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Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
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President's Message

Greetings everyone,

I hope everyone is enjoying the New Year.

This Month on February 12th will mark President Lincoln's 225th Birthday but in February of 1864, he was in the middle of heated Re-Election and the Army of the Potomac was in the middle of a Winter stand-down awaiting the arrival of a new Commanding General from the West named Ulysses S. Grant. If you were a regular Union Soldier at this time, it would have been an opportunity to try and obtain a Military Leave. I read in the book - "Field of Battle" (The Civil War letters of Major Thomas Halsey) how he was able to go on Leave from Brandy Station, Virginia where his Army Unit was at to his home in New Jersey to visit his wife and family during the Month of February for a welcomed leave.

My Father, who was in Korea during the Korean War, never got to come home on Military Leave because of the distance, however, he and a War Buddy were approved Leave to go to Japan for a Week and remember seeing photo's in his scrapbook of Osaka and Mount Fuji. As for myself, I remember when I was in the Military and I came home for a 10-Day Christmas Leave. It was the first time I had moved away to Pensacola, Florida where I was stationed and I remember how happy my family and I were upon the visit.

I would like to ask all of you did you ever remember when you or any of your family members came home on Military Leave and how did you feel? Were you as happy as Major Halsey was during the Civil War?

James C. Juanitas, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, January 10, 2024
Denny's Restaurant, 3520 Auburn Boulevard, Sacramento

ATTENDANCE – 13:

MEMBERS – 12: James Juanitas, President; Carol Breiter, Vice President; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Jean Breiter, Harvey & Marsha J. Cain, Mark Carlson, Arnd Gartner, Ron Grove, (MAL); Joe & Michelle Matalone, & Stephen Shiflett.

GUESTS – 1: Doug Bonetti.

1. The meeting was called to order by President James Juanitas at 7:06 PM and he led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. President Juanitas asked the membership if they knew of a new meeting place since the Hof Brau may or may not reopen.
3. New Members and Guests were introduced. One Guest was present, the speaker.
4. President Juanitas asked for volunteers for the three vacant Board positions. There were no responses.
5. Vice President Carol Breiter is the new Sacramento Civil War Round Table Facebook Director. You can access SCWRT Facebook through your Facebook Account. On your Page, hit search and type in Sacramento Civil War Round Table.
6. The raffle was conducted by Joe & Michelle Matalone. Books, wine, and other items were offered as prizes. The raffle raised \$42.00.
7. Member-at-Large Ron Grove introduced the speaker, Doug Bonetti. Mr. Bonetti's topic was "Surprising Facts About Abraham Lincoln."
6. Many items about Abraham Lincoln were discussed. A few were Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's first love. Another was his clothing from Brooks Brothers. Lincoln loved the song "Dixie," which was written by a Northerner. Lincoln's travel from Springfield to Washington, DC in March 1861, aided by The Pinkertons due to death threats. Lincoln ordered the attack on Norfolk, Virginia in May 1862 which was successful. The Gettysburg Address was 272 words and lasted about three minutes. Mr. Bonetti felt Lincoln's second inaugural address in 1865 was one of his most important speeches.
7. After questions and answers, the evening ended at 8:12 PM.
6. The next Executive Board Meeting is Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 10:00 AM, at Brookfields near Madison and I-80. All members and guests are welcome.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on January 10th was \$4,794.76. Thanks to Joe & Michelle Matalone, members, and guest, the raffle brought in \$42.00.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2024

Date	Speaker	Topic
February 14th	"Robert Orr"	"USS Monitor Exhibit (Slide Show)"
March 13th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
April 10th	"Tim Karlberg"	"Civil War Spies in California"
May 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
June 12th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
July 10th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

2024 Membership

The 2024 membership renewal is due on January 1, 2024. 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 day 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:

gwoffoxworth@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

William Scott

“The Sleeping Sentinel”

William Scott was one of eight children born to Scottish immigrants, Mary Wormwood and Thomas Scott Jr. Born on April 9, 1839, in the small town of Groton, Vermont, he was described as a “big, awkward country lad who had a heart as big as he was.” William attended the local schools with his siblings. After school and during the summers, he worked on the family farm until that eventually became his full time job.



On July 10, 1861, 22 year William Scott enlisted with 78 other Groton men to fight in Company K, Third Regiment Vermont Volunteers.

