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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

Well I've started my second year as the President of this great group! I'd still like to see more attendance although we seem to keep the server at R Vida busy! I also want to thank Brendan Harris for his presentation – he moved his program up a month as our scheduled speaker (Brian Duggan) canceled due illness. Mr Duggan will speaker to us in February about Custer and His Hounds!

I'm also hoping for a good turnout for the Central Coast Conference at the beginning of May in Monterey. Would anyone be interested in ride sharing or room sharing? – Our Club used to put on epic West Coast Civil War Conferences a few years ago – I'd love to see them come back.

Thanks,

**Carol Breiter, President**

# MINUTES

## SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

R Vida Cantina Restaurant, 7040 Sunrise Boulevard, Citrus Heights

### ATTENDANCE – 20

**MEMBERS – 14:** Carol Breiter, President; Jean Breiter, Secretary; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Steve Breiter, Marsha Jutovsky Cain, Ron Grove (Program Director), Brendan Harris (Speaker), Matthew Jutovsky, Mike Lynch, Joseph (Member-at-Large) & Michelle Matalone, Bernie Quinn, & Stuart & Andrea Sheffield.

**GUESTS – 6:** Jason Carter, Jason & Jennifer Crutchley, Jamie Lazarus, Katherine Phillips, & Broderick Whitford.

### **ZOOM – 0:**

1. The meeting was called to order by President Carol Breiter at 7:00 PM and she led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. President Breiter shared this day in history. In 1864, President Davis sent General Johnston to Alabama and Mississippi to bolster the defense of the area; in 1865, Admiral Porter bombarded Fort Fisher and General Terry took the Fort and eventually conquered Wilmington; in 1129, formal approval of Knights Templar at the Council of Troyes; in 1525, Charles V and Francis I signed the Treaty of Madrid; in 1741, Benedict Arnold was born; in 1746, the Jacobite Army leaves Glasgow for Culloden and were defeated by the English in April; in 1954, Joe DiMaggio married Marilyn Monroe; in 1963, George Wallace was inaugurated as the Governor of Alabama; in 1970, Diana Ross and the Supremes gave their last concert; in 1973, the Miami Dolphins won Super Bowl 7 and became the only NFL team to have an undefeated season; and in 1980, gold was released from government control and soared to \$800.00 an ounce (today is \$4,620.00).
3. President Breiter introduced new members and guests. One new member and three guests.
4. There was no old business. Announcement: THIRD CENTRAL COAST CONFERENCE – will be held May 1 - 3, 2026 in Monterey, California, "Seldom Heard History of the Civil War." Members and guests were encouraged to attend.
5. The Raffle was conducted by Jean Breiter. Thanks to members and guests, the Raffle collected \$28.00.
6. President Breiter introduced the speaker, Brendan Harris. He discussed the many attributes, traits, and restrictions of the various monuments of the Gettysburg Battlefield.
7. After discussions and questions, the evening ended at 7:55 PM.
8. The next Executive Board Meeting is Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 10:00 AM, at Brookfields near Madison and I-80. Members and guests are welcome.

**Submitted by Jean Breiter, Secretary**

### **Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance on January 14, 2026 was \$4,871.71. Thanks to members, guests, and Jean Breiter, the Raffle brought in \$28.00.

**George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**

# Coming Programs for 2026

Date	Speaker	Topic
February 11th	"Brian Duggan"	"General Custer's Civil War Hounds"
March 11th	"Debby Johnson"	"Pharmacy Practice From the Mid 1800s Through the End of the Civil War"
April 8th	"Bernie Quinn"	" Battle of Little Round Top"
May 13th	"Doug Bonetti"	"Lincoln in Film, Poetry, & Literature"
June 10th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
July 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

## **2026 Membership**

The 2026 membership renewal is due on January 1, 2026. 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:

[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 Round Table or the Editor. The official address of this Round Table 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.

# Woman of the Month

**Ann Pamela Cunningham**

America's First Historic Preservationist  
1816 - 1875



Ann Cunningham was born into elite status as the daughter of a cotton planter in South Carolina. She was well-educated, socially connected, and also somewhat disabled by a spinal injury from a horseback riding accident in her teens. She lived with chronic pain for the rest of her life.

Ann's life work was sparked by a letter she received in 1853 from her mother, who had passed Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, while on a steamer in the Potomac River. Her mother wrote, "I was painfully distressed at the ruin and desolation of the home of Washington and the thought passed through my mind: Why was it that the women of his country did not try to keep it in repair, if the men could not do it? It does seem such a blot on our country!"

