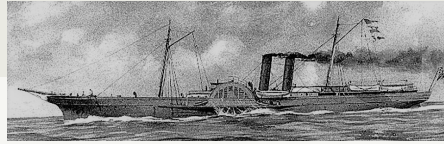




FEBRUARY 2019

THE RUNNER



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

The Strong Southern Woman

We know that hundreds of thousands of soldiers died on the terrible battlefields and in the unhealthy camps of the Civil War. While those at home seldom experienced the terrors of combat, their everyday challenges included shortages of food, runaway inflation, marauding soldiers, deserters and guerillas. All these factors contributed to the impact of disease, an ever-present threat in the mid-19th Century. In 1862, approximately 650 Wilmingtonians died of yellow fever, a communicable disease brought to the city by the blockade runner *Kate*.

Famed Civil War historian James McPherson estimated that 50,000 civilians died during the war and that the overall mortality rate for the South exceeded that of any country in World War I. The home front was a dangerous place.

Yet, for the most part “the strong southern woman” led those at home in successfully overcoming the challenges. Living Historian Rhonda Florian will

(Continued on page 5)

Cornubia

The *Cornubia* was one of the most successful of all Confederate blockade runners. She made about 20 successful runs through the blockade before being captured by US Navy ships *Nippon* and *James Adger* on November 8, 1863. According to *Lifeline of the Confederacy* by Stephen R. Wise, she made 18 successful runs. The Naval History and Heritage Command credits her with 22 successful runs. According to Mr. Wise, almost 300 steamers made about 1,300 attempts to run the Union blockade and approximately 1,000 attempts were successful. The average lifetime of a blockade runner, however, was just a little over four runs, or two round trips. Of the 300 steamers engaged in the risky but profitable enterprise, 136 were captured and 85 destroyed.

The *Cornubia* was built in Cornwall, England, in 1858 as a ferry and packet running along the rugged southwest coast of England. “Cornubia” is a Latinized form of the name “Cornwall.” The builder and owner was Harvey and Son of Hayle, England. She was 190 feet long, a twin sidewheel steamer with a shallow draft of 12 feet, six inches. She was purchased by the Confederacy and primarily ran the blockade between Bermuda and Wilmington, a distance of about 675 miles. She was fast, making about 18 knots, and painted white to make her hard to spot. A typical cargo was 314 bales of cotton, 29 casks of tobacco and two casks of turpentine. That was the cargo reported in the *New York Times* when *Cornubia* arrived in Bermuda on March 22, 1863 out-bound from Wilmington. A “cask” was about 250 gallons and a “bale” of compressed cotton weighed 400 to 500 pounds. Other ships, typically British, transported the cargo to England where it was sold and the money, or

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NEXT PRESENTATION

- ◆ Thursday, 02-14-19
- ◆ Speaker: **Rhonda Florian**

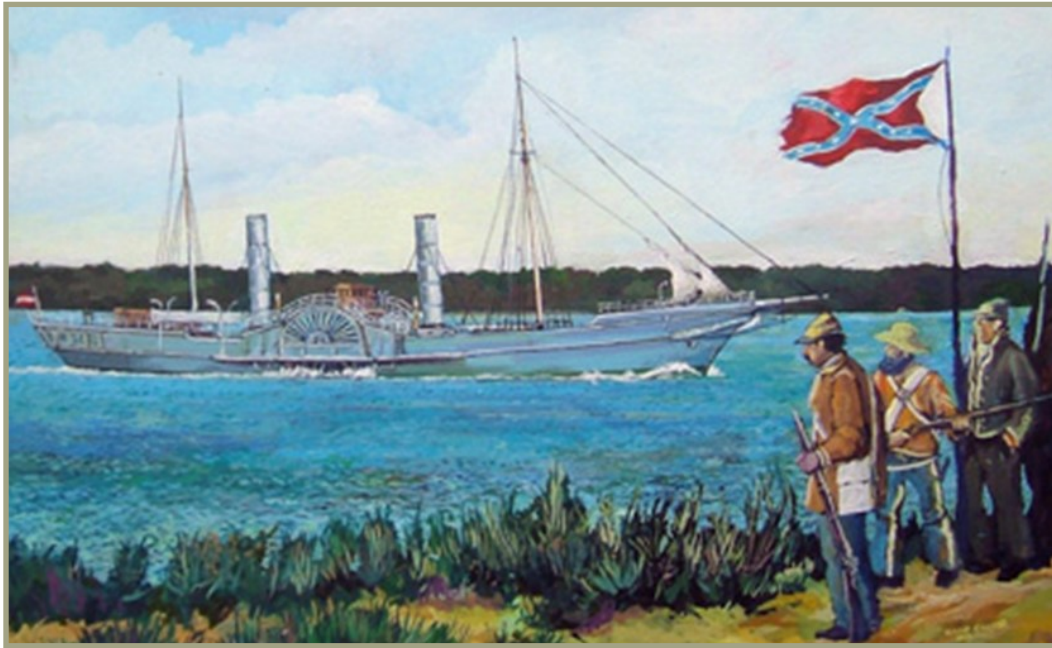
The Strong Southern Woman: Facing Challenges in her own Back Yard

