



**Volume 51, No. 1**  
**January, 2011**  
**2011 Officers:**

**Don Hayden, President**  
(916) 485-1246  
[djhbooklover@yahoo.com](mailto:djhbooklover@yahoo.com)

**Silver Williams,**  
Vice President  
(916) 408-4574  
[snw5678@aol.com](mailto:snw5678@aol.com)

**Dennis Kohlmann,**  
Program Director  
(916) 726-4432  
[dkohlma@aol.com](mailto:dkohlma@aol.com)

**Edie Keister, Secretary**  
(916) 725-1852

**George Foxworth, Treasurer**  
(916) 362-0178  
[gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net)

**Bob Hanley, MAL**  
(805) 796-5895 cell  
[acivilwar@aol.com](mailto:acivilwar@aol.com)

**Richard Sickert, MAL**  
(916) 564-4608  
[r.sickert@comcast.net](mailto:r.sickert@comcast.net)

**Paul Ruud, IPP**  
(530) 886-8806  
[ruud@starband.net](mailto:ruud@starband.net)

**SCWRT Website**  
[www.sacramentocwrt.com](http://www.sacramentocwrt.com)  
**Kim Knighton, Webmaster**  
[webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com](mailto:webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com)

**Editor**  
[brenttrp@gmail.com](mailto:brenttrp@gmail.com)

**Deadline is 1:00PM, last**  
**Wed. of the month 2 weeks**  
**before the regular meeting.**  
**Items can be given the editor**  
**by hand, mail or e-mail.**

# Battle Cry

Founded 1961,  
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table  
P.O. BOX 254702  
Sacramento, CA 95865-4702  
<http://sacramentocwrt.com/>



## President's Message:

Bob Hanley gave a thorough, interesting presentation on Abraham Lincoln's pre-presidential years. Much new information emerged and some old questions, such as the Ann Rutledge relationship, were answered. Lincoln's legal career, his relationship with his family and selection of his cabinet are all of great interest. Bob has done a lot of reading in researching this material and has spoken to many groups over the past year or two. He has always been willing when our group has been asked to give a talk and I for one deeply appreciate that. In addition December's meeting provided an opportunity for the members to mutually celebrate the season and thanks are due to all who helped out.

At a recent meeting our board approved the purchase of a projector to allow guest speakers to present power point presentations. Previously we have had to borrow one. An Epson which is intermediate in price was selected since it has wide-screen projection and will accept the multitude of interfaces, CDs, DVDs, a microphone and a remote. An expenditure of \$800 was authorized. In addition a contribution to The California Military Museum in Old Sacramento of \$250 was approved. This will be recognized by a permanent marker on their staircase. We have enjoyed a long-standing relationship with them and have several members among us. In the future I shall provide a capsule summary of board decisions in this space.

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors has approved Doug Ose's proposal to keep Gibson Ranch functioning. Whether or not the annual Civil War re-enactments will continue is an open question. Further information is forthcoming.

Brent ten Pas is our new editor of The Battle Cry and has already put out several issues. For the upcoming year, he has proposed highlighting in each issue a blog that covers relevant ideas, places, and interests regarding the Civil War. This sounds like an excellent idea and I suggest you watch for it in this and future issues.

Another year is upon us. This is the fiftieth anniversary of our round table which has had an interesting history. For the past fifteen years we have remained a strong and vigorous group. I encourage all of our members to spread the word about our existence and bring guests. We have consistently been the largest contingent at annual West Coast conferences and this year will sponsor our third. Thank you for your support and I hope you all have the happiest New Year ever!

On January 12th, Fred Bohmfalk will discuss the Death of Jefferson Davis. Come early for dinner and social hour. See you there.

**Don Hayden, President**

# MINUTES

SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE  
Wednesday, December 8, 2010  
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

## ATTENDANCE – 29

### MEMBERS – 28

Don Hayden, President	Bob Hanley, MAL
George Foxworth, Treasurer	Scottie Hayden
George Beitzel	Nancy Hayden
Joan Beitzel	Nina Henley
Fred Bohmfalk	Wayne Henley
Ardith Cnota	Dennis Kohlmann, PD
Mitch Cnota	Ken Lentz
James Cress	Mary Lentz
Jerry Cress	Jim Middleton
	Anne Peasley

### GUESTS – 1

Joseph Meyer

	Rick Peasley	
	Horst Penning	
	Mark Penning	
	Paul Ruud, IPP	
	Nancy Samuelson	
	Nicholas Scivoletto	
	Bob Williams	
	Maxine Wollen	
	John Zasso	

