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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

Dear Sacramento Civil War Round Table (SCWRT) Members:

The past year has been a difficult challenge for most volunteer clubs and interest groups. In order to meet the challenge of the COVID Virus, some groups were able to utilize technologies such as "Zoom" and continue to meet, just not in person. Others, including the Sacramento CWRT, suspended future meetings until some later date dependent upon local COVID health restrictions and mandates.

The Board of Directors of the Sacramento CWRT met on March 24, 2021 to discuss the Club's future. At present, the Restaurant (Hof Brau) where we have been meeting for years, remains closed with no definitive date for reopening to 100 percent indoor dining. Thus, the meeting room where we met is not available to us at this time.

To assist our Board in planning for the near future, we are asking each member to review the very brief interest survey below and "reply" to **me** or any **Board Member** with a "YES" or "NO" response so your answer can be counted. Thank you for your continued support of the Sacramento CWRT. **The Survey:**

If the Sacramento CWRT was to resume meetings in the room at its former gathering location, Sam's Hof Brau, and continue with the regular format of earlier meetings --dining for those who chose, a raffle, followed by announcements, and then a program on some topic related to Civil War history, is it likely that you would attend?

YES _____ or NO _____.

If the Hof Brau is not available for Sacramento CWRT meetings in the near future, can you suggest an alternate location that would accommodate from forty to fifty people? **Bear in mind that the current arrangement with the Hof Brau has been made available to the Sacramento CWRT at no cost to the Club.**

Thank you.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, March 10, 2021
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 still closed to inside dining.
2. The next Board Meeting is unknown at this time.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on March 10th was \$4,466.35. No meeting and no raffle.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2021

Date	Speaker	Topic
April 14th	"No Speaker"	"No Topic"
May 12th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
June 9th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
July 14th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
August 11th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
September 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

2021 Membership

The 2021 membership renewal was due as of January 1, 2021. 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

NOTE: 2020 memberships are good for 2021 due to COVID-19.

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.

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

Jane Means Appleton Pierce

Jane Means Appleton was born on March 12, 1806 in Hampton, New Hampshire. Her father, a minister and President of Bowdoin College, died in 1819 and the family moved in with Jane's wealthy maternal grandparents in Amherst.

Jane, reared in the strict Calvinist Church, believed that if anything terrible befell her, it was because she had displeased God. Frail and sickly, she never weighed more than one hundred pounds. She dressed in dark colors and didn't seem interested in finding a beau or making deep connections with other young girls her age. She was often laid low by bouts of "nostalgia," a Nineteenth Century term for depression.



Jane and her family hated politics. When she fell in love with the young attorney, Franklin Pierce, son of a New Hampshire Governor, her family was against the match. They didn't want "Handsome Frank," a man with political ambitions, to wed their Jane. Franklin swore that politics was just a "temporary phase" of his life. After an extended courtship, the two finally married on November 11, 1834, well after Jane's twenty-eighth birthday. They honeymooned in Washington, DC, home of politicians and slave markets, everything Jane despised. Franklin had become a member of the New Hampshire State Legislature in 1829. By 1837, he was a member of the United States Senate.

Tragedy struck the young couple when their first child, Franklin Pierce Junior, born on February 2 1836, lived only three days. Franklin was away in Washington when the baby died. Jane retreated into depression. She blamed his political cronies for his heavy drinking and his inattention to his family. She refused to return to Washington as she felt her husband was "too much stimulated by the gay life of the Capital." In 1842, in order to save his marriage, Franklin resigned from the Senate and returned to Concord, New Hampshire, to practice law. He did it for his wife and their other two sons, Frank Robert Pierce and Benjamin "Bennie" Pierce, but he did it reluctantly. In 1843, when Frank Robert died of typhus at four years-old, Jane believed they were being punished because of her husband's continued interest in politics and his alcoholic lifestyle. She became ill and took to her bed. Franklin took the Pledge and became President of the local temperance society. He turned down the offer of a job as United States Attorney General from President James Polk to please Jane. He rejected an open Senate seat and a nomination to be the Governor of New Hampshire for the same reason. Jane and

Franklin now put all their energies into making their marriage work and doting on their last surviving son.

