



Volume 62, No. 2
February, 2022

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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

No Message for now.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, January 12, 2022
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 0:

MEMBERS – 0: No meeting and no Members.

GUESTS – 0: No meeting and no Guests.

1. No meeting. Meetings are cancelled until further notice due to COVID-19. The Hof Brau is open to decreased inside dining and starts closing at 6:30 PM.
2. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, February 16, 2022.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on January 12th was \$3,960.56. No meeting and no raffle.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2022

Date	Speaker	Topic
February 9th	"No Meeting"	"No Topic"
March 9th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
April 13th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
May 11th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
June 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
July 13th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

2022 Membership

The 2022 membership renewal was due as of January 1, 2022. The dues are \$30.00 and you can renew and send to the Treasurer through the mail. For all checks, make them payable to **Sacramento Civil War Round Table** and send them to:

George W. Foxworth
9463 Salishan Court
Sacramento, CA 95826-5233

NEWSLETTER CIVIL WAR ARTICLES

Civil War articles/book reviews are welcome. The submission deadline is the first of each month for that month's **Battle Cry**. However, you can submit articles at anytime. Please submit your items in Microsoft Word or regular email to:

gwofforth@sbcglobal.net

The **Battle Cry** is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento CWRT. Submissions are subject to availability of space and size limitations. Submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization or the Editor. The official address of this organization is: Sacramento Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 254702, Sacramento, CA 95865-4702. <http://www.sacramentocwrt.org> is the web site address. Check the web for past newsletter editions and information about the group.

Friends of Civil War Alcatraz

The Friends of Civil War Alcatraz (FOCWA) is a group of individuals interested in the Civil War history of Alcatraz island. We are made up of teachers, veterans, historians, and others who like to research and read about how Alcatraz became an important Fort for the protection of San Francisco during the Civil War.

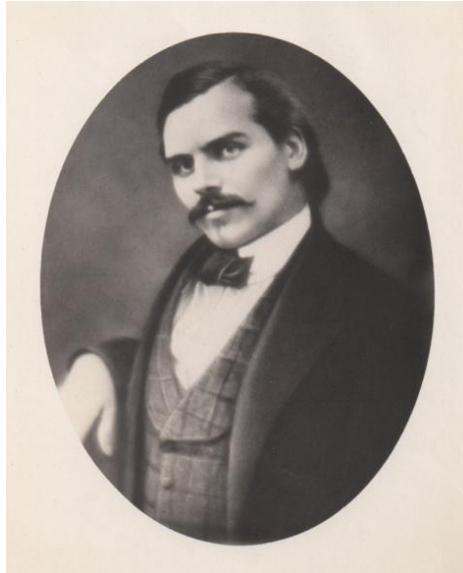
Some of our members are also National Park Service volunteers who assist the rangers in giving public programs, in uniform, about the Union soldiers stationed on the Island and interesting events that occurred there between 1859 and 1865. We publish a newsletter every month, which can be found on our website www.friendsofcivilwaralcatraz.org.

We also visit schools and organizations to tell that early history of the Island, long before it became the notorious Federal prison. And we conduct living history days twice a year, in conjunction with the American Civil War Association, to give the public an idea of what the Island was like as a Union Fort.

Submitted by Steve Johnson

Thaddeus Sobieski Coulincourt Lowe

Thaddeus Sobieski Coulincourt Lowe was born to Alpha and Clovis Lowe on August 20, 1832 in Jefferson County, New Hampshire. His name came from a romantic 1803 novel his mother had read about the Polish War for Independence.



Lowe's background was thoroughly American. His ancestor, Peregrine White, was born on the Mayflower in 1620. His grandfather had fought in the Revolutionary War and his father had been a drummer boy in the War of 1812. Thad had no interest in a military career. He would have loved an education but he was able to attend school only when cold weather prevented him from doing any farm work. Thad spent any spare minute he had reading borrowed books.

At age 18, Lowe attended a lecture that was to change his life. Professor Reginald Dinklehoff was speaking on gases that were lighter than air. When the professor asked for volunteers, Lowe was the first one to reach the stage. The Professor was so impressed by Thad, that he hired him to be his assistant. After two years of touring, the Professor retired and Lowe brought the traveling show. He now styled himself as "Professor Coulincourt" and went on the road. He amused his onlookers with experiments using nitrous oxide ("laughing gas"). Thad made enough money to retire from show business and go back to school.

Lowe tried studying medicine but it did not hold his interest. What he really loved was the emerging science of aeronautics. When he heard that an airship had crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Wales to North Carolina, he was agog with excitement. But it turned out to be a hoax played by the reigning mystery writer, Edgar Allen Poe, and taken as gospel by the newspapers. Once again, Lowe turned to his traveling science show. Money could still be made on the lecture circuit.

In 1855 in Cleveland, Ohio, Thad spotted a lovely young girl in the second row at his show. She was Leontine Augustine Gaschon, a Parisian actress, who had come to the United States with her father to escape the political turmoil in France. It was love at first sight. Thad and Leontine married on February 14, 1855, one week after they had met. They honeymooned on the Riverboat, Crystal Palace. To make extra money, Thad performed his science shows on stops along the way. Leontine set up a little marionette theater.



In 1857, Thaddeus Lowe built his first successful air balloon in Hoboken, New Jersey. His first rides were “captive” ones, meaning they were tethered to the ground by rope. Soon enough, Lowe began making free ascents. Most of his “rides” ended with dismal results. One airship was ripped apart by the wind. Another developed a huge bulge. Once, the gas company ran out of gas before a balloon could be totally filled.

Lowe was finally successful with a smaller balloon, *The Enterprise*. But his timing was off. The balloon drifted to Unionville, South Carolina during the opening days of the Civil War. Lowe was arrested as a spy, but Secretary of Treasury, Salmon Chase, came to his rescue, declaring him a man of science. Lowe was allowed to return home.

The Civil War cut short Lowe’s dream of crossing the Atlantic. But he still had big plans. From 500 feet above the White House, he sent a telegram to President Lincoln, “I have the pleasure of sending you this first ever dispatch from an aerial station.” Though he was competing against three other balloonists, Lowe was appointed Chief Aeronaut of the Union Army Balloon Corps. He and his crew worked as civilian contractors. If they were military, they could be caught as spies and executed.

Lowe eventually built seven airships made of silk by 30 Philadelphia seamstresses. Ever the showman, he invited reporters and journalists to his camp and entertained them with food and drink besides offering free rides. When Thaddeus invited George Armstrong Custer to go up in his air balloon, the brave soldier wrote later, “My desire, if frankly expressed, would have been not to go up at all.”

Lowe’s first mission was at Bull Run. He landed behind enemy lines and twisted his ankle so badly he was unable to walk. Leontine, using her acting background and make-up skills, disguised herself as an old woman, and drove a wagon behind Rebel lines to rescue him. Somehow, she was successful which surely made for a great story on their wedding anniversary each year thereafter!

Lowe flew hundreds of missions. Besides Bull Run, he was active in the Peninsula Campaign, the Wilderness, Fredericksburg, Gaines Mill, and Chancellorsville. During the Seven Days Campaign, he flew his balloon at an altitude of over 1,000 feet, enabling him to see Richmond seven miles away. The exploits of Lowe and his crew provided the Union Government with insight into the enemy’s movements, where to aim the Union cannons, how to draw accurate maps, the best and safest ways to transport troops, supplies, and set up camps. Sometimes Lowe’s data differed sharply from reports taken from spies on the ground. McClellan refused to believe the number of troops that Lowe reported seeing, insisting that there was a much larger force aligned against him.

Newly appointed Commander, Joseph Hooker, begin reducing the use of air balloons as soon as he took over operations. The Union Balloon Corps was reassigned to the Engineer Corps. Lowe's pay was cut from ten dollars to six. Several Union generals refused to consider using balloons although CSA General Joseph Johnston exclaimed that the "infernal balloon" made it difficult to deceive the enemy about his troops' movements. After a bad bout of malaria, Lowe handed in his resignation as Chief Aeronaut in May 1863. Shortly after, the Union Balloon Corps faded from existence.