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. by President Don Hayden who welcomed members and guests.
2. Apple cider, cake, and ice cream were served to members and guests to honor the holiday season.
3. President Hayden introduced the speaker, our own Bob Hanley. Bob's topic was "Lincoln, the Early Years." The talk was an outstanding discussion on the life of Abraham Lincoln from birth until he arrived in Washington, DC in 1861. Thank you very much Bob.
4. John Zasso sold additional raffle tickets and read the numbers.
5. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

### **George W. Foxworth, Acting for Secretary Edie Keister**

#### **Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance following the December 8, 2010 meeting was \$2,801.43. Thanks to John Zasso, other members, and guests, the raffle brought in \$63.00.

**George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**



## BOOK REVIEWS



***Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander In Chief.*** By James M. McPherson. (New York: Penguin Press 2008 . 329 pp.)

***Lincoln and his Admirals: Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. Navy, and the Civil War.*** By Craig L. Symonds. (Oxford University, 2008. 430 pp.)

It may seem strange that any aspect of Abraham Lincoln's exhaustively chronicled career could be considered neglected, let alone one central to his fame. But Lincoln's performance as commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy is such a subject. Every biography of Lincoln and every history of the Civil War has contended with it, but so crowded is the canvas of that tumultuous age that the president's military leadership often fades from view. This is in spite of the fact that Lincoln's entire administration was consumed by war. He presided over the mightiest fighting force the world had ever seen, came directly under enemy fire and at war's end became its final casualty. Absent military success, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation would not have freed a soul, and his eloquent speeches would today go unread.

More than half a century has passed since the last authoritative study, *Lincoln and His Generals*, was published. In that seminal work, T. Harry Williams argued that Lincoln was the greatest war leader of all the presidents, a "natural strategist" whose judgment and ability far exceeded those of his officers. Williams' assessment of Lincoln's military prowess has never been seriously challenged, but two new works revise his thesis, giving us a view of Lincoln's abilities both more nuanced and more comprehensive.

In *Tried by War*, James M. McPherson agrees that Lincoln was America's finest commander-in-chief but convincingly argues that this status was achieved only after exhaustive study and heartbreaking



setback. There was nothing "natural" about Lincoln's strategic genius; it was the result of sustained effort. Faced with the initial crisis at Fort Sumter in March and April 1861, Lincoln appeared to many to be irresolute and vacillating. His Cabinet was restive and even some of his supporters wished for "one hour of Jackson!" The Northern public demanded that the rebellion be put down quickly, and Lincoln deployed an inexperienced army that was humiliated at Bull Run.

But McPherson shows that Lincoln was a diligent student of military affairs and a shrewd judge of men. He immersed himself in works on strategy obtained from the Library of Congress and soon recognized the limitations of his commanders. His increasingly direct involvement in military matters and his eventual appointment of Ulysses S. Grant as general-in-chief led ultimately to victory.

Lincoln's achievement is all the more remarkable, McPherson argues, when one considers the paucity of genuine military ability in his high command. Most of the best military minds went South; those on whom he initially had to rely were timid, incompetent or both. Compare this to the situation faced by Franklin D. Roosevelt, considered by historians to be another great wartime leader; he was assisted by an extraordinary assemblage of military talent: Marshall, Eisenhower, Patton, MacArthur, Nimitz and others. Any number of leaders might have succeeded with such support, but it is difficult to imagine anyone other than Lincoln triumphing over his obstacles.

If the story of Lincoln as commander of the Army has been neglected, his leadership of the Navy has been almost ignored. The victory of Union arms was not achieved on land alone; naval forces were integral to Lincoln's strategic vision. One of his first actions as president was to authorize a blockade of Southern ports, and a seaborne relief mission to Fort Sumter led to the first shots of the war. *Lincoln and his Admirals*, by Craig L. Symonds, professor emeritus at the U.S. Naval Academy, shows that through his able secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, Lincoln deployed the Union's ships on river and sea with increasing confidence and skill.

Though Lincoln never sailed to distant lands, he was no stranger to the water. He journeyed down the Mississippi twice as a young man and received a patent (still the only president to do so) for a device to lift vessels over sandbars. As president he often traveled by water, and he once directed an amphibious landing (a scene compellingly rendered by Symonds). He expressed his affection for the

Navy in a whimsy unusual for him: He called the irascible Welles "Father Neptune" and the Navy itself "Uncle Sam's web-feet." After the opening of the Mississippi River by Union forces, he declared: "The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea," a sentence almost as beautiful in composition as momentous in consequence.

