



Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
P.O. BOX 254702
Sacramento, CA 95865-4702
<http://sacramentocwrt.com/>



Volume 51, No. 5
May, 2011
2011 Officers:

Don Hayden, President
(916) 485-1246
djhbooklover@yahoo.com

Silver Williams,
Vice President
(916) 408-4574
snw5678@aol.com

Dennis Kohlmann,
Program Director
(916) 726-4432
dkohlma@aol.com

Edie Keister, Secretary
(916) 725-1852

George Foxworth,
Treasurer
(916) 362-0178
gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net

Bob Hanley, MAL
(805) 796-5895 cell
acivilwar@aol.com

Richard Sickert, MAL
(916) 564-4608
r.sickert@comcast.net

Paul Ruud, IPP
(530) 886-8806
ruud@starband.net

SCWRT Website
www.sacramentocwrt.com
[Kim Knighton, Webmaster](mailto:Kim.Knighton@digitalthumbprint.com)
webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com

Editor
brenttrp@gmail.com

President's Message:

At our most recent meeting we were presented another fine discussion by Professor Sherri Patton, this time on *Southern Women in the Civil War*. Her technique of encouraging audience participation was much appreciated and apparently greatly enjoyed. Her City College students are fortunate to have such a dynamic teacher and we trust she will be willing to return to enlighten us again.

The plans continue for the November conference which along with our Elk Grove CWRT colleagues we shall sponsor. Paul Ruud has done an exemplary job chairing the planning committee consisting of Silver Williams, Carol Breiter, George Foxworth, Dennis Kohlmann, Bob Hanley, Richard Sickert, and yours truly. All efforts are underway to make this one of the best. Beginning with this issue I shall introduce the biography of Dr. Craig Symonds and continue with each speaker in subsequent issues. The topic is *1861-The War Begins*, the dates November 11-13 and the site the Doubletree Hotel, on Arden Way. I encourage all to attend since these meetings are the highlights of each year and provide an opportunity to meet and hear outstanding nationally recognized authorities. Registration forms are to be mailed as well as sent electronically and will also be posted on our website; www.sacramentocwrt.com.

The annual Gibson Ranch Civil War weekend is May 20-23 and we still need a few more volunteers to escort the schoolchildren on Friday and to greet visitors at our booth on Saturday and Sunday. If interested, I can be reached at 485-1246. George Foxworth attended The Ranch's Opening Day on April 23rd and has included a special report on the festivities in this issue. Many efforts have been made to maintain this traditional weekend at Gibson Ranch and if you have never been there it is an experience not to be missed.

The Civil War Trust announced the Pennsylvania Gaming Commission denied the application for the gambling casino near Gettysburg National Park. Many noted authorities, historians, politicians, and notables encouraged this decision along with the majority of Pennsylvanians. The Trust worked especially hard to prevent this potential travesty.

Our next meeting is May 11, 7PM, at Sam's Hof Brau. We are adding a few minutes discussion of 1861 events presented by Vice-President Silver Williams prior to the speaker's discussion. We are fortunate to welcome John McKinsey who has recently authored *The Lincoln Secret* who will discuss his research and findings in seeking information about this little known question of history. Don't miss this one! Come early for dinner and camaraderie.

Don Hayden, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, April 13, 2011
Hof Brau Restaurant, 2500 Watt Ave, Sacramento

ATTENDANCE – 42

MEMBERS – 35

Don Hayden, President	Mitchell Cnota	Dennis Kohlmann, PD	Roxanne Spizzirri
Silver Williams, Vice President	James Cress	Lowell Lardie	Brent Ten Pas, Editor
George Foxworth, Treasurer	Jerry Cress	Grace Long	Robert Williams
Edie Keister, Secretary	Alan Geiken	Robert Moore	Maxine Wollen
James Armstrong	Bob Hanley, MAL	Anne Peasley	John Zasso
Joan Beitzel	Scottie Hayden	Rich Peasley	<u>Guest-7</u>
George Beitzel	Nancy Hayden	Horst Penning	Gail Cretcher
Marsha Cain	Eric Henderson	Robert Schroder	Keith Cretcher
Harvey Cain	Nina Henley	Nicholas Scivoletto	Alfredo DeLeon
Ardith Cnota	Wayne Henley	Richard Sickert, MAL	Albert DeLeon
			Sherri Patton
			Richard Spizzirri
			Larry Spizzirri

1. Meeting started at 7:05. President Hayden welcomed guest and members.
2. Flyers for the grand Re-opening at Gibson Ranch were passed out. The movie “The Conspirator,” regarding the trials of Lincoln’s assassins, was discussed. A volunteer sign-up list to work at our booth or help with visiting school kids at Gibson Ranch was passed around.
3. Vice President Silver Williams introduced our speaker Sheri Patton, who spoke on “Southern Women in the Civil War;” and discussed their shortcomings, ability to survive the war, while the men were gone. She spoke on both classes- rich and poor. Thank you Sheri, it was fascinating.
4. Raffle was held and meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Edie Keister
Secretary

