



# The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

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## The *RUNNER*

### Newsletter of The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

Editor **Tim Winstead**

\*\*\*\*\* October 2011 \*\*\*\*\*

**Our next meeting will be Thursday, 13 October 2011 at St. Andrew's On-the-Sound (101 Airlie Road).  
Social Hour at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7:30.**



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We invite and welcome all people with an interest in Civil War history to attend a meeting of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table. The speakers for our programs are diverse in their views, interpretations, and presentations.

\*\*\*\*\* **October Program** \*\*\*\*\*

**Fort Fisher 1865: The Photographs of T.H. O'Sullivan**



**Timothy O’Sullivan 1840 – 1882    Dr. Chris Fonvielle**

CFCWRT member, **Dr. Chris Fonvielle**, will present a program based upon his recently published book about the photographic history of Fort Fisher made by T.H. O’Sullivan during February 1865.

As reported in the *New York Herald* on February 8, 1865, Messrs. Gardner & Company, as requested by Lt. Gen. Grant, dispatched an experienced Civil War photographer to make a series of views of Fort Fisher for Grant’s report on the Wilmington expedition. The thirty-nine photographs taken by O’Sullivan have provided a detailed record of the fortifications that protected the many blockade runners that made entrance into New Inlet during 1861 – 1865.

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Chris has used O’Sullivan’s photographs to paint a picture of the fort that had become known as the Gibraltar of the South. Please join us on October 13<sup>th</sup> for a program that will add to our knowledge of the local history of the Cape Fear region during the Civil War. As is his style, Chris is sure to share anecdotes that will add human interest stories to the largest naval bombardment ever to have occurred on this continent.

**Dr. Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr.** is a native of Wilmington with a lifelong interest in the American Civil War, the Lower Cape Fear, and Southern history. He currently teaches courses on the Civil War, Wilmington and the Lower Cape Fear, and the Old South and Antebellum America at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Among his many books and articles, *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope*, is the definitive examination of the Union effort to close the port of Wilmington.

Editor

**\*\*\*\*\* Raffle Winners \*\*\*\*\***

- |  |   |                |
|--|---|----------------|
| <i>The American Civil War</i> / Keegan | - | Tom Morgan     |
| <i>Witness to Appomattox</i> / Wheeler | - | Martha Watson  |
| <i>Rising Thunder</i> / Wheeler        | - | Richard Covell |

*Robert E. Lee: The Soldier* / Maurice  
*Classic Civil War Stories* / Purcell  
*Andersonville* / Kantor

- Palmer Royal  
- Bill Jayne  
- Mary Royal



**Raffle Master: Ed Gibson**

If you have books, prints, or other items that you would like to donate to the CFCWRT raffle, talk to Ed at our next meeting.

**\*\*\*\*\* Trivia Questions September 2011 \*\*\*\*\***

- 1 – Who was John H. Foard? Why was he important to the Civil War history of the Cape Fear region?**
- 2 – At the southern end of the Fort Fisher sea face, Battery Lamb (Mound Battery) towered some forty-three feet above the beach. This important battery provided protection for blockade runners entering or leaving the Cape Fear River through the New Inlet. It also served as the signaling station to assist the blockade runners trying to navigate into the river. During the bombardment on December 24, 1864, Colonel Lamb ordered that a Confederate flag be raised on the Mound Battery in defiance of the Union ships shelling the fort. Because the signaling flagpole was not equipped with halyards to raise a flag, someone would be required to climb the pole and manually attach the flag. Who was the “volunteer” who came forward to attach the fort’s standard to the Mound Battery flagpole?**
- 3 – Mr. Wilkinson’s presentation began with a slide that showed a seal with crossed naval guns overlaid by an anchor with the inscription “C.S.N” and the phrase, “Aide toi et Dieu t’Aidera.” Know where the phrase originated? Know what Confederate leader had this phrase engraved on his sword?**
- 4 – Among the officers who served in the Confederate States Navy, Commander James D. Bulloch, a Georgia native, was sent to England where he purchased, manned, and commanded the CSS *Fingal* in bringing a much needed cargo of military stores to Savannah, Georgia during November 1861. Because of his unique managerial talents, Bulloch was sent back to England where he achieved prominence for his actions as Chief Purchasing Officer for the CSN in Great Britain. Bulloch’s talents included establishment of contacts & methods that allowed the Confederate Navy to clandestinely contract the construction and equipage of warships in violation on Britain’s Neutrality Act. Among the ships Bulloch procured, the Laird #290 became the most effective commerce raider of the war. The Laird cruiser #290 slipped out of Liverpool as the unarmed *Enrica* and after a cat-and-mouse game with the USS *Tuscaloosa*, the *Enrica* proceeded to the Azores where she received guns and other equipment needed to complete a warship. Having completed his task, Bulloch turned the *Enrica* over**

