



**Volume 63, No. 2  
February, 2023**

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# Battle Cry

Founded 1961,  
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table  
P.O. BOX 254702  
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## President's Message

Greetings everyone:

As the newly elected President of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table I would like to introduce myself for my first President's Message.

My name is James Juanitas and I was first elected in 2020 as the SCWRT Vice-President and due to the unfortunate passing of our late SCWRT President Dennis Kohlmann in March, 2022, I succeeded to the position of Acting-President for the remainder of the 2022 term and was officially elected President of the SCWRT in December 2022 effective as of January 1, 2023.

I have the experience of being involved in a number of historical organizations in the past and I have known and worked with many of the other organizational Officers before. My first introduction to a historical organization was when I was a kid growing up in Stockton, California and my Father was a member of the San Joaquin County Historical Society in the 1960's and it has continued up to the present day with my involvement in CAM - California Automobile Museum where I work as a Volunteer Docent on a bi-weekly basis.

With the newly elected SCWRT Officers of 2023, we have the makeup of both experience and enthusiasm. In the upcoming term of 2023 - 2024 I am looking forward to working with both our newly elected Board and Round Table members in what we hope will be a term of opportunity in historical education.

**James Juanitas, President**

# MINUTES

## SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

DENNY'S RESTAURANT, 3520 AUBURN BOULEVARD, SACRAMENTO

### ATTENDANCE – 13:

**MEMBERS – 13:** James Juanitas, President; Carol Breiter, Vice President; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Jean Breiter, Arnd Gartner, Ron Grove, Joseph & Michelle Matalone, Bernie Quinn, Program Director; Nicholas Scivoletto, Larry Spizzirri, Richard Spizzirri, & Peggy Tveden.

**GUESTS – 00:** There were no guests.

1. The meeting was called to order by President James Juanitas at 7:03 P.M.
2. A conversation was held on the Sacramento CWRT hosting the 2023 Civil War Conference in Fresno. The members were interested only in a Sacramento location. At the same time, most of our former members before COVID-19 have not returned. President Juanitas will have further talks with Ron Vaughan (Fresno) on the 2023 Civil War Conference.
3. The raffle was conducted by Nicholas Scivoletto.
4. The speaker was Arnd Gartner. His topic was "Union Intelligence Services: Part 2." The Unit was BMI (Bureau of Military Intelligence) and many people were involved during the War.
5. When General Hooker became the Commander of the Army of the Potomac, one of his first orders was for Deputy Provost Marshal Colonel George H. Sharpe to establish an intelligence unit. Sharpe, a New Yorker and an attorney before the War, was assisted by John C. Babcock, a civilian and former employee of Pinkerton. On February 11, 1863, they established the Bureau of Military Information.
6. The BMI utilized around 70 field agents during the War, ten of whom were killed. In addition to field agents, information was gathered through interrogation of prisoners of war and refugees, newspapers, and documents left on the battlefield by Confederate officers who has retreated or been killed.
7. Some of the major units were the 20th New York Regiment and the 120th New York Militia. The most successful spy was Elizabeth Van Lew. Another was Lafayette C. Baker.
8. In 1864 for the campaign to capture Richmond, General Ulysses S. Grant stationed Sharpe and the BMI staff into his command headquarters, to ensure he would have the most up to date knowledge of the battlefield. Sharpe and BMI continued to serve Grant up until the Battle of Appomattox Court House, where they were responsible for paroling the members of the Army of Northern Virginia, including General Robert E. Lee.
9. The BMI was disbanded in 1865 at the end of the Civil War. Following Lincoln's assassination, Baker would be responsible for tracking down the conspirators. Baker would also hunt for Lincoln's conspirators in Europe as a special agent of the United States Department of State.
10. After being elected President of the United States, Grant appointed Sharpe as United States Marshal for the Southern District of New York where he helped root out corruption, including disbanding the Tweed Ring. President Grant also appointed Elizabeth Van Lew the Postmaster of Richmond.
11. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, February 8, 2023.

**George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary**

### **Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance on January 11th was \$4,869.39. The raffle brought in \$49.00. Thanks to Nicholas Scivoletto and members.