Though he was 43 years-old, Franklin Pierce served in the Mexican War, returning home a Brigadier General. The next four years were happy ones. Franklin adamantly denied that he was seeking a return to politics. But rumors began to spread that the Democrats were nominating him to run as their candidate for 14th President of the United States. When Jane heard that he had been nominated, she fell into a dead faint. During the campaign, their son, Bennie, wrote her, "I hope he won't be elected for I should not like to be at Washington and I know you would not either."

Though he was a compromise candidate, nominated on the 49th ballot, Pierce won the election in a landslide against General Winfield Scott, who he had served under in Mexico. At forty-eight years-old, Pierce was the youngest President ever elected.

Two months before the Inauguration, on January 6, 1853, the family left Concord to attend a funeral. On their return home, a freak accident suddenly derailed the train, overturning the car they were sitting in. The only fatality was eleven year old Bennie Pierce, the back of his head crushed. His parents witnessed his death and disfigurement. Jane came to believe that God had taken Bennie so Franklin would have no outside distractions during his Presidency. She also discovered that her husband had actively promoted his nomination behind her back. She lost all faith in him. Franklin began drinking again.

Jane did not attend Bennie's funeral or the Inauguration on March 4, 1853. There was no inaugural ball. Pierce was the first President to ever "affirm" the oath rather than be sworn in on a bible, explaining that he had lost his faith after his son's death. Jane remained in seclusion at home for the next two months. More tragedy followed when Vice President William Rufus King died a month later.

When Jane finally moved into the White House, a pall of gloom settled over the building. She did not host "afternoons" or balls. Dressed in mourning, she remained hidden upstairs writing letters to her dead sons and then burning them. Servants whispered they overheard her talking to her dead children behind her closed door. She became known as the "Shadow in the White House." Only Varina Davis, wife of Pierce's Secretary of War, came to keep her company. Franklin's best friend and college roommate, the author Nathaniel Hawthorne, called Jane that "Death's Head in the White House." Jane's aunt, Abigail Kent Means, served as the unofficial First Lady. Somehow either Abigail or Franklin managed to set up the very first Christmas tree displayed in the Executive Mansion.

Pierce had lost his focus and powers of concentration after Bennie's awful death. He could not wipe out the image of his son's brains spilling onto the ground. Pierce suffered from what we today would call P.T.S.D. He drank even more, using alcohol as a sedative.

Pierce was known as a "doughboy," Northern on the outside, Southern in philosophy.

He appointed pro-slavery Southerners to his Cabinet. He supported the Fugitive Slave Bill and signed the Kansas Nebraska Act. Jane's New England circle was all abolitionists. Harriet Beecher Stowe called Pierce an "arch traitor." The few outings Jane made during her stay in Washington were to a school for freed slaves. She even taught one class there, using some of her inherited wealth to support the school financially.

Franklin and Jane drew further apart, he into politics and carousing, she into abolition, depression, and religious fervor. Stricken with tuberculosis, she returned to Concord for months at a time to be cared for by her sisters. Franklin became the first and only American President ever denied re-nomination by his own party for a second term. His lackluster first term and his alcoholism had people chanting “Anyone but Pierce.” Broken by the rejection, Pierce was quoted as saying, “There’s nothing left but to get drunk.” By the time the Pierces left the White House, Jane was so ill she needed to be carried out.

When the Civil War began, Pierce retained his Southern friendships, especially with Jefferson Davis, now President of the Confederacy. If Jane and Franklin were polar opposites when they married, they were even further apart now.

Jane Pierce died on December 2, 1863, at the home of her sister, Mary Aiken, in Andover, Massachusetts. By the time of her death, at age 57, she and her husband had lived apart for about two years. She was buried alongside her two sons, Frank and Bennie, in Old North Cemetery in Concord, New Hampshire. The burial place of her first child, Franklin Pierce Junior, is unknown.



Franklin Pierce’s beloved friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, had grown dangerously ill. Pierce took him to the White Mountains in New Hampshire where he believed the pure air could cure him. Sadly, Hawthorne died in the night, Franklin holding him in his arms. Their old college friends, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Ralph Waldo Emerson, both abolitionists, hated Pierce and made sure he was not a pall bearer at Hawthorne’s funeral.