to a new captain. Who was that captain who would take command and commission the ship as a Confederate warship? Why was Bulloch not given command of the #290?

**5** – Lt. John Wilkinson commanded the CSS *Robert E. Lee* through the Union blockade 21 times. During these trips, Wilkinson delivered some 7,000 bales of cotton to European markets and he returned through the same blockade with critical stores for the Confederate government. What was the fate of the CSS *Robert E. Lee*?

**6** – During the Civil War, Imperial Russia was the only European nation that unequivocally supported the Union and its cause. The leaders of the two nations recognized the similarity between Czar Alexander II's freeing of Russia's serfs and Lincoln's freeing of America's slaves. After the czar survived an assassination attempt on April 16, 1866, the United States Congress, remembering Abraham Lincoln's assassination, enacted a resolution of sympathy to the Russian people. Gustavus Fox was selected to personally take the message to Russia. On what iron-clad did Fox make the nearly one year tour of ports from the Mediterranean to the Baltic?

\*\*\*\*\* **Member News** \*\*\*\*\*

If you have member news that you think would be of interest to CFCWRT membership, let me know about it.

**1** – The CFCWRT is pleased to welcome the following new members: **Judy L. Ward, Art McGiverin** (Associate member – Bartlesville, OK), **Jim Spruill**, and **Dennis Wrynn**.

**2** – A memorial service for Charles Watson will be held at Popular Grove Plantation at 3:00pm on October 1, 2011.

**3** – At the September meeting, **Gary Henderson** addressed those present about the North Carolina Power and Sail Heritage Foundation and its project to build a blockade runner for display in Wilmington. The foundation had experienced difficulties in moving forward with the project - Gary was seeking assistance from members who had skills in ship building, fund raising, or related talents. For an overview on the project see: <http://www.blockaderunnerproject.com/>

If you have talents in this arena and are interested in supporting a most worthy cause, contact [tpwinstead@gmail.com](mailto:tpwinstead@gmail.com) and I will be sure Gary gets the names of any interested individuals .

\*\*\*\*\* **October 1861** \*\*\*\*\*

October 1st: President Lincoln met with his Cabinet and senior army figures such as McClellan to discuss a major operation against the Confederates along the east coast. Ironically, Jefferson Davis was doing the same in Richmond regarding an attack against Unionist positions in Virginia as the public in the South were also expecting a major military campaign against the enemy.

October 3rd: Governor Thomas More of Alabama banned the export of cotton to Europe. He hoped that this would pressure the governments of France and Great Britain to recognize the Confederate government. Soldiers fought at Greenbriar, western Virginia, which resulted in over 100 Confederate dead while the Unionists lost just eight killed but also captured a large number of horses and cattle.

October 4th: The Confederacy signed a number of treaties with Native American tribes that brought these tribes into the war on the side of the Confederacy.

October 5th: The Cabinet in Washington DC signed a contract for a new type of warship – the Ironclad. The first was called the ‘USS *Monitor*’ and had a pair of heavy guns in a revolving turret.

**Note:** This was one of the pivotal moments in the course of the Civil War for John Ericsson’s “Cheesebox on a Raft” would have significant impact on Great Britain’s decisions concerning recognition of the Confederacy. See \*\*\*\*\* **More Summer Reading** \*\*\*\*\* for more information. A review of Howard J. Fuller’s *Clad in Iron: The American Civil War and the Challenge of British Naval Power* further explained the impact of ironclads on naval policies in both the United States and Great Britain. **Editor**

October 6th: The Confederacy started a campaign to find crossings over the Upper Potomac that, if successful, would have allowed them to outflank the Unionist force in the capital.