Scott seemed to have some trouble adjusting to Army life. In one letter he wrote, “A soldier’s life is nothing more or less than a dog’s life.” Arthur Worthern, another enlistee in Company K, wrote, “Scott couldn’t keep step to a march to save his life, and whoever marched in front of him was greatly annoyed by Scott hitting his heels.”

The Third Regiment of Vermont Volunteers had been sent to do guard duty in and around Washington, DC. Currently they were stationed about a dozen miles from the City near Chain Bridge at Camp Lyon, which is now Alexandria, Virginia. Their mission was to stand watch over the City’s reservoir and water supply. William, used to the cool climate of Vermont, could not get used to the steam and humidity of Washington in July. He admitted in his letters home, “I’d rather see all the snow that ever fell in Vermont than to endure the weather we have to endure here.”

Still he soldiered on. At this time, the Union Army was still an undisciplined mélange of volunteers. Harsh punishments would be meted out for raw recruits who were unaccustomed to the hard life of the Army and could not keep up with the physical demands. The new 46th Articles of War made it a capital offense for a soldier to be found asleep at his post. If a soldier was court martialed and found guilty, the sentence was death by firing squad.

Vermont Captain Francis Randall wrote that the men in his unit were often exhausted. “I have seen the boys walking their beat regularly when they were so

completely asleep that they could not observe my approach till I spoke to them. They would mechanically execute their duty, but consciousness had fled.”

On the night of August 30, 1861, William went to his sentry post. The following night, he volunteered to take the place of a sick friend. Friends warned him he’d never be able to remain awake a second night in a row. After two nights with little sleep, an officer of the guard found William dozing at his post between the hours of three and four AM.

Scott was arrested, court martialed, and sentenced to be executed on September 9 for dereliction of duty. He was the first soldier in the Union Army to be condemned to death on this charge.

A protest immediately arose among the troops. A petition to pardon the well-liked Scott was circulated. One hundred and ninety one men signed. Scott’s commanding officers, soldiers he was serving with, and men from other brigades all scrambled to register their complaint. The petition was presented to Lincoln’s Register of the Treasury, a Vermonter himself named Lucius Crittenden.

Crittenden immediately passed the plea on to Lincoln. Because of Scott’s youth, his “inexperience as a soldier,” his “previous good conduct and character,” Lincoln decided on clemency. He said, “I have made one family happy, but I don’t know about the discipline of the Army.”

On September 7, the President wired an order to Major General George McClellan to intercede and stop the execution from going forward. A pardon was written by McClellan on the morning of September 8. That night in a letter to his wife, Ellen, McClellan wrote, “Mr. Lincoln came this morning to ask me to pardon a man that I had sentenced to death.”

Meanwhile in Virginia, preparations for the firing squad went on as scheduled though rumors of the pardon had already reached the Army camp. The commanding officer, wishing to impress upon the soldiers the seriousness of the offense, had the 3rd Vermont Brigade form a hollow square formation. The seven soldiers picked to serve as the firing squad were handed six blank cartridges and one loaded one. William was brought out. A white cap was placed over his head and “a white shield was sewed over his heart as a target for the guard.” The order of execution was then read aloud.

And then an adjutant stepped forward and read the President’s pardon.

No one knows what William Scott felt at that moment. He was immediately returned to duty.

Some historians say that Scott’s father, Thomas Scott, traveled to Washington to thank Lincoln in person for handing his son a reprieve. When Lincoln heard that five of Thomas’s sons had left home and were serving in the Union Army, he handed their

father a ten dollar bill to help him financially. Lincoln also issued a pass for Thomas to visit his boys.

On April 16, 1862, only seven months after the aborted execution, William Scott was mortally wounded at the Battle of Lee's Mill near Yorktown, Virginia. He had been hit by five or six bullets while struggling up a riverbank carrying a wounded soldier across his shoulders. He fell into a coma and died the following day.

Scott was initially interred on the battleground in Yorktown. As his grave was being dug, the buttons and belt buckle of a Revolutionary War soldier were found in the bottom of his resting place amid the dirt and pebbles.



William was later reinterred at the National Cemetery in Yorktown, Virginia.

Five Scott brothers had responded to Lincoln's call for volunteers to serve during the Civil War, William, George, John, Joseph, and Daniel. Only John survived. Their mother, Mary Scott, died shortly after the War in October 1865 at age 53 of "lung fever."

