



# Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

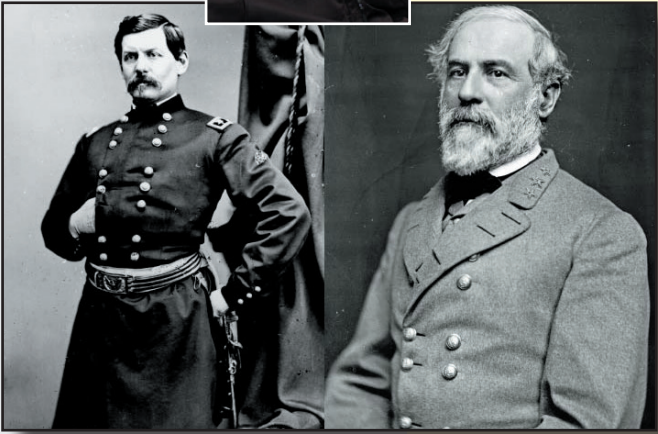
October 9, 2025

The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

## Alex Rossino on : “Lee’s Army in Maryland: A New Perspective on the Campaign of September 1862”



Alex Rossino



Most students of the Civil War believe the story of Robert E. Lee’s 1862 Maryland Campaign is complete, and that new studies must rely on interpretations long since accepted and understood. But what if this is not the case? What if the histories previously written about the first major Confederate operation north of the Potomac River missed key sources, proceeded from mistaken readings of the evidence, or were influenced by Lost Cause ideology? Dr. Alexander Rossino demonstrates that these types of distortions continue to shape modern understanding of the campaign and offers suggestions for how to correct them, developing in the process a new understanding of what General Lee hoped to accomplish in

September 1862.

Dr. Alexander Rossino is an independent historian. He earned Master’s and Doctoral degrees in History at Syracuse University, where he taught for two years, before working as a historian at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. He is an expert on the 1862 Maryland Campaign and the author of *Their Maryland: The Army of Northern Virginia from the Potomac Crossing to Sharpsburg in September 1862*; *The Tale Untwisted: General George B. McClellan, The Maryland Campaign, and the Discovery of Lee’s Lost Orders* (with Gene Thorp); and *Calamity at Frederick: Robert E. Lee, Special Orders No. 191, and Confederate Misfortune on the Road to Antietam*.

### Notes from the President

Greetings Everyone! Whether you participate via Zoom, in person, follow us on Facebook or just take time to browse our webpage and read our wonderful newsletter – WELCOME. Please thank our dedicated volunteers, behind the scenes who bring you this terrific content. **Jim Heenehan** oversees all the media, **Don Wiles** puts together our award-winning newsletter, **Dave Gilson** and **Randy Acorcey** manage the Zoom content, **Kevin Sekula** keeps our Facebook page active, **Pete Wood** is working on the new website, and **Ted**

### Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:15 PM on Thursday, October 9th.

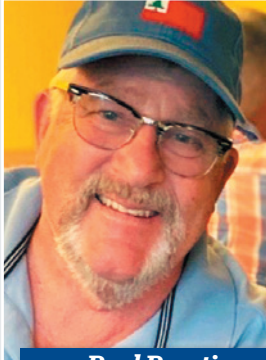
Please note: We will be meeting at the Rohrer Center and simulcast on Zoom.

And will also gather for the pre-meeting dinner at the Kettle & Grill at 5:30 PM

If you are not already receiving Old Baldy communications, email [oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net) at least 24hrs prior to request the Zoom link for the program.

"Members, and Friends of the Roundtable who receive our email communications, will automatically receive the Zoom link and do not need to request it"

- President's Notes Page 1
- Member Profile Page 2
- Today in Civil War History Page 3
- August Raffle Winners Page 4
- Civil War Books Page 5
- September Raffle Winners Page 6
- OBCWRT Author Page 6
- Photos: OBCWRT Picnic, Fort Mercer
- Strafford Display Page 7
- Bucktails Page 8
- Cato Memorial Page 9
- Andrew Hull Foote Page 10
- Events Page 13
- OBCWRT Newsletter Submission
- Protocols Page 15
- Awards Page 16
- Meeting/Speaker Schedule Page 16



**Paul Prentiss**  
**President, OBCWRT**

**Leventhal** takes the majority of our photos. Yes! You too can join in by contributing your adventures, stories and pictures by sending them to Jim. Please see the newsletter for more information. OB has been busy this month attending the Picnic and participating in the *Stratford Centennial Celebration*. A big thank you to **Ed Komczyk**, the picnic crew who set up, brought delicious food and cleaned up and of course all our members who participated. Thank you, **Steve McMahon**, for setting up and manning our table at the *Stratford Centennial Celebration*. Mother Nature blessed us with beautiful days. Don't forget we have a display table at the *Civil War History Weekend at the West Jersey Depot in Glassboro on October 25th*. We need volunteers to man the table and assist promoting OBCWRT. Please read the e-mails and newsletter for more information.

Our 50th anniversary celebration is getting closer and closer so please let vice-president **Cal Kinsel**, [francal@comcast.net](mailto:francal@comcast.net), know if you are interested in working with the planning committee. Preliminary plans are to have the lunch event at the Adelphia Restaurant. We still require a member to volunteer as Zoom meeting coordinator to assist **Randy Acorcey** with meetings and setup. This is a critical position we need to fill. We still need a person to volunteer as Treasurer as Cal, our vice president, is still acting temporally in that capacity.

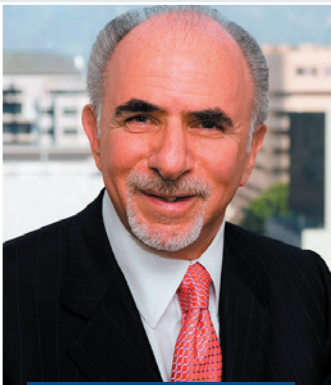
As you know, Old Baldy won the **2025 Matthew Borowick Marketing Award**. We will be starting the November 13th meeting a little earlier at 7PM to make the award presentation. Mat will be joining us for dinner on Thursday November 13th at the at the Kettle and Grill.

