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Battle Cry

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

The America's Civil War Magazine had an interesting article reassessing General George McClellan at Antietam. He is usually condemned for delaying 36 hours before advancing his forces. What was his charter and what was he trying to do?

Lee had crossed the Potomac River and was in Maryland. Where was he mostly likely headed? Washington, DC was the most heavily defended City in the world at this time: 500 cannons and 160,000 troops defending it.

Close by is Baltimore, Maryland. It was undefended. All the Northern railroad lines go to Baltimore, and then a single line goes from there to Washington. Taking Baltimore isolates DC from supplies. Maryland is a State with a large Southern population. McClellan figures this is Lee's destination.

Thus McClellan's first move was not toward Frederick, MD where Lee was static roughly 50 miles west of Baltimore. McClellan instructed Major General Burnside to march his 9th Corps North accompanied by Major General Hooker's 1st Corps. Marching more than 40 miles in 3 days, Burnside promptly seized the National Road passing through a gap at Ridgeville, MD, effectively blocking any Rebel move toward Baltimore.

McClellan is now in the driver's seat. Lee has two options: retreat back across the Potomac River or fight.

Only the President was convinced Little Mac had achieved victory. McClellan had rid the North of the invader, protected Washington and wounded Lee with two stunning defeats. So confident was the President that the very next day he issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, March 11, 2020
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 17:

MEMBERS – 15: Dennis Kohlmann, President; James Juanitas, Vice President; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Claude Alber, Harvey & Marsha Cain, Arnd Garnter, Donald J. Hayden, Wayne & Nina Henley, Joseph & Michelle Matalone, Bernie Quinn, Program Director; Paul Ruud, (MAL); John Zasso.

GUESTS – 2: Milo Turaylich, Don A. Zajic.

1. President Dennis Kohlmann led the Pledge. President Kohlmann recognized new members and guests. The raffle was conducted by John Zasso.
2. President Kohlmann was the speaker on the Second Battle of Sabine Pass. The Battle took place on September 8, 1863, the result of a failed Union Army attempt to invade the Confederate State of Texas during the Civil War. It has often been credited as the most one-sided Confederate victory during the War. (Fort Sabine was renamed Fort Griffin after the First Battle of Sabine Pass.)
3. With a de facto French government bordering Texas on the south across the Rio Grande River, the Confederates hoped to establish a formal route between Texas and Mexico by way of which the Confederacy could obtain much-needed supplies.
4. President Abraham Lincoln was well aware of Confederate intentions and sent an expedition to establish a military presence in Texas and to discourage Maximilian from opening trade with the Confederacy. The military Federal force was commanded by Major General Nathaniel P. Banks.
5. General Banks ordered his subordinate, Major General William B. Franklin, who would coordinate with the U.S. Navy, to enter the Sabine River from the Gulf of Mexico and defeat the small Confederate detachment at "Fort Sabine" on the River's west bank.
6. On the afternoon of September 8, 1863, U.S. Navy Lieutenant Frederick Crocker ("Acting Captain") was in command of the advance squadron composed of four gunboats. Crocker was a veteran officer of considerable recent experience in Union river-gunboat actions and blockade duty.
7. Crocker's squadron had no local river pilots, only general knowledge of the River's channels, no assurance of locations of the constantly varying depths especially of large oyster-shell "reefs" or "banks" between the River's two channels.
8. The Confederate detachment residing at the Sabine Pass Fort was the Jeff Davis Guards, a company of mostly Irish-American men from the Houston and Galveston area, and recently had merged into the First Texas Heavy Artillery.
9. The Confederates captured two of the gunboats with a total of 13 heavy cannon, including at least two new Parrot Rifles, which were handed over to Leon Smith's Texas Marine Department. The Union casualties amounted to two dozen killed and badly wounded, about 37 missing (including several "colored men" U.S. sailors), and 315 Navy men captured. The combined Union Army and Navy invasion force withdrew and returned to New Orleans. The Confederates had no casualties.
10. In recognition of the victory, the Confederate Congress passed a resolution of special thanks to the officers and men of the Davis Guard.
11. The Second Battle of Sabine Pass was of little tactical or strategic significance to the Civil War. A Confederate supply line from Mexico to Texas was never established.
12. The next Board Meeting is unknown at this time.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on March 11th was \$5,226.93. The raffle brought in \$32.00. Many thanks to John Zasso, members, and guests.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2020

Date	Speaker	Topic
April 8th	No Meeting	"No Topic, No Meeting"
May 13th	Carl Guarneri	"Lincoln's Informer"
June 10th	John Scales	"The Campaigns & Battles of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest"
July 8th	Bernard Quinn	"Lee's Sharpshooters"
August 12th	Arnd Gartner	"Union Intelligence Services"
September 9th	Nancy Samuelson	"To Be Determined"

2020 Membership

The 2020 membership renewal is due as of January 1, 2020. The dues are \$30.00 and you can renew at a monthly 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

Please remember, you can also pay at any monthly meeting.

