

# Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia



April 2004, The One Hundred and Forty-Third Year of the Civil War

## April Meeting of 2004

The April 8th Meeting of the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table will start at 7:30 pm on Thursday at the Civil War and Underground Railroad Museum at 1805 Pine Street in Philadelphia. The speaker will be **Michael Dreese**. Michael's topic will be "*Union and Confederate Battle Flags and Color Bearers at the Battle of Gettysburg*" Michael is a noted Gettysburg historian.

**Bring a friend, neighbor and another Civil War buff to enjoy a fascinating subject and to support our speakers at Old Baldy.**

## "On the Roads to Gettysburg"

At the March meeting **Brad Gottfried's** talk gave us a fascinating look into his book "*Roads to Gettysburg*". His presentation consisted of the time period of June 3, through July 1, 1863. From the time the two armies left Fredericksburg until they reached the battlefield. How the men performed superbly in marching 20 -25 miles a day, in hot, dry weather and with little water. The small skirmishes along the way, the missed opportunities to cut off the enemy army, the lack of decision to move an army do to the lack of good communication and the so called political communications among the commanding officers. An how it all came together at Gettysburg July 1, 1863.

## The President's Letter

Hi Everyone,

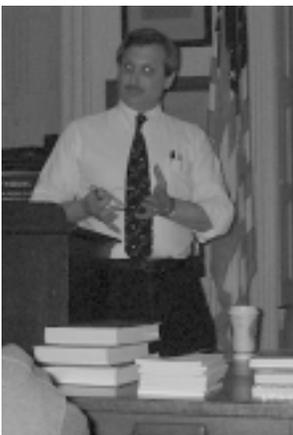
I'm sure by now we're all tired of the cold and anxiously waiting for spring and some upcoming events. Our WWII seminar on May 15th is just around the corner and promises to be a day not to be missed. It's a terrific opportunity to come listen to WWII veterans tell stories of their firsthand personal experiences. Anyone who attended our last seminar can attest to the fact that it will be well worth the price of admission.

Also on April 24th and 25th is the annual re-enactment at Neshaminy State Park. This is always a fun event for everyone. There are book vendors as well as Civil War groups represented and the afternoon has a large scale re-enactment complete with infantry, cavalry and artillery. Come out and spend a day in the fresh air!

Last month we listened to author **Brad Gottfried** speak on the "*Roads to Gettysburg*" as he described how the armies on both sides all converged on Gettysburg from different locations. Quite interesting! Our speaker this month will be author and Gettysburg historian, **Michael Dreese** who will share with us his presentation on Union and Confederate Battle Flags and Color Bearers at the Battle of Gettysburg. Come out and bring a friend!

And last but not least, for anyone not in attendance last month I would like to congratulate member and

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Photos - Pat Caldwell

**Brad Gottfried**

long time CWLM volunteer **Walt Coughlin** on his retirement from the Philadelphia Police Department. Walt served for 49 years and 3 months!! He ended his career as a Sergeant in the Organized Crime Division. Enjoy your retirement Walt, you deserve it. (I am SO jealous.)

Hope to see you all at the meeting.

Nancy

## Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers for Winter/Spring/Summer 2004

April 8 - Thursday  
**Michael Dreese**

Author, Gettysburg Historian  
Topic: *Union and Confederate Battle Flags and Color Bearers at the Battle of Gettysburg*

May 5 - Wednesday **Special Program**  
**Gordon Rhea**

Author  
The Topic: *The Battle of Cold Harbor*

May 13 - Thursday  
**William M. Welsch**

Author  
Topic: *"General Samuel Cooper, CSA"*

June 10 - Thursday  
**Edward Bonekemper**

Author  
Topic: *Was Ulysses Grant a Butcher?*

July 8 - Thursday  
**Nancy Caldwell**

President Old Baldy CWRT  
Topic: *Civil War Horses*

August 21 - Saturday  
**H. Wilson Greene**

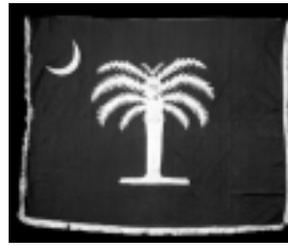
Executive Director of Pamplin Park, Author, Historian  
Topic: *TBA*