We are meeting at the Rohrer Center on Thursday evening at the regular time of 7:15 PM to hear Alex Rossino present Lee's Army in Maryland: A New Perspective on the Campaign of September 1862. *For those who like socializing and sharing a meal together, a group of us meet at the Kettle and Grill, 230 N Maple Ave, Marlton around 5:30PM. Please join us!*

**Paul Prentiss, President**

## Member Profile - Gary Kaplan

by Kim Weaver  
OBCWRT Member



**Gary Kaplan**

Gary Kaplan was born in 1939 in south Philadelphia, which was back then a classic American melting pot of a neighborhood. His father, a skilled tailor, immigrated from Ukraine; his mother was from a small town near Krakow, Poland. Their humble effort at assimilation into U.S. culture included purchasing in 1950 a rowhouse in Oxford Circle, a picture of FDR on the living room wall, and a strict rule of speaking only English in their often family-filled home.

Early on, Gary was smitten with the movies. "My dad had a passion for Western films, and for me it was contagious. We frequently bonded at the Saturday kiddie matinees, where for 10 cents we could see a western double feature, animated shorts, a serial and a newsreel." One of Gary's best friends at Solis-Cohen Elementary School was future actor Mark Margolis, who portrayed Hector Salamanca in *Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul*. Although his parents would encourage college throughout his school years, Gary harbored a fantasy of going to Hollywood to become an actor like Mark, or maybe a broadcaster in radio or TV. But family pressure prevailed and Gary pursued a more practical course.

After graduating from Lincoln High School in 1957, Gary entered Penn State University as a political science major, and produced and appeared in weekly public service programs at WMAJ. He was president of his fraternity, and elected into Scabbard & Blade, the college military honor society (he was Army ROTC). At commencement in 1961, Gary was commissioned a second lieutenant and wore the uniform of the U.S. Army.

Following a year of teaching biology at Northeast High School in Philly, Gary began his three years of active duty in the First Army. He spent the balance of



his tour at Fort Hamilton, NY, where he was CO of the Returnee-Reassignment Station. He emerged with the rank of Captain and accepted a position with Bell Labs as a college recruiter in its human resources department. It was at Bell Labs that he met his wife, Linda.

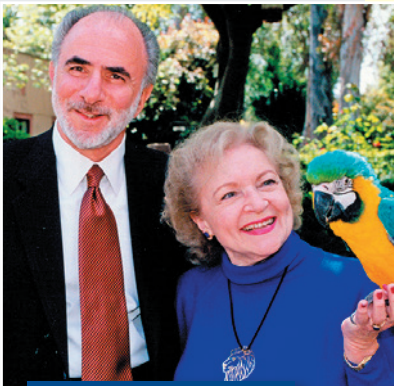
Over the next 15 years, Gary advanced his professional career in human resources management. In 1978, he and Linda moved to CA after Gary was recruited by Crocker National Bank to be its VP of human resources. The executive recruiting firm Korn Ferry found him and enticed him away with an offer to enter the executive search field as a partner, and then a managing VP. He launched the firm's first entertainment specialty practice and realized his dream of making an impact on the entertainment industry.

And then in 1984, Gary struck out on his own and founded Gary Kaplan & Associates, an executive search firm based in Pasadena. "We had a very versatile practice, and it was international in scope: higher education, healthcare, nonprofits, mining, museums and entertainment." Things seemed to come full circle when Gene Autry, the top box office attraction of Hollywood westerns, became a client. "I was like a kid in a lollipop factory every time I was around him! I idolized him as a youngster, watching him with my dad in those early westerns." Because of his expertise in the recruitment field, Gary was featured in and written numerous articles for major publications and has appeared on many national TV news programs. Being passionate about volunteerism, Gary served on a multitude of boards, including the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association for 15 years, serving as vice chair for 9, where his "boss" for several of those years was chairperson and beloved actress, Betty White.

In 2011, Gary transitioned from a whirlwind business life into retirement. He has traveled extensively with Linda, his wife of 57 years. They have visited every continent except Antarctica. Hawaii is a favorite vacation spot; Gary calls it his Jersey Shore. Living in La Canada, CA, Gary and Linda are fortunate to have their three grown sons and their families living nearby in southern CA. "Our family is our greatest joy and passion."

In July 2020, Gary was on Zoom enjoying a meeting of the DelVal CWRT—his sister Bernice is a member—and Rich Jankowski, Old Baldy's resident recruiter, saw Gary and pounced. "In junior high, I became interested in the Civil War. I read books by Catton and was deeply moved by Kantor's, Andersonville. I attempted to see as many films with Civil War themes as possible."

Gary wants to thank Rich Jankowski for reaching out to him, especially since he lives quite remote in South Jersey, and for bringing him back to his old neighborhood, Marlton, with an informed and interesting group in touch with a subject that has long fascinated him.



Gary and Betty White

## Today in Civil War History

1861 Wednesday, October 9

### **Eastern Theater**

The Union-held fortifications and batteries along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the Confederacy are a direct threat to rebel seaborne trade, but prove difficult to handle as they can be supplied and reinforced by the US Navy. Fort Pickens, on Santa Rosa Island, is just such a fortification which dominates Pensacola harbor, the finest anchorage on the Gulf. It is garrisoned by regular infantry and artillery. They are supported by a Zouave regiment, the 6th New York, which is encamped a mile further down the island. Although there is a large Confederate Army under General Braxton Bragg on the mainland, the Zouaves neglect to mount more than a token guard down the island. In the early hours, the Confederates land a force of up to 2000 men not four miles down the island. Although Colonel Billy Wilson has little more than 200 effectives under his command, they put up a stern resistance when the

## OBCWRT Awards

American Battlefield Trust  
for 25 Year Service to the Trust  
presented to OBCWRT

The Society For Women  
and the Civil War  
for Service to the Society  
presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress  
The Wallace L. Rueckel  
Innovation Award  
presented to OBCWRT (2022)

Civil War Roundtable Congress  
Sustainability Challenge  
presented to OBCWRT  
(2023)

Kevin M. Hale Award  
for best Historical  
Newsletter in New Jersey  
(2017, 2022)

Candid  
Gold Transparency Award  
presented to OBCWRT  
(2024)

Matthew Borowick  
Marketing Award  
presented to OBCWRT  
(2025)

rebels attack. Soon, laden with plunder, the Confederates retire. But as they are boarding their boats they are in turn attacked by a column from the fort, coming to the aid of the Zouaves. Confederate losses are great at this point, and they retreat back across the bay.

