

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

November 2015

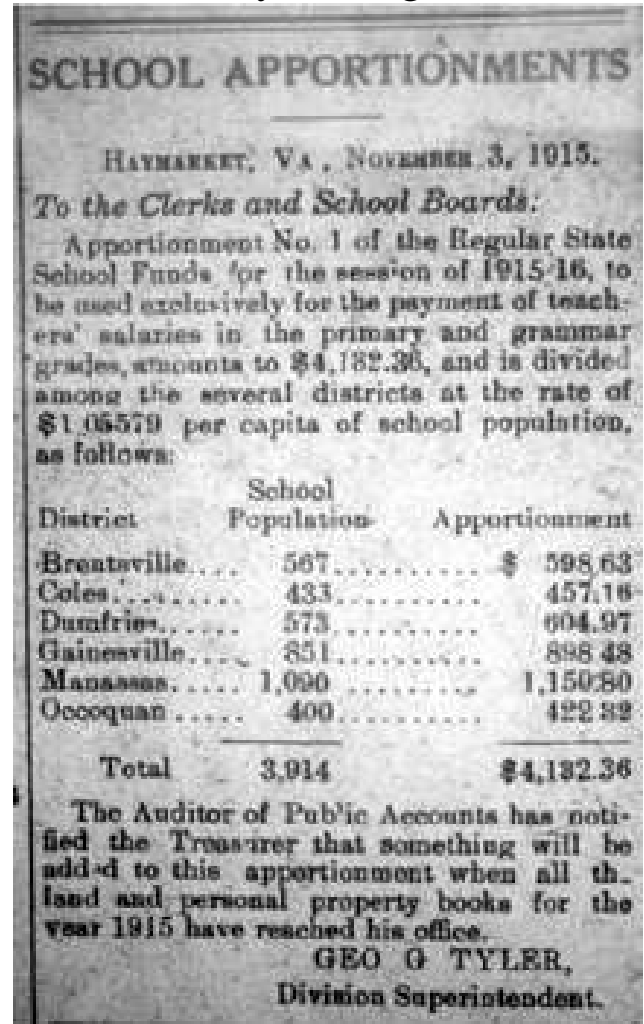
Welcome neighbors,

October was an exciting month. On the 13th the bars for the jail windows and the door hinges, all custom made, were delivered. More on this next month. And if that were not enough, the Leadership Prince William class of 2016 selected Brentsville as their base of operations for their “History & Government” segment under the direction of Earnie Porta, former Mayor of Occoquan. About 30 individuals from all over Prince William and other near-by locations arrived at 7:30 a.m. to start the day. An hour later they boarded a chartered bus to visit other locations including Rippon Lodge, finally returning to Brentsville around noon for lunch. This was followed by a quick talk on the history of Prince William’s County Seats and a tour of the courthouse. At the conclusion of their scheduled events several members stayed to tour the remainder of the site and many expressed an interest in returning soon with their family.

As for this month, please take advantage of a scheduled Open-Hearth Cooking Class at Brentsville scheduled for November 14th from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. The cost is \$30 per person, and it is not recommended for children under 12. Reservations are required. Gear up for the Thanksgiving season by learning the skills of open-hearth cooking. Join an experienced open-hearth cooking historian and learn the basic skills needed to prepare food over an open fire. You will learn how to build a fire and will prepare and cook three different dishes. End the program by enjoying a taste of the food you cooked. Class will take place in the ca. 1850 Haislip Farmhouse. As usual, you are invited to call 703-365-7895 for additional information.

Very best wishes,
Kay and Morgan

100 years ago...



The Manassas Journal, November 5, 1915

This month:

- Letter From Brentsville page 2
- Where Wild Things Live pages 3 & 4
- A Brentsville Man Called... pages 5 & 6
- When War Came pages 7 & 8
- As I See It by Lance page 9



The children of Brentsville are much addicted to bright sayings (according to their parents), so in the interest of the community at large this column is about to institute a

Bright Sayings department. There are two schools of thought of this, as any other, weighty question of the day; One composed mainly of crusty bachelors, maintaining that children witticisms are of interest to nobody, including the child himself. The other, of which I am a proud member, holding that anybody who is a parent, not merely a candidate for public office, will laugh heartily at ANY wisecrack of ANY juvenile.

