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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

Any list of the top Union Generals will almost always include the name of General Montgomery C. Meigs. General Meigs never lead troops in combat, but he was the man who made sure every army had everything it needed when and where it was needed. General Meigs was the Quartermaster General for the Union Army.

Meigs graduated 5th in the 49-man West Point Class of 1836. He received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the 1st U. S. Artillery, but most of his Army service was with the Corps of Engineers. His favorite prewar engineering project was the Washington Aqueduct which he supervised from 1852 to 1860.

In the fall of 1860, as a result of a disagreement over procurement contracts, Meigs was banished to Tortugas in the Gulf of Mexico. Upon the resignation of Secretary of War Floyd a few months later, Meigs was returned to Washington.

On May 14, 1861, Meigs was appointed Colonel, 11th U.S. Infantry and then, next promoted to Brigadier General and Quartermaster General of the Army, replacing General Joseph Johnston.

Meigs efficiently oversaw the disbursement of as much as \$15 billion for the provisioning of troops during the Civil War. He also personally commanded the supplying of the Armies of Grant and Sherman during several important campaigns in 1864 and 1865.

It was Meigs who suggested to President Lincoln that Arlington would be an appropriate site for a National Cemetery. Meigs himself is buried there.

I wonder if the Union could have won the War if they had operated under a supply system like the Confederates had.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, May 13, 2020
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. The next meeting is unknown at this time.
2. The next Board Meeting is unknown at this time.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on May 13th was \$5,049.14. No meeting and no raffle.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2020

| Date | Speaker | Topic |
|---------------|--------------------------|--|
| June 10th | No Meeting | "No Topic, No Meeting" |
| July 8th | Dr. Tad Smith | "The Fuse to the War: The Dred Scott Decision" |
| August 12th | Arnd Gartner | "Union Intelligence Services" |
| September 9th | Nancy Samuelson | "To Be Determined" |
| October 14th | Tim & Ginny Karlsberg | "Vicksburg" |
| November 11th | Richard Sickert | "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).

Philip Kearney

Born on June 2, 1815, in New York City, Philip Kearney grew up at 3 Broadway. His mother died before his eighth birthday, leaving Philip to be mostly reared by his maternal grandfather, John Watts, a rich industrialist. His father, Philip Kearney Sr., was one of the original founders of the New York Stock exchange.

As a young boy, Philip dreamed of a military career. His father and grandfather would not allow it. Philip was sent to Columbia College to study law, graduating in 1833. He was soon employed at the law firm of Peter Augustus Jay.

When Philip's grandfather died in 1836, Philip inherited over one million dollars. There was no longer anything holding him back from his lifelong desire. He joined the Army.



At his own expense, Kearney made sure that the troops assigned to him had everything they needed. In 1839, a European assignment interrupted Kearney's romance with his Commandant's sister-in-law, the beautiful Southern Belle, Diana Moore Bullitt.

Because he spoke fluent French, Kearney was sent to France to study military tactics at the Cavalry School at Saumar. It was there Kearney learned to fight with a gun in one hand, a saber in the other and the reins of his horse gripped between his teeth. Little did he know that this maneuver would serve him well later on in his life. He volunteered to assist in the campaign in Algiers against Abd-el-Kader, the Arab chief, there earning the nick name, Kearney the Magnificent.

When he returned to the United States, Kearney begged for an assignment in the West. Instead he was sent to Washington, DC, ending up as an aide-de-camp to General Winfield Scott. He considered himself to be a "High Paid Flunky." Kearney and Diana Bullitt had resumed their romance. On June 24, 1842, they married in a magnificent ceremony that was to turn into an unhappy union.

When Kearney was assigned to Fort Leavenworth, Diana refused to leave her position as a popular social hostess in New York. She pointed out the dangers of life on the frontier for their two small children. They had already lost an eight month old baby daughter, Susan, in 1843. The two fought constantly and bitterly. Kearney went alone but found the boredom out West soul-killing. Only the eagerly awaited news of the birth of a son and heir dispelled his ennui. In 1846, to try and save the marriage, Philip resigned his commission and returned to New York. Diane and Philip entertained lavishly. When the Mexican War broke out, Kearney withdrew his resignation and requested active duty. Diana was furious. At the Battle of Churubusco, Kearney was badly wounded. He was held down while his left arm was amputated. General Franklin Pierce cradled Kearney's head in his lap while the surgeon did his bloody work. Kearney's close friend, Lieutenant Richard Ewell, stood nearby. After the surgery, Kearney pinned his empty uniform sleeve up and went on with his life.

With the death of his father in 1849, Kearney became one of the richest men in America. Bored after six months recuperating at home, Kearney began serving as a recruiting chief for the Army in the Five Points section of New York. He contracted smallpox there, nearly dying of it.

Living together did not bring the Kearneys into harmony. In 1849, Diana took their three children and left New York to live in her hometown of Kentucky. Kearney was lonely and wrