



HFCWRT Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 35 December 2015 No. 04

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- DATE:** Wednesday, December 9th, 2015
- TIME:** Dinner 7:00 PM; Program 8:00
- PLACE:** Camp Hill Methodist Church, Harpers Ferry, WV
- SPEAKER:** Anthony J. Ziebol
- SUBJECT:** Angel of Marye's Heights: The Story of Richard Kirkland

The Speaker:

Anthony J Ziebol is an accomplished journalist and writer from Minneapolis, Minnesota. After receiving a degree in print journalism from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Ziebol moved back to the Twin Cities and began writing as a staff reporter for newspapers and as a freelancer for Midwest magazines. He also did promotional writing for the legendary rock club of Prince's Purple Rain fame, First Avenue.

More than anything, Ziebol loves history and the outdoors and went in search of a story that would unite his passions. He took long solo road trips, camping near Civil War battlefields, encountering more wild animals than people. On one of these trips, he stumbled into Fredericksburg, VA, where he saw a statue of a common soldier with an

incredible story; he knew the epic of Richard Kirkland had to be told to the world. Since that day, Ziebol has become an authority on Kirkland's regiment, the 2nd South Carolina Infantry. He helped edit National Park Service (retired) historian Mac Wyckoff's recent book, *A History of the 2nd South Carolina Infantry*. He has also been invited to speak at the prestigious South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum in Columbia, SC and will be the keynote speaker at this year's Richard Kirkland Memorial Service, an annual event in Camden, SC. He also gave a talk on the battlefield at the 150th anniversary of the battle of Chickamauga, where he organized a joint ceremony with the Camden chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and a contingent of the Minnesota Civil War Commemoration Task Force.

Ziebol's first historical novel, *Angel of Marye's Heights: The Story of Richard Kirkland*, follows more than a decade of research. It is an extremely realistic novel, in the vein of Jeff and Michael Shaara, as close as it gets to a true history of one of the few individuals that is a hero to both sides of the Civil War.

The Subject

Known as the "Angel of the Battlefield," Sergeant Richard Kirkland served in the 2nd South Carolina Infantry. During the Battle of Fredericksburg, Kirkland's unit helped to defend the famous stone wall at Marye's Heights. In the action, Confederate defenders inflicted heavy casualties on the Union attackers and the morning after revealed that over 8,000 Union soldiers had been struck down in their front. Many were still alive, but suffering terribly from their wounds and a lack of water. Soldiers from both sides heard their tortured cries for hours, but none dared to venture out for fear of being shot by the enemy. At great personal risk and with no flag of truce, Sergeant Kirkland gathered all the canteens he could carry and ventured out from Confederate lines. He returned back and forth several times, giving the wounded Union soldiers water, warm clothing, and blankets. Soldiers from both armies watched as he performed his task for more than an hour and a half, but no one fired a shot. While some scholars have begun to question the veracity of the famous incident, Sergeant Kirkland was a real and heroic figure whose actions remain a poignant part of the memory of the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Anthony Zeibol's presentation will focus on the story of his recent book, *Angel of Marye's Heights: The Story of Richard Kirkland*. While his novel is historical fiction, based on real people and events, Mr Zeibol's presentation this evening will focus on his extensive research and lengthy travels that made it possible to bring Richard Kirkland accurately to life. The presentation will include a slide show featuring period photographs and Ziebol's own pictures taken while following in Kirkland's footsteps from South Carolina to Fredericksburg to Gettysburg to Chickamauga, and places in between.

The Meal

A family-style meal will be served at 7:00 PM prior to the program. The cost of the meal is \$15.00 per person. Reservations for the meal **must be made no later than Sunday, December 6th**, with Kyle Wichtendahl at kfwichtendahl@gmail.com or 301-639-8855. The meal will consist of Olde-Fashioned Pot Roast with Potatoes, Carrots, & Gravy, Fruit Cup or Applesauce, Iced Tea, Coffee, Rolls, Butter & Dessert.

"The Most Fatal of All Acute Diseases:" Pneumonia and the Death of Stonewall Jackson

As night fell and a full moon rose in the sky, Lieutenant General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson was becoming increasingly impatient. Although he had just orchestrated one of the most successful flank attacks in military history, he wanted more.

It was May 2, 1863, and the second day of the Battle of Chancellorsville was coming to a close. The men of Jackson’s Second Corps, Army of Northern Virginia, had attacked the unsuspecting right flank of the Union army and had driven it back nearly two miles before confusion and darkness stalled the action. Anxious to continue the attack, Jackson quietly rode beyond his main battle line to scout the position. The men of the 18th North Carolina Infantry, however, were unaware that Jackson was ahead of them in the dark woods. As the general and his staff returned toward the line, the edgy soldiers mistook the riders for Federal cavalry and opened fire. Three bullets struck Jackson—two in the left arm and one in the right hand.

With Union artillery fire showering the road around them, members of Jackson’s staff desperately tried to remove him to safety. Using the woods along the side of the road for cover, the men carried Jackson on a stretcher at shoulder height to clear the tangled underbrush. Suddenly, one of the litter bearers tripped on a vine and dropped his corner of the stretcher. The abrupt tilt caused Jackson to roll off the litter and crash to the ground. The hard fall caused further damage to the artery in his injured arm, and fresh blood began flowing from the wound.

They brought Jackson by ambulance to a field hospital located one mile behind the Confederate line. Dr. Hunter Holmes McGuire, medical director of the Second Corps, arrived at the location shortly after the ambulance. Using his finger, McGuire immediately compressed the artery above the wound in Jackson’s arm, stemming the bleeding. He then rode with the general to a larger corps hospital farther to the rear. Still in shock from the loss of blood, Jackson was placed in bed and kept warm, still, and quiet. Two and a half hours later, he was deemed stable enough to undergo surgery. McGuire removed the ball from Jackson’s right hand and then amputated the left arm two inches below the shoulder.

Jackson’s initial recovery from surgery was promising. So much so, in fact, that he was transported 27 miles by wagon to an estate near Guiney Station, Virginia, the following day; the overall plan being to evacuate him by train to his home in Lexington, Virginia, for recuperation. Sadly, however, “the great and good Jackson” would never make that journey alive.

Four days after his amputation, Jackson began to experience chest pain and difficulty breathing. A close examination by McGuire would reveal the problem – pneumonia in the right lung. Despite around-the-clock medical care, Jackson’s health would slowly deteriorate over the next three days, culminating in his death on May 10, 1863.

(Excerpted from *The Civil War Monitor: A New Look at America’s Greatest Conflict* [online magazine], by Matthew W. Lively, who is a Professor of Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at the West Virginia University School of Medicine. His first book, *Calamity at Chancellorsville: The Wounding and Death of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson*, has been released by Savas Beatie LLC in May 2013.)