Therefore all clever remarks of local children will be cordially welcomed, and I will lead off by citing the sign on the door of my 12-year-old son's "chemical laboratory": KEEP OUT! Dangriss exspirments going on. Do not enter EVUN AT OWN RISK!

Well, this has not been a very exciting week in our town; even with elections and all. Only 22 persons bothered to go to the polls. Everybody I've talked to seems resigned to the fact that the next two years are going to be tough ones for the little guy, and we're all very glad that we live in the country where we can at least browse on turnip-greens and poke-weed if the worse comes to the worst!

Oh we've lived like pigs in clover
In comparison with some;
But election-time is over
And I think the worst will come
We've been glum from lack of gum and rum
And mayonnaise and sockses,
But there's far worse yet to come
Now that the votes are in the boxes.
Oh we're getting meat and tires
But I'm goint on a diet;
Though the stores are full of fryers
Still I can't afford to buy it.

Oh a dollar's worth a quarter, and I haven't got a nickel,

And the bubble that we've blown is bound to burst;

So I plan to live on water and occasionally a pickle

When the Worse we've been predicting comes to Worst!

And just to make things good and gloomy, most everybody around here is sick: Mr. Hedrick is still laid up, Dewey Keys and Mrs. Joe Keys are ill, and Mrs. Shoemaker and Mrs. Morgan Breedon both have sick children.

Quite a few people from Brentsville attended the funeral of Mrs. Ed Herring at Valley View Church on Sunday; Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Alice Speaks, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Keys, and Mrs. Lillie Keys.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennett Breedon spent the week end in Washington.

Mrs. Joe Keys, daughter and son-in-law spent the week end in Brentsville.

Guest speaker at the Young People's meeting on Sunday night at the Brentsville Presbyterian Church, was a Brazilian, Maria Reis. This was followed by Mr. Ramkey's sermon, the subject of which was "Why we are Christians."

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Cordell visited the Shoemakers over the week end.

Mr. Maurice Keys of Alexandria is building a new home here.

Mr. J. M. Keys is remodeling his house, and it certainly looks nice.

Jim Shoemaker has started work on his garage and will soon be open for business. (We hope!)

Best Regards,
Agnes Webster

The Manassas Messenger, November 15, 1946

Where WILD things live...

Elaeagnus angustifolia

Russian olive



Russian olive is a native of Asia and southern Europe. Since the 1800s, Russian olive has been used in North America for erosion control, strip mine reclamation, wildlife habitat and as ornamentals in landscaping. Due to its adaptability, Russian olive has been a popular tree for shelterbelts and windbreaks in saline and semi-arid environments. Despite the food and cover these trees provide for birds and wildlife, research has determined that native species provide more benefits without the devastating alterations in nutrient cycling, hydrology and loss of native biodiversity. The species escaped cultivation, because its fruits are relished by birds which disperse the seeds. It is now widely established in North America.

This deciduous, woody species grows from 10-30 feet in height, taking the form of a large shrub or small tree. Its stems, buds, and leaves have a dense covering of silvery to rusty scales. The leaves are alternate with a smooth margin. The highly aromatic flowers, produced in clusters of 1-3, appear in early summer and are followed

by clusters of fruit, a small cherry-like drupe (a fruit in which an outer fleshy part surrounds a pit) which mature from August to October and stay on the tree throughout the winter. The fruits are edible and sweet, though with a dryish, mealy texture. Its common name comes from its similarity in appearance to the olive (*Olea europaea*), in a different botanical family.

The shrub is somewhat unique because although not in the legume family, it has nitrogen-fixing root nodules and is able to tolerate infertile soils and disrupt nutrient cycles in native plant communities. Its prolific and rapid growth enable it to compete with native plants for water and light, enabling it to grow just about anywhere.