**George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**

# Coming Programs for 2023

Date	Speaker	Topic
February 8th	"Bernie Quinn"	"Ranald S. McKenzie"
March 8th	"Jim Stanbery"	"Grant & Lee: The Similarities"
April 12	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
May 10	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
June 14	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
July 12	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

## **2023 Membership**

The 2023 membership renewal is due on January 1, 2023. The dues are \$30.00 and you can renew at a meeting or 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:

[gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gwfoxworth@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](http://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**

## Colonel Marcus Spiegel

Moses Spiegel had been the rabbi of his village in Abenheim, Germany. But now it was time for him and his wife, Regina Herz Spiegel, to leave Europe. Political revolutions were going on in all the German states. Anti-Semitism was at an all-time high. Jews were being deprived of citizenship and were forced to pay higher taxes than their neighbors. Their property was being confiscated. They were conscripted into the Army but not allowed to become officers. They were severely restricted in traveling and forced to live in segregated areas. Only a small number amount of marriages were allowed to be performed each year.



The Spiegel's oldest son, Marcus (b. December 8, 1829), had become active in politics in Germany. He served in the anti-government Landstrum Regiment under Franz Sigel. Moses and Regina hadn't heard from him in a very long time and feared he was dead. The Spiegels had lost their first three children in infancy. In 1846, they packed up their remaining family, three daughters and eight year-old Joseph, and headed to the *Golden Medina*, the land of opportunity, the lower east side of Manhattan without Marcus. There they could blend in with the thousands of other Jewish immigrants. Moses became a peddler, traveling about selling thread, needles, and other notions. But soon his neighbors prevailed upon him to return to the rabbinate. Moses practiced Reform Judaism, the more modern form of the religion that the German Jews had brought with them from Europe.

Back in Germany, Sigel's revolutionaries began to be arrested and executed. When they failed to overthrow the Prussian dynasty, the very much alive Marcus Spiegel fled to America to join his family. They were shocked when he showed up at their door in the spring of 1849.

The congested streets of the lower east side teemed with pushcarts and people. Marcus found it too confining and so, like his father before him, he began a career as a peddler.

Life on the road was physically demanding, lonely, and dangerous because a peddler needed to travel with cash. Most peddlers looked at their itinerant life as a stepping stone. They hoped to be welcomed into a new community with the offer of a job or a wife. In order for the woman of the house to open her door to a strange man, that man had to have a good outward appearance. His clothes needed to be not just clean, but elegant. He had to learn the language well enough to encourage some conversation, which would usually lead to a bigger sale. Marcus not only learned to speak the language well, but as his letters show, he developed an impressive command of English.

In Millersburg, Ohio, Marcus met Caroline Frances Hamlin (b. July 27, 1833), the daughter of Quakers. He was smitten. When Caroline agreed to be his wife, Marcus wrote home to tell his family of their betrothal. They immediately sent a cousin out west to try to dissuade their son from this intermarriage. However, the cousin wrote back to the family, "...if Spiegel did not marry her, he would try to win Caroline for himself."

The young couple was married in a civil ceremony on August 7, 1853. They moved back to Chicago where Caroline, surrounded by Marcus' extended family, immediately began lessons in the German language, German-Jewish cooking, and conversion to Judaism. Her conversion ceremony was the first Jewish conversion ceremony in Chicago's history.

When the Civil War began, Marcus enlisted in November 1861 in the 67<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Infantry. In late 1862, he was transferred to the 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Regiment. By 1864, he had been promoted to Colonel. He was one of the highest ranking Jewish officers in the Union Army where, unusual for the time, he faced little anti-Semitism. He was known as a "jolly fellow" by his men. His obvious concern for the troops he commanded and his great physical courage might have stopped any Jew baiters in their tracks.

Marcus' younger brother, Joseph, had contracted with the 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteers to serve as a sutler and Marcus was able to keep a brotherly watch over him. The two planned to go into business together after the War.

In 1864, the 120<sup>th</sup> Regiment was shipped to Alexandria, Louisiana to reinforce the Army of Nathaniel Banks. On May 3, they ran into a Confederate ambush at Snaggy Point, near Marksville, Louisiana. They were hugely outnumbered. Colonel Marcus Spiegel was shot in the stomach. Mortally wounded, with his brother at his side, he died the following day. He was 34 years old. His body was buried near Wilson's Plantation on the muddy banks of the Red River. Though he was a civilian, Joseph was taken prisoner. He and his Regiment went on a forced two hundred and fifty mile "hike" to Camp Ford Prison Camp, near Tyler, Texas. Joseph and the remnants of the 120<sup>th</sup> were kept prisoners until they were formally exchanged on May 27, 1865.