When Lincoln was assassinated, an angry mob surrounded Pierce’s home for he had not put up any sign of mourning. Only his oratory skills saved him from physical harm. The scare did not stop him from visiting Jefferson Davis at Fortress Monroe and then pleading with President Johnson to release his old friend.

Franklin Pierce died of cirrhosis of the liver on December 8, 1869 at age 64. He is buried in Old North Cemetery with his family. The announcement of the death of the Fourteenth President of the United States barely made the news, appearing on page 3 of the New York Times.

The Pierces survived all their sons. There are no direct living descendants today.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

National Registry of Women's Service in the Civil War

Woman of the Month

Sarah "Sallie" Chapman Gordon Law

"First Nurse of the Confederacy and Mother of the Confederacy"



Born August 27, 1805, in Wilkes County, North Carolina

Died June 28, 1894, in Memphis, Tennessee

Sallie Chapman Gordon was born the daughter of Revolutionary War veteran Chapman Gordon and his wife, Charity King. She married Dr. John Sandiford Law on January 25, 1825, in Eatonton, Georgia. The couple had eight children together and operated his medical practice in Georgia and Tennessee until his death in 1843. The widowed Sallie moved her family to Memphis, as she believed the city offered better opportunities for the education of her children.

With the prospect of Civil War looming, Sallie led a group of women of the congregation of Memphis' Second Presbyterian Church in forming the Southern Mothers Association (SMA). Meeting in Mrs. Miles Owen's house at Madison and Third Street, they sewed uniforms for family members serving in Tennessee units even before their State's secession. As their numbers swelled, SMA moved their activity to the basement of their Church.

In April 1861, the women of the SMA organized the Southern Mothers' Hospital, with Sallie elected as President and Mary Pope serving as Secretary. In their 12-bed hospital, located in the home of Mrs. W. B. Greenlaw, they began caring for the sick, wounded, and dying Confederate soldiers in Memphis. Sallie is recorded as the first nurse serving the Confederacy.

Needs soon outgrew the capacity of the original hospital building and, in August 1861,

the women relocated it to the north building of Irvington Block, a row of large commercial buildings on Court Square. The use of the multi-story building was donated by the owner, but operations were solely funded by the SMA. The facility served as a general hospital accommodating 2,000 soldier patients. In her memoir, Sallie wrote that "at one time we had three hundred measles patients." As the patients reached the convalescent stage, they were moved into the homes of SMA members, and cared for under the direction of members' personal physicians.

Learning of the needs of a Confederate hospital in Columbus, Kentucky, Sallie travelled to that location to deliver excess supplies which had been gathered for the hospital in Memphis. From the steamboat *Prince* on the Mississippi River, Sallie observed the Battle of Belmont, Missouri, on November 7, 1861. Sallie's only son, Confederate soldier John Gordon Law, fought in this battle.

The Southern Mothers' Hospital was taken over by the CSA Medical Department and consolidated with the Overton Hospital. Overton served both Confederate military patients and wounded Federal prisoners of war. The SMA nurses continued their work in the consolidated hospital, and until the 1862 loss of Memphis to Federal forces, Sallie continued both nursing at the Overton Hospital and transporting medical supplies to Confederate field hospitals.

The June 1862 Federal occupation of Memphis forced the removal of Confederate military patients to a facility run by Dominican nuns at Saint Agnes Academy, which was outside the City. The SMA smuggled out medical supplies from their stores in the Irving Block until the location was commandeered by Federal authorities for a prison.

The occupation of Memphis made the continued nursing of Confederate patients difficult. While some SMA nurses remained to care for Confederate POWs, Sallie led a SMA contingent to the La Grange, Georgia, Confederate hospital complex. \$2,500.00 in Confederate currency remained in the SMA's treasury, and Sallie spent those funds on medical supplies, including opium and quinine, personally smuggling them through Federal lines to the La Grange hospitals, one of which was named Law Hospital in her honor. Sallie spent the duration of the War in Georgia, nursing and caring for the wounded; organizing the efforts of aid societies to support soldiers; and gathering and delivering clothing and supplies to Confederate forces.

Following the War, Sallie served until 1889 as President of the Southern Mother's Association, when it transformed into the Confederate Historical Association (CHA). The CHA was one of the first Confederate memorial societies and, presided over by Sallie, help erect monuments and mark soldiers' graves.