## 1861 Thursday, October 9

### **Eastern Theater**

J.E.B. Stuart takes a force of 1800 Confederate cavalymen on a raid deep into Federal territory which will last for several days. Western Theater General Braxton Bragg withdraws from Perryville towards Harrodsburg, where he unites with Kirby Smith. From there the Confederates move south towards Camp Dick Robinson and out of the state of Kentucky.

## 1863 Friday, October 9

### **Western Theater**

Wheeler's cavalry return from their raid, having narrowly escaped defeat by the large concentration of Union cavalry ranged against them. Although some of their booty is lost, the Confederates have burned hundreds of Union wagons—a crippling blow to Rosecrans' supply system.

## 1864 Sunday, October 9

### **Eastern Theater**

Sheridan counter-attacks in the Shenandoah, sending his cavalry under Meritt and Custer to respond in force to the Confederate cavalry raids of the last week. The Union cavalry defeat Early's horsemen under Rosser and Lomax, taking 300 prisoners for the loss of nine dead and 48 wounded.

## 1865 Month of October

### **The North**

On October 11 President Johnson paroles former Confederate vice-president Stephens and several members of Jefferson Davis's Cabinet.

### **Mexico**

On October 3 Maximilian announces the "Black Decree." Believing that Juarez had fled across the Rio Grande, he proclaims that the Republican forces have ceased to exist and any further action against his government will be regarded as criminal, punishable by death. In fact, Juarez never leaves the country, although .. his officers attend festivities organized by Sheridan's command.

### **Jamaica**

Free blacks riot on the British island of Jamaica, killing 21 people before British soldiers quell the disturbance. Southern fears about their own black population are increased when the news reaches America.

### **Far West**

Peace is established on the southern plains in treaties signed on the Little Arkansas on October 12 and 24. The Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and Commanche tribes accept annual annuities in exchange for with-drawing to areas south of Kansas and east of New Mexico. The Cheyenne and Arapaho received extra payment—blood money for the "gross and wanton outrages" perpetrated by Chivington and his men.

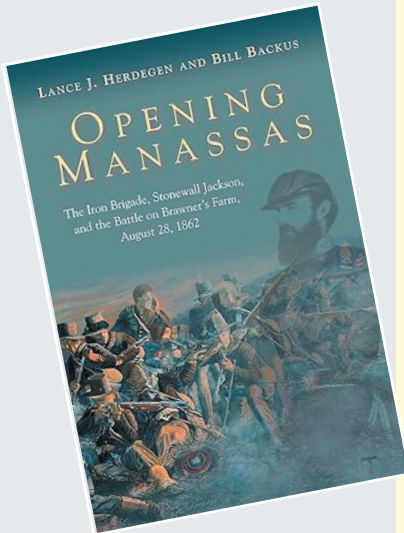
### **August Raffle Book Winners -**

**Book : Grand Army of the Republic and Union Veteran Research**  
**Present at Meeting: Paul Prentess**  
**Zoom Meeting Participant: Alex Glisson**  
**Member: Dylan Scurria**

# American Civil War Books

(to be released October 2025)

Compiled by Kim Weaver  
OBCWRT Member



## ***Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle on Brawner's Farm, August 28, 1862***

*by Lance J. Herdegen, Bill Backus/Savas Beatie*

In the fading light of August 28, 1862, an untested Union brigade of Wisconsin and Indiana men fought an unexpected 90-minute stand-up clash with the Confederate veterans of Stonewall Jackson on the Virginia farm fields of John Brawner. The Rebels recalled a Wisconsin man that day “yelling like demons [in] a roaring hell of fire.” Despite its fascinating origins and far-reaching consequences, surprisingly little has been penned about this remarkable engagement. *Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle on Brawner's Farm, August 28, 1862*, rectifies this oversight in the first full-length balanced study of the affair ever published.

In August 1862, Robert E. Lee struck north to carry the war away from Richmond. His opponent at the head of the recently constructed Army of Virginia, Maj. Gen. John Pope, was new to the theater and had just suffered a bloody awakening at Cedar Mountain on August 9. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson’s wing marched first, swinging behind Pope and destroying the massive Union supply depot at Manassas Junction. The stunning move shocked the Union high command. Pope withdrew from his defensive line along the Rappahannock determined to find and eradicate the Confederates. First he had to find them. Unbeknownst to Pope, Jackson had deployed his men in a strong wooded defensive position along an abandoned railroad cut. All Old Jack needed was a reason to sally forth and strike an unsuspecting piece of Pope’s scattered army. That opportunity presented itself on the afternoon of August 28 when the Western men, soon to be known as the Iron Brigade, marched along the Warrenton Pike, unaware that danger lurked just yards away off their exposed left flank.

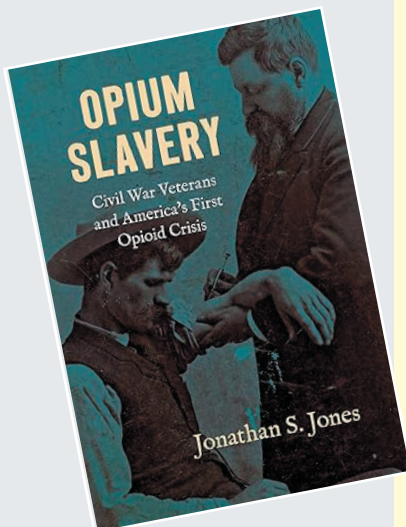
One battle, two authors. This unique study uses a fog-of-war approach to unfold the battle as the soldiers of both sides would have experienced it, and how the various officers reacted with only the information they had at the time. Award-winning author Lance J. Herdegen handles the Union side of the equation, while preservation historian and veteran of the National Park Service, Bill Backus, chronicles the Confederate perspective. Together, chapter by chapter, they march their respective forces to the point of destiny and discover unexpected insights into the engagement and the leadership decisions of both sides. The affair was a rude baptism of blood for Western Union men, while the bold thrust by Jackson revealed his location and put his entire command in serious peril.

*Opening Manassas* is based on primary source material and a complete understanding of the terrain. Its unique dual-author and fog-of-war approach, together with its original maps and explanatory notes, makes it a must-have book for students of the Civil War.