Rumors that her husband had been killed began to reach Caroline. It took over a month until the military confirmed the rumors. She begged family and friends to help locate Marcus's body but the Red River had overflowed and destroyed any traces of a grave.

Caroline Spiegel was 30 years old when her husband was killed. She never remarried and remained with her husband's family rather than return to her girlhood home. Two months after Marcus's death, she gave birth to their fifth child. The Spiegel family bought her a two-family home where she was able to live rent free and lease out the other half of the house to support herself and her children. Simon Wolf, a politician and close friend, helped Caroline get a military pension. She took in sewing to supplement her income.

Caroline had saved all her husband's letters. Five generations later, the great great



granddaughter of Caroline and Marcus Spiegel published their historic correspondence in the book, *A Jewish Colonel in the Civil War*.

Caroline sometimes admitted to Marcus that she had “the blues.” Marcus was well aware of the burden he had left on Caroline by his enlistment. On April 4, 1864, he had grown severely depressed when he learned that his little son, Hamlin, had lost a finger in a printing press. His guilt at being away during his son’s mishap made him admit to Caroline that he, “...ought to be home, but I cannot leave my ‘boys’.” He wrote that he volunteered because he “...felt it was his duty to preserve the American Union for his children.” In his letters home, he often addressed Caroline as “My abused wife.” One of his last letters to her said, “Buy everything you want to be happy and console yourself...I would gladly walk 600 miles to see you if they would only say go. God bless you, my love, my sweet, my all: may the blessings of heaven rest upon you. Ever your true and loving Marcus.”

Joseph Spiegel returned to Chicago after the War. What he and his brother had once planned to do together, he now did alone, opening up a home furnishings store. In 1888, the first issue of the *Spiegel Catalog* was sent out.

Though most peddlers made only a modest living, many of the original Jewish peddlers became millionaires and household names: Rowland Macy, Adam Gimbel, Levi Strauss, Neiman Marcus, Solomon Guggenheim, and Benjamin Altman were some.



A cenotaph tombstone for Colonel Marcus Spiegel stands in the Jewish Graceland Cemetery in Chicago, Illinois. Caroline Spiegel is buried next to the empty place where her husband’s body should lie. She died, age 68, on November 19, 1901.

**Submitted by Judith Breitstein**

## National Register of Women's Service in the Civil War (NRWSCW):

### Sarah Elizabeth Lane Thompson Bacon Cotton

Military Recruiter, Spy, Nurse, Lecturer, and  
Government Employee, USA



(Image from Sarah E. Thompson Papers, Special Collections Library, Duke University)

Born February 11, 1838, in Greene County, Tennessee  
Died April 22 1909, in Washington, DC  
Buried at Arlington National Cemetery

Little is known of her youth, but, at sixteen, Sarah Elizabeth Lane married Sylvaniaus H. Thompson, a shoe maker, in 1854. Early in their marriage, they lived in Thompkinsville, Kentucky, but, by the onset of the War, had returned to East Tennessee, living in Greeneville, the seat of Sarah's home county. The couple had two daughters together. Sarah was a mother and traditional homekeeper during the pre-War years, but she also developed her own, independent political identity. Not only was she highly patriotic toward the United States, but she was an early abolitionist, and, as was sometimes rare even for abolitionists, strongly practiced racial equality.

Early in the Civil War, Sarah's Unionist husband travelled to Kentucky to enlist in a US Army unit. On July 12, 1862, Sylvaniaus was enrolled in Company I of the 2d Tennessee Cavalry Regiment (USA). His assignment was to return to the Greeneville area to secretly perform recruiting duties. Sarah was his partner in this endeavor. In an area which was controlled by the Confederacy, but with a substantial amount of Unionist allegiance amongst the populace, they worked together to recruit and organize support for the US Army. The pair built an

underground network of Unionists, which included not only men and women of Caucasian descent but enslaved African-American men and women. Sarah took on the team's intelligence and recruiting work. Led by Sylvanius, and using the same mountainous route he had first taken to join the US Army, their network succeeded in safely guiding East Tennessee Unionist recruits to US Army enlistment centers in Kentucky.

Along with fellow Unionists in the Greeneville area, the couple faced tremendous hardships, vicious harassment, and daily danger. Area Unionist women were specifically targeted for what Sarah described as brutal treatment by the Confederate Government and military forces. On January 10, 1864, Sylvanius was ambushed and killed by a Confederate soldier. Despite the death of her husband, and the grave threat to herself, Sarah continued her secret service to the US Army – as a recruiter, spy, and dispatch carrier.