At the time, Mount Vernon was owned by the first President's great-great nephew, John A. Washington III, who was seeking a buyer for the estate, as he lacked the funds to maintain the property. He had already approached both the US Government and the State of Virginia, but neither entity was interested in purchasing at his asking price of \$200,000 (or \$8.3 million in today's money).

Ann determined to buy Mount Vernon and preserve it for future generations. She began by founding the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association (MVLA), establishing herself as Regent and enlisting 22 prominent, well-connected Vice Regents to carry out the Association's work in their respective states. Their mission struck a responsive chord in Americans nationwide, enabling the Association to gather and deliver the asking price within two years of launching their campaign. Ann took possession of the mansion keys on February 22, 1860.

The MVLA, under Ann's direction, decided to preserve not only the mansion, but every standing structure that dated to George Washington's lifetime. The Civil War halted the preservation efforts, but the ladies resumed their work in 1866. Ann lived at Mount Vernon and served as Regent until 1874, contracting and overseeing the work on the property, as well as spearheading the additional fundraising. In addition to conserving buildings, the MVLA also located and acquired furnishings, household objects, and personal items formerly belonging to George and Martha Washington.

To learn more about the tremendous effort to save Mount Vernon, click here: [The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association | George Washington's Mount Vernon](#)



Members of the MVLA at Mount Vernon in 1870.

Ann's legacy was more than the rescue of Mount Vernon. Her campaign sowed the first seeds of America's historic preservation movement. What began with Mount Vernon would, in time, lead to the restoration of countless historic structures and districts.

-- DeAnne Blanton

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

# Alabama Comes to Auburn's Aid: The Battle of Chehaw Station

Mike Bunn, December 2, 2024, [blueandgrayeducation.org](http://blueandgrayeducation.org)



View of the University of Alabama's Quad in 1859. Alabama cadets played a big role in the little-known Battle of Chehaw Station in 1864.

The Battle of Chehaw Station is a largely forgotten conflict associated with the July 1864 cavalry raid through Alabama led by Union General Lovell Harrison Rousseau. Ordered by General William T. Sherman, the raid aimed to disrupt Confederate operations in the area during the Atlanta Campaign. This skirmish holds a unique place in Alabama's history primarily due to the heavy involvement of conscripted teenagers and University of Alabama cadets, for many of whom it was their first combat experience.

Chehaw Station, a stop on the Montgomery and West Point Railroad, connected Alabama's Capital to Western Georgia—and, eventually, Atlanta. Near this Station, Rousseau's rugged cavalymen encountered the largest Confederate force assembled to stop them from severing a vital section of the critical rail line. Rousseau's men had met only minimal resistance as they carved a destructive path through Eastern Alabama, reaching Loachapoka by sundown on July 17. Early the next morning, Rousseau divided his forces into four detachments, assigning each to destroy sections of the Montgomery and West Point Railroad in the area before advancing to join the Federal Army near Atlanta. Key targets included Confederate facilities in nearby Auburn, home to the East Alabama Male College, the precursor of Auburn University.

Confederate authorities in Montgomery scrambled to meet the crisis as best they could, hastily cobbling together a meager force of perhaps 500 troops, most of whom were the untested teenagers of Lockhart's Battalion. To supplement their numbers, Governor Thomas Hill Watts called upon a small contingent of University of Alabama Cadets (Alabama operated as a military school at the time), who happened to be staying in or passing through Montgomery at the time. General Bryan M. Thomas was entrusted with the overall Command of the little makeshift Army and soon had it rattling along the tracks aboard a train to meet the invaders east of Town.

The Confederate force approached Chehaw Station on the morning of Monday, July 18, 1864. About a mile past the Station, they encountered a Federal force under Major Absalom Baird.

The Yankees fired the first shot, striking a railcar near one of the troops. The boys were hastily deployed, and the fight ensued. The opposing lines clashed across a half-mile stretch of ground, with the Confederates anchored on a small ridge in a large field containing a gin house and the Federals positioned at the edge of a clearing a few hundred yards away. The two sides slogged away at each other intermittently for several hours as General Thomas directed the train to shuttle back and forth to the Station, ringing its bell to create the illusion of reinforcements.



Major Baird

Already convinced he faced a force at least as large as his own, Major Baird sent a courier up the line to request reinforcements. When additional Union cavalry arrived, they stymied a tentative Confederate advance in the early afternoon. A Union detachment flanked the Confederate line under the cover of the railroad embankment, overwhelming the outnumbered and disorganized Southern troops. Thomas's thin line soon broke. Despite their success, Baird, believing he would need even more men to advance farther down the rail line, decided to pull back.