The plant begins producing flowers and fruit after only 3-5 years, eventually producing up to 8 pounds of fruit per plant. The fruit is readily eaten and disseminated by many species of birds and also by mammals and water flow. These species are highly invasive in some habitats and regions, and once established are extremely difficult to control.

Source: various Internet locations.

Russian Olive Jelly

By Ellen Zachos

The texture of Russian olive fruit is a little dry and mealy, so not everyone enjoys eating the fruit plain. But if you'd like to experiment with the flavor, try juicing the fruit, then making a sweet, mild jelly. Russian olives aren't juicy, so you'll need to add a little more water than usual. Instead of just barely covering the fruit with water, you'll want to float the Russian olives in just enough water to let them bob around. Be sure to use only fully ripe fruit; underripe Russian olives are highly astringent. I used commercial pectin in this recipe because I'm not sure how much natural pectin Russian olives have. The jelly has a lovely, pinkish-orange color and a mild, apple-like flavor.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup Russian olive juice
1 Tbs. lemon juice
3/4 cup sugar
2 tsp. powdered pectin

Prep Time: 0 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes
Yield: 3 1/2 pint jars

PREPARATION

Rinse the fruit and place it in a single layer in a jelly pan or saucepan. Add just enough water to float the fruit and simmer over medium-low heat. Cook until the fruit is soft, mash it, and pour into a jelly bag to strain. Let it drip, without squeezing, then measure your fruit juice. Pour the juice back into your pan and for each cup of fruit juice, add 3/4 cup of sugar and 1 tablespoon of lemon juice.

Bring the juice to a boil that can't be stirred down, then whisk in the pectin. Bring the juice back to a boil that can't be stirred down and boil for a full minute, stirring the whole time. Remove from the heat and pour the jelly into sterilized jars, cover, and process in a boiling water bath for ten minutes.

The jelly may take up to 24 hours to set. While the recipe is scalable, don't work with more than six cups of juice at once. The time it takes to bring a larger quantity of jelly to the boiling point is often long enough to break the pectin bonds and prevent jelling.

Russian olive jelly looks beautiful on scones, cookies, or cakes. It also makes an excellent glaze for pork, chicken, fish, or carrots.

For an herbal twist, add a cup of fresh mint or purple Thai basil (chopped) at the fruit-simmering stage, then strain. Both flavors complement the taste of the fruit and the purple basil is especially pretty.

Source: <http://foraging.about.com/od/Invasive-Edible-Plants/r/Russian-Olive-Jelly.htm>

Russian Olive Jam

By Marie Viljoen

“Before you pick your berries, taste them” says Viljoen. “They vary from tree to tree.” She also notes to let the jam fully cool in the saucepan before you jar it. Due to the fruit's high levels of lycopene, which is not water-soluble, sometimes the juice will separate from the pulp in the set jam. It doesn't affect flavor, says Viljoen, but you can ensure lovelier jars by letting the jam completely cool to room temperature in the saucepan and stirring it frequently to keep everything mixed.

3 pounds ripe autumn-olives, rinsed and dried

1 cup water

2 pounds sugar

3 tablespoons lemon juice

In a large saucepan crush the berries very lightly with a wooden spoon or potato masher. Add the water and bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring, until berries are just soft enough to press in batches through a strainer or food mill to remove the seeds.

Return the pulp to a clean saucepan over medium heat. Add the sugar, stirring to dissolve. Keep at a simmer and skim off any foam that forms at the sides and in the middle. Add the lemon juice. When the jam reaches gel point* turn off the heat. When fully cooled, pour into sterilized glass jars.

Source: <http://www.ediblemanhattan.com/recipes/autumn-olives-all-around/>

A Brentsville Man Called Richard

His history as we know it

By Brenda (Melvin) Crewe

Daniel Donovan, an emigrant of Ireland, made his way across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in Virginia in the mid-1800's. He became acquainted with a gentleman by the name of Richard Short who owned a large farm at Stoney Creek that originated from Chapman Mountains, which is south of Alma, then empties into the South Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Daniel and Richard became very good friends but Richard's youngest daughter Mary Catherine apparently was quite taken by the young Irishman because on July 7, 1851 they were married. Daniel started his family a year later right there in Stoney Creek across from his new in-laws.