It was missed by some. Major General George Stoneman wrote, "Valuable as your balloons have been, I feel satisfied that you would have made them more so had you been encouraged by having more facilities extended to you."

Forced to leave all his equipment behind, Thaddeus headed home empty handed. In 1864, the quartermaster held an auction, liquidating all the Balloon Corps' paraphernalia.

In 1877, Lowe moved to California. He never stopped striving to discover new technology. He built the Lowe Observatory in Pasadena. He invented an icemaker. He tried equipping a boat with refrigeration for transporting perishable food. He discovered a method to convert crude oil to gas and coke. He sold his own manufactured stoves, heaters and fireplaces. He developed the Mount Lowe Railway, providing trolley and cable service from Los Angeles to nearby mountain resorts. It operated at a loss, as did all his ventures. Thaddeus was forced to declare bankruptcy. The Lowes had no alternative but to move in with their daughter.

Leontine died on May 16, 1912. Thaddeus Lowe was laid beside her a year later on January 16, 1913 in Mountain View Cemetery in Los Angeles, California. All 10 of their children survived them.



The Lowe's granddaughter, Leontine Lowe Barnes, gained the nickname "Pancho" after working as a gunrunner for Mexican revolutionaries. Pancho eschewed a traditional life, leaving her son, along with her several husbands and lovers, behind. She worked as a stuntwoman riding horses in the new Hollywood movies. She became one of the first licensed female pilots in the United States, beating Amelia Earhart's speed record in 1930. Soon after she traded in her horses and became a stunt pilot. She never achieved the fame of Amelia Earhart because of her "unladylike" ways. She said, "Flying makes me feel like a sex maniac in a whorehouse with a stack of \$20 bills."

Pancho died of breast cancer in 1975.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

A Splendid Expression of Civil War Symbolism

On a fairly recent sojourn to South-Central Tennessee, I revisited the Winstead Hill Memorial Park. First thing noticed was a new rock masonry entrance sign. Initial impression was that the sign had been severely damaged on its northernmost one-third, probable by an accident with a large vehicle. But upon closer inspection it became apparent that the sign was “as built,” and only then did I realize that it reflected a splendid expression of Civil War symbolism. Indeed a message was being conveyed. The background is as follows:

Winstead Hill is located two miles south of Franklin along the old Nashville-Columbia Pike, now US 31. The small elevation, raising about 150 feet above the roadbed, was the headquarters location and observation post for Confederate General John Bell Hood during the 30 November 1864 Battle of Franklin. (See *Battle Cry* July 2014 article.) Hood, in a vindictive fit of rage, coupled by a generous sprinkling of stupidity, had ordered a series of six separate frontal attacks against well fortified Federal forces which resulted in 6,500 rebel casualties, one-third of his effective fighting forces, over a four and one-half hour period. Hood had begun a process toward the total destruction of the Confederate Army of Tennessee which he completed 3 weeks later at the Battle of Nashville. (See *Battle Cry* May 2014 article.)

The purpose of the Winstead Hill Memorial Park is to honor those Confederate soldiers killed, including one Major General, five Brigadier Generals, and 16 Regimental Commanders. The one-third rubble end of the sign depicts the one-third loss of the rebel army. (Had a similar symbolic sign been placed at Traveler’s Rest, Hood’s headquarters during the Battle of Nashville, it would need to have been 100 percent rubble.)

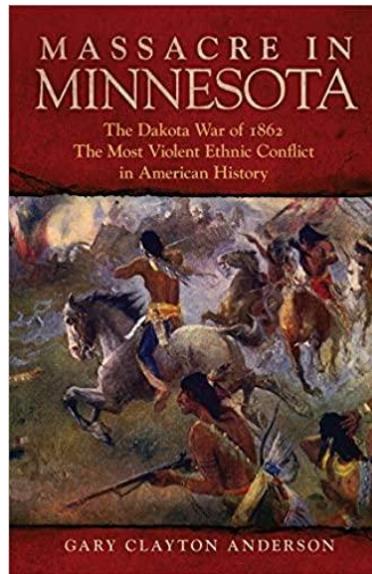


Indeed, the Battle of Franklin was the worst blunder of the entire Civil War, and it was brought about by the action of a single individual. Notwithstanding, that individual was later honored in 1942 by the naming of a major U. S Army installation in Texas after him. Some feel this to have been quite appropriate since John Bell Hood was the Confederate General who had done the most to help the Union win the Civil War.