Symonds, like McPherson, charts Lincoln's development from uncertain amateur to masterful leader. But he does so through the refreshingly unfamiliar prism of naval affairs. *Tried by War* supersedes *Lincoln and His Generals* as the definitive portrait of Lincoln as war leader, while *Lincoln and His Admirals* is that rare thing, an important Lincoln book of genuine originality.

*Michael F. Bishop served as executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission from 2002 to 2006. This review was first published in the Washington Post, Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 and was reprinted here with author's permission.*



***Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North.*** By Jennifer L. Weber. (Oxford: University Press 2006. 286 pp.)

When we hear "Copperhead," we think of rabble-rousers like Rep. Clement Vallandigham of Ohio and Mayor Fernando Wood of New York, and probably regard them as dangerous, but as uncommon as the poisonous reptile for which they were named. Jennifer Weber, in an exhaustively researched new book (2006), demonstrates in only 217 pages that this was a serious, far-reaching movement that created real problems for President Lincoln and Republican governors.

Ms. Weber, a former journalist, is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Kansas. In a glowing foreword to her book, Prof. James M. McPherson points out that "Until now the foremost historian of the Copperheads was the late Frank L. Klement, whose several books advanced the thesis that the Copperhead 'fire in the rear' was mostly 'a fairy tale.'" He asserts that Ms. Weber "disentangles the myths and realities of antiwar dissent."

Early on, Ms. Weber defines the Copperheads. They "were not traitors." Though their efforts were "misguided and at times damaging," they were "genuinely committed to the well-being of the nation," and "the vast majority were loyal to the Union.... They just wanted the nation to return to

the *status quo ante bellum*." However, as she points out, they ignored political reality, never advanced a coherent program, and eventually collapsed almost as quickly as the America Firsters did in December, 1941.

But people took them seriously. Ohio Congressman George Pendleton, McClellan's running mate in 1864, advocated a "Northwest Confederacy." Ms. Weber writes that, "Whether there was any truth to the rumor that the Northwest was about to split off is impossible to tell...What is most important is that many contemporaries heard these stories, believed them, and made decisions based on that belief." Senator Charles Sumner wrote on Jan. 17, 1863, "These are dark hours. The President tells me that he now fears a 'fire in the rear' – meaning the Democracy, especially at the Northwest – more than our military chances."

*Copperheads* touches on many aspects of wartime dissent. The current euphemism for military conscription is Selective Service. In 1863, it was the Enrollment Act. Ms. Weber discusses substitutes, enlistment bounties (which reached \$1000!), draft dodging, and draft riots, which occurred in four New England states, as well as New York City. She also notes, "The same day that Congress approved the Enrollment Act, it passed another bill that gave Lincoln the right to suspend habeas corpus anywhere in the United States."

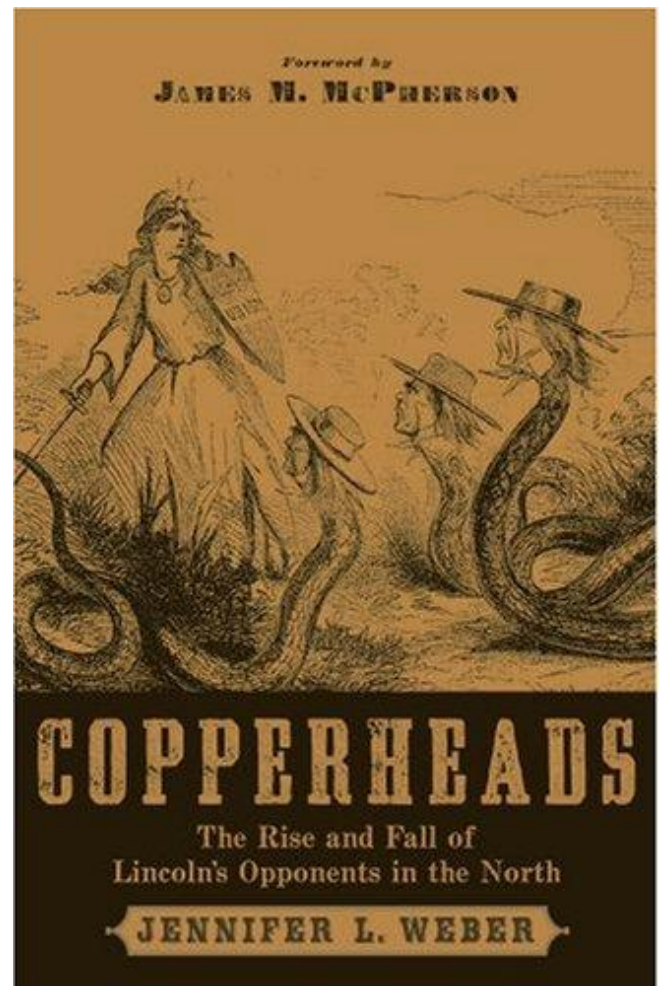
We know how the soldiers' vote in 1864 helped re-elect Lincoln. Ms. Weber has reviewed their letters home, in which they condemned their neighbors -- and even their parents -- for supporting Peace Democrats, a synonym for Copperhead. In Charleston, Illinois -- site of one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858 -- there was a two-hour riot on March 28, 1864 involving armed local Copperheads and soldiers home on leave. When it was over, six soldiers and three civilians were dead. "Fifteen suspects were sent to Fort Delaware, near Philadelphia, where they spent seven months in prison without trial."