In the aftermath of the Battle, both sides claimed victory. The Union forces had clearly gotten the better of the fighting, but they had left Confederates in control of the Battlefield as they departed to join up with Sherman's Army. Union casualties numbered about 15, while the Confederate losses ranged between 40 and 50. Among the Confederate casualties were two University of Alabama cadets, the first to be wounded in action during the War.

The Battle of Chehaw Station remains a significant yet lesser-known chapter in Alabama's Civil War history, illustrating the challenges and sacrifices faced by those defending the Confederacy.

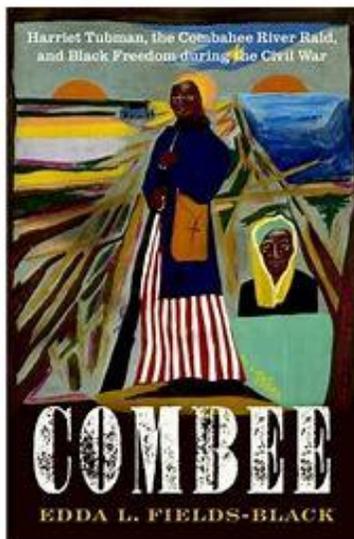
*Mike Bunn is the Director of Historic Blakeley State Park in Spanish Fort, Alabama.*

**Submitted by the Blue and Gray Education Association**

## **COMBEE: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom during the Civil War**

By Edda L. Fields-Black. New York. Oxford University Press, 2024. 776 pp. \$39.99 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-19-755279-7.

Reviewed by Erin Shearer (University of Reading). Published on H-CivWar (August, 2024). Commissioned by Patrick J. Doyle



Scholars have extensively chronicled Harriet Tubman's role in the emancipation of enslaved individuals held in bondage across the US South. While Tubman remains synonymous with self-liberation, her participation in the Civil War, specifically her role in the US Army Department of the South, remains the least-studied aspect of her well-documented life. Edda L. Fields-Black draws attention to this neglected area of historical inquiry through her examination of Tubman and the Combahee River Raid of 1863, alongside the experiences of Combahee freedom seekers who utilized the raid to secure their release from slavery throughout the South Carolina Lowcountry. COMBEE meticulously details Tubman's involvement in the US War effort against the Confederacy, which included gathering intelligence; leading a group of pilots, spies, and scouts; and piloting Colonel James Montgomery and his Regiment, the 2nd South Carolina Volunteers (US), up the Combahee River. While Fields-Black spotlights Tubman's contributions to the US military, alongside the prominence of the Combahee River Raid in the defeat of the Confederacy, the author simultaneously details the stories and experiences of other Combahee freedom seekers, providing a detailed study of their lives before and after the Civil War. This book helps readers understand the role of Tubman and the many Black freedom seekers in the US Civil War.

In COMBEE, Fields-Black makes use of planter papers and other written sources including court proceedings, marriage settlements, wills, estate papers, and bills of sale to trace the history of Tubman and the Combahee freedom seekers before, during, and after the Combahee River Raid. Fields-Black examines the US Civil War Pension Files to reconstruct Tubman's Civil War service and the experiences of the self-emancipated

people of the Combahee River Raid. An underutilized source of evidence, this material offers new insights into the experiences of Tubman, Black Union soldiers, and the enslaved people of the Combahee rice plantations. Due to the scarcity of written accounts in this period from the perspective of the enslaved, the testimonies in the US pension files represent an important source of evidence in uncovering the lives and experiences of the enslaved communities in Lowcountry South Carolina before, during, and after the Civil War. Historians are well versed with the WPA narratives, yet the testimonies present in the pension files offer a new lens through which to study slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Jim Crow South. The pension files enable the author to identify enslaved individuals and communities, with freed people articulating their own histories of enslavement and that of their family members "in their own words and in their own voices"(p. 132).

The work's nineteen chapters chronicle the history of the region and the lives of those enslaved before and after the US Civil War. Beginning with a contextual examination, Fields-Black simultaneously uncovers the histories of both slaveholding families and their enslaved laborers, meticulously tracing the labor and movement of enslaved individuals in Lowcountry rice plantations. Through the lens of Tubman and other enslaved individuals, the author documents the varied exploitations and abuses of enslavement, including sale, labor, and sexual violence, which ultimately spurred some individuals, including Tubman, to seek permanent release from slavery through the act of fleeing to US territory.