Gary Clayton Anderson. **Massacre in Minnesota: The Dakota War of 1862, the Most Violent Ethnic Conflict in American History**

Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. 384 pp., \$32.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8061-6434-2.

Reviewed by Jimmy Sweet (Rutgers University). Published on H-CivWar (April, 2020). Commissioned by G. David Schieffler.



Gary Clayton Anderson argues that the US-Dakota War, a consequential Civil War-era War between the United States and the Dakota Nation of Indians in the Upper Midwest, was so brutal that it deserves the moniker of "most violent ethnic conflict in American history." As a singular event, this is probably true, but the US-Dakota War should more accurately be contextualized within a broader history of the violence of American settler colonialism. In fact, the book is not contextualized at all, and the author makes no attempt to ground the text within any of the broader literature on the Civil War, the Indian Wars, the American West, or American Indian history. Indeed, the author gives his argument short shrift and soon leaves it behind. After the brief preface, *Massacre in Minnesota* never returns to the argument in a substantial way. The book is principally a narrative history of the US-Dakota War, rather than an analytical piece, which is not necessarily a bad thing. One must read Anderson's other books in order to get any analysis of ethnic conflict or violence. See, for example, his *The Conquest of Texas: Ethnic Cleansing in the Promised Land, 1820-1875* (2005) and *Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime that Should Haunt America* (2014). *Massacre in Minnesota* is useful, however, in that it resolves previous misunderstandings of the War, makes extensive use of Dakota sources and perspectives, and is easily the best, most complete, and most compelling history of the US-Dakota War published to date.

In scope, Anderson claims that over six hundred White settlers were killed by Dakota warriors, causing a refugee crisis when forty thousand Whites abandoned their homes and fled eastward in panic, and in the aftermath, six thousand Dakota Indians were

ethnically cleansed from Minnesota. These estimations are not new, nor is his argument unique. What is new is the unparalleled extent of the research, the attention to detail, and the clarity and completeness of the book. For a broader picture of the War, before *Massacre in Minnesota*, readers had to make do with Duane Schultz's *Over the Earth I Come: The Great Sioux Uprising of 1862* (1992), Michael Clodfelter's *The Dakota War: The United States Army Versus the Sioux, 1862-1865* (1998), Jerry Keenan's *The Great Sioux Uprising: Rebellion on the Plains, August-September 1862* (2003), or other, more problematic texts. Like most books on the US-Dakota War, these works were written by amateur historians and are deeply Eurocentric. *Massacre in Minnesota* is worlds better and stands as the definitive work on the US-Dakota War.

The book's well-organized eleven chapters provide a comprehensive history of the War, logically progressing through every significant aspect. Chapters 1 and 2 illuminate the decades leading up to the conflict, explaining how the change in the Dakota economy, the appearance of missionaries, and the growing horde of settlers irrevocably altered Dakota life. In Chapters 3 and 4, Anderson narrates how the extreme corruption on the part of prominent White politicians, traders, and Indian agents in the Treaties of 1851 and 1858 was a leading cause of the War. In the next two Chapters, *Massacre in Minnesota* narrates the settler perspective, the bloody first week of the War in which hundreds of Whites were killed, and the ensuing flight of tens of thousands of refugees. Chapter 7 describes the mobilization of American forces and the main battles of the War, ending with the pivotal Battle of Wood Lake. In Chapter 8, Anderson controversially argues that Dakota men raped dozens of White women captives, asserting that among more than a hundred White prisoners, "virtually all the young girls from twelve to twenty became wives [to Dakota men involuntarily], as did most of the middle-aged women" (p. 210). The deeply flawed military trials of nearly four hundred Dakota men, of which most were found guilty and sentenced to death, is the subject of Chapter 9, while Chapter 10 relates the tragedy of the execution of thirty-eight Dakota prisoners on December 26, 1862, the largest mass execution in American history. The final Chapter gives an account of the aftermath, including the Dakota concentration camp experience at Fort Snelling, their removal to the desolate Crow Creek Reservation in Dakota Territory, and the final two executions of Dakota leaders in 1865.