## ***Opium Slavery: Civil War Veterans and America's First Opioid Crisis***

*by Jonathan S. Jones/The University of North Carolina Press*

During the Civil War, the utility and widespread availability of opium and morphine made opiates essential to wartime medicine. After the war ended, thousands of ailing soldiers became addicted, or “enslaved,” as nineteenth-century Americans phrased it. Veterans, their families, and communities struggled to cope with addiction’s health and social consequences. Medical and government authorities compounded veterans’





suffering and imbued the epidemic with cultural meaning by branding addiction as a matter of moral weakness, unmanliness, or mental infirmity. Framing addiction as "opium slavery" limited the efficacy of care and left many veterans to suffer needlessly for decades after the war ended.

Drawing from veterans' firsthand accounts as well as mental asylum and hospital records, government and medical reports, newspaper coverage of addiction, and advertisements, Jonathan S. Jones unearths the poorly understood stories of opiate-addicted Civil War veterans in unflinching detail, illuminating the war's traumatic legacies. In doing so, Jones provides critical historical context for the modern opioid crisis, which bears tragic resemblance to that of the post-Civil War era.

***Point Lookout, Maryland: The Largest Civil War Prison***

*by Robert E. Crickenberger, Jr./Savas Beatie*

***The Atlantic Campaign: Volume 2: From the Etowah River to Kennesaw Mountain, May 20 to June 27, 1864***

*by David A. Powell/Savas Beatie*

***Measuring the Man: The Writing of Frederick Douglass on Abraham Lincoln***

*by Lucas E. Morel, Jonathan W. White/Reedy Press*

***A Forest of Granite:***

***Union Monuments at Gettysburg 1863-1913***

*by Brendan Harris/Brookline Books*

***Gothic and Strange True Tales of the Civil War***

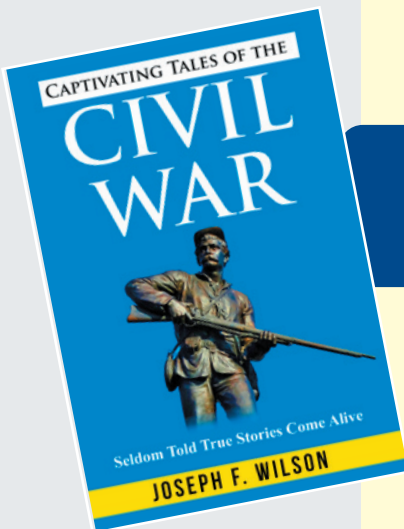
*by Keven McQueen/America ThroughTime*

***The Boston Way: Radicals Against Slavery and the Civil War***

*by Mark Kurlansky/David R. Godine, Publisher*

***The Day They Hanged Old Brown: The Making of Celebrity and Martyrdom in the Civil War Era***

*by John R. Van Atta/University of Missouri*



***"Captivating Tales of the Civil War"***  
***A New Book by Old Baldy Member Joe Wilson ...***  
***"An October release"***

In this collection of true stories, I've gathered some of the most fascinating tales that fly under the radar and may be lost forever to the dustbin of history. All of these accounts are part of the historical record.

In "The Yankee Who Cheated Death", the story centers on a Yank shot seven times and left for dead. Another tale, "A Boy Sailor's Tragic Odyssey", follows a sixteen year old boy who only wanted to support his mother. Even love blossoms in "Finding Love in the Ruins of War."

My purpose in writing this book is to shine a spotlight on the trials of ordinary soldiers whose gripping story might otherwise be forgotten. Civil War scholars of all levels will appreciate these narratives. I hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as I have enjoyed researching and writing them.

*Joseph F. Wilson*  
*Member of Old Baldy CWRT*  
*General Meade Society*  
*of Philadelphia*

***September Raffle Book Winners -***

***Book : The Revolutionary War: The Philadelphia Campaign 1777***

***Present at Meeting: Lorraine Gancher***

***Zoom Meeting Participant: Mike Hoover***

***Member: Mary Wible***

# Photos - Old Baldy Picnic and Fort Mercer Stratford Centennial Display and Program Presenter

Photos by  
Amy Hummel  
Ed Komczyk  
Margaret Tumas  
OBCWRT Members



Whithall House

Red Bank Battlefield



A model of Fort Mercer

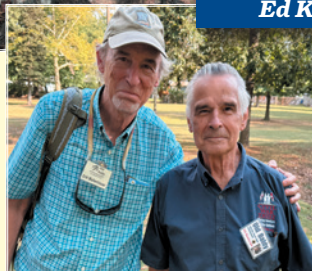


Karl Pusch, his dog Pug and me  
at this ancient Sycamore tree  
which may be a witness tree.



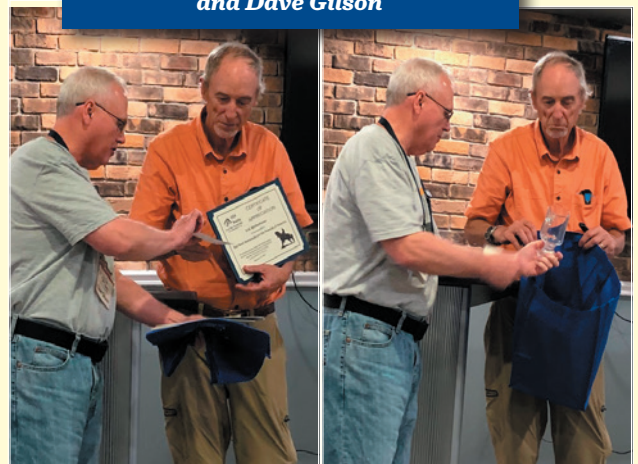
Ed Komczyk  
at the  
Sycamore Tree

Erik Mollenhauer  
Ed Komczyk



A memorial to Kosciuszko  
from The U.S. Congress for the  
Fortification  
of the Delaware River

Erik Mollenhauer Program Speaker  
and Dave Gilson



Statford Centennial Display



Steve McMahan relaxes after  
setting up our display

Steve and Sandy Kenny  
staffing the display





## Continued from September Issue

General Armistead, his hand upon a Union gun inside his opponent's lines, cheering on his men. The victory was short lived. General Hancock threw into the gap reinforcements and shortly after the remnant of the attacking columns retreated across the plain. It is believed that Pickett's division lost 75 per cent, in killed, wounded and captured.