**Annual Fund Raising Dinner**  
**Reservations Required**  
**Radisson Hotel, Route One, Trevoese, PA**

**All meetings, unless otherwise noted, begin  
at 7:30 PM at the  
Civil War Library and Museum,  
1805 Pine Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

**Questions to Mike Cavanaugh at 215.725.3602 or  
chief96pbi@juno.com**

## Flags of Gettysburg



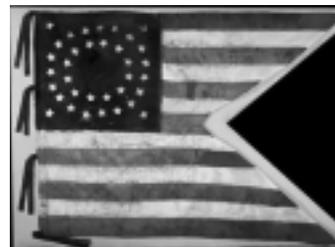
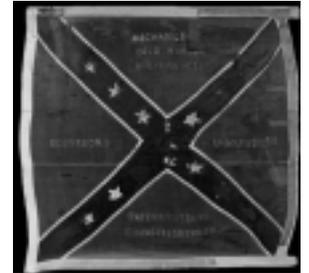
**Pee Dee Rifle Guard Flag**

Flag carried by the Company A of the Pee Dee Rifle Guard.



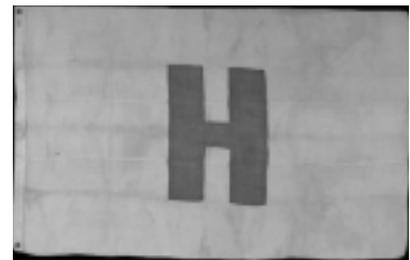
### Infantry Regiment Battle Flag

The 2nd North Carolina Volunteer Infantry regiment carried this battle flag. Men painted the names of the 7 battles they'd fought in, around the St. Andrew's cross. All the engagements predate July 1863, as this flag was captured at the battle of Gettysburg.



### US Artillery Guidon

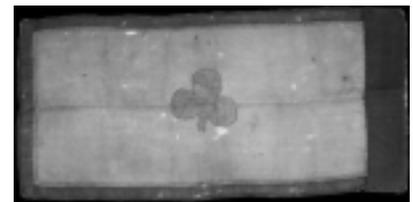
Major General Winfield Scott Hancock was reported to have used this flag. He had a mounted enlisted man carry this guidon so that he could be easily located on the battlefield.



### Hospital Flag

This US Army Medical Department flag was hung outside of a house, church, barn or post to mark that the structure was being used as a hospital. The flag heading has "E&H" stamped on it. Evans and Hassall was business in Philadelphia that operated from 1859-1866.

Army branches were assigned a color; sky blue for infantry, red for artillery, yellow for cavalry, and green for the medical branch.



### Ambulance Flag

The 1st Division of the 2nd Army Corps flew this flag on an ambulance. Each corps in the Union Army was assigned a distinctive badge. Usually composed of 3 divisions, the 1st division was assigned a red badge, the 2nd division white, and the 3rd division was assigned blue badges.



Major General  
Nathaniel Prentiss Banks

Birth: January 30, 1816  
Waltham, Massachusetts  
Death: September 1, 1894  
Waltham, Massachusetts  
Burial: Grove Hill Cemetery  
Waltham, Massachusetts



Major General  
Richard "Dick" Taylor

Birth: January 27, 1826  
Louisville, Kentucky  
Death: April 12, 1879  
New York, New York  
Burial: Metairie Cemetery  
New Orleans, Louisiana

## Today in Civil War History

**April 8, 1864**

### **Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana**

The Red River campaign of Union General Nathaniel Banks grinds to a halt when Confederate General Richard Taylor routs Banks' army at Mansfield, Louisiana.

The Red River campaign, which had begun a month earlier, was an attempt by the Union to invade Confederate Texas from Shreveport, Louisiana. Banks, accompanied by a flotilla on the Red River, would move northwest across the state and rendezvous at Shreveport with a force under General Frederick Steele moving from Little Rock, Arkansas.