On May 11, 1855, the second son was born, Richard Donovan. Richard was one of eight children. William was the oldest and Ellen Katherine was the youngest. Fifteen months after her birth their mother passed away. Hannah Short (Mary Catherine's older sister) becomes their mother. It seemed back in the day a lot of this took place, one daughter would marry and then pass away. The next available daughter took her place.

Richard remained on his father's farm until 1870 when he left to work for Martin Strickler who owned a neighboring farm in Page County. After a few years Richard and his younger brother John, who he was very close to, went to Rockingham County in 1878 where they found work on yet another farm owned by Frederick Hillyard. Not only did Mr. Hillyard own a very large piece of property he also owned a business in Broadway not far from his home. At the time the boys arrived on the Hillyard farm, Frederick's divorced daughter Mary Frances and her daughter Genie were also living there.

Richard at the young age of about 25 fell in love with the 41 year old Mary Frances and they were married on October 14, 1880. They were given a small house and a piece of farm land on the Hillyard property. Richard would help work the land and in return could

keep a certain percentage of the income. After his brother's marriage, John, being a mere boy of 16, decided to head west.

After the Civil War, a lot of the southerners migrated to Missouri to begin a new life. John was one, traveling with friends and family gave him a sense of security. Once in Missouri, the new arrivals went on to surrounding states and territories.

John ended up in Dakota Territory on a cattle drive, later we find that he had become a marshal or deputy sheriff and formed a posse to hunt down Jesse James before settling down on his farm in Missouri.

Richard missed his brother very much. But back in the day you did what you had to do in order to survive, he would do the same.

Richard and Mary Frances were blessed with three sons, sadly only one survived. On July 29, 1883, John Franklin Donovan came into this world. He never got to know his brothers, the first son was only four years old, the third son was only four days old when he passed on November 29, 1886. This took a great toll on Mary Frances, time and age were not on her side. On January 1, 1887 she joined her children in the Hillyard family cemetery.

Richard, now alone, remains on the Hillyard property raising his crops and his son. As years go by Richard meets a woman by the name of Agnes Long. We believe she, too, worked as a servant on the Hillyard Farm. It was eleven years after his wife's death that Richard would once again tie the knot. He and Agnes were married on January 22, 1898. By this time, John was now sixteen years old, Richard felt his son was old enough to look after things on the farm while he took his new bride to Missouri to meet his brother John. He also knew that two of his brothers, William and James would be close by if need be.

About three months later Richard and his new wife returned. He was somewhat surprised when he found that Frederick Hillyard (ex father-in-law) had obtained

(Continued from page 5)

an attachment against his property for the sum of \$56.43. This included interest in a growing crop of wheat on 28 acres of land and his interest in a rye crop in one and one-half acres of land which included his home. Hillyard thought Richard had left for good even though John was still there. This little court case continued for over a year. Richard got tired of the disagreements and hard feeling that were coming between them. He paid the \$56.43.

One year later Richard becomes acquainted with Solomon Spitzer. It seems the two might have worked together on a farm called Long Meadow. They became good friends and decided to go out on their own. In 1899 they packed up all their belongings and headed over the mountains to a small town called Brentsville. The parcel of land they decided on was located from Bristow Road (route 619) back to the bend at Cedar Run. The men became partners, so to speak. Richard said he would take the lower end to raise his crops and Solomon agreed to sell the produce at the other end to make money to support one another. I also believe that they helped each other in building their homes, especially since Solomon was a carpenter by trade.

On October 18, 1901, the two decided to dissolve the partnership. Solomon held the northern end and Richard kept the southern end but they continued to do business together.

By this time Richard and Agnes are blessed with a baby girl, Viola Donovan. With Agnes busy now with Viola and John working along side his father they made a new life for themselves.

