



Volume 59, No. 6
June, 2019

2019 Officers:

Dennis Kohlmann, President
(916) 726-4432
gkohlma@aol.com

Anne M. Peasley, IPP
(530) 320-5112
apeasley22@gmail.com

Donald J. Hayden, Vice
President
(916) 485-1246
djhbooklover@yahoo.com

Barbara A. Leone, Secretary
(916) 457-3915
bleonelachatte@hotmail.com

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

VACANT,
Program Director

Paul G. Ruud, MAL
(530) 886-8806
paulgruud@gmail.com

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

VACANT,
Editor

SCWRT Website
www.sacramentocwrt.com

Kim Knighton, Webmaster
webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com

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

Bernie Quinn did a great job talking about Berdan's Sharpshooters. They were involved in more battles than I realized. In June, our own Nancy Samuelson will speak about Colonel John S. "Rip" Ford, Ranger.

Postal Service During the Civil War - In the Union:

About 45,000 pieces of mail per day were sent through Washington D.C. from the Eastern Theater of the War and about double that in the West through Louisville, Kentucky. Areas with heavy troop concentrations were bogged down with incredible amounts of mail. In order to process the estimated 8 million letters per month, postal reforms were enacted.

in 1860 alone, mail service in the eleven Southern Confederate States cost about \$3 million and brought in \$1 million. With secession, unproductive routes were eliminated so that by 1863, the United States Postal Service was actually showing a profit.

On July 1, 1863, free delivery of mail began in the 49 largest cities in the North, cities with over 50,000 in population. Within 3 years, the free delivery was extended across the Country. In 1864, to speed up the process of delivery, the Postal Service began to sort the mail while still on the train, cutting about 24 hours from its delivery time. While there were often lengthy delays, most Civil War soldiers received their mail within 2 weeks of it being sent.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, May 8, 2019
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 23

MEMBERS – 20: Dennis Kohlmann, President; Donald J. Hayden, Vice-President; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Steven Andrews, Roy Bishop, Harvey & Marsha Cain, Ron Grove, James Juanitas, Lloyd Limprecht, Joseph & Michelle Matalone, Bernard Quinn, John Rice, Paul Ruud, Member-at-Large; Nancy Samuelson, Nicholas Scivoletto, Stephen Shiflett, Ray Valdez, John Zasso.

GUESTS – 3: Ed Gillum, Tracy Samuelson, Don A. Zajic.

1. The meeting opened with the raffle by Nicholas Scivoletto. President Dennis Kohlmann was detained because there was no screen for the presentation.
2. The meeting continued at 7:16 PM as President Kohlmann led with the Pledge of Allegiance. Paul Ruud made an announcement about the 2019 West Coast Civil War Conference.
3. President Kohlmann introduced the speaker, Bernie Quinn, and his topic was "Engagements of Hiram Berdan's Sharpshooters." Since a few of the members did not attend or remember Part One of the Sharpshooters, Mr. Quinn gave a short introduction of the Sharpshooters. He briefly explained that Berdan's Sharpshooters were over 2,000 elite marksmen with special uniforms, rifles, equipment, and tactics. Hiram Berdan sold the idea for the Sharpshooters to the War Department. There was a 1st and a 2nd Regiments of the Sharpshooters.
4. The Sharpshooters were part of the Regular Army. They were the only volunteers who became a part of the Regular Army. The duties were mostly skirmish/offensive, scouting/defensive, not used in the line of battle, and always fight by two. Their weapons were mostly Springfields, Enfields, Whitworths, Sharps, and Spencers. Most of the Sharpshooters were young men.
5. The presentation detailed the performance of the Sharpshooters in the following engagements:
 - Movement up the Peninsula prior to the siege of Yorktown, Virginia.
 - Siege of Yorktown - California Joe (Private Truman Head) silenced a Confederate cannon, General Fitz John Porter is saved by the Sharpshooters.
 - Gaines Mill, Virginia - Heavily outnumbered Sharpshooters broke Trimble's Brigade and inflicted 180 casualties while losing 11 men.
 - Malvern Hill, Virginia - William Young Warren Ripley wins the Medal of Honor by leading a charge that saves the Union left flank. Sharpshooters devastate the Rebels with their newly arrived Sharps' rifles. This was the first use of the Sharps' rifles.
 - Antietam, Maryland - 66 men of the 2nd Sharpshooters were lost in 10 minutes due to a foolish order by the Commander of the Iron Brigade.
 - Blackburn/Shepherdstown Fords, Virginia - Cassius Peck wins Medal of Honor for capturing Rebel guns at Blackburn Ford. The Sharpshooters used a bayonet charge at Blackburn Ford. Shepherdstown Ford is today in West Virginia.
 - Fredericksburg, Virginia - Sharpshooters protect troops from two Union divisions from Rebel firing.
 - Chancellorsville, Virginia - The 23rd Georgia Regiment was cornered and captured by the Sharpshooters.
 - The second and third days of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania - Sharpshooters successfully assault General Longstreet's troops on Seminary Ridge and defend the left flank from his later attack. The Sharpshooters fought on Little Round Top with the 20th Maine Regiment.
6. The 1st and 2nd United States Sharpshooter Regiments were consolidated on December 31, 1864; the Regiment was broken up on February 20, 1865; and assigned to seven Volunteer Regiments.
7. The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, June 12, 2019, 10 AM, at Brookfield's Restaurant.