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

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.

NORTH & SOUTH IS BACK!

Re-Launched in July 2019, three issues have already appeared by December 31, 2019. Each 100-page issue is packed with 7 - 8 articles plus the familiar Departments--Knapsack, Crossfire, and Briefings-- and a new one, *Civil Warriors*, that looks at little known participants in the War.

Lead article in Issue 4 is a detailed examination of whether Meade could have - and should have - trapped and destroyed the Army of Northern Virginia. (Editor says yes, 98%.) There will be a follow-up discussion article.

To subscribe go to northandsouthmag.com or call Keith on (559) 260 3852 (Pacific time).

Ann Caroline Coleman

Every day on his way to study law, handsome 17 year-old, six-footer James Buchanan passed the home of 13 year-old Ann Caroline Coleman. Ann's home, on the corner of King and Chestnut Streets in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was the largest in town. Her father was the richest man in Lancaster and one of the richest in the State.



By 1819, James Buchanan was making \$8,000 a year. He had passed the Pennsylvania Bar, been admitted to the Masonic Lodge, and was climbing the social ladder of his adopted hometown. He believed he could afford to take a wife and he asked for Ann's hand in marriage. Her father, Robert Coleman, refused to even consider Buchanan as a marital prospect for his daughter. Coleman was a self-made man, always conscious of being judged as nouveau riche, and of having his social aspirations snickered at behind his back. He wanted someone of wealth and class for his daughter, someone who could secure his family's position in high society. James Buchanan, though respectable, was a first generation self-made man. Robert Coleman knew that Buchanan's grandfather had abandoned his family in Northern Ireland, leaving his wife and children to survive the best they could. As a member of the Board of Trustees of Dickinson College, Coleman knew that Buchanan had been disciplined and briefly expelled from the school for dancing on table tops in the local tavern. He was known to gamble and had lost three tracts of land in an election bet with a friend.

Ann was beautiful, intelligent, and well-educated. Her future husband would receive a large dowry. Anne had not received many proposals. Town gossips maintained that she remained single at 23 because she was emotionally unstable.

Ann and James defied her father's wishes and became affianced. But in October and November of that year, Buchanan had little time to cozy up to his future bride. The Panic of 1819 had put the country's finances in disarray. The Federalist Party in Lancaster was falling apart and Buchanan was working day and night to keep it together. James was gone from town for weeks at a time.

Ann was proud, sensitive, impetuous, and highly strung. She fretted when she heard townspeople whispering that the ambitious Jimmy Buchanan had his eye, not on her feminine charms, but on her fortune. Receiving few letters from her busy fiancé, Ann wrote to James that he "...did not treat her with that affection that she expected from the man she would marry...it was not regard for her that was his object, but her riches."

Ann was unaware that her mother had hidden all of her beau's love missives to her.

Buchanan did not rush home to reassure Ann of his love when he received her admonishing letter. Hurt and resentful at the accusations, he dallied on his way home, stopping here and there, and making social visits to female friends. When Ann heard of his "visits" she broke off their engagement. She packed her bags and on December 6, she left town with her sister, Sarah, to visit their older married sister in Philadelphia.

By December 9, 1819, Ann was dead.

A friend of the Colemans, Judge Robert Kittera wrote, "I met this young lady on the street in the vigor of health, and but a few hours after, her friends were mourning her death. She had been engaged to be married, and some unpleasant misunderstanding occurring, the match was broken off."

Her sisters, believing that Ann was fine, had gone out for the evening. They returned at midnight to find her dead. Dr. Chapman, who attended her said, "...it is the first instance he ever knew of hysteria producing death." The doctor was well aware of the chances of accidental overdoses from the opium or laudanum he prescribed for hysteria. But he did not believe this death was a mishap. He believed it to be suicide.

Friends and family back in Lancaster seemed to agree with him.

On December 10, James penned a letter to Ann's father, pleading to be allowed to attend her funeral. "You have lost a child, a dear, dear child. I have lost the only earthly object of my affection...Afford me the melancholy pleasure of seeing her body before the interment...she was infinitely dearer to me than life." The letter was turned away and never read by the family.

Ann was buried at Saint James Episcopal Church Cemetery in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Buchanan fled the town for a visit to his parents in Mercersburg. When he returned and tried to re-enter society, he was snubbed. A townsman wrote "...he secluded himself for a few days and then sallied forth as bold as ever....he is the whole conversation of the town."



A strong coalition of friends urged James to run for a seat in the House of Representatives. It would distract him from his sorrow and distract the gossips from discussing him. In 1820, James Buchanan ran for and won that seat. He ever after admitted that he entered politics as a "distraction from my great grief." He served in the House of Representatives for the next ten years.

In 1821, when his father died, Buchanan took on the responsibility of the next generation of his family. He was the second eldest of 11 siblings, but nine of them and most of their spouses, had predeceased him. He cared for all their children and his two youngest brothers who were schoolboys when their father died.