October 7th: Lincoln sent the Secretary of War to Missouri to investigate what exactly was going on as more reports reached Washington DC about the incompetence of General Frémont. What Secretary of War Simon Cameron found was that it had taken Frémont seventeen days to organize troops in an effort to retake Lexington. The news was not well received by President Lincoln.

October 8th: William T Sherman was appointed commander of the Union’s Army of the Cumberland. Sherman replaced the ill General Robert Anderson.

October 10th: Jefferson Davis, while discussing the fact that the South has a smaller population when compared to the North, ruled out using slaves in the Confederate Army.

October 12th: Two commissioners from the Confederacy left the South for Europe. Their task was to increase trade between the South and the UK and France. In Missouri many people, opposed to Frémont’s harsh rule, took part in clashes against Unionist forces.

October 14th: President Lincoln suspended habeas corpus. Though he did so reluctantly, Lincoln felt that such a move was necessary to the war effort.

October 16th: Lexington in Missouri was back in the hands of the Union after Confederate forces withdrew from the town.

October 18th: Union gunboats started a move down the Mississippi River.

October 20th: McClellan believed that the Confederacy was planning a major move against Washington DC.

October 21st: A Union force suffered heavy losses at Ball’s Bluff. The Union force, commanded by Colonel Edward Baker, believed that it was attacking a small Confederate force. In fact, they advanced into four Confederate regiments. In the confusion that reigned in the Union ranks, many men tried to swim across the river at Ball’s Bluff but were drowned. 223 Unionists were killed at Ball’s Bluff, 226 wounded and 445 taken prisoner. The Confederates lost 36 men killed. There was an outcry in the North but the Confederate leader at Ball’s Bluff, Nathan Evans, was hailed as a hero by the Confederacy.

October 22nd: Lincoln’s Cabinet met to discuss the disaster at Ball’s Bluff.

October 24th: Lincoln decided to replace Frémont as Union commander in Missouri. He appointed General David Hunter as his replacement “with immediate effect”.

October 29th: A major naval force sailed from Hampton Roads – 77 ships. The ships carried 12,000 troops commanded by General T Sherman. Deliberate leaks make the Confederates believe that the naval force will target Charleston or New Orleans. In fact, it was heading for Port Royal, South Carolina.

October 31st: General Winfield Scott, head of the Union Army, retired at the age of 75. He was replaced by General George McClellan.

Source: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/october-1861-civil-war.htm>, accessed September 10, 2011.

\*\*\*\*\* **View from a Blockader** \*\*\*\*\*

At our September meeting, Don Wilkinson provided a view from a Blockade Runner– tension, exhilaration, and danger were ever present to the crew of a runner. It was easy to picture John Wilkinson with his pistol threatening to shoot anyone who made a sound that would give the ship’s presence to the enemy. What was the view from an officer on a Blockader off New Inlet?

Paymaster William F. Keeler, U.S. Navy, left a series of letters he wrote to his wife, Anna, while serving on the USS *Florida* from 1863 – 1865. These letters provided a view aboard a Union Blockader.

Off Wilmington, April 23, 1863

Well we poked around in the darkness for some time without hearing or seeing anything but the lights I have already mentioned when we anchored & at 1 I turned in & slept till the deafening report of the 9 in. gun directly over my head, followed in a moment or two by the rush of a rocket, *slightly disturbed my quite slumbers* & led me to suspect that something was in the process of “turning up.”

A dense thick fog enveloped us on every side rendering objects invisible but a few feet from the vessel. Our sides were lined with anxious faces peering into the surrounding darkness in search of the object of our alarm. This, as the officer of the deck states, was a large steamer which stole noiselessly out of the fog & glided by us as quickly & quietly as a shadow. Before he could train a gun on it, it had disappeared in the fog.

Keeler related the heightened activity when a runner was sighted, but he also wrote of the extreme boredom that accompanied the “sameness” that constituted the daily activities of the crew of a Blockader.

Source: William F. Keeler, *Aboard the USS Florida: 1863-65*, ed. Robert W. Daly (Annapolis, Maryland, United States Naval Institute, 1968), 24-25.

\*\*\*\*\* **More Summer Reading** \*\*\*\*\*

Amanda Foreman’s book, *A World on Fire: An Epic History of Two Nations Divided*, whetted my appetite for additional reading on the roles of Great Britain and the United States during the Civil War.