Between 1905 and 1910 Richard again becomes a widower. John however has now met the woman he is to spend the rest of his life with, Florida Virginia Allison, married December 25, 1909. She moved in, however, to a ready made family. Not only did she help in raising Viola but did her share of farm work, and other little things to pass the time such as cooking all the meals, washing clothes, mending, canning fruit and vegetables, just trying to do her share, as most women did back in those days.

On December 15, 1910, Florida took a little time off. She and John had their only child, Audrey Virginia Donovan, born right there on the farm and Richard had his only grand-daughter. In order to have extra

income Florida now took in sewing for other people and John continued to farm their land but in addition he also hauled rails for the railroad. As time went on Richard's health began to fail which meant more responsibility for John and Florida.

On January 7, 1920, Richard Donovan died due to heart failure. The funeral service was at his home in Brentsville. Rev. Barnett Grimsley, of the Baptist Church, conducted the service. He was buried at Valley View Cemetery in Nokesville Virginia His grave is unmarked but the death certificate states that's where he was laid to rest.

Richard in passing left the farm to his son. He also left John the binder, corn planter, mower and drill that was owned jointly with Solomon Spitzer. John was to oversee the farm for five years. At the end of that time it was to be divided between him and Viola. John bought Viola's share, kept the farm and Viola went to California.

In 1928 John and Florida see their daughter getting married to Foley Samuel Melvin, their first son also John was born on the Donovan farm. Johnny stayed on the farm while mom and dad went to Washington D.C. to live. There they had two more children, George and Edith. Several years later the children come together on the Donovan farm. This time they stayed. Richard might not have had much of a legacy but that little farm house that he built and then was enlarged by his son to make room for others was truly a blessing in itself.



When WAR Came to Brentsville

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Falmouth, Va., November 19, 1862.

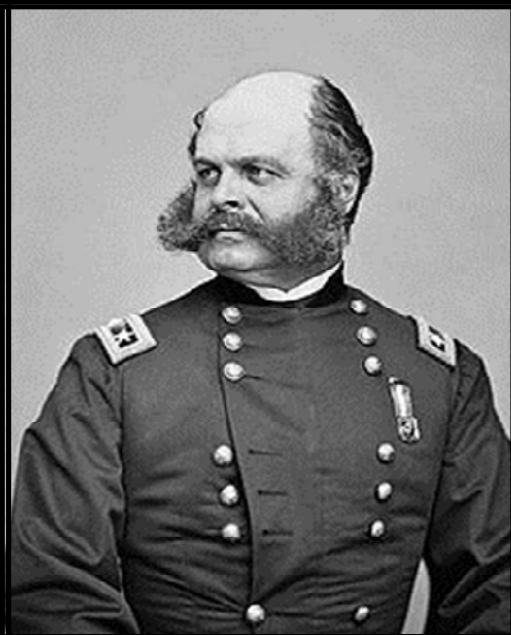
GENERAL: I have the honor to report that on the receipt of the telegram of the General-in-Chief, informing me that the President approved of the plan of operations on this line, arrangements for a move were commenced by drawing in the extreme right to the neighborhood of Warrenton, and, as soon as the whole command was supplied with three or four days' commissary stores and a day or two of forage, the column was moved.

General Sumner, with his two corps, took the road to Falmouth, arriving there with his advance on the night of the 17th. General Franklin, with his two corps, took the road to Stafford Court-House, arriving there last night and General Hooker, with his two corps, and Stoneman's and Whipple's divisions, brought up the rear on all the roads, and arrived at this designated place, within 6 miles of here, opposite the United States Ford, to-day. Pleasanton's and Bayard's cavalry are just beyond Hooker, at Deep Run, picketing all the fords of the Rappahannock, and Averell is at Spotted Tavern, picketing the roads in the direction of Catlett's, Brentsville, and Dumfries. I shall make different arrangements for the cavalry to-morrow, which will be reported to you, as so strong a force is not needed in that direction.