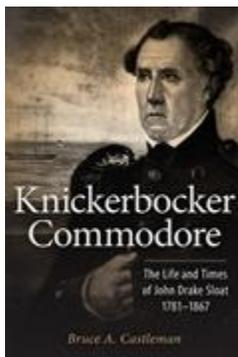
Six years after Ann died, Reverend Augustus Muhlenberg asked Robert Coleman for the hand of her younger sister, Sarah Coleman. Robert Coleman disliked Muhlenberg even more than he'd disliked Buchanan. The door was slammed in the Reverend's face. Sarah, like her sister Ann, went to visit their older sister in Philadelphia. She died there suddenly on November 1, 1825, also aged 23, perhaps a victim of laudanum. She is buried next to Ann.

Buchanan, the son of immigrant parents, rose to become the fifteenth President of the United States. He was the last President to be born in the Eighteenth Century and the last one still alive at the same time as George Washington. Many people believe he was one of the worst Presidents the country ever had and that his inaction led the United States into Civil War. Upon his death on June 1, 1868, a sealed box containing mementos and letters was found that purported to hold the key to explaining the cause of the rift between Ann and James. A box was also found with a note saying that upon his death, all material in the box was to be destroyed. His executors followed his wishes.

James Buchanan remains the only President of the United States who never married.

Knickerbocker Commodore

The Life and Times of John Drake Sloat, 1781-1867



Bruce A. Castleman - Author

[Excelsior Editions](#)

Price: \$24.95

Hardcover - 340 pages

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Explores the life and times of John Drake Sloat, the US Navy Pacific Squadron Commander who occupied Monterey and declared the annexation of California at the beginning of the War with Mexico.

Knickerbocker Commodore chronicles the life of Rear Admiral John Drake Sloat, an important but understudied naval figure in US history. Born and raised by a slave-owning gentry family in New York's Hudson Valley, Sloat moved to New York City at age nineteen. Bruce A. Castleman explores Sloat's forty-five-year career in the Navy, from his initial appointment as midshipman in the conflicts with revolutionary France to his service as Commodore during the Country's War with Mexico. As the Commodore in Command of the naval forces in the Pacific, Sloat occupied Monterey and declared the annexation of California in July 1846, controversial actions criticized by some and defended by others. More than a biography of one man, this book illustrates the evolution of the peacetime Navy as an institution and its conversion from sail to steam. Using shipping news and Customs Service records from Sloat's merchant voyages, Castleman offers a rare and insightful perspective on American maritime history.

"...a worthy contribution to the literature of the period ... gives a balanced view of American naval leadership in the age of sail ... The book is well researched and a brisk read, and would benefit both interested general readers and academic historians focused on early Nineteenth-Century naval history alike." — *Mariner's Mirror*

"Drawing from his own twenty-four-year naval career, the author ably guides the most land-borne reader through the complexities of ship operations and naval officer development in the age of sail ... *Knickerbocker Commodore* is well worth the time, especially for those interested in United States' naval and commercial shipping history.

Castleman not only provides a biography of an almost-forgotten Commodore; he contributes a worthy addition to the historiography of antebellum America.” — *Journal of Military History*

“...Castleman does an outstanding job of contextualizing the institutions, events, and personalities that impacted Sloat’s life ... *Knickerbocker Commodore* is both enjoyable and illuminating.” — *Western Historical Quarterly*

“*Knickerbocker Commodore* is a first-rate scholarly biography of John Drake Sloat. In his study, Castleman presents a persuasive assessment of this important naval officer and his role in the controversial early days of the Mexican War in California.” — John H. Schroeder, author of *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat*

“Written by a scholar and a former naval officer, Bruce Castleman has given us not only a well-balanced biography of John Drake Sloat but also a history of the US Navy from the time of the War of 1812 to the Civil War. In addition, his well-researched book provides an important contribution to the War with Mexico and the American conquest of Alta California through the actions and decision making of this ‘Knickerbocker Commodore.’” — Gary F. Kurutz, Curator Emeritus of Special Collections, California State Library.

“The Mexican-American War of 1846 – 47 was a War of foundational importance to the United States. Bruce Castleman’s biography of an important but little-known participant deftly captures the critical moment when America defeated its major continental rival. Even better, by thoughtfully tracing the entirety of Sloat’s life, the book winningly tells the story of the early American Navy from its tremulous beginnings in the Revolution to its steam-powered modernity in the Civil War. Castleman’s biography is of more than just a man; it is of an entire time in American history, and all the more useful for it.” — David J. Silbey, author of *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine-American War, 1899 – 1902*

Bruce A. Castleman served in the US Navy for twenty-four years and held the rank of Commander at the time of his retirement. He then trained as a historian and lectured in history at San Diego State University. He is the author of *Building the King’s Highway: Labor, Society, and Family on Mexico’s Caminos Reales, 1757 – 1804*.

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.