The slow-moving Banks approached Mansfield and opted to take a shorter road to Shreveport than one that ran along the Red River. Not only was the road narrow, it was far away from the gun support offered by the Union flotilla on the river. Banks' troops ran into Taylor's force and a skirmish erupted. At 4:00 p.m., Taylor ordered an all-out assault on the Yankees. The Rebels withered a heavy fire before breaking the Union lines and sending the Federals in a disorganized retreat. The Yankees fell back three miles before reinforcements stopped the Confederate advance.

Banks suffered 113 men killed, 581 wounded, and 1,541 missing, while Taylor had about 1,500 total casualties. But Banks was now in retreat, and the Red River campaign was failing. Taylor attacked again the next day, but this time Banks' men held the Confederates at bay. Banks was unnerved, though, and he began to retreat back down the Red River without penetrating into Texas.

## **Death-Knell of the Confederacy**

### **The Final Battles at Appomattox Station and Appomattox Court House, Virginia April 8 - 9, 1865**

On the evening of April the 8th, General Robert E. Lee and the remnants of his once-proud Army of Northern Virginia arrived in Appomattox County one step ahead of the pursuing Federal Army. Lee's hope was to reach Appomattox Station on the South Side Railroad where supply trains awaited. Having moved ahead of the rest of Lee's army, Gen. R. Lindsay Walker led a detachment of reserve artillery to bivouac near the station. It was not long after their arrival -- around 4:00 -- that Federal cavalry, riding hard from the south, attacked the waiting supply trains and then assaulted Walker. This cavalry, under command of Gen. Philip Sheridan, was merely a harbinger of the fast approaching Federal columns. Sheridan's horsemen repelled Walker's detachment -- Lee's much-coveted supplies were now in enemy hands.

In the meantime, the majority of Lee's forces were setting up a temporary camp one mile north of Appomattox Court House -- the small town lying between the Confederates and the station. Word of the victorious Federal advance soon reached the camp. The beleaguered Confederates realized that Grant's men had the upper hand. A Confederate trooper reflected: "I felt myself now to be near physical collapse... expecting to go into battle in the morning."

The expectation was validated when, at 2:00 A.M. on the morning of April 9th, Lee ordered General Gordon's II Corps to move into line of battle west of Appomattox Court House. Lee had met with Generals Gordon, Longstreet, and his nephew, Gen. Fitzhugh Lee earlier that evening and decided to throw a portion of his infantry against Sheridan's men. He certainly did not expect to have to fight Federal infantry, believing that he had outmarched most of Grant's troops moving west from Farmville.

At 9:00 that morning, Gordon's II Corps was ordered forward to break through the Federal cavalry and proceed to the west -- in the process recapturing the station. Protecting Gordon's right flank was Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry. Gordon's Corps, "fought to a frazzle" during the previous week, was a mere shadow of its former strength. The combined force of the infantry and the cavalry numbered no more than 9,000 men. "Fitz" Lee's cavalry spearheaded the advance, and the lines of scattered, grey-clad infantrymen lurched forward; most men somnolent from their early rising yet nervous with the anticipation that manifests itself before an impending battle. As the line moved up the sloping ridge along the Richmond-Lynchburg Stage road, the enemy came into view.

Situated on the crest of the hill and beyond were two cannon of Federal artillery and a brigade of cavalry under General Charles H. Smith. Smith had been ordered by his division commander, Gen. George Crook, to hold his position as long as possible. The Confederates, as exhausted as they were, advanced

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*Confederate artillerymen of General R. Lindsay Walker's brigade dismantle a cannon on the night of April 8 to prevent it from falling into the hands of General George Armstrong Custer's cavalry. Behind them, other soldiers destroy the railroad track leading west from Appomattox to Lynchburg.*

through the artillery and Smith's men fled in their wake -- only to be supported at the last moment by Mackenzie's and Young's cavalry brigades. The combined force once again slowed the Confederate advance, but most of "Fitz" Lee's cavalry skirted the Federals and escaped westward toward Lynchburg.