- ◆ 6:30 Social 7:00 Meeting
- ◆ Harbor UMC
4853 Masonboro Loop
Rd. Wilmington



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PAINTING BY CLIVE
CARTER, FIRST LIGHT
GALLERY,

CORNUBIA
MOVING UP THE CAPE
FEAR RIVER.

Cornubia—cont.

credit, was used to acquire weapons, ammunition, medicine and other war materiel for the Confederate war effort. Some blockade runners were owned by the Confederate government, some by the states and some were privately owned. In addition to military supplies, private blockade runners typically brought luxury items and valuable foodstuffs such as coffee and wine back to the Confederacy where it was sold at a huge profit. *Cornubia* was owned by the Confederacy.

According to the U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command, the *Cornubia's* 23rd voyage was disastrous, having repercussions far beyond those stemming from the loss of a precious cargo. Blockader USS *Nippon* gave chase as *Cornubia* sought to run in to Wilmington and Lieutenant Richard H. Gayle, Confederate States Navy, beached his ship at 2:30 a.m., 8 November, 1863. She was beached 11 miles north of New Inlet and out of range of the friendly guns at Ft. Fisher. The captain, carpenter and one seaman remained on board while the officers, crew and passengers escaped to shore. By 3:00 a.m., USS *James Adger* had towed *Cornubia* free on the flood tide still intact and she and the three captives were duly sent to Boston as a prize, along with a bag of water soaked mail that one of her officers had tried to dispose of in the surf.

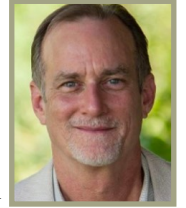
The *Cornubia* papers quickly became a Rosetta stone to unlock the management secrets of the official Confederate blockade-running program. The most immediate result was a new, tough policy toward British seamen caught challenging the blockade. U.S. District Attorney Richard Henry Dana, Jr., at Boston, was designated to receive a sealed packet of all papers taken in the prize. Transmitting them to Secretary Welles, 26 December, after study, Dana wrote: "We have found in the prize steamer *Cornubia* letters which prove that that steamer, the *R. E. Lee*, and *Ella & Annie* and others of their class are the property of the Confederate Government and that their commanders are in the service of the Confederate Navy Department. This raises the question whether, in like cases, the Government will detain foreign seamen found on board as prisoners of war. The letters also show that they are under or-

(Continued on page 4)

THE *CORNUBIA* PAPERS
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Member News

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table honored our own **Dr. Chris Fonvielle**, past president of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table with the annual T. Harry Gattton Award, named for the distinguished former chairman of the NC Historical Commission. Professor Fonvielle is a founding member of the Cape Fear Civil War Round Table and served as president from 2000-2006.



Our April meeting features Professor **Chris Fonvielle** speaking about "*The Wilmington Campaign*." Because of conflicts at Harbor UMC, we've decided to move the venue for this meeting (only) to the Cape Fear Museum at 814 Market Street. The room is the Williston Auditorium on the 2nd floor of the museum. The times of the meeting will be the same as normal. Street parking is free and there is a parking lot directly behind the museum.

OUR APRIL
MEETING FEATURES
PROFESSOR **CHRIS
FONVIELLE**
SPEAKING ABOUT
"*THE WILMINGTON
CAMPAIGN*."

Raffle

Raffle Master: Ed Gibson

If you have books, prints, or other items that you would like to donate to the raffle, contact [Ed Gibson](#) before our next meeting. The raffle is one of the components which the CFCWRT uses to fund our activities and our speakers. Please take part in our raffle by contributing items and/or purchasing tickets.