This repulse is generally looked upon as closing the three days' battle; but, at about 5 o'clock the First brigade of the division of Pennsylvania Reserves was put in motion. General Meade, who was standing upon Little Round Top, was annoyed, not only by sharpshooters, but by a battery posted beyond the wheat-field.' Hence General Sykes ordered General Crawford to advance and clear out the woods. The First brigade, with which the Eleventh regiment was still acting, was accordingly formed by Colonel McCandless,

# The Pennsylvania Invasion: History of the Bucktails

by O. R. Howard Thomson  
*History of the Bucktails*  
1906

the Sixth regiment advancing through the woods on the left to drive out the enemy's skirmishers. Then right through the open field the regiments charged. The rebel battery opened fire, but as the brigade approached, turned and fled. Wheeling his men, so as to face to the left, McCandless then ordered his regiments to advance once more. Again the line swept forward, and though attacking a much superior force, drove the enemy before them.

One brigade of the Confederates, General George T. Anderson's Georgians, had taken position behind a stone wall, made stronger by rails and logs. The brigade dashed around their flank, taking over 200 prisoners, while Sergeant James B. Thompson, of Company G, of the Bucktails, captured the flag of the Fifteenth Georgia.

The enemy retreated a mile, and thus the brigade, probably firing the last shots of the battle, had re-won all the ground lost on the left by other troops on the previous day. Their position flanked Devil's Den so completely that it was abandoned by the enemy, and during the evening some of the men entered it and examined it with curiosity. In the charge the brigade captured one 12-pounder Napoleon gun, three caissons, seven thousand stand of arms and over two hundred prisoners.' The brigade occupied the position won till noon of the 4th, when, relieved by fresh troops, it moved back to the stone wall.

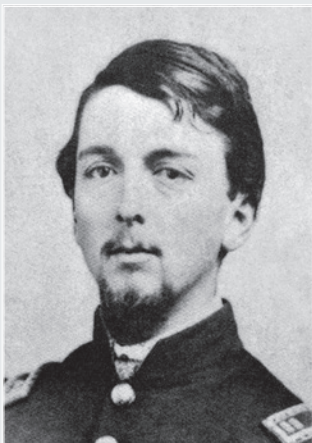
Excepting for this movement resulting in the evacuation of Devil's Den, the defeat of Pickett's charge marked the close of the battle. Lee, with his shattered forces, prepared to retreat towards Virginia, commencing the retrograde movement on the 4th.

The official report of the Bucktail loss was as follows:

	Killed	Wounded/Missing	Total.
Officers	2	8	10
Men	5	31/2	38
Total	7	39/2	48

The officers killed were Colonel Charles Frederick Taylor, and Second-Lieutenant Robert Hall, of Company D; and the officers wounded, Lieutenant-Colonel Alanson E. Niles; Captains: Neri B. Kinsey, Company C; Hugh McDonald, Company G; John D. Yerkes, Company H; and Frank J. Bell, Company I; and Lieutenants Joel R. Sparr, Company B; Thomas J. Roney, Company H; and John E. Kratzer, Company K.

Probably no officer of the Bucktails was ever better or more generally loved than Colonel Taylor. Cultured and refined he was a favorite of the army officers who held higher rank than he; sympathetic and just, he was regarded with the greatest of affection by those under him. He was the youngest man in the Army of the Potomac holding a colonel's commission,' being but slightly over twenty-three on the day that he met his death.' General Crawford in reporting his death refers to him as the "gallant and brave leader of the Bucktail regiment," adding, "No braver soldier and patriot has



**Colonel**  
**Charles Frederick Taylor**



**Taylor Monument**





**Original Monument  
Location**

given his "life to the cause."

His body was taken to the family home, and interred in Longwood cemetery, a monument principally subscribed for by officers and men of the regiment, being erected over the grave.

A marker was placed on the battle-field, to indicate the place he fell by the Charles Frederick Taylor Post, G. A. R. ; but as recent investigations have proven that this marker was not placed exactly over the spot where he fell, arrangements were made by the Regimental Association of Bucktail or First Rifle Regiment of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, and assented to by the Taylor Post, to place a new marker in the correct position.'

To Sergeant James B. Thompson, Company G, was awarded a medal of honor for his gallantry in capturing the flag of the Fifteenth Georgia.'

## ***Old Baldy ventured over to City Hall in Philadelphia for the annual Octavius V. Catto Memorial Event***

*photos by  
Dr. Rich Jankowski  
Past President  
OBCWRT*

*The event included speeches, honor volleys, taps and wreath laying*



**Catto Memorial**



**The Meade Society**



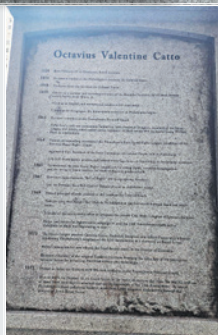
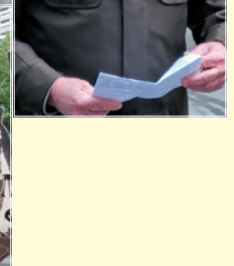
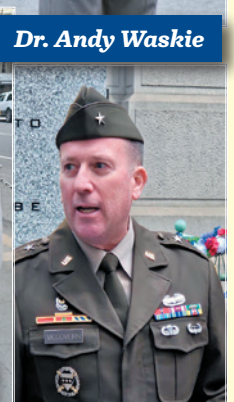
**Chaplain**



**Dr. Andy Waskie**



**Daughters of Union Veterans**



# Commodore Andrew Hull Foote

*"He prays like a saint and fights like the devil."*

by Allen Keller  
*Civil War Times*  
December 1979



**Commodore  
Andrew Hull Foote**

His craggy face looked as if it had been carved by frost and erosion from a mountainside above the tree line; his voice was strident and unpleasant. He spent more time on his knees in prayer than a lot of clergymen and he was a teetotaler. He was the Connecticut Yankee who worked with Major General U.S. Grant to cut the Confederacy in two, but, except historians, few remember his name: Andrew. Hull Foote.

He was called the "Gunboat Commodore" because his vessels were crude craft built in a few weeks out of the hulls of river packets or barges for the sole purpose of holding heavy mortars. Unique ships in the annals of naval architecture, their armored sides even predated the Monitor and Virginia.

Foote served twenty-one years on the high seas and in important posts on shore before Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, asked him to command the riverine forces being organized on the Mississippi.

Used to the music of wind in the rigging on the high seas, he fought with ugly, awkward, slow-moving steamboats on narrow, cluttered, inland rivers. But none of this really mattered. If there was fighting to be done Foote was the man for it and there was no denying the appraisal of one admiral who said, "He prays like a saint and fights like the devil."