The LaCrosse (Wisconsin) *Democrat* said any man who voted for Lincoln was "a traitor and a murderer," and that if Lincoln were re-elected, "We trust some bold hand will pierce his heart with

dagger point for the public good." (He was not arrested; what would happen to him today?)

These were turbulent times. This important, well-written book brings them to life, and adds another dimension to our understanding of the Civil War.

*Michael Wolf is a member of The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc. and is a frequent contributor to their newsletter; The Dispatch. This review was reprinted with author's permission.*



# JANUARY DURING THE CIVIL WAR

## 1861

- 9th** Mississippi secedes
- 10th** Florida secedes
- 11th** Alabama secedes
- 19th** Georgia secedes
- 26th** Louisiana secedes

## 1862

- 15th** Edwin M. Stanton is confirmed by Senate as Secretary of War.
- 27th** Discontented with McClellan's slow pace to prosecute the war, Lincoln issues General War Order #1.

**30th** U.S.S. *Monitor* is launched in Long Island, New York.

## 1863

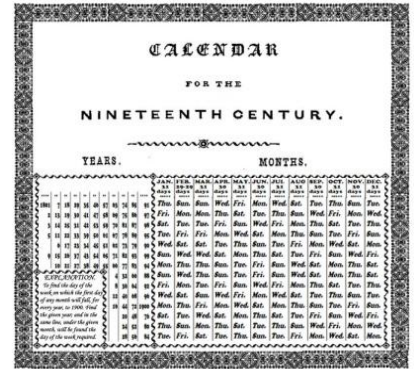
- 1st** President Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation.
- 20-22nd** General Ambrose Burnside gets bogged down in trying to flank the Confederates near Fredericksburg. It becomes a major public relations nightmare known as the *Mud March*.
- 25th** "Fighting Joe" Hooker replaces Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac.

## 1864

- 11th** The 13th Amendment (ending slavery) to the Constitution is proposed by Senator John B. Henderson of Missouri.

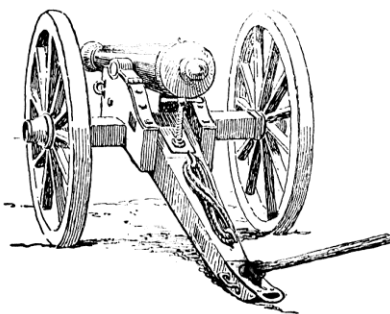
## 1865

- 15th** John Bell Hood is replaced as commander of Army of Tennessee.
- 31st** 13th Amendment to U.S. Constitution passes abolishing slavery.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The most southernmost Civil War engagement took place on American soil at Fort Myers, Florida, where Federal troops repulsed a small Confederate attack on the Union-occupied fort on December 30, 1865.



## CIVIL WAR BLOG SPOTLIGHT

### Crossroads

Brooks Simpson's recent blog creation *Crossroads* will cover a range of issues related to the Civil War and the academia who writes the history. Mr. Simpson, a professor of history at Arizona State University since 1990, has written a number of books including *Ulysses S. Grant: Triumph Over Adversity, 1822-1865* (2000).

You can find Crossroads at <http://cwcrossroads.wordpress.com/>.