Treasurer’s Report

The cash balance following the April 13, 2011 meeting was \$2,157.20. Thanks to John Zasso, other members, and guests, the raffle brought in \$57.00.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

A Report on the Return of Gibson Ranch Park

By George W. Foxworth

Gibson Ranch Park in Elverta, California, re-opened Saturday, April 23, 2011 with a grand celebration. The ceremony began with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department's mounted unit carrying the colors and a band (Peter Neumann and the Bayside Woodland Band of Woodland, CA) played the Star Spangled Banner. The master of ceremonies was Hal Morris, President of the Rio Linda Chamber of Commerce. The first speakers were Roberta MacGlashan (Chair) and Jimmy R. Yee, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. Sacramento County Sheriff Scott Jones was followed by Lois Meidinger, Dawn Lucas, and Keith Weber. Keith Weber, Chairperson of the newly formed "Friends of Gibson Ranch," issued a resolution to honor Mr. Doug Ose & GRP LLC 2011 for stepping up to the plate and taking on the re-opening and maintaining of the Park. Mr. Ose gave a few words after accepting the resolution. Later, the Ben Ali Keystone Cop Patrol made Sheriff Jones an honorary member of their Patrol.

After the opening ceremony, the carnival continued. Activities included pony rides, hayrides, free face painting, Mother Goose story-telling, balloon art, bounce houses, petting zoo, cake walk and auction, Painted Ladies Rodeo Performance-horseback drill team performance, bag pipe performance, horse classes, ice cream eating contest, and free ice cream social. Special displays included the Sacramento Area Search and Rescue, Western Truck Parts and Peterbilt Trucks, Antique Fire Truck presented by Roger Mitchell, National Civil War Association (NCWA), Sacramento Metro Engine 117, Sacramento Metro Firefighting Helicopter, and food by Big Joe's BBQ. The Sacramento Metro Fire Department helicopter was loved by everybody, especially when the aircraft took off and circled the Ranch twice as they returned to their base, McClellan Field. In addition to several hundred people at the celebration, several hundred other people were using the Park for barbeques, picnics, and fishing.

The NCWA Booth was staffed by Charlotte Mirabella and Bob Van der Pool of the James River Squadron; Eric Henderson, Robert Schroeder, and Sean Taylor

of Company B, 7th West Virginia; and Joe Fiffick and Mike Sanders of Company A, 71st Pennsylvania. The following SCWRT members attended: Eric Henderson, Robert Schroeder, and George W. Foxworth. Many thanks to all volunteers and attendees.

The weather conditions were mostly dry, mostly overcast, windy, cool, and pleasant.

The Gibson Ranch ceremony was a complete success and Mr. Doug Ose, "Friends of Gibson Ranch," L & M Concession Management, and many others are commended for their great work. We look ahead to the 13th Annual 2011 Civil War re-enactment at the Ranch on May 20 – 22, 2011. The NCWA will present "*Sesquicentennial Anniversary Commencement of the American Civil War.*" Please join us.



**Civil War 2011
Gibson Ranch
May 21st & 22nd**

For more information, please visit;

http://www.gibson-ranch.com/civil_war_2010.htm



BOOK REVIEWS



THIS REPUBLIC OF SUFFERING; Death and the American Civil War.

By Drew Gilpin Faust. (New York: Knopf, 2008. 346 pp.)

(First published in Washington Post on February 24, 2008)

Professional military men of the late 19th century were generally unimpressed by America's Civil War. "A contest in which huge armed rabbles chased each other around a vast wilderness," Prussian Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke contemptuously sniffed, concluding there was nothing for the world's armies to learn from such an unmilitary spectacle that had so little to do with the established art of war.

But in 1901 a young member of the British Parliament accurately read the war's central and overwhelming implication -- one that would be borne out all too well in the bloody century of industrialized slaughter to come. "The wars of peoples," warned the 26-year-old Winston Churchill, "will be more terrible than those of kings."

The American Civil War was the first "war of peoples," and as Drew Gilpin Faust vividly demonstrates, the unprecedented carnage of this first modern war overwhelmed society's traditional ways of dealing with death. The customs, religion, rhetoric, logistics -- even statistical methods -- of mid-19th century America were unequal to slaughter on such a scale. How American society attempted to come to terms with death that broke all the rules about dying, and how the nation ultimately did -- and did not -- face up to this new reality of war are Faust's haunting and powerful themes. If nothing else, this finely written book is a powerful corrective to all the romantic claptrap that still envelops a war that took as many American lives, 620,000, as all other wars from the Revolution to Korea combined.