[text intentionally omitted]

I have the honor to be, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. E. BURNSIDE,
Major-General, Commanding.



Ambrose Everett Burnside (May 23, 1824 – September 13, 1881) was an American soldier, railroad executive, inventor, industrialist, and politician from Rhode Island, serving as governor and a United States Senator. As a Union Army general in the American Civil War, he conducted successful campaigns in North Carolina and East Tennessee, as well as countering the raids of Confederate General John Hunt Morgan, but suffered disastrous defeats at the terrible Battle of Fredericksburg and Battle of the Crater. His distinctive style of facial hair became known as sideburns, derived from his last name. He was also the first president of the National Rifle Association.

Burnside was born in Liberty, Indiana and was the fourth of nine children, a family of Scottish origin. His father, a native of South Carolina, was a slave owner who freed his slaves when he relocated to Indiana. Ambrose attended Liberty Seminary as a young boy, but his education was interrupted when his mother died in 1841; he was apprenticed to a local tailor, eventually

becoming a partner in the business.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Burnside was a brigadier general in the Rhode Island Militia. He raised a regiment, the 1st Rhode Island Volunteer Infantry, and was appointed its colonel on May 2, 1861. Two companies of this regiment were then armed with Burnside Carbines. Within a month, he ascended to brigade command in the Department of Northeast Virginia. He commanded the brigade without distinction at the First Battle of Bull Run in July, committing his troops piecemeal, and took over division command temporarily for wounded Brig. Gen. David Hunter. After his 90-day regiment was mustered out of service on August 2, he was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers on August 6, and was assigned to train provisional brigades in the nascent Army of the Potomac.

McClellan was removed [from command] after failing to pursue General Robert E. Lee's retreat from Antietam, and Burnside was assigned to command the Army of the Potomac on November 7, 1862. He reluctantly obeyed this order, the third such in his brief career, in part because when he tried to refuse, the courier told him that the command would go instead to Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker (whom Burnside disliked). President Abraham Lincoln pressured Burnside to take aggressive action and on November 14 approved his plan to capture the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. This plan led to a humiliating and costly Union defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg on December 13. His advance upon Fredericksburg was rapid, but planning in marshaling pontoon bridges for crossing the Rappahannock River and his own reluctance to deploy portions of his army across fording points later delayed the attack. This allowed Gen. Lee to concentrate along Marye's Heights just west of town and easily repulse the Union attacks. Assaults south of town, which were supposed to be the main avenue of attack, were also mismanaged, and initial Union breakthroughs went unsupported. Upset by the failure of his plan and by the enormous casualties of his repeated, futile frontal assaults, Burnside declared that he would personally lead an assault of the IX corps. His corps commanders talked him out of it, but relations between the commander and his subordinates were strained. Accepting full blame, he offered to retire from the U.S. Army, but this was refused. Burnside's detractors labeled him the "Butcher of Fredericksburg".

In January 1863, Burnside launched a second offensive against Lee, but it bogged down in winter rains before it accomplished anything and has been derisively called the Mud March. In its wake, he asked that several officers, who were openly insubordinate, be relieved of duty and court-martialed; he also offered to resign. Lincoln chose the latter option on January 26 and replaced him with Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker, one of the officers who had conspired against Burnside.

Burnside was relieved of command on August 14 and sent on "extended leave" by Grant. Burnside was never recalled to duty during the remainder of the war. A court of inquiry later placed the blame for the Crater fiasco on Burnside and his subordinates. In December, Burnside met with President Lincoln and General Grant about his future. He was contemplating resignation, but Lincoln and Grant requested that he remain in the Army. At the end of the interview, Burnside wrote, "I was not informed of any duty upon which I am to be placed." He finally resigned his commission on April 15, 1865, after Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

The United States Congress Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War later exonerated Burnside, and placed the blame for the Union defeat at the Crater on General Meade for requiring the specially trained USCT (United States Colored Troops) men to be withdrawn.

