

Nelson D. Lankford

Presentations; The Fall of Richmond & Reconstruction Begins

Nelson D. Lankford retired in July 2014 as vice president for programs at the Virginia Historical Society. VHS activities under his supervision included exhibitions, educational programs, the web site, the library's reading room, and publications. For the remainder of 2014 he continued on a part-time basis, as he has for the past thirty years, as editor of the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, the quarterly journal of the VHS. In addition to his administrative duties at the VHS, Dr. Lankford is a published historian. His most recent book, *Cry Havoc: The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861* (Viking, 2007), examines the last weeks of peace in 1861 between Lincoln's inauguration and the beginning of the war. It won the 2008 Daniel W. and Marilyn W. Laney Prize.

He also wrote an account of the end of the Civil War, *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (Viking, 2002). It was a nonfiction finalist for the Library of Virginia's annual literary award. A paperback edition published by Penguin appeared in 2003.

Two earlier books written for the VHS concern Private Robert Knox Sneden, a New York mapmaker and prisoner of war during the Civil War. The first of these two, which Lankford co-edited with Charles F. Bryan, Jr., was *Eye of the Storm*. It won the Founders Award of the Museum of the Confederacy and was a nonfiction finalist for the Library of Virginia's annual literary award. The second, related book, *Images from the Storm*, edited with Bryan and James C. Kelly, presented 300 of Sneden's watercolors with commentary from his memoir.

Dr. Lankford is also the author of a biography of Ambassador David K. E. Bruce, entitled *The Last American Aristocrat* (1996). Earlier books include *OSS Against the Reich* (1991) and *An Irishman in Dixie* (1988).

Lankford is a native of Hampton, Virginia. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Richmond and his Ph.D. and MBA from Indiana University, Bloomington. His late wife, Judy, was the president of the fund-raising consulting firm, Lankford & Associates, LLC. He is chairman of the finance committee of the Hollywood Cemetery Company, junior warden of the vestry of Grace & Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, and a trustee of the G&HT Church Endowment. He is a member of the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame and a former president of the Conference of Historical Journals.

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