George W. Foxworth for Barbara Leone, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on May 8th was \$6,384.12.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2019

Date	Speaker	Topic
June 12th	Nancy Samuelson	"Colonel John S. "Rip" Ford, Ranger"
July 10th	Robert Bundy	"Rebel Hunters of the Cumberland- -In the Footsteps of the 15th Ohio Volunteer Infantry"
August 14th	Dr. Tad Smith	"The Fuse to the War: The Dred Scott Decision"
September 11th	Richard Sickert	"To Be Determined"
October 9th	James Juanitas	"The Navy in the Civil War"
November 13th	Lawrence Marvin III	"54th Infantry -- Fighting for Glory"

2019 Membership

The 2019 membership renewal is due as of January 1, 2019. The dues are \$20.00 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

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 1st 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.

Annual Conference on Women & the Civil War

Friday, July 26 to Sunday, July 28, 2019 - The **Annual Conference on Women & the Civil War** will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia. The weekend's events include lectures by noted historians, and field trips to Historic Jamestowne and James River Plantation sites. This will be the **Society for Women & the Civil War's 20th Conference**, and it is sure to provide a wealth of information around the Conference Theme of "**Women of the Peninsula.**" For Conference information and registration, go to: <http://www.swcw.org/annual-swcw-conference.html> or feel free to contact Pasadena CWRT member Janet Whaley at Janet1860@charter.net.

Earl Van Dorn

Earl Van Dorn was born in Port Gibson, Mississippi on September 20, 1820, one of nine siblings. He was nicknamed "Buck." His mother, Sophia, was the niece of Rachel Jackson, President Andrew Jackson's wife. Jackson was instrumental in getting Buck appointed to West Point. In the class of 1842, Earl was known as "Damn Born." He graduated fifty second out of fifty six students. One year after graduation and a whirlwind courtship, the twenty three year-old Earl married sixteen year-old Caroline Godbold. The daughter of a wealthy Alabama plantation owner, Caroline remained home caring for their son and daughter while Earl was stationed in Florida and Texas.



Van Dorn served in the Mexican-American War where he earned a promotion and was twice brevetted for bravery in action. By 1855, he was assigned to fight Seminoles and Comanches on the frontier. He was badly wounded several times and was on medical leave for most of 1860-1861 after receiving an arrow through his chest.

Van Dorn was an egotist and ladies' man. Never faithful to his wife, he seemed to yearn for every woman who passed him on the street. While on garrison duty in Texas, he had three out-of-wedlock children with Martha Goodbread, a laundress at the fort.

Van Dorn viewed himself as a gallant Southern cavalier, a dashing fire-eater. He was an excellent horseman and a passable poet and painter. He was also impetuous...at one point, challenging Nathan Bedford Forrest to a duel (which, luckily for Van Dorn, did not take place). Certainly, no one doubted Van Dorn's courage. But he had an unhealthy hunger for fame and what he called "a burning name."