I plunged into another work that added more to what I had learned. Howard J. Fuller wrote a technical analysis of the evolution of ironclads as they developed in France, Great Britain, and the United States. *Clad in Iron: The American Civil War and the Challenge of British Naval Power* concentrated on the variety of ship designs and designers, naval ordinance advances, evolution of armor plating, and strategies that were considered by each government.

The characters depicted in Fuller's book were familiar from previous readings; however, Fuller more fully presented the contributions of men like John Ericsson, Gustavus Fox, and Gideon Welles to the Union naval development. On the British side, Fuller presented the evolving British reaction to the challenge of Ericsson's *Monitor*. The leaders in both the Lincoln and Palmerston governments played a delicate game to develop and maintain a naval power to counter that of the other. Fortunately for the United States, Ericsson, Fox, and Welles created a naval force that gave the British pause during the period in which the British government considered actions against the United States.

I enjoyed this book; however, I needed to be in the mood to study the technical developments, personality clashes, and diplomatic dealing that contributed to the armored, steam-powered vessels that forever changed naval warfare. The March 9, 1862 Battle of Hampton Roads between the C.S.S *Virginia* and the U.S.S *Monitor* was the impetus that accelerated evolution of all ships that were to be "clad in iron."

Source: Howard J. Fuller, *Clad in Iron: The American Civil War and the Challenge of British Naval Power* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 268 – 285.

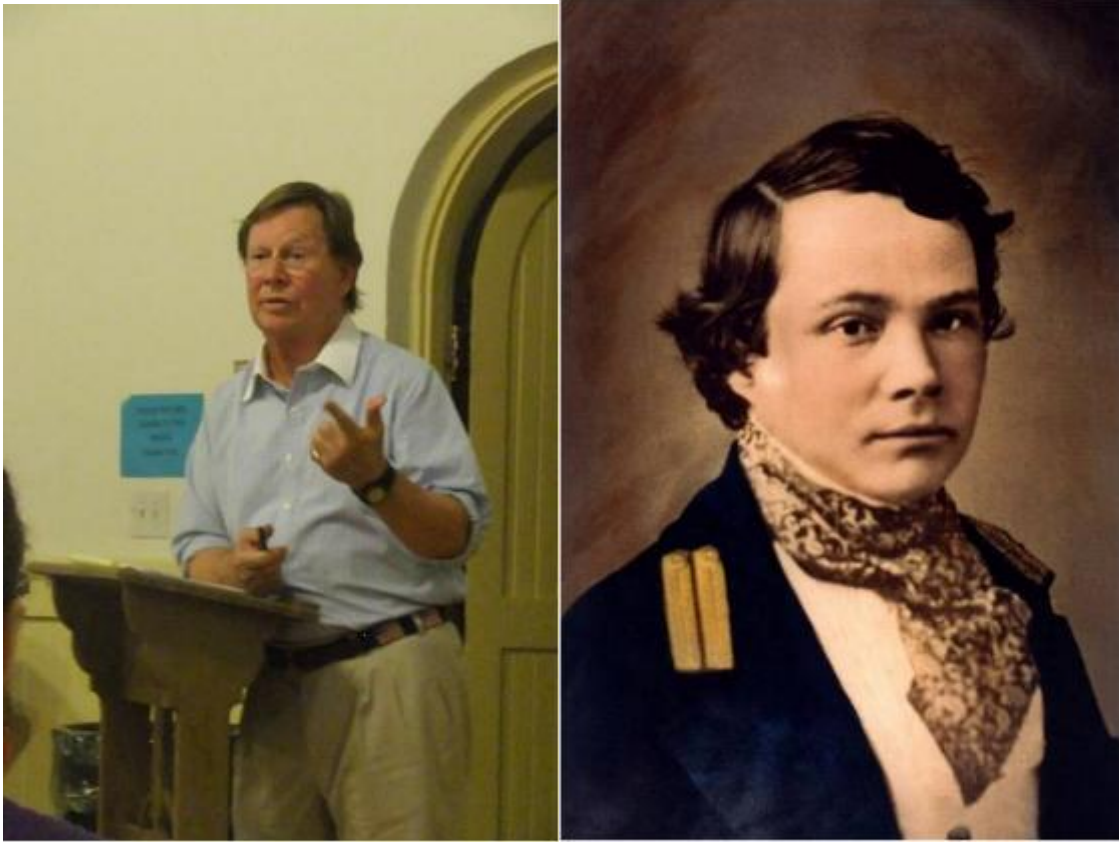
Editor

\*\*\*\*\* September Meeting \*\*\*\*\*

**The Most Good for the Confederacy**

**Captain John Wilkinson, CSN**

**Donald Wilkinson**, great great-nephew of Captain John Wilkinson, presented a fascinating program that shared revealing information about John Wilkinson and others who served with the Confederate States Navy.