Getting ready for the raffle

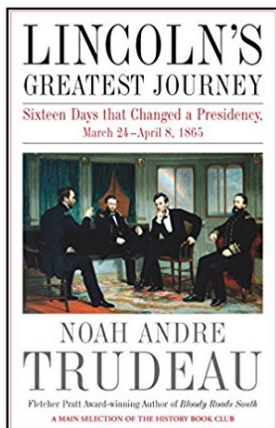
January Winners:

Chickamauga	Bill Jayne
Stonewall in the Valley	Erik Gray
No Quarter	John Monroe
The Sword of Lincoln	Ed Gibson
Lee's Young Artillerist	John Bolger
Lee and His Men at Gettysburg - ?	

Noteworthy

Noah Andre Trudeau, Author of **Lincoln's Greatest Journey**, will lead a visit to sites in eastern Virginia visited by Lincoln during March and April 1865. This event will take place Saturday May 4, 2019. This is a Smithsonian Associates event. For those interested, here is the link : [Lincoln in Virginia: A Wartime Journey](#).

Mr. Trudeau did a presentation of this book for CFCWRT in March 2018.



(Continued on page 7)

Cornubia—cont.

(Continued from page 2)

ders to conceal these facts while in neutral ports, in order to escape the rules applicable to public vessels of belligerents." Welles endorsed the letter, writing: "The persons captured on the boats mentioned and others in like cases to be detained as prisoners."

Comdr. Thomas H. Patterson, USN, of *James Adger* noted, "Her captain remarked to my executive officer that 'though the *Cornubia* is a small vessel the Confederate Government could better have afforded to lose almost any other vessel.' " He was not referring merely to essential cargo. The papers the captain tried to destroy revealed the operational pattern of the Confederate Army transport service. The ship's Confederate register showed the Secretary of War, "James A. Seddon, of Richmond, Va., is her sole owner." Commanders of these transports were CSN officers who reported to Col. Josiah Gorgas, Chief of Ordnance, CSA, through special War Department Agent J. M. Sexias in Wilmington, N.C.

The Confederacy was buying other ships in addition to the *Cornubia* and the ships were initially commanded by British captains in order to give the appearance of British ownership and conceal their identity as Confederate ships. One British captain advised Confederate Navy Secretary Stephen Mallory: "I would suggest that as fast as the ships are paid for, [Confederate States] Navy officers be put in command as a general rule," adding that such vessels "ought to be kept registered in the names of private individuals, otherwise serious embarrassment may arise, as Lord Russell has stated in the House of Lords that if it could be shown that the steamers trading between the Confederate States and the British Islands were owned by the Confederate States Government, they would be considered as transports and would be forbidden to enter English ports, except under the restrictions imposed upon all men-of-war of the belligerent powers."

Following this pattern, orders and letters from the summer of 1863 from Col. Gorgas to Lt. Gayle, via Agent Sexias, stated: "You [that is, Lt. Gayle] will assume command of the Steamer *Cornubia* relieving Capt. J. M. Burroughs ... (whose contract) terminates on reaching Bermuda...Take immediate steps to change your flag and register under Confederate colors." The intent of the whole system was revealed by the following sentence: "Being in the Confederate service, they [crew members] are entitled to be exchanged as prisoners-of-war."

As the war progressed, the Confederate government realized that it needed to gain more control over blockade running in order to ensure a flow of desperately needed military supplies, including weapons. Typical of the Confederacy's reluctance to exercise centralized control, however, it wasn't until February 1864 that President Jefferson Davis was authorized to exercise control over all foreign commerce. In essence, it was too late by that time, as the Union Navy's blockade had become more and more effective as the war ground on.

After her capture, the *Cornubia* was adapted to US Navy use as a warship and ended the war in far-off Galveston, Texas, where she captured several Confederate ships and assisted in the sinking of the Confederate steamer *Denbigh*. She was sold after the war.

COMDR. THOMAS H.
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OTHER VESSEL.' "

Trivia Questions

Which state is on the state list for the most Civil War Battles? Which State is 2nd on the list? How many battles were fought in each of these states?

Answers on Page 5.

The Strong Southern Woman

(Continued from page 1)

...“THE STRONG SOUTHERN WOMAN” LED THOSE AT HOME IN SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES.

appear before our Round Table in authentic period attire to give a slide presentation describing how the war affected the lives of Southern women. Topics covered will be “Patriotism, Nursing the Soldiers, Food Shortages and Starvation, Physical Danger, Refugees, and Smugglers and Spies.”

The presentation features twenty-two Southern women of the period and includes photographs or portraits of thirteen of those women. Sketches from Harper’s Weekly and other photographs are also included in the presentation.