The extent to which the Civil War found America unprepared to deal with its carnage at the most basic levels is fascinatingly horrifying. "As late as Second Bull Run, in August 1862, a Union division took the

field without a single ambulance available for removal of casualties," Faust writes. "Burying the dead after a Civil War battle seemed always to be an act of improvisation." Two and a half weeks after Antietam, unfathomable numbers of corpses lay unburied, stacked in rows a thousand long or still scattered about the field. Coffins were practically unheard of; no provision of any kind had been made by military authorities. A Union surgeon who took upon himself responsibility for burying "those he could not save" after Gettysburg had to send out a foraging party to locate a shovel.

Nor had provision been made for notifying families of the deaths of husbands, sons, brothers. The chaotic record-keeping led to many heartrending incidents of survivors of battles erroneously reported dead, or vice versa. "I read my own obituary," recalled a Confederate soldier. Union private Henry Struble, misidentified as a soldier killed and buried at Antietam, laid flowers on the grave of the unknown soldier occupying his place every year afterward on Memorial Day.

Charitable organizations attempted to fill the information void but were overwhelmed by the task. After the bloody battles in Virginia in the spring of 1864, the Washington "Directory Office" of the volunteer Sanitary Commission was besieged day after day by distraught families and friends seeking to learn the fate and whereabouts of loved ones.

The increasingly helpless efforts of comrades, chaplains, families and compassionate onlookers to maintain the customary forms of solace and dignified treatment of the dead are the poignant backdrop to Faust's exploration of the byways of death in wartime. "I insisted upon attending every dead soldier to the grave and reading over him a part of the burial service," wrote a Confederate nurse, Fannie Beers, in the fall of 1862. "But it had now become impossible. The dead were past help; the living *always* needed succor."

Soldiers and families alike tried hard to cling to the Victorian notion of the "Good Death," so much so, observes Faust, that "letters describing soldiers' last moments on Earth are so similar it is as if their authors had a checklist in mind." In the mid-19th century, a dying person was expected to pass away

surrounded by family, conscious of and at peace with his impending fate, reconciled to his Maker, leaving inspiring last words to be remembered by. War, especially modern war, shattered all those assumptions. Death was often unpredictable, excruciatingly painful, absurd and squalid, the dying departing full of fury and agony. It came far from home; and when delivered by explosive artillery shell, it sometimes did not even leave any identifiable remains. A man could be literally "blown to atoms," wrote a Union chaplain at Gettysburg -- a fate, Faust observes, that civilians found incomprehensible.

Faust shows how American institutions adapted to the staggering burden of this new kind of war and wholesale death with a blend of can-do humanitarianism, pragmatic improvisation, mawkish sentimentality, political cant, commercial hucksterism and downright fraud. Freelance embalmers flocked to battlefields in the aftermath of the fighting. "Bodies taken from Antietam Battle Field and delivered to Cars or Express Office at short notice and low rates," read the business card of one entrepreneur. "Bodies Embalmed by us NEVER TURN BLACK! But retain their natural color and appearance," boasted another. In 1863, a Washington undertaker was imprisoned on charges of making a practice of recovering and embalming dead soldiers without permission and then extorting payment from families that wanted the bodies returned.

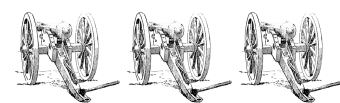
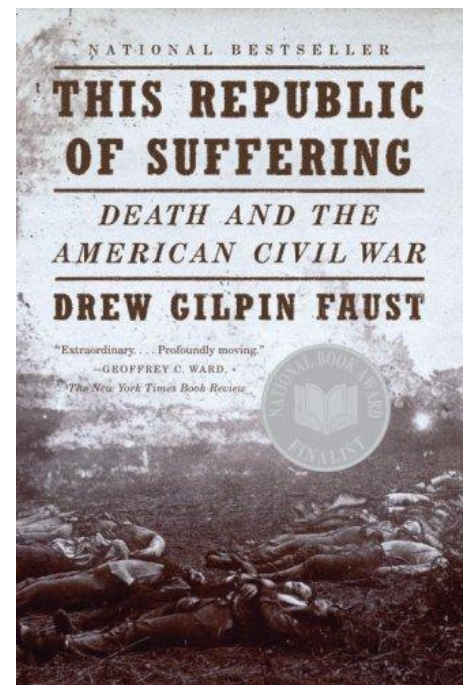
Faust convincingly demonstrates that the trauma of the Civil War revolutionized the American military's approach to caring for the dead and notifying families. After the war, a massive and superbly organized effort by the War Department to recover, identify and rebury Union dead in newly established national cemeteries was an act of atonement for the nation's failings during the war itself.