Thomas Jefferson was President when Foote was born in New Haven, the son of a man who served as governor of Connecticut and represented that state in the U.S. Senate. His grandfather and great-grandfather served the nearby village of Cheshire as ministers for 100 years between them. Nothing in his background hinted at a career in the navy. But his high grades won him easy admission to the military academy at West Point where he stayed only long enough to get an appointment as a mid-shipman in the navy.

In a short time he had seen more foreign lands and done more duty of an unusual sort than most officers see or do in a lifetime. He seemed to have gone everywhere, from Chile and the East Indies to the Caribbean, Alexandria, and Athens. He circumnavigated the globe in the war sloop John Adams, fought pirates off Sumatra, and bombarded East Indian towns where American traders were being threatened. He found the women of Tahiti most attractive but complained of the "licentiousness" of the islanders.

After this sea duty he took the post of superintendent of the naval school and asylum for retired sailors in Philadelphia, and it was there he took the temperance pledge in hope of persuading the old salts to follow his example. They did not and it was one of his few failures.

At sea again, he scoured the African Gulf of Guinea trying to suppress the slave trade. It was unbelievably arduous duty, beating up and down the coast of west Africa in heat that melted the tar between the deck planks, in glaring sunlight that ruined his eyesight. He was often battered by hurricanes or tortured by the yellow dust blown hundreds of miles to sea by the harmattan winds blowing off the Sahara Desert.

In 1856, after another tour of shore duty, Foote, now a commander, took the sloop-of-war Portsmouth to the East Indies station. From Java he was ordered to China where the nationals were preventing

American and British merchant ships from trading. Foote found the Chinese had built four forts on the Whangpoa River below Canton and were firing at ships flying British and American flags while allowing French and other foreign vessels to pass in safety.

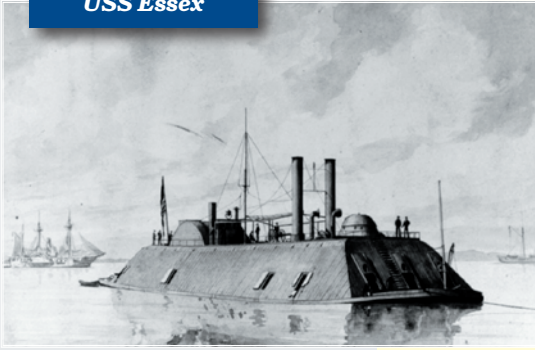
When his superiors told Foote to take any necessary steps to correct this condition it was all he needed. One morning he led a party of 287 officers and men from the Levant and San Jacinto and about forty marines ashore with



**Foote's USS Perry  
confronting the slave ship  
Marta of Ambriz**



**USS Essex**



four howitzers. In three days Foote led his men through a barricaded town, into all four forts (which among them had 176 heavy guns), and beat off a force of several thousand Chinese soldiers sent to the forts' relief. The Americans lost were seven men; the Chinese lost 250.

For this feat the naval officer won acclaim from his own countrymen and the British alike. When one American dissenter complained about the action in a letter, Foote wrote back, scoffing at views "as crude as they are perverse where the honor of your country's flag is involved."

The storming of the Whangpoa barrier forts was Foote's last active duty before the Civil War. He headed the Brooklyn Navy Yard, served on many boards and commissions, and was totally surprised when Welles, an old schoolmate from his New Haven days, ordered him to take command of naval activities in the West.

Both U.S. Grant, who headed field forces in the Mississippi Valley, and Commodore Foote saw eye to eye on how best to defeat the Confederates. A drive down the "Father of Waters," together with one along the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, would cut the South in two, deny the Rebel forces use of supplies from the West and Southwest, and make victory certain by piecemeal annihilation of whatever forces might oppose them.

The South, aware of this, had fortified many points on the Mississippi south of its juncture with the Ohio, and had built or was building fortifications on the two smaller rivers which flowed into the Ohio within a short distance of each other. Fort Henry on the Tennessee was the first Union objective and the two Union commanders planned a joint operation against it.

Foote bemoaned the fact he had no experienced shipwrights, but with the help of farmers, blacksmiths, and carpenters, soon succeeded in finishing four new gunboats. Essex, Carondelet, St. Louis, and Cincinnati, all carried some iron sheathing over engine rooms and magazines. There were three older wooden vessels, Tyler, Lexington, and Conestoga, armored with a patchwork of railroad ties, heavy timbers, and baled cotton.

For his part, Grant organized his 15,000 men into two divisions and started overland for the enemy strong- hold. On the night of February 5, 1862, a storm of near hurricane violence lashed the whole area, leaving the roads impassable, the small streams in flood, and bridges useless. Unable to move through the dense woods, the army was stalemated. Hearing the sound of scattered firing as patrols and skirmishers met in the darkness, Foote decided to fight alone. The Federal gunboats dodged floating "torpedoes" and crept closer and closer to the big guns of Fort Henry.

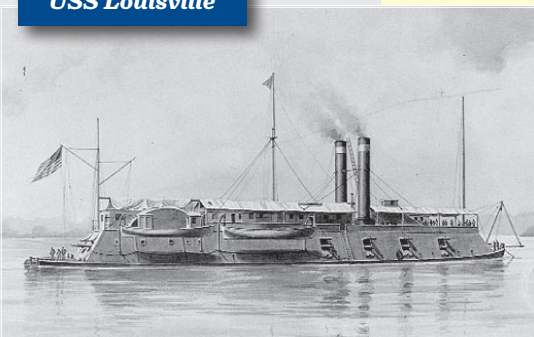
Grant came aboard the flagship just as one of the torpedoes was lassoed and brought onto the fantail of the Cincinnati. An armorer examined it as the general and commodore stood by, watching. Suddenly there was a hiss of escaping gas. Foote, sixteen years older than Grant, made the ladder to the gundeck only to find Grant hard on his heels. On the upper deck, when it was found that the hissing came from an inert section of the mechanism and did not indicate an explosion, Foote felt a bit sheepish. To cover this he asked Grant, "General, why all the haste?" "To keep the Navy from getting ahead of me," laughed Grant.

The Confederate commander, Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman, an old West Pointer, listened to the reports of his scouts as they ticked off the brigades Grant was throwing upriver; he looked through his glass at the gunboats steaming nearer, and sent most of his men cross-country to Fort Donelson, hoping to save them for a later battle. With about 100 artillerymen, he stayed to man the guns. In line with his aggressive fighting instincts, Foote put aside thoughts of Grant's men slogging through the sodden forest on shore and pressed ahead until at 600 yards he opened a blistering attack on Fort Henry's guns. They were not

**USS Carondelet**



**USS Louisville**



long in replying. It was a heavyweight fight, toe-to-toe, big gun against big gun. Shells from the gunboats plowed great ruts across the parade ground upending some Confederate cannon and knocking others into rubble.

**USS Cincinnati**



But Tilghman was no mean fighter himself. He told his men to aim at the Cincinnati, which, as flagship, was flying Foote's broad pennant, and shells began to find their mark. One crashed through the pilot house wall, missing the commodore by a foot or less and deranging the steering apparatus.

On the Essex it proved even worse. A shell from the largest Rebel gun, a 24-pounder, tore through the wooden superstructure, plunged into the engine room, and exploded the main boiler. Scalding steam killed the steersman at the wheel and burned many others. Gunners were scythed down by the steam jet and some men, scalded and in agony, jumped overboard to escape. But despite this damage, the ironclads provided sufficient protection for the old wooden vessels to come in close enough to add their fire. After less than an hour, Tilghman ordered the Stars and Bars lowered.

So Foote took Fort Henry without material assistance from Grant. It was, in fact, a naval victory. Although many more words have been written about the conflict between the Monitor and Virginia, which met in battle a few weeks later in Hampton Roads, Virginia, the victory of the gunboats at Fort Henry preached its own sermon. The age of wooden war ships was over; ironclads were the vessels of the future.

**Fort Henry**



Proud of his success, Foote steamed back to Cairo, Illinois, for divine services on the sabbath. In full uniform, he walked to a small Presbyterian church to give thanks. But there was no minister. After a considerable wait, Foote went to the deacons' bench and urged one of the officials to replace the missing pastor. They were so reluctant the commodore himself strode to the pulpit, read from the Scriptures, said a prayer, led in the singing of several hymns, and preached a sermon on the words of Jesus: "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." The congregation seemed pleased.

The next major battle, against Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, was another story. With his flotilla gathered again, Foote steamed upriver while Grant's huge force marched overland. The gunboats reached the outer works of the fort on the night of February 13, an evening that turned bitterly cold. Snow began to fall and persisted for much of the darkness. Dawn was little more than a lightening of the sky, enough to show the mercury standing at 10 degrees and two or more inches of snow on the riverbanks.

Before Grant could arrange the troops to his satisfaction, Brigadier General John McClernand, a politician turned soldier, disobeyed orders and began an assault on the Rebels' outer works. Foote, hearing the noise of battle, moved his gunboats upstream to divert pressure on Union troops and came

immediately under heavy, plunging fire from shore batteries high on the bank. In minutes Louisville, Carondelet, and St. Louis were riddled and disabled. Foote himself, entering the wheel house of the St. Louis, was struck by shell splinters.

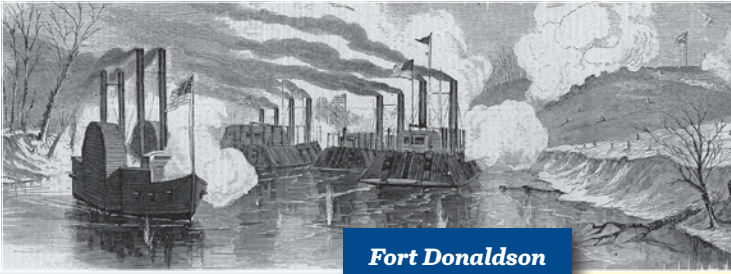
**USS St Louis**



Casualties were heavy on the Union craft and some of the boats yawed out of control, drifting downstream on the swollen current. If Foote had known of the confusion in the fort, where Brigadier Generals Gideon Pillow, John B. Floyd and Simon Bolivar Buckner were debating just who should surrender the bastion, he might have called for a desperate stand. Instead, the flotilla drew back; it was a defeat for the Union naval force.

But on land things went much better, perhaps, it may be surmised, because of Foote's diversionary action. Floyd and Pillow, both afraid of being shot as traitors if captured, fled, leaving the surrender to Buckner. A colonel





**Fort Donaldson**

whose name would soon become one of the most famous of the Civil War, Nathan Bedford Forrest, led his small cavalry troop away from the fort over a hidden path through the swamps and escaped to fight again, and again.

It was Grant's victory and many Northerners over-looked Foote's vital role in the drama. Hobbling around on crutches, his foot hurting badly from the shell splinter wound, the commodore sent a report to the Navy Department ascribing his difficulties to the

premature attack launched by McClernand, but he highly praised the soldiers who had fought through snow, tangled forest and bitter cold. He did not mention his own wound.

**To be continued next issue**

## Events

### **Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire Upcoming events**

**On Monday, Oct. 20th, Author and Historian Dan Welch will present "Secessionville: A Forgotten Battle of the Civil War." In this enlightening talk, learn about the forgotten battle that took place on June 16, 1862, near Charleston, South Carolina. Discover how this forgotten battle shaped Union policy towards this front of the war following its conclusion.**

**Here is the Zoom Link—6:30 p.m. Pacific Time. The Zoom room will open at 6:15.**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87187864471?pwd=vOaWqi520lQdahnjbSdBrp488bdq.1>**

**Meeting ID: 871 8786 4471**

**Passcode: Lincoln**



## **GENERAL MEADE SOCIETY FALL EXCURSION**

### **"General Meade in Maryland & Pennsylvania 1862-1863"**

The GEN Meade Society has graciously invited our members to join them on an exciting excursion over the Columbus Day weekend. The trip includes deluxe motor coach, driver tip; free parking; snacks & beverages on board; tours of the Wheatland Estate in Lancaster PA, lunch at the Lancaster Brewing Company, wreath laying at Lancaster Cemetery for Gen. Reynolds; a stop in Frederick, Maryland; on board guide on Sunday visiting Monocacy, South Mountain and Antietam battlefields, Saturday night Pizza Party, and Sunday dinner, Two night accommodations at the Comfort Inn and Suites, Hagerstown MD (breakfast included).

The trip is October 11, 12 & 13 and costs \$455/person/double occupancy (\$125 more for single occupancy), or \$468 if paying by credit card. The bus & driver and six meals from lunch Saturday through breakfast on Monday are included, along with admission to the Monocacy, Antietam & South Mountain battlefields and museums in Gettysburg & Lancaster, plus room reservations for Saturday & Sunday nights at the Country Inn & Suites in Hagerstown, MD. If interested, please check the General Meade Society website, <http://www.generalmeadesociety.org>, for how to sign up for this trip.

**A \$50.00 per person deposit required to register.**

**Send checks to : Gen. Meade Society, PO Box 394, Abington, PA 19001,  
and include your contact info**

***forget not his deeds...***





*For thousands of children across New Jersey, the Halloween traditions of costumes, candy and trick-or-treating are anything but magical. For these children, Halloween costumes often don't make the list of essentials in the family budget. Halloween carnivals, trick-or-treating and the possibility of being your favorite super hero - even for a night - all disappear when you don't have a costume. Help Jersey Cares bring imaginations and magic to life for children living in New Jersey by collecting new and gently used Halloween costumes. You have the opportunity to provide youth between the ages of 0-14 with the chance to enjoy a fun and festive Halloween! Jersey Cares appreciates all donations; however, we only accept new and/or gently used costumes. We ask that volunteers refrain from donating stained or torn costume items.*

**Items ACCEPTED for the Halloween Costume Drive Include:**

- New or gently used/washed costumes (ages 0-14)
- Halloween masks
- Costume accessories (wands, wings, capes, etc.)
- Unused Halloween face make-up
- Candy pails or treat bags

**\*\*IF DONATING GENTLY USED ITEMS, PLEASE BE SURE TO WASH BEFORE DONATING.\*\***

**Donate Supplies Virtually**

**Want to contribute to the Halloween Costume Drive, but don't have time to go to the store?**

**Visit our Amazon Wish List to have items sent directly to us!**

*If you would like to donate items, please bring them to the October 9th meeting at the Rohrer Center in Cherry Hill. They will be collected and given to the Volunteer Center to be distributed. Thank you for your generosity. Find more information at Jersey Cares | Halloween Costume Drive*



# Civil War History Weekend

Sat 10/25; 1-4pm & Sun 10/26; 1-4pm

at  
Historic West Jersey Train Depot  
354 Oakwood Ave- Glassboro, NJ  
(856) 881-9230 ext. 88149



Mark your calendars for Civil War History Weekend at the historic West Jersey Depot Train Station. Saturday Oct-25, 1-4pm & Sunday Oct-26, 1-4pm at the station. Plan to stay late on Saturday and attend the free and authentic Civil War Ball from 6-9pm at the Glassboro Marriot ballroom- get dressed up with Aunt Corrine and learn the reels and steps with the Victorian Ensemble Civil War Dancers to the live music performed by Becks Band.

**Volunteers are needed both days to help staff our Old Baldy information table at the Train Station.**

**Please contact Dave G at [oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net) for details and to volunteer.**



 **ONE DAY ONLY**   
**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup> 2025**



The Cruiser Olympia won fame in the Spanish-American War and served as a flagship in WWI

## **HOMECOMING 250**

### **OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025**

To kickoff America's celebration of its 250 years of independence, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will honor the men and women who gained and continue to defend our independence. Through our efforts, the Secretary of the Navy has announced that the Navy and Marine Corps should celebrate their 250th birthdays in their birthplace, Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. Homecoming 250 will salute their 250 years of distinguished service by hosting spectacular events, ceremonies, parades, aerial demonstrations, exhibitions, and educational programs featuring historic buildings, ships, museums, and waterfront sites on both sides of the Delaware River.

## **Old Baldy Newsletter Submission Protocol**

With Jim Heenehan taking over as the Old Baldy newsletter coordinator, please submit future items for the Old Baldy newsletter to both Jim and Don Wiles. Jim is charged with making sure all the submissions reach Don by the Tuesday the week before our Old Baldy meetings (9 days) so, if possible, please make such submission to Jim and Don by the Saturday the week before our meetings (12 days). This will give Jim time to follow up with you if he or Don has any questions and forward the finalized submissions to Don by the Tuesday deadline. Please include any photographs that are to accompany the submission at the end of the submission with a short caption describing the photos in questions.

Jim's email address is: [jheenehan@verizon.net](mailto:jheenehan@verizon.net); and Don's is: [cwwiles@comcast.net](mailto:cwwiles@comcast.net).

Thanks very much. - Jim & Don



**FOB Welcomes  
New Members, Award and  
Visits from afar...**



**Erik Mollenhauser  
Presenter  
at September meeting**



**Sandy Kenny  
New Member  
of Cherry Hill NJ**

## **Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2025 - 2026**

**November 13, 2025 - Thursday**  
Ellen Alford  
**Abolition and the Underground RR in South Jersey**

**December 11, 2025 - Thursday**  
**General Membership Meeting and Social Night**

**January 8, 2026 - Thursday**  
Ron Kirwood  
**Tell Mother Not to Worry:  
Soldier Stories from Gettysburg's George Spangler Farm**

**February 12, 2026 - Thursday**  
James Jewell  
**Waging War For Freedom with the 54th Massachusetts**

**March 12, 2026 - Thursday**  
John Horn  
**Lee Besieged: Grant's Second Petersburg Offensive,  
June 18-July 1, 1864**

**April 9, 2026 - Thursday**  
Elizabeth Varon  
**Longstreet - The Confederate General Who Defied the South**

Questions to  
Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - [dgilson404@gmail.com](mailto:dgilson404@gmail.com)

**Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia**  
Camden County College  
William G. Rohrer Center  
1889 Marlton Pike East  
Cherry Hill, NJ  
[oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net)  
Founded January 1977

**President - Paul Prentiss**  
**Vice President - Calvin Kinsel**  
**Secretary - Anita Schwartz**  
**Treasurer: TBD**  
**Director - Alex Glisson**  
**Director - James Heenehan**  
**Director - Ted Leventhal**  
**Past President - Dr. Rich Jankowski, Jr.**

**Programs: Dave Gilson**  
**Membership: Amy and Dan Hummel**  
**Editor: Don Wiles - [cwwiles@comcast.net](mailto:cwwiles@comcast.net)**

**WEB Site: <http://oldbaldycwrt.org>**  
**Email: [oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net](mailto:oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net)**  
**FaceBook: Old Baldy Civil War Round Table**

**<https://www.youtube.com/@oldbaldycivilwarroundtable86/videos>**