**Donald Wilkinson - John Wilkinson 1821 – 1891**

Mr. Wilkinson began his presentation with a discussion of the strategies developed by the Union and Confederate leaders to “rule the seas.” While the Union strategy evolved from Winfield Scott’s schema that became known as the Anaconda Plan – the Union would build a powerful navy that would blockade and strangle the rebellious and agricultural Southern states. The Confederate strategy evolved from the mind of Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of the Navy – the Confederates would use technology to overcome the numerical advantages of the Union navy, they would employ commercial raiders to destroy Yankee commerce, and they would utilize the competent naval officers who chose loyalty to the Southern cause. The availability or lack of manufacturing capability would further shape the strategies of each – The Union would produce the ships needed to accomplish their task, the Confederates would build but few ships to challenge their enemies and they would seek to purchase most of their arms and ships in Europe. Thus began the naval war of 1861 – 1865.

The Confederate Navy had an abundance of experienced and qualified officers. They had few ships available for these competent men to serve upon; hence, a Confederate naval officer was offered the opportunity for a broad variety of services untraditional to in the pre-war United States Navy. Wilkinson discussed the variety of duties that many of these men undertook; these duties included serving “aboard” either: Artillery Batteries, Gunboats, Commerce Cruisers, Blockade Runners, Administrative positions, Ironclad Rams, Covert Operations, Special Duty Abroad, or Torpedo Service. Among these officers were: Comdr. James Bullock, Lt. Hunter Davidson, Comdr. Catesby Jones, Comdr. John N. Maffitt, Lt. Charles M. Morris, Capt. Thomas J. Page, Capt. Raphael Semmes, Lt. Alex Warley, Lt. John Wilkinson, and Lt. John Taylor Wood.

In addition to the naval officers, Mr. Wilkinson provided information concerning three men who shaped the strategy that the Confederacy would employ during the war. As previously stated, Stephen



R. Mallory, Secretary of the Navy, was a proponent of the South's use of advanced technology that included iron-armored ships, torpedoes, fast steam-powered commerce raiders – the inadequacy of Southern manufacturing capability limited the successful adaptation of these new technologies. Christopher Memminger, Secretary of Treasury, supported the strategy to withhold cotton from the European textile industry in an effort to force European intervention – this “Cotton is King” strategy failed miserably, for at the time when the Union blockade was weak, the South could have shipped much cotton to provide cash credits to purchase the manufactured items needed for the war effort. George A. Trenholm became the banker of the Confederacy who arranged the financial resources that James Bulloch and others would require in Europe. Trenholm's expertise made available international banking services for the Confederate cause.

With the background of the Confederate Navy established, Mr. Wilkinson began to share the story of his great-great-uncle, Lt. John Wilkinson.

John Wilkinson was born in Norfolk, Virginia on November 6, 1821. The son of Commodore Jesse Wilkinson and Frances Coleman Wilkinson, John followed his father's path when he was appointed a Midshipman in 1837. During the Mexican War, John served on the USS *Saratoga* which was commanded by David Farragut. John Wilkinson saw service with the Coastal Survey. By 1860, he was Chief of the Hydrographic Party and commanded the USS *Corwin*. John Wilkinson resigned his commission in the USN on April 6, 1861.

Wilkinson was first assigned to command of a Confederate shore battery at Ft. Powhatan on the James River. As with most of his deep water navy comrades, John longed for service aboard ship.

John was ordered to New Orleans where he saw service as executive officer on the powerful, but uncompleted and immobile, CSS *Louisiana*. Union commander, David Farragut, ordered David D. Porter to use his mortar boats to reduce Ft. Jackson and St. Phillip. When the bombardment and an expedition that cut a chain that blocked the river were complete, Farragut steamed passed the forts and the tethered *Louisiana* on the night of April 24, 1862, and captured the city. The forts surrendered and left the *Louisiana* to its fate - destruction by its crew and capture of the crew by Union forces. John was sent to Ft. Warren in Boston Harbor where he would remain until exchanged on August 5, 1862.