After his resignation, Burnside was employed in numerous railroad and industrial directorships, including the presidencies of the Cincinnati and Martinsville Railroad, the Indianapolis and Vincennes Railroad, the Cairo and Vincennes Railroad, and the Rhode Island Locomotive Works.

He was elected to three one-year terms as Governor of Rhode Island, serving from May 29, 1866, to May 25, 1869.

Burnside died suddenly of "neuralgia of the heart" (Angina pectoris) at Bristol, Rhode Island, and is buried in Swan Point Cemetery, Providence, Rhode Island. An equestrian statue in his honor was erected in the late 19th century in Burnside Park in Providence.

Burnside was noted for his unusual facial hair, joining strips of hair in front of his ears to his mustache but with chin clean-shaven; the word burnside was coined to describe this style. The syllables were later reversed to give sideburns.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (abridged)

The Way I See It

by Lance Webster, DTM

Dear readers of Brentsville News,

Morgan Breeden (your editor), and I, and all our schoolmates at BDHS and, for me later, Osbourn High, grew up in an era when the Confederate Battle flag was revered, and the South's victories at First and Second Manassas were sources of pride. We sort of understood that there was gallantry and heroism and the pathos of a just but lost cause in the Civil War, which we were taught was about "states' rights," the right of states to decide their own destinies and make their own laws free of the brutal and tyrannical "Yankees." Our annual school trips and picnics toured those battlegrounds. We had no "negroes" living in Brentsville or even 'different' people, except for one kindly, elderly, and somewhat distant Puerto Rican gentleman (affectionately known as "Portarrica") so I was never aware of racial animosity. There was a Catholic girl in our class, Iris, and while she was liked, she was thought to be a bit "different." Likewise the few Mennonites in the community. But never, to my recollection, was there racial or religious hatred.

As I have aged, and read more widely, the inherent moral ugliness of The Civil War has transcended the physical ugliness documented so thoroughly by photographer Matthew Brady and his assistants. Once one reads the secession documents of the Southern states, and supporting statements but their leading politicians and proponents of separation, it is expressly stated and abundantly clear again and again that this most hideous of wars was fought precisely and explicitly to protect, maintain and preserve the institution of slavery, on which Southern economy and its aristocracy rested. Rich planters and all who profited immensely from slavery had been struggling for decades not just to maintain slavery, but to expand it to existing and newly admitted states, to justify their cause.

From the Mississippi articles of secession: *"In the momentous step which our State has taken of dissolving its connection with the government of which we so long formed a part, it is but just that we should declare the prominent reasons which have induced our course. Our position is thoroughly identified*



with the institution of slavery — the greatest material interest of the world." (Emphasis added.) Texas, South Carolina and other states have similarly worded documents.

From the Vice President of the new Confederate States of America: *"Our new government was founded on slavery. Its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, submission to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition."*

"States Rights" was the philosophical and governmental principle which would keep slavery in place and the 'negro' in bondage.

Was there heroism on both sides by individuals? Yes. Were the South's generals generally more experienced and successful than those of the North? Quite possibly, especially in the early years. Did hundreds of thousands of Americans give their lives for what they believed in? Definitely. But let us always remember that what those from the seceding states believed in....was slavery, the right of whites to own, buy, sell, and exploit those of another race.

The fiction remains throughout much of the South. 150 years after the "Stillness at Appomattox," the belief that blacks are inferior remains. The continuous vicious attacks on the current President are daily witness and testimony. The fiction that the war was fought over States Rights — a justification, not a reason - remains.

The justification of The Civil War continues in the hearts, minds and souls of millions of people in this country. In so many ways our nation is poorer, more divided, and less honorable for it.

Let us keep in mind when we read here and elsewhere of the heroisms, the defeats and the victories, just what that brutal and divisive war — still being waged by many today — was - and is - really all about: the right to enslave, buy and sell human beings for personal profit and gain.

Lance

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

Contact us on:

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All back issues on:

<http://www.historicprincewilliam.org/brentsvilleneighbors/index.html>

IN GOD WE TRUST

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