At the beginning of the Civil War, Van Dorn resigned from the United States Army. He was sent by the new Confederate Government to Mississippi to replace Jefferson Davis who was to be sworn in as President of the C.S.A. Van Dorn was made Major General and Commander of Mississippi's State Forces.

Van Dorn began his Civil War career well enough. There was nothing he liked better than a good battle to show off his prowess. However, at Pea Ridge, he ignored the fact that his forces were greatly outnumbered. At Corinth, he ordered his men to make a bloody frontal assault in an attack that would be impossible to win. Van Dorn was called

to stand before a military court of inquiry for drunkenness and the debacle at Corinth. He pled that he had spent his entire adult life in the military. "I have accumulated nothing of the world's wealth, having devoted my whole time and energy to the service of my country; therefore my reputation is all that belongs to me, without which life to me were as valueless as the crisp and faded leaf of autumn."

Though he was exonerated after his plea, Van Dorn was relieved of his command and placed in charge of the cavalry. Here he seemed to have found his niche, disrupting U.S. Grant's campaign against Vicksburg. He made his headquarters in Spring Hill, Tennessee, placing his office in an upstairs room in "White Hall," the residence of Dr. Aaron and Mrs. White.

In April of 1863, Van Dorn started receiving regular visits from Jessie McKissack Peters, the beautiful third wife of Dr. George Peters who had been away from Spring Hill for a year attending the Tennessee State Legislature. Jessie was twenty four years younger than her husband and also his first cousin. Some said the marriage was strictly a financial arrangement to keep their money in the family. However, the town was appalled as they watched Mrs. Peters cuddle next to Van Dorn on their daily carriage rides.

Dr. White's wife insisted that Earl move his headquarters elsewhere. Van Dorn was happy to comply. He moved to Ferguson Hall, directly across the field from Jessie's house.

When Dr. Peters arrived home, he was inundated with stories of the behavior of his faithless wife and Van Dorn. He soon intercepted a steamy love letter. The doctor told the courier to tell Van Dorn he would "blow his brains out" if it happened again.

Not long after, Dr. Peters returned from a business trip at around 2:30 AM to discover Van Dorn in a compromising condition with Jessie. Though intoxicated, Van Dorn was still able to flee the house and hide under the porch. Dragging him out by his hair and holding a pistol to his head, the doctor told Van Dorn he would spare his life on two conditions:

- 1) Earl must write a letter to his own wife admitting the affair and
- 2) Earl must write an open letter to Dr. Peters begging his forgiveness for the illicit trysts with Jessie.

Van Dorn insisted such a letter would hurt the Confederate cause and destroy his wife. Dr. Peters gave him one day to make up his mind.

Early the following morning, May 7, 1863, Dr. Peters was at the front door of Ferguson Hall. Van Dorn had decided to call the doctor's bluff. He refused to write the letters claiming that his reputation would be destroyed. Peters drew his revolver and shot Van Dorn in the back of the head.

The doctor raced home, told his wife what he had done and then got on his horse and headed to Nashville where he turned himself in to the police. A servant insisted that when Jessie heard the news she said, "Ain't that the devil, a sweetheart killed and a husband runs away in the same day."

Dr. Peters was never prosecuted. He and Jessie Peters divorced but later reunited. Jessie insisted to the end of her days she'd always been faithful. No one believed her. Eight and a half months after Earl was killed, Jessie gave birth to a daughter, Madora. The child was sent to an orphanage but later was taken back to live with the Peters. Jessie and Dr. Peters both lie in unmarked graves in Elmwood Cemetery in Memphis, TN. The family chose not to mark their graves because of all the scandal surrounding their lives.

Earl Van Dorn did not die immediately. He lingered, bleeding profusely, unable to speak, for four and a half long hours. There were rumors he was holding a letter in his hand from the long suffering Caroline Van Dorn, informing him of her intentions to divorce him because of his philandering ways. Earl was buried in his wife's family cemetery in Alabama. In 1876, Caroline was buried beside him. In 1899, Earl's sister had him exhumed and reburied in the Wintergreen Cemetery in the Van Dorn family plot in Port Gibson, Mississippi.