Part 2 provides a detailed overview of the Region's Civil War history and the thousands of enslaved individuals on Port Royal Island, Saint Helena, and Lady's Island who navigated warfare for their own needs and survival. Fields-Black spotlights Tubman's "indispensable" role in the US Army Department of the South gathering valuable intelligence from formerly enslaved people, now refugees, at Beaufort Camp, concerning the movements, locations, and numbers of Confederate forces (p. 199). These "Black Dispatches," as termed by contemporary US Army officials, proved to be crucial in the US War effort. Fields-Black emphasizes the role of freedom seekers in the ultimate demise of the nearby Confederate forces due to their knowledge of the local geography, plantations, enslaved populations, and Confederate lines. These freedom seekers worked alongside Tubman, whose movements, as demonstrated by Fields-Black, were not solely confined to the Beaufort refugee camp; her intelligence gathering also occurred in refugee and enslaved communities on neighboring islands. The intelligence gathered in 1863 would prove pivotal in shaping the US Army Department of the South's military strategy for its Black regiments.

Part 3 details the events and aftermath of the Combahee River Raid and Tubman's role as the Commander to those who acted as pilots, scouts, and intelligence gatherers. Fields-Black gleans information of the raid through contemporary newspapers, military records, firsthand accounts, and of course, the pension files. Fields-Black voices the importance of both Tubman and the 2nd South Carolina Volunteers in the Combahee River Raid, stressing the human and economic effects of the raid, resulting in the liberation of hundreds of freedom seekers and the destruction of Confederate property, crops, and provisions. Faced with archival silences surrounding Tubman's service in the US Army Department of the South, the author relies on Tubman's autobiography, interviews, and pension applications to tease out Tubman's role, which has been

obscured in official archival documentation. Moreover, Fields-Black openly acknowledges the pervasiveness of these silences in official military records pertaining to those who operated as spies, scouts, guides, and pilots, despite the Union commanders' reliance on the intelligence provided by self-liberated Black people. This makes Fields-Black's use of the pension files to uncover their roles all the more poignant and crucial. Through this underused source of evidence, Fields-Black confirms their identities and uncovers their experiences of the raid.

The final part of this work discusses the military assaults following the Combahee River Raid including the Union bombardments of Morris Island, Battery Wagner, Fort Sumter, and Charleston with the aid of the 2nd South Carolina Volunteers, emphasizing the personal sacrifices of soldiers who experienced injuries, death, and trauma. Fields-Black also spotlights the positions of thousands of refugees, veterans, and widows who navigated postemancipation life in the Port Royal area, the majority of whom experienced exploitative labor contracts with former enslavers on rice plantations following the end of the Civil War. The author also highlights the positive, lived experiences of those previously held in bondage, noting freed people's legal marriages (previously denied under slavery) and their acquisition of land, alongside the establishment of communities, which, as Fields-Black argues "sowed the seeds" for "linguistic, cultural, and social transformation" in the establishment of Gullah Geechee (p. 495). The author's emphasis on transformation is key to her study, as African Americans "identified themselves in freedom as 'Combee' through the end of the Nineteenth Century" (p. 521).

The book as a whole stresses the prominence of the Combahee River Raid and its Black participants in the destruction of the Confederacy and racial slavery. In the history of Black freedom, Fields-Black argues, the Combahee River Raid "belongs on the same spectrum" as some of the most well-known insurrections in US history, including the Stono Rebellion, Denmark Vesey's conspiracy, and the Southampton Revolt of 1831 (p. 519). Throughout this detailed epic, Fields-Black recognizes and articulates Tubman's invaluable role and contribution to the US military during the Civil War. Most notably, Fields-Black stresses the revolutionary nature of the Combahee River Raid, and she credits Tubman as an insurrectionist, alongside the other 180,000 Black men whose military service had a significant impact on the Union War effort and, thus, the end of the South's "peculiar institution." Tubman, in the words of the author, "led the largest and most successful slave revolt in US history" (p. 519). The Combahee River Raid not only played a vital part in the US military effort, it also secured the release of at least 756 people held in human bondage. COMBEE articulates the need for a broader conceptualization of insurrection, freedom, and resistance through the author's emphasis on the importance of Tubman and other freedom seekers in the demise of slavery. This book represents an important contribution to Civil War history, alongside the history of Black resistance to slavery in the United States.

**Submitted by Bruce A, Castleman, Ph.D**