On August 6, 1862, Wilkinson reported to George W. Randolph, Confederate Secretary of War, for special duty in England. Wilkinson carried cotton bonds from Secretary Memminger to Commissioner James Mason and he was also charged to purchase a ship capable of running the Union blockade. (NOTE: Wilkinson was accompanied by an interesting group that included Major Benjamin Franklin Ficklin, Colonel William Finney, and Johnny Tabb. Theirs was another story; however, be sure to check out Ben Ficklin). Wilkinson purchased the fast packet ship *Giraffe* from Alexander Collie & Co. Lt. Wilkinson and the renamed CSS *Robert E. Lee* thus began the adventure as one of the most successful blockade runners. With John Wilkinson in command, the CSS *Robert E. Lee* ( 900 tons, 283' length, 20' beam, and 13' depth) made 21 trips through the Union blockade.

Mr. Wilkinson shared a unique example of what it was like to have been on a blockade runner trying to sneak into either the Old Inlet at Fort Caswell or the New Inlet at Fort Fisher. Imagine yourself on board the *Robert E. Lee* where there were no navigational instruments to guide you, there had been no dredging of the inlets, there were no lights aboard your darkened ship – only stealth, speed, and daring were your deliverer. It was easy to feel the tension on a dark night where a cough, a stumble, or escape of steam from an engine boiler could remove your shield of invisibility.

Mr. Wilkinson discussed the tactics used by Lt. Wilkinson to avoid the Union blockaders as he made his way out of or into the Cape Fear River.

- **Doing the unexpected** (don't wait for a moonless night to run)
- **Innovation** (run out during the day – break the rhythm of the blockaders)
- **Misinformation** (spread false rumors of destination and schedule while in St. George or Nassau)
- **Imitation** (Fly the Union flag and act like you are a blockader, use colored rockets like the Union ship commanders to miss-direct pursuit)
- **Smokescreen** (Wilkinson used North Carolina coal to create a means of escaping detection – North Carolina coal attributed to the *Ad-Vance* captured; hence, when and where it was used was mission critical)
- **Daring** (steam between blockading ships making it difficult for them to fire without risks to each other, Use cotton soaked in turpentine to extract extra speed for the engines)
- **Seamanship**

In October, 1863, Wilkinson was selected to lead a group of 22 Confederate Naval officers in an attempt to free prisoners held by the Union on Johnson's Island on Lake Erie. The group made their way to Halifax, Nova Scotia; hence, into Canada and to the Great Lakes where an attempt to seize the USS *Michigan* was to be made. While planning was underway and the attempt was to be made, a Canadian volunteer revealed the plan to the Canadian government. With the Union authorities alerted and the Canadian government anxious to see the Confederates depart their country, Wilkinson cancelled the expedition. **NOTE:** A complete report on the Johnson's Island expedition can be found in the ORN Series I, Vol. 2, pages 822 – 830 in a letter from expedition member, Lt. Minor, to Admiral Buchanan.

John Wilkinson was to serve in numerous positions during the war. At one point he was assigned to Wilmington to establish a system of lights, maintain a record of water depth at the inlets, and make efficient the export of cotton. Wilkinson would make several additional runs through the blockade as commander of blockade runners and of a commerce raider. Wilkinson considered the latter vessel, CSS *Chickamauga*, as being in conflict with what he thought was prudent action against the Union. His last command was the converted commerce raider, CSS *Tallahassee*, renamed the CSS *Chameleon*. Wilkinson took the *Chameleon* on a trip to Bermuda for food stuffs for Lee's army. When he returned to Wilmington and found it taken by Union forces, Wilkinson took the *Chameleon* first to Nassau. Wilkinson (and John N. Maffitt) consulted with the Confederate agent at Nassau and they decided the *Chameleon* should be taken to Liverpool. After arriving on April 9, 1865, Wilkinson turned the ship over to Commander James D. Bulloch. The war was over – Wilkinson later wrote, "... the cause for which so much blood had been shed, so many miseries bravely endured, and so many sacrifices cheerfully made, was about to perish at last."