Born on November 4, 1851, the sixth Scott brother, Frank, was too young to serve. He never married and died of Acute Bright's disease at age 71 on April 16, 1923.

In 1863, Frances De Haes Janvier wrote an epic poem titled "*The Sleeping Sentinel*." It took the country by storm. It was followed in 1914 by a black and white silent film of the same name.

On June 25, 1936, the William Scott Memorial Association of Groton, Vermont, assisted by the Grand Army of the Republic, unveiled an historical marker dedicated to William Scott on the grounds of the farmhouse where he had grown up.

William Scott still lives on in the memory and imagination of the people of Vermont.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

WOMAN OF THE MONTH

Josephine Saint Pierre Ruffin

Activist and Publisher



Born August 31, 1842 in Boston, Massachusetts.
Died March 13, 1924 in Boston, Massachusetts.
Buried at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Josephine Saint Pierre was the daughter of a successful clothier from Martinique, John Saint Pierre, and his English wife, Elizabeth. She grew up in the African-American community on Beacon Hill in Boston, and was educated in both Boston and New York City. Her family was active in abolitionist and political circles.

At the age of 16, she married George Ruffin, the first African-American graduate of Harvard Law School. George would go on to be the first elected African-American Boston City Council Member, as well as the first African-American Municipal Judge in the City. Josephine and George welcomed five children during their marriage, and were activist partners in a wide range of social causes.

During the Civil War, the Ruffins recruited soldiers for the 54th and 55th Massachusetts Infantry Regiments and also volunteered with the Sanitary Commission. After the War, Josephine was active in the Kansas Freedmen Relief Association, an organization founded to assist formerly enslaved families who left the South for Kansas.

A staunch suffragist, Josephine joined Julia Ward Howe and Lucy Stone in establishing the American Woman Suffrage Association in Boston in 1868, and was active in promoting women's suffrage for the rest of her life.

After the death of George in 1886, Josephine turned her attention to publishing, and founded *The Women's Era*, the first American newspaper published by and for African-American women. Josephine was Editor until 1897. In 1894, Ruffin organized The Women's Era Club, an advocacy organization for African-American women. The following year, she organized the National Federation of Afro-American Women, and convened the First National Conference of the Colored Women of America in Boston. In 1896, Josephine integrated the New England Women's Club, becoming its first African-American member.

In 1910, Josephine helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and was a charter member.

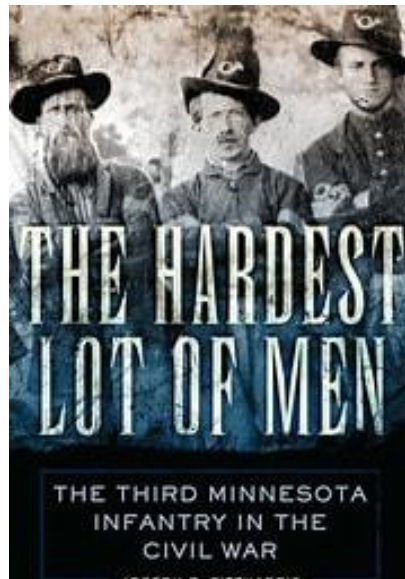
Josephine Saint Pierre Ruffin died at the age of 81. She was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1995. Her bust is in the Massachusetts State House. Her home on Charles Street is part of the Boston Women's Heritage Trail.

Submitted by the "Society for Women and the Civil War - wwwswcw.org"

The Hardest Lot of Men: The Third Minnesota Infantry in the Civil War

By Joseph C. Fitzharris. Campaigns and Commanders Series. Norman. University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. Illustrations. 338 pp. \$34.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8061-6401-4.

Reviewed by Adam Brown (Air University, Squadron Officer School). Published on H-War (March, 2022). Commissioned by Margaret Sankey.



In *The Hardest Lot of Men: The Third Minnesota Infantry in the Civil War*, Joseph C. Fitzharris describes, through immense detail, the local history and story of the Third Minnesota Infantry during and after the Civil War. This work analyzes the chronological story, presents individual perspectives of the soldiers, and compares the primary source documents detailing the Unit's Regimental history. Fitzharris argues that the memory and local history of the Third Minnesota Infantry does not comprehensively, nor objectively, factor in the personal perspectives or the scope of operations this Regiment was tasked with during its time in the United States Army. He attempts to provide the context of the Third Minnesota Infantry during this era. As a Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, Fitzharris is a veteran professor of nearly forty years of accomplished military history teaching and scholarship. He is the 2018 and 2011 winner of the Edwin H. Simmons Award, awarded for long,

distinguished, or particularly outstanding service to the Society for Military History.