It now became apparent to Gordon that Lee had grossly underestimated the Federal strength. In truth, Grant had not only positioned more cavalry in front of Lee during the night, but had also force-marched almost three entire corps of infantry along the South Side Railroad to arrive at Appomattox Station during the night. Most of the Army of the James (under Gen. Edward Ord) -- the XXIV and elements of the XXV (United States Colored Troops)-- had moved to block Lee's western escape route with the Army of the Potomac's V Corps in tow. Gordon and his battle-worn

foot soldiers now faced advancing lines of dark blue-clad Federal infantry -- men of the XXIV and XXV Corps. As Gordon's men began to skirmish with the Federal Infantry, two Cavalry divisions converged on the Confederate lines alongside infantry of Griffin's V Corps. It was only a matter of time before Gordon's men broke. The Confederates withdrew from their advanced positions and General Lee ordered truce flags sent out at about 11:00 that morning.

Meanwhile, back at his camp, Lee was deep in decision. Not only had Gordon been defeated to his front, but Federals of the II and VI corps had pinned Longstreet's rearguard in from the north. Grant had surrounded Lee on three sides, leaving the northwest as his only unimpeded route. Lee knew that there was no hope of supplying his army by retreating in that direction. He was in "checkmate": he had no other options left. The disconsolate Lee sent word to Grant that he was prepared to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia.

Casualties of these two battles have been estimated at nearly 500 total dead and wounded.

## ***Appomattox Court House, Virginia The Surrender April 9, 1865***

### **The Gentlemen's Agreement**

On the morning of April 9, while General Robert E. Lee realized that the retreat of his beleaguered army had finally been halted, U. S. Grant was riding toward Appomattox Court House where Union Cavalry, followed by infantry from the V, XXIV, and XXV Corps had blocked the Confederate path.

Lee had sent a letter to Grant requesting a meeting to discuss his army's surrender and this letter overtook Grant and his party just before noon about four miles west of Walker's Church (present-day Hixburg). Grant, who had been suffering from a severe headache, later remembered that upon reading Lee's letter the pain in his head had disappeared. He stopped to prepare his reply to Lee, writing that he would push to the front to meet him. The location of the meeting was left to Lee's discretion.

Lt. Colonel Orville E. Babcock and his orderly, Capt. Dunn, took Grant's reply and rode ahead. Babcock found Lee resting under an apple tree near the Appomattox River. After reading Grant's letter, Lee, his Aide-de-Camp Lt. Colonel Charles Marshall, and Private Joshua O. Johns rode toward Appomattox Court House accompanied by Federal Officers Lt. Col. Babcock and Capt. William McKee Dunn.



Marshall and Johns rode ahead of Lee in order to find a place for the generals to confer. As Marshall passed through the village he saw Wilmer McLean in the vicinity of the courthouse. He asked McLean if he knew of a suitable location, and McLean took him to an empty structure that was without furniture. Marshall immediately rejected this offer. Then McLean offered his own home. After seeing the comfortable country abode, Marshall readily accepted and sent Private Johns back to inform General Lee that a meeting site had been found.

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Lee arrived at the McLean house about one o'clock and took a seat in the parlor. A half hour later, the sound of horses on the stage road signalled the approach of General Grant. Entering the house, Grant greeted Lee in the center of the room. The generals presented a contrasting appearance; Lee in a new uniform and Grant in his mud-spattered field uniform. Grant, who remembered meeting Lee once during the Mexican War, asked the Confederate general if he recalled their meeting. Lee replied that he did, and the two conversed in a very cordial manner, for approximately 25 minutes.

The subject had not yet gotten around to surrender until finally, Lee, feeling the anguish of defeat, brought Grant's attention to it. Grant, who later confessed to being embarrassed at having to ask for the surrender from Lee, said simply that the terms would be just as he had outlined them in a previous letter. These terms would parole officers and enlisted men but required that all Confederate military equipment be relinquished.