*CSS Chameleon*

Because he was classified as a pirate by the United States government, Wilkinson did not return to the states immediately after the war. He and fellow Confederate naval officer, John Taylor Wood, operated a marine mercantile business in Halifax, Nova Scotia for some number of years. When a pardon was granted in 1871, Wilkinson with his wife and daughters returned to the U.S. where upon a recommendation from Union Admiral and friend, David Dixon Porter, he established a school in Annapolis, Maryland to tutor aspiring Naval Academy students. John Wilkinson died in Annapolis in 1891.

Lt. John Wilkinson was involved in every duty except that of the torpedo service. The title of Mr. Wilkinson's presentation came from a lecture given by General Perry M. DeLeon at Annapolis in 1900 and it reflected the full measure of service that John Wilkinson gave to the Confederacy:

**“Raphael Semmes did the most injury to the enemy,  
But John Wilkinson did the most good for the Confederacy.”**

**NOTE:** For additional information about John Wilkinson read his book, *The Narrative of a Blockade Runner*. This book is available online at:  
[http://books.google.com/books?id=304DSBXn020C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=304DSBXn020C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)

**\*\*\*\*\* Comments and Suggestions \*\*\*\*\***

Comments and suggestions to make the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table and “The Runner” more relevant to your Civil War experience are welcomed. Send them to me at [tpwinstead@gmail.com](mailto:tpwinstead@gmail.com). Please include “CFCWRT News” in your Subject line.

**\*\*\*\*\* Trivia Question Answers September 2011 \*\*\*\*\***

**1 - Who was John H. Foard? Why was he important to the Civil War history of the Cape Fear region?**  
John H. Foard was a Wilmington native whose interest in Wilmington during the Civil War led him to collect and display his collection at the Blockade Runners of the Confederacy Museum. The privately owned and staffed museum operated in Carolina Beach from 1967 until 1983. Mr. Foard's efforts preserved and brought focus on the significance of Wilmington to the Confederate war effort. After Mr. Foard's death, the collection was purchased by New Hanover County and is now part of the Cape Fear Museum located in Wilmington.  
Dr. Chris Fonvielle served as the last curator of the Blockade Runners of the Confederacy Museum from 1979 to 1983.

Source: Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., *Fort Fisher 1865: The Photographs of T.H. O'Sullivan* (Carolina Beach, North Carolina, SlapDash Publishing, LLC, 2011), 2.

2 – At the southern end of the Fort Fisher sea face, Battery Lamb (Mound Battery) towered some forty-three feet above the beach. This important battery provided protection for blockade runners entering or leaving the Cape Fear River through the New Inlet. It also served as the signaling station to assist the blockade runners trying to navigate into the river. During the bombardment on December 24, 1864, Colonel Lamb ordered that a Confederate flag be raised on the Mound Battery in defiance of the Union ships shelling the fort. Because the signaling flagpole was not equipped with halyards to raise a flag, someone would be required to climb the pole and manually attach the flag.

Who was the “volunteer” who came forward to attach the fort’s standard to the Mound Battery flagpole?

As recounted in Fonvielle’s *The Wilmington Campaign* and *Fort Fisher 1865*, Lamb sent word to Captain Daniel Munn at Mound Battery to raise the flag. Munn ordered Corporal Noah B. Bennett of Company K, 36<sup>th</sup> Regiment of North Carolina Troops, to brave the fire of the Union fleet and attach the colors. The 196 pound Bennett was probably a brave man, but his size made him an unlikely climber. Private Christopher C. “Kit” Bland **volunteered** to shinny up the flagpole. Not only did Kit brave the fire and attach the flag, he re-climbed the flagpole and reattached the flag when it was partially detached. This time the volunteer received hoorays from Confederate defenders and Federal gunners. Source: Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope* (Campbell, California, Savas Publishing Company, 1997), 134-136.

3 - Mr. Wilkinson’s presentation began with a slide that showed a seal with crossed naval guns overlaid by an anchor with the inscription “C.S.N” and the phrase, “**Aide toi et Dieu t’Aidera.**” Know where the phrase originated? Know what Confederate leader had this phrase engraved on his sword? This phrase has been attributed to Joan of Arc during her quest to free France from English control. Most translations revealed this to mean, “**Aid yourself and God will aid you.**”

On April 9, 1865, General Robert E. Lee wore a presentation sword to his meeting with General U.S. Grant at Appomattox. The sword, a gift from a Maryland admirer, was engraved with this phrase. This sword was never offered to Grant as has been rumored. Today, this sword is part of the collection at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia.