The former Managing Director of Carolinian Shakespeare Festival in New Bern, Ms. Florian will give readings of two period poems during the course of the presentation. She will also dramatize a selection from the diary of Mrs. Mary Rhodes of Alabama and a letter from a farmer’s wife in Nansemond County, Virginia.

Ms. Florian grew up near New Bern and earned a BA degree from Welch College in Nashville, TN, and a MFA in acting from Rutgers University in New Jersey. Her presentation promises to be both educational and enjoyable.



Trivia Questions—Answers

Which state is on the state list for the most Civil War Battles?

Which State is 2nd on the list?

How many battles were fought in each of these states?

For a list, check out this link: [Civil War Battle Summaries by State](#)

Virginia

Tennessee

VA—122

TN—38



Upcoming Events

Brunswick Town/Ft. Anderson State Historic Site

- ♦ February 16, “Engineering a Fort: The 154th Anniversary of the Fall of Ft. Anderson.” [Ft. Anderson - 154th Anniversary](#)

Bentonville Battlefield - State Historic Site

- ♦ March 16, “A Fighting Chance for Life” focuses on Civil War Medicine: 154th Anniversary of the battle.
- ♦ April 5-7—“Two Weeks of Fury” tour and symposium visits Kinston, Monroe’s Crossroads, Fayetteville, Averagesboro, and concludes at Bentonville. [Bentonville Battlefield](#)

Virginia Tech Civil War Weekend

- ♦ March 24-26, **Civil War Weekend** at The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center, Blacksburg, VA. Speakers include Gary Gallagher, “Bud” Robertson, Joan Waugh, and others. [VT Civil War Weekend](#)

Fort Fisher - State Historic Site

- ♦ April 6, **American Battlefield Trust Park Day** Volunteer work day. [Ft Fisher American Battlefield Trust Park Day - 2019](#)

Smithsonian Associates

- ♦ May 4, **Lincoln in Virginia: A Wartime Journey** *Noah Andre Trudeau*, Author of *Lincoln’s Greatest Journey*, will lead a visit to sites in eastern Virginia visited by Lincoln during March and April 1865. [Lincoln in Virginia: A Wartime Journey](#).

American Civil War Museum in Richmond

- ♦ May 4, **Grand Opening of Historic Tredegar Iron Works location** [Historic Tredegar Iron Works](#)

North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh

- ♦ New Exhibit open through July—“Freedom: a Promise Disrupted” [NC Museum of History](#)

THE FALL OF

FORT ANDERSON

“WHERE ARE THE BRICKS? THERE’S NO WAY THIS IS A FORT! WHY DID THEY CHOOSE TO MAKE A FORT OUT OF DIRT?!” JOIN US ON FEBRUARY 16TH AND LEARN WHY AS WE MARK THE 154TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF FORT ANDERSON BY EXPLORING THE INS AND OUTS OF THE CAPE FEAR DEFENSE SYSTEM AND IT’S OPEN GORGE SEACOAST EARTHEN FORTIFICATIONS.

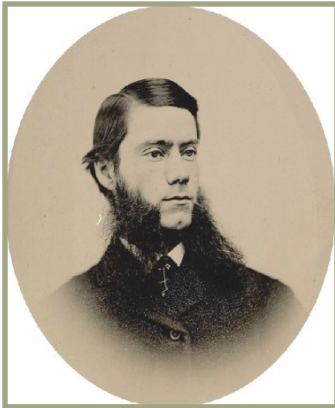
THE EVENT WILL FEATURE LECTURES, ARTILLERY DEMOS, AND HANDS ON ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY. ARTILLERY DEMOS TO BE HELD AT 10:30AM, 12:30PM, 2:00PM, AND 3:30PM.



*Noteworthy—cont.***The Letters of Sidney Stockbridge, aboard the USS Pawtuxet, off Fort Fisher - January 1865**

Our January presentation was shared in the StarNews Community Affairs page online January 6th and the paper edition on January 7th (Thank you Bill Jayne.) Below is an excerpt from that column:

Today the seascape off Fort Fisher invokes the beauty of nature and the majesty of the Atlantic Ocean, ever changing but always the same. In January of 1865, however, something unique occurred. Fifty-eight US Navy ships mounting almost 600 guns stood in close to shore on a relatively placid sea pummeling Fort Fisher, the Confederacy's huge earthen fort that was the key to the defense of Wilmington, the last port able to provide desperately needed foreign supplies to Robert E. Lee's embattled army in Virginia. The sounds and sights of the bombardment were monumental and fearsome.