The book clearly illuminates the cause of the War. Corruption on the part of White traders, Indian agents, politicians, and other American officials in the Dakota Treaties of 1851 and 1858 was so extreme that the Dakota received little benefit from them, while ceding most of Southern Minnesota. As a result, by the start of the War in 1862, the Dakota had been living in poverty for years. So much money intended for the Dakota had been funneled into the pockets of Whites that it gained the attention of Abraham Lincoln's Administration, whose investigation was soon overshadowed by the War itself. While Anderson describes the extensive violence of Dakota warriors as reprehensible and unforgivable, he places blame for the War squarely on the prominent Whites in Minnesota who robbed the Dakota to such an extent that it left them starving and desperate. Instead of being punished for their role in causing the War, those responsible, such as Henry Sibley and Alexander Ramsey, were later revered as generals or politicians.

One place where the book misses its mark is in its use of the Dakota language. For instance, Anderson misspells the word *akicita* (warrior) as "akacita" dozens of times

throughout the book. (I use Anderson's simplified Dakota orthography so as not to bring more confusion.) He pluralizes Wicaśta Wakan (Medicine Man) with an "s," an impossibility in Dakota. The book smacks of Eurocentricity when it prioritizes and normalizes the English versions of all Dakota band names and individual names. Anderson supplies the Dakota name at the first meeting of each individual in the text, but subsequently uses the English version. Taoyateduta becomes Little Crow, Tatankanažin is rendered Standing Buffalo, and so on. These are not their names, but rather the appellations given to them by White settlers and uncritically repeated in the literature decade after decade. After more than forty years of study on the Dakota, and this his sixth book on Dakota/Lakota people, Anderson's misstep with Dakota names and language is disappointing. To be fair, Anderson is simply repeating how previous scholarship and sources recorded these names, but it is time for scholars to stop normalizing the Anglicization of American Indian languages and cultures.

Massacre in Minnesota is extensively researched, full of previously unknown or misunderstood information, and the most detailed and complete account of the War ever written. Anderson's greatest strength is that he does not pull any punches. Nobody comes out of this history looking good, and he does justice to both sides in the conflict. He excoriates the Whites responsible for the corruption that led to the War. In a controversial, albeit convincing chapter, he argues that the rape of White women by Dakota men was more frequent than previously thought. Anderson chides sensationalist newspaper accounts that stoked hysteria by exaggerating the violence, which played a major part in the refugee crisis in Minnesota. In the subsequent military trials, he asserts, "virtually all due process was ignored" and outlines the numerous legal mistakes in the proceedings (p. 216). Anderson sums up his work by arguing that "those who suffered the most were innocent settlers, who experienced horrible deaths at the hands of violent men who had reasons to be upset," but concludes that that was not a sufficient excuse for Dakota men to kill White women and children. He tempers this statement by saying that the American Government was responsible for the suffering of over one thousand Dakota women and children sent to "Crow Creek where many perished, some literally from starvation" (p. 285).

In his preface and final Chapter, Anderson claims to be objective, implying that many previous works lacked his objectivity, which is accurate. Given that in the pages between, nearly none of the historical actors in *Massacre in Minnesota* come away unscathed, Anderson's claims to objectivity are sound. The history of the US-Dakota War is still contentious in Minnesota and is a traumatic past well remembered by Dakota people today, which means that some readers will find fault with his portrayal of one side or the other, which Anderson acknowledges. Given this ongoing contentiousness, no book on the US-Dakota War will please everyone, but *Massacre in Minnesota* sets a high bar. The book is written in such a way that it is accessible and useful to a broad audience. Scholars of the Civil War in the West, the Indian Wars, and Dakota history will appreciate Anderson's meticulous research, well-written narrative, and deep understanding of the US-Dakota War.

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.