In the first four chapters, Fitzharris provides the context of circumstances that western front states encountered when forming military units. This context encompasses recruiting, officer commissioning, and the political mechanisms Minnesota State leadership used when selecting higher-ranking commissioned officers. Additionally, he outlines the various reasons enlisted men joined the Army from the frontier: patriotism, social norms and expectations, local women shaming men into joining, travel, and glory. Fitzharris then describes the training the Third Minnesota Infantry endured on the journey to Murfreesboro. He uses the events at Murfreesboro between insurgency and organizational struggles to examine, and highlight, the changes that occurred within the regiment. Therefore, Fitzharris establishes the catalyst to highlight his evidence within the next four chapters of the work.

In the next four chapters, he uses the challenges of cowardice, defeat, and broken morale within the Third Minnesota Infantry to contrast their performance against the Dakota Native American tribes in Southwestern Minnesota. The elements contributing to the Unit's surrender at Murfreesboro focus on lack of pertinent information about Confederate military movements and actions, poor estimates of enemy numbers, and initial poor performance. Fitzharris highlights the societal shame and ridicule shown to the unit in the following months of Murfreesboro. However, he pivots to the journey assigned to the Third Minnesota to restore order and suppress raids by the Dakota Native Americans. This journey outlines two avenues through Major Abraham Welch and Private Carl Roos. These avenues led the Regiment toward reclaiming their honor and glory as they organized and defeated the Dakota Native Americans.

In the final three chapters, Fitzharris crafts the final linear narrative of the Third Minnesota's road to redemption. In this phase, the Union's objectives of the counterinsurgency campaign in Arkansas are twofold: destroy the rebel army as an organized force to safeguard Unionist Missouri and gain control of Arkansas to prepare for the military campaign into Texas. Fitzharris begins his discussion of the Arkansas Campaign with the battles in Northwestern Arkansas. This origin point illustrates a similar military strategy as used in Twenty-First-Century military conflicts as the descendant of efforts to win the hearts and minds of the people of Arkansas. During this historical analysis, the author provides the contextual events to the success of the Third

Minnesota Infantry. This analysis shows the congenial conduct of the Third Minnesota with their success in fighting Arkansas Confederate guerillas along the river delta region. The Third Minnesota's counterinsurgency tactics illustrate the differences the local population encountered with previous Union regiments. Fitzharris uses this phase of the Third Minnesota's success to highlight the reclaimed honor and pride despite the social abuse they experienced after Murfreesboro.

Fitzharris lays out the framework for the work in the introduction. He narrates the purpose and specific scope a regimental history retains in the larger scope of historical analysis. Additionally, Fitzharris identifies the sources contributing to the Third Minnesota Infantry's historical analysis and provides the sources that normally contribute to other regimental histories. His framework details the historiography of scholarly interpretations since 1889. In his evaluation of these interpretations, Fitzharris identifies the inaccuracies with previous scholarly work while highlighting the contradictions in these interpretations. According to Fitzharris, these inaccuracies and contradictions lack primary sources from the soldiers or communities that supported them. He examines "the motivation, morale, cohesion, spirit de corps, and brokenness" of the regiment as well as individuals' post-military service civilian life (p. 9).

The author's main argument and claim for writing the work is that the official history of the Third Minnesota Infantry has not incorporated the primary source documentation from the Third Minnesota soldiers, local leaders, or the communities that interacted with the regiment. Fitzharris argues that this source material changes the narrative from broken veterans and cowards to a battle-hardened military unit with success during the post-Civil War campaigns. Fitzharris provides a robust list of primary and secondary sources used in creating this work. The comprehensive and balanced interpretations noted within the work show the credibility of the author.

Fitzharris provides an intensely detailed account of the individual perspective and Regimental history through his collection of primary source documentation. He does account for secondary works describing the Regiment as a point of comparison in presenting his argument. His work's audience is public, local, and military historians with baseline knowledge of the Civil War and counterinsurgency operations after the War. The work has a tremendous amount of detail and would not be recommended for the average historical enthusiast or reader.

Submitted by Bruce A, Castleman, Ph.D