For her humanitarianism and philanthropy, Sallie Law was referred to by Confederate veterans as "The Mother of the Confederacy." Her 16-page pamphlet memoir chronicling thirty years of service, *Reminiscences of the War of the Sixties between the North and South*, was published by the Memphis Printing Company in 1892.

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

Gilleland's Civil War Double-Barrel Cannon

The story of the double-barreled cannon has to do with an experimental weapon during the Civil War. Of course, while that's true, the concept of such a field piece goes back to an arms maker in Italy in 1642. That particular gun maker did in fact cast a double-barrel cannon which was intended to be fired simultaneously. It was designed to fire two cannonballs linked by a chain from its side-by-side barrels. The rounds were to act as a mower or sickle to cut down enemy soldiers as if they were wheat. Imagine that!



In 1862, an Athens, Georgia, dentist by the name of John Gilleland, no relation to Georgia dentist Doc Holliday, raised money from Confederates there and cast a double-barrel cannon. It had twin side-by-side 3-inch bores. As with the Italian gun maker's design of 1642, Gilleland's cannon was designed to simultaneously shoot two cannonballs connected with a chain. For things to work out without a hitch, simultaneous ignition was key. The powder in each barrel had to ignite at the exact same moment in time to have things go well. An instant off in either barrel meant trouble.

April 22, 1862, was the day of the first test of the Gilleland cannon. It's said that his double-barrel cannon was aimed at a couple of upright poles. The poles were going to be used to gauge the effect of the shot so that it could be accurately measured. Well, as with the best laid plans of mice and men, the powder ignited unevenly.

Because of that and imperfections in the casting process, the twin barrels gave the connected balls a spinning movement in a direction other than where the targets were located. Witnesses reported that its rounds "plowed up about an acre of ground, tore up a cornfield, mowed down saplings, and then the chain broke, the two balls going in different directions."

And no, things didn't go any better during the second test. During its second test,

the chain broke when the barrels ignited a second or two apart and subsequently shot that chain over the horizon. Witnesses during the second test reported, "The thicket of young pines at which it was aimed looked as if a narrow cyclone or a giant mowing machine had passed through it."

On its third and last test, when fired, the chain snapped almost instantly. With that, one cannonball slammed into a nearby cabin and took out its chimney. The other cannonball took off in a whole different direction and killed a cow.

So believe it or not, during those tests, the Gilleland cannon mowed down trees, cut through a cornfield, and showed that it was capable of taking out a cabin and killing a cow who wasn't a threat to the Confederacy. Were those trees, cornfield, cabin, or that cow even near the intended targets of Gilleland's double-barrel cannon? No. Not even close. In fact, none of those things including that poor cow were reported to be anywhere near its actual targets or impact area.

Because it was such a failure, the Confederacy didn't want anything to do with it. In fact, no matter how much Gilleland tried to pawn it off on the Confederates, no one in the South's military wanted it. But its rejection wasn't the end of the story of Gilleland's double-barrel cannon. The folks in Georgia agreed to use it as a blank firing signal cannon to be used to warn the city of Monroe in the event of approaching Union troops.

On July 27, 1864, Gilleland's double-barrel cannon was actually fired once for just that reason. It was on that day when there was a report of several thousand Union troops being sighted approaching Monroe. The Gilleland cannon was loaded with shot but not cannonballs, it was readied and fired to signal the city that Yankees were advancing on Monroe. The cannon's signal did in fact incite mass hysteria in the city of Monroe. The hysteria died down and calm was regained in the City later when it was found that the reported sighting of Union troops turned out to be false.

While that was the last time it was fired, today Gilleland's double-barrel cannon is on display in front of the City Hall of Athens, Georgia. As part of the Downtown Athens Historic District, it's said to be one of the city's most popular and well-known attractions there.

And while Gilleland's double-barrel Civil War cannon never saw battle, and is today a very popular landmark, the folks in Athens, Georgia, found it fitting to point it facing north when they positioned it in front of their City Hall. Though it never used in battle, some say it's pointing North as a symbolic gesture of defiance against the Yankees that it was built to fight. Of course there are those who say the Yankees probably had spies in the South who reported how it was useless weapon all the way around. Unless of course the target was something other than what was being aimed at.

Tom Correa, American Cowboy Chronicles, Sunday, April 19, 2020

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.