Faust is less convincing in making a case that the war's confrontation with death produced a permanent transformation in American belief, politics, character, habits of mind and modes of expression -- something that Paul Fussell did so insightfully for World War I in *The Great War and Modern Memory*. She notes, for example, Ambrose Bierce's bitingly ironic humor, which grew very directly out of his war experience, but it would be interesting and important to learn how this brand of cynicism went over with most people.

She suggests that the war's unprecedented suffering posed a challenge to religious faith, but beyond offering a series of interesting anecdotes she never really presents a clear argument that the war, in the end, had a lasting effect one way or another on American religiousness.

But the real lesson may be the remarkable human capacity to forget and gloss over even the ugliest realities. Walt Whitman, who visited tens of thousands of wounded soldiers during the war and came to know its death and terrible suffering firsthand, wrote (in a speech he never delivered) the famous words, "The real war will never get in the books." But he then added, "I say will never be written -- perhaps must not and should not be." Those who read Faust's powerful account of "the real war" will almost surely beg to differ.

Stephen Budiansky is the author of "The Bloody Shirt: Terror After Appomattox."



2011 West Coast Civil War Conference

1861: The First Year

November 11 - 13, 2011, Doubletree Hotel,
Sacramento

Speaker Profile: Dr. Craig Symonds

(This is the first installment of biographical profiles of speakers confirmed for the 2011 West Coast Civil War Conference)



We have the distinct pleasure of Dr. Craig L. Symonds as our keynote speaker for November's West Coast Civil War Conference. Not only a renowned authority on the Civil War, but Dr. Symonds is an outstanding teacher who has accumulated many awards during his long tenure as professor of history at The US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Although recently retired in 2005, Dr. Symonds will return to the Academy this year as the first recipient of a newly endowed annual chair for emeritus professors.

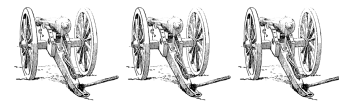
Dr. Symonds is the author of many prize winning books including biographies of Joseph E. Johnston, Patrick Cleburne, and Franklin Buchanan, as well as *The American Heritage History of the Battle of Gettysburg*. His expertise on Naval History is displayed in his works such as *Decision at Sea: Five Naval Battles that Shaped American History*, *The*

Naval Institute Historical Atlas of the US Navy, Navalists and Anti-Navalists: The Naval Policy Debate in the United States, 1775-1827, and numerous others. In 2008, Dr. Symonds' book *Lincoln and his Admirals* received numerous literary prizes, and his most recent work is *The Civil War at Sea*.

While also a frequent speaker at West Coast Civil War conferences, Dr. Symonds provided invaluable assistance in helping us plan the last conference SCWRT hosted in 2006; *The War on the Water*. One will also hear Dr. Symonds voice, accompanied by notable historian James McPherson providing commentary under the Special Features of the Director's Cut *Gettysburg*.

A native Californian, Dr. Symonds matriculated from the University of California, Los Angeles and completed his graduate studies at the University of Florida. He and wife Marylou reside in Annapolis and have a son and grandson in Berkeley.

We are delighted to have them join us once again this Fall.



DID YOU KNOW?

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., future chief Justice, was wounded three times during the Civil War: in the chest at Ball's Bluff, in the back at Antietam and in the heel at Chancellorsville.

MAY

DURING THE CIVIL WAR

1861

- 6th Arkansas secedes, Davis approves state of war between the US & CS
- 20th North Carolina secedes
- 23rd Virginia secedes

1862

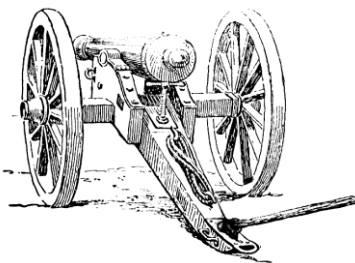
- 6 & 7th Battle of Shilo
- 19th Battle of South Mills
- 29th New Orleans surrenders to Union

1863

- 1st - 2nd Battle of Chancellorsville
- 10th "Stonewall" Jackson Dies
- 16th Battle of Champion's Hill
- 18th Siege of Vicksburg begins

1864

- 5th Battle of the Wilderness Begins
- 12th Battle of "Bloody Angle" at Spotsylvania Court House



CIVIL WAR BLOG SPOTLIGHT

That a Nation Might Live

Dr. Charles Ross and Dr. David Coles of Longwood University, located in Farmville, Va., host a blog sponsored by the university that celebrates the Civil War's Sesquicentennial Anniversary by focusing on "events leading up to and during the United States Civil War." A weekly podcast discusses "significant events that occurred roughly 150 years ago on those same dates." These podcasts can easily be listened to on the website or you may subscribe and have it delivered to your email inbox.

You can find That a Nation Might Live at <http://civilwar150.longwood.edu/>