey; Secretary – Carol Crowe-Carraco; Treasurer – Robert Dietle;
Advisors – Glenn LaFantasie and - Greg Biggs (Program Chair and President-Clarksville CWRT)

The Bowling Green KY Civil War Round Table meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month (except June, July, and December).

Email: BGCWRT@wku.edu

Rm. 125, Cherry Hall, on the Campus of Western Kentucky University.

The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and is always open to the public.

Members please bring a friend or two – new recruits are always welcomed

Our Program for January 15, 2015

Brian Allison,

“The United States Colored Troops in the Battle of Nashville”

The Battle of Nashville is noteworthy for a number of reasons, not least of which was the involvement of a large body of African-American soldiers, more of whom took part in this action than in any other of the Western Theater. U.S. Colored Troops played a major role in the Union victory, and suffered a disproportionate number of casualties, but their contribution has long been overlooked, and remains largely unknown to many students of the war. This presentation will examine the U.S.C.T. and their actions in the battle in great detail: who they were, what they did, and how it affected the attitudes of both friends and enemies.

Bio: Born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee, Brian Allison grew up fascinated by the rich historical heritage of the area around him. A graduate of Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, he has worked in the history field for the better part of two decades. Most recently, he was the Curator of Travellers Rest Plantation & Museum in Nashville. He is an artist and a storyteller, and is currently working on freelance writing, film production, and design projects. His past works include a recently published Arcadia book about the Tennessee State Prison published in October 2014. He was also the head writer on the Wide Awake Films production *Franklin: Five Hours in the Valley of Death*, which won a Telly Award and a MidSouth Regional Emmy in 2006.

Our Previous Meeting: November 20th, 2014

At our previous meeting Linda Barnickel discussed the Battle of Milliken’s Bend and the pivotal role that African Americans played in the battle. This small yet important fight received some initial widespread

attention but soon drifted into obscurity. The fighting at Milliken's Bend began on June 7th 1863 when a brigade of Texas Confederates attacked a Federal outpost. The majority of the Union soldiers stationed the outpost were Colored troops, many of them only recently freed from slavery. The new African American recruits fought well, despite their minimal training, and Milliken's Bend helped prove to a skeptical northern public that black men were indeed fit for combat duty. After the battle, accusations swirled that Confederates had executed some prisoners taken from the "Colored Troops." The charges eventually led to a congressional investigation and contributed to the suspension of prisoner exchanges between North and South. If you would like more information about Milliken's Bend, please consult Linda's website: <http://www.millikensbend.com>. The Bowling Green Civil War Roundtable would like to thank Linda for her informative presentation, and extend an invitation for her to return in the near future.

This Month in Civil War History

- January 6th: Jefferson Davis sends Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens a letter inquiring into his involvement in the Georgia peace movement.
- January 9th- The Constitutional Convention of Tennessee formally abolishes slavery within the state. Missouri would follow suit on January 11th.
- January 12th 1865- Francis P. Blair arrives in Richmond Virginia with a proposal for a peace conference (this is depicted in Stephen Spielberg's recent film *Lincoln*.)
- January 12th 1865- Jefferson Davis writes a letter to President Lincoln acknowledging his willingness to conduct peace negotiations, but only the condition that Southern independence be maintained.
- January 13th-15th- Union Admiral David Porter the Confederates Fort Fisher on the Cape Fear River in North Carolina. The fort is taken on January 15th by amphibious forces led by General Alfred Terry.
- January 17th 1865: General William Tecumseh Sherman issues Field Order 15, which granted former slaves forty acres of land along the abandoned Georgia coast. This made African Americans more than willing to aid Sherman's army with troops and supplies, and granted renewed hope to former slaves.
- January 19th- General William Tecumseh Sherman begins his march from Savannah into South Carolina, which would lead to the controversial burning of Columbia South Carolina in February 1865.
- January 23rd 1865-The Confederates lose both the *Virginia* and *Richmond* ironclad ships, the first after running aground on the James River, and the latter from Union artillery fire from Fort Parsons.
- January 24th 1865- General Ulysses S. Grant agrees to a prisoner exchange with the Confederacy. After nearly two years of languishing in Civil War prisons without the prospect of exchange Union and Confederate soldiers began making their way home.
- January 25th 1865: Sherman's army continues its march into South Carolina facing no opposition from Confederate General Joseph Johnston's forces.
- January 27th 1865- General Robert E. Lee complains to Richmond officials that his troops received poor rations. Lee argued that the pitiable condition of his men's food contributed to rising desertion rates from the Army of Northern Virginia.
- January 28th 1865- President Davis appoints Alexander Stephens, former U.S Supreme Court Justice John H. Campbell, and Robert Turner to serve as peace negotiators with President Lincoln.
- January 31st 1865: Robert E. Lee is named the General in Chief of the Confederate military. Lee was the only Confederate officer to hold this position.
- January 31st 1865: the 13th Amendment to the U.S Constitution is passed in the House of Representatives. The amendment had already been passed in the Senate in April of 1864, and was formally recognized by the requisite number of states for its formal adoption.