The discussion between the generals then drifted into the prospects for peace, but Lee, once again taking the lead, asked Grant to put his terms in writing. When Grant finished, he handed the terms to his former adversary, and Lee -- first donning spectacles used for reading-- quietly looked them over. When he finished reading, the bespectacled Lee looked up at Grant and remarked "This will have a very happy effect on my army."

Lee asked if the terms allowed his men to keep their horses, for in the Confederate army, men owned their mounts. Lee explained that his men would need these animals to farm once they returned to civilian life. Grant responded that he would not change the terms as written (which had no provisions allowing private soldiers to keep their mounts) but would order his officers to allow any Confederate claiming a horse or a mule to keep it. General Lee agreed that this concession would go a long way toward promoting healing.

Grant's generosity extended further. When Lee mentioned that his men had been without rations for several days, the Union commander arranged for 25,000 rations to be sent to the hungry Confederates.

After formal copies of the surrender terms and Lee's acceptance had been drafted and exchanged, the meeting ended. In a war that was marked by such divisiveness and bitter fighting, it is remarkable that it ended so simply. Grant's compassion and generosity did much to allay the emotions of the Confederate troops. As for Robert E. Lee, he realized that the best course was for his men to return home and resume their lives as American citizens. Before he met with General Grant, one of Lee's officers (General E. Porter Alexander) had suggested fighting a guerrilla war, but Lee had rejected the idea. It would only cause more pain and suffering for a cause that was lost. The character of both Lee and Grant was of such a high order that the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia has been called "The Gentlemen's Agreement."

## Civil War Events

**Apr 16 - Apr 18 Pennsylvania Focus Weekends**

**June 11 - June 13**

**July 12 - July 15 (Two day programs)**

**July 16 - July 18**

**August 13 - August 15**

Gettysburg Focus Weekend featuring Licensed Battlefield Guides. Sponsored by the Blue and Gray Education Society. Fee.

*For more information, contact: (888) 741-2437*

**Apr 24 - Apr 25 Pennsylvania Reenactment**

15th Annual Neshaminy Civil War Reenactment "Battle of Bethesda Church" Virginia Campaign 1864 at Neshaminy State Park, Bensalem.

*For more information, contact: (215) 204-5452*

**Apr 25 - Apr 25 Pennsylvania Annual March**

Annual March for Gettysburg sponsored by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, a fund-raising walk for battlefield preservation.

*For more information, contact: (717) 334-0772*

**May 6 - May 9 Virginia Seminar**

"Footsteps of Jackson, Part 2--Stonewall in the Valley," seminar and tour based in Lexington. Historians Ted Alexander & Dennis Frye plus Robert Tanner, Ron Maxwell, Keith & Patricia Gibson, Holt Merchant, Frank O'Reilly, John Schildt, Mike Cavanaugh. Lectures, panel, walking tours to Lexington landmarks, full-day tour of 1862 Valley Campaign sites.

*For more information, contact: (717) 264-7101*

*Chambersburg Civil War Seminars Chambersburg, PA*

**June 27 - July 3 Gettysburg Institute**

"Uncle Sam's Web Fleet: The Navies" Fee includes lodging, meals, lectures, tours. Speakers: Ira Meistrich, Craig Symonds, Geoff Perret, Senator Glenn McConnell, Harold Holzer, Lisa Norling, David Surdam, Robert Browning Jr., Stephen Wise, David Mindell, John Hightower, John Waugh, David Hedrick, John Coski, Spencer Tucker, Michael Bennett, Joseph Reidy, Alan Nolan. Tour of Washington or Annapolis.

*For more information, contact: (717) 337-6590*

*Civil War Institute, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA  
www.gettysburg.edu*

### Old Baldy

**Civil War Round Table  
of Philadelphia**

**1805 Pine Street**

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103**

**215.735.8196**

**Founded January 1977**

**President: Nancy Caldwell  
Vice President: Pat Caldwell  
Treasurer: William George  
Secretary: Steve Lieberum**

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**Families: \$35.00**

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