Source: [http://www.maidofheaven.com/joanofarc\\_robert\\_e\\_lee.asp](http://www.maidofheaven.com/joanofarc_robert_e_lee.asp) , accessed September 12, 2011.

4 - Among the officers who served in the Confederate States Navy, Commander James D. Bulloch, a Georgia native, was sent to England where he purchased, manned, and commanded the CSS *Fingal* in bringing a much needed cargo of military stores to Savannah, Georgia during November 1861. Because of his unique managerial talents, Bulloch was sent back to England where he achieved prominence for his actions as Chief Purchasing Officer for the CSN in Great Britain. Bulloch’s talents included establishment of contacts & methods that allowed the Confederate Navy to clandestinely contract the construction and equipage of warships in violation on Britain’s Neutrality Act. Among the ships Bulloch procured, the Laird #290 became the most effective commerce raider of the war. The Laird cruiser #290 slipped out of Liverpool as the unarmed *Enrica* and after a cat-and-mouse game with the USS *Tuscaloosa*, the *Enrica* proceeded to the Azores where she received guns and other equipment needed to complete a warship. Having completed his task, Bulloch turned the *Enrica* over to a new captain. Who was that captain who would take command and commission the ship as a Confederate warship? Why was Bulloch not given command of the #290?

The captain was **Raphael Semmes** and the *Enrica* became the famous or infamous commerce raider, **CSS Alabama**.

Bulloch was too critical to the Confederate naval efforts to give him command of a single ship. After returning to Liverpool, Bulloch would “work his game” again and again as the Union agents tried with

increasing effectiveness to stop his efforts. Bulloch remained in England after the war. In 1883, Bulloch published the record of his exploits, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe*.  
Source:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool/localhistory/journey/american\\_connection/alabama/building\\_02.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/liverpool/localhistory/journey/american_connection/alabama/building_02.shtml), accessed September 10, 2011.

**NOTE:** James Dunwoody Bulloch and his exploits were of great interest to his nephew. Bulloch's sister, Martha Bulloch, had married a New Yorker in 1853. Bulloch's nephew was born on October 27, 1858. This nephew became the 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States in 1901 – Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. **5 – Lt. John Wilkinson commanded the CSS *Robert E. Lee* through the Union blockade 21 times. During these trips, Wilkinson delivered some 7,000 bales of cotton to European markets and he returned through the same blockade with critical stores for the Confederate government. What was the fate of the CSS *Robert E. Lee*?**

Wilkinson was reassigned from the *Robert E. Lee* to lead a Confederate expedition to free 2,000 prisoners at Johnson's Island at Sandusky, Ohio. Wilkinson and a group of Confederate Naval officers were on the *Robert E. Lee* on October 7, 1863 as it steamed to Halifax, Nova Scotia. **Lt. Richard H. Gayle** was in command of the *Robert E. Lee* when on November 9<sup>th</sup> the USS *James Adger* intercepted Gayle on the return trip from Bermuda to Wilmington. The CSS *Robert E. Lee* was converted from blockade runner to the blockader, USS *Fort Donelson*.

Source: <http://cavernofcarnage.wordpress.com/acw-naval/confederate-navy/confederate-blockade-runners/css-robert-e-lee/>, accessed September 12, 2011.

**6 – During the Civil War, Imperial Russia was the only European nation that unequivocally supported the Union and its cause. The leaders of the two nations recognized the similarity between Czar Alexander II's freeing of Russia's serfs and Lincoln's freeing of America's slaves. After the czar survived an assassination attempt on April 16, 1866, the United States Congress, remembering Abraham Lincoln's assassination, enacted a resolution of sympathy to the Russian people. Gustavus Fox was selected to personally take the message to Russia. On what iron-clad did Fox make the nearly one year tour of ports from the Mediterranean to the Baltic?**

In an expression of sympathy to Czar Alexander II (and an expression of American naval power), Fox boarded the USS *Miantonomoh* for an extended voyage to Europe. The visit of the twin-turreted ship warship caused considerable controversy among the naval planners in Great Britain.

Source: Howard J. Fuller, *Clad in Iron: The American Civil War and the Challenge of British Naval Power* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 268 – 285.