Civil War Quotes

"A rich man's war and a poor man's fight..." Southern opposition slogan, in *The Civil War* by Shelby Foote

"Only three men in the Confederate army knew what I was doing or intended to do; they were Lee and Stuart and myself." from *Mosby's War Reminiscences* by John S. Mosby

"If I tap that little bell, I can send you to a place where you will never hear the dogs bark." United States Secretary of War Stanton

"At the outbreak of the war it was found very difficult to raise infantry in Texas, as no Texan walks a yard if he can help it. Many mounted regiments were therefore organized, and afterwards dismounted." Sir Arthur James Lyon Fremantle, 1863

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle-- be Thou near them! With them-- in spirit-- we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of their guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain." From *The War Prayer* by Mark Twain

"I like whiskey. I always did, and that is why I never drink it." - Robert E. Lee

"As a nation we began by declaring that all men are created equal. We now practically read it, all men are created equal except Negroes." - Abraham Lincoln, 1855

"That old man...had my division massacred at Gettysburg!" Confederate Major General George Pickett to John S. Mosby shortly after paying Lee a visit in Richmond

"Well, it made you famous." Mosby's reply to Pickett

"Hello, Massa; bottom rail on top dis time." - Comment made by an African American prison guard upon seeing his master as a prisoner

"In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free - honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just - a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless." - Abraham Lincoln

"On the Avenue in front of the White House were several hundred colored people, mostly women and children, weeping and wailing their loss. This crowd did not diminish through the whole of that cold, wet day; they seemed not to know what was to be their fate since their great benefactor was dead, and though strong and brave men wept when I met them, the hopeless grief of those poor colored people affected me more than almost anything else." - Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy.

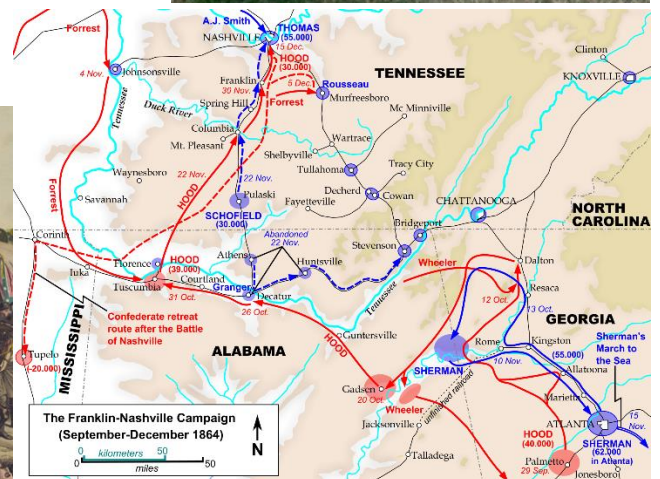
"Tradition usually rests upon something which men did know; history is often the manufacture of the mere liar." - Jefferson Davis

"I want peace, and believe it can only be reached through union and war, and I will ever conduct war with a view to perfect an early success." - General William Tecumseh Sherman

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE BGCWRT

- **February 19th, 2015** - Ron Sydnor, Jefferson Davis State Historic Site - "Jefferson Davis - The Man"
- **March 19th, 2015** - Mark Hoffman, author/historian - "The 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics" (based on his book)
- **April 16th, 2015** - TBA
- **May 14th, 2015** - Gus and Traci Belt, authors/historians - "Religion and the Army of Tennessee" (based on their book)

A View of the Battle for Nashville



Top Left: Plaque commemorating action at Peach Orchard Hill.

Top Right: Bronze statue in honor of African American soldiers during the battle of Nashville, located in the Nashville National Cemetery.

Bottom Left: Artist depiction of Union and Confederate forces during the Battle of Nashville.

Bottom Right: Map of the Franklin-Nashville campaign.