On September 4, 1864, Confederate Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan and his cavalry forces spent the night in Greeneville, initially at Sarah's house. After he had departed to spend the remainder of the evening at the home of a Confederate-sympathizer mother of a member of his staff, Sarah rushed to get word to nearby Federal forces under the command of Maj. Gen. Alvan Cullem Gillem, a fellow Tennessean. Sarah later described that night in her own words:

"I took my sunbonnet in hand and went to the street and met Colonel Williams and after I had passed the time of day, I asked him to pass me out after my cow as there was several cows on the hill. He told the guard to pass me out and to pass me in when I returned and I would give him some milk. So I was through the enemies lines and went on after the cow. When I got to it, I threw (a rock) at her and she went down the hill and I went after her. When I was out of sight, I crossed over in a corn field and went to a friend's house that had aided me more than one time and got a horse and went to our forces that were at Bulls Gap. I sent word into our forces. When Gillem who was General heard the news he did not believe it as he said it was a woman's tale. The Colonel of the 3rd Tennessee whose name is Brownlow and the 10th Michigan and seven others said they would go. After they talked and at last they started though I must say Gillem did not deserve any of the honor of that great deed for had it been left to him he would not have went and when he did go he went behind so far there was no danger of any harm in anyway coming at him."

Responding to Sarah's alert, Federal forces raided Greeneville, surprising Morgan's Cavalry. Having learned of Morgan's location from an enslaved woman whom she had paid to watch him, Sarah later took credit for having pointed out to the trooper the position of Morgan hiding behind a garden fence. Morgan was approached, but refused to surrender and was shot and killed by a Federal cavalry trooper.





(Unidentified artist's depiction of US Army Sergeant James Campbell firing and killing CSA BG John Hunt Morgan, for The National Tribune, 24 April 1902)

Following the killing of the controversial, but highly-popular Morgan, Sarah was captured and threatened with hanging by troopers from Morgan's Cavalry Unit. Rescued by Federal forces, Sarah and her children were forced to flee the Greeneville area. They were taken to Federally-controlled Knoxville, Tennessee, where she served as a nurse in a US Army hospital. She later served as a US Army nurse in Cleveland, Ohio. Following the War, she earned a living for herself and her children by lecturing to audiences in Northern cities about her wartime experiences.

Sarah re-married, in 1866, to Orville J. Bacon, of Broome County, New York. She had two children with Orville prior to divorcing him. During the 1870s, she received a series of appointments to positions in a variety of U.S. Government departments, from which she was consistently laid-off, mixed with appointments to temporary positions. She married again, in the 1880s, to James Cotton, by whom she was widowed.

Once more required to support herself and her youngest children, she struggled to obtain and maintain employment. Amongst the letters from those who attempted to assist her, was one from a US Army Cavalry Unit Commander. Evaluating Sarah's wartime service, he wrote:

"From a personal knowledge derived from service in East Tennessee during the years 1864-5, I can truthfully state that...the value of Mrs. Thompson's services to the cause of the Union was not exceeded by those of any of the gallant soldiers with whom I served during the years named. Justice appears to demand a recognition by some of the Departments in accordance with her physical strength and sufficient for her support.

E J Brooks, Bat Lt Col, 16th Mich Cav"

By a special Act of Congress, she was finally granted a pension for her wartime nursing service, at \$12.00 per month. An image of her certificate, issued to Sarah E. Cotton, and dated May 7, 1898, may be found in the collection of her papers held by Duke University, for which information is provided below.

In April 1909, at the age of 71, she was struck on the street by an "electric car" in Washington, DC, and died from her injuries the next day. She was buried, with full military honors, in Arlington National Cemetery, under her Thompson married name. Her grave marker is inscribed: "Her love for her country was shown by the service she gave."



Sarah E. Thompson Grave Marker

The collection of Sarah Thompson's personal papers is held in the Special Collections Library of Duke University. Selections from the archive are available online at

<https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/thompson/sarahindex.html>.

Note: most secondary sources report Sylvanius' enlistment in a different cavalry unit, at a different date. The information in this article is taken directly from Sarah Thompson's personal hand-written testimony, as contained in her papers cited above.

Submitted by the "Society for Women and the Civil War - [wwwswcw.org](http://wwwswcw.org)"