Major General Earl Van Dorn was not sorely missed by anyone. Confederate General Saint John Liddell said most people had "...little or no regret for a man whose willful violation of social rights led him to such an inglorious end."

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

2019 CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE SUMMER CONFERENCE



CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

2019 CIVIL WAR INSTITUTE SUMMER CONFERENCE

Join us, June 14-19, 2019, for a blockbuster year of CWI speakers! We are thrilled to feature eminent Civil War scholars, Gary W. Gallagher, Ed Ayers, Carol Reardon, and Peter Carmichael within our line-up of over 35 distinguished speakers and tour guides.

Full-time and part-time packages available!
Register now at www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Gettysburg: A Staff Ride
- Stonewall Jackson at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville
- Mosby's Confederacy: Part II
- Treasures of the National Civil War Museum
- Voices of Antietam

with guides Carol Reardon, Dennis Frye, Greg Mertz, Wayne Motts, and more.

FEATURING

- Gary Gallagher, *Edward Porter Alexander*
- Ed Ayers, *The Thin Line of Freedom: The Civil War and Emancipation in the Heart of America*
- Peter Carmichael, *The Combat Experience of Civil War Soldiers*
- Earl Hess, *Tactics, Terrain, and Trenches in the Atlanta Campaign*
- Amy Murrell Taylor, *Embattled Freedom: Journeys Through the Civil War's Refugee Camps*
- Patrick Breen, *Nat Turner's Rebellion*

PLEASE NOTE: 15% discount for all Sacramento Civil War Round Table Members! Please see www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference for full details.



2019 West Coast Civil War Conference

Sponsored by Sacramento Civil War Round Table

Civil War Leadership, 1861 - 1865

November 8 - 10, 2019, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sacramento

Our Speakers are:

Chris Mackowski: A Professor of Journalism & Mass Communication at Saint Bonaventure University, & the author of more than 10 books. He works with the National Parks Service & is the founder of the Emerging Civil War Blog.

David A. Powell: A Vice-President of Airsped, Inc., a delivery firm. He has published many articles in magazines & historical simulations of different battles. He specializes & leads tours on the Battle of Chickamauga.

Sarah Kay Bierle: A Managing Editor for Emerging Civil War's Blog. She has spent the last few years researching, writing, & speaking across the Country about the American Civil War.

Paul Kahan: An expert on the political, diplomatic, & economic history of the United States in the Nineteenth Century. Dr. Kahan has published several books & is a former resident of Sacramento.

Jim Stanbery: A retired Professor of Political Science and History at Los Angeles Harbor College, and speaker at the West Coast Civil War Conference for more than thirty years. He is a frequent CWRT speaker.

Theodore P. Savas: Is an attorney, adjunct college instructor, award-winning author, Partner and Managing Director of Savas Beatie LLC. He specializes in military history and the American Civil War.

Edwin L. Kennedy Jr.: A graduate of West Point & former Professor of the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College History Department & Combat Studies. He is the leader of staff rides, including the Battle of Chickamauga.

The Conference cost is \$200 per person which includes Friday dinner, Saturday lunch and dinner, as well as all sessions. A full hotel breakfast buffet is included for guests staying at the Hotel.

Partial day attendance: **Friday Only** is \$50; **Saturday Only** is \$125; **Saturday Dinner and Lecture Only** is \$50; **Sunday Only** is \$25.

There will be a no-host bar set-up Friday and Saturday evenings for your enjoyment before dinner.

For more information, contact Paul Ruud at 530-886-8806 or by contacting www.sacramentocwrt.com where information and registration forms will be available.

Room reservations are available by calling Crowne Plaza directly 877-504-0054 or www.crowneplaza.com
Crowne Plaza Hotel has rooms set aside for us at \$139 per night, plus tax. Please mention the Conference.

Please print this page, fill it out, and return the form with your check for your registration. Make checks payable to:
Sacramento CWRT and mail to: George W. Foxworth, 9463 Salishan Court, Sacramento, CA 95826-5233.

Name / Organization as you want it on your badge (Please Print):

Organization: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone: _____ Other Phone _____

Email: _____