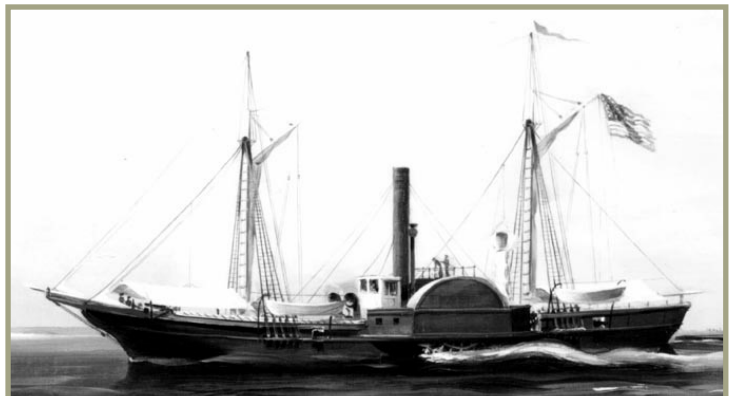
SIDNEY

STOCKBRIDGE

What was it like from the point of view of a side-wheel steamer in the first line of the task force less than a mile off shore? **Becky Sawyer**, interpreter and collections manager at the Fort Fisher State Historic Site, offers a glimpse of that experience. A native of the St. Louis, Missouri, area, Becky earned a Masters degree in public history from UNCW. She is also a highly accomplished reenactor who researches costumes from the 18th and 19th centuries to enrich the experience of history.

Over the course of the past two years, with the assistance of Rick Morrison, Becky and other staff of the Fort Fisher State Historic Site have been transcribing letters belonging to Sidney Stockbridge who served in the Paymaster's Office on the USS Pawtuxet in the battle of January 1865. These letters are on loan from Joe Stockbridge of Surry, Maine, the great nephew of Sidney Stockbridge.

A highlight of the collection is a letter from the battle dated January 16-18, 1865. It contained valuable information about the torpedoes (mines) at Battery Buchanan, a sketch of the fort from on deck of the USS Pawtuxet and sketches from inside the fort. It also contained gruesome post battle descriptions and the apparent capture of the dog that belonged to Colonel William Lamb, the Confederate commander of the fort. Other letters describe the US Navy's push up the Cape Fear River to capture Fort Anderson and Wilmington.



USS PAWTUXET

CAPE FEAR CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

YOU CAN FIND US ON THE WEB! CFCWRT.ORG

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK: [CFCWRT](https://www.facebook.com/CFCWRT)

Books

Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson's Epic 1863 Civil War Raid through Mississippi - by Timothy B. Smith

Benjamin Grierson's Union cavalry thrust through Mississippi is one of the most well-known operations of the Civil War. The last serious study was published more than six decades ago. Since then other accounts have appeared, but none are deeply researched full-length studies of the raid and its more than substantial (and yet often overlooked) results. The publication of Timothy B. Smith's *The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson's Epic 1863 Civil War Raid through Mississippi* rectifies this oversight.

Published by Savas Beatie, \$32.95 Hardcover.

Attention Members!



IF YOU PURCHASED OR HAVE A SHIRT WITH THE CFCWRT LOGO ON IT, PLEASE WEAR IT TO THE NEXT MEETING—WE WILL BE TAKING A PICTURE!

THE RUNNER is the official newsletter of the CFCWRT and is published monthly.

If you have member news or news about Civil War events that you think would be of interest to the CFCWRT membership, send an email with the details to the editor, [Sherry Hewitt](mailto:Sherry.Hewitt@CFCWRT.org). Thank you.

Steering Committee—Officers

President:	Bill Jayne (910) 386-9203
Vice President:	Greg Willett (910) 777-3935
Secretary/Treasurer:	Bruce Patterson (910) 794-8905
Membership:	Linda Lashley
Tours/Trips:	Dale Lear
Runner Editor/Publicity:	Sherry Hewitt
Raffle Master:	Ed Gibson
Webmaster:	Richard Buggeln
Refreshments:	John Moore

CAPE FEAR CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 15750

Wilmington, NC 28408

The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table is a non-profit organization made up of men and women who have a common interest in the history of the Civil War. The meetings include a speaker each month covering some aspect of the Civil War. This serves our purpose of encouraging education and research into that historical conflict.

Click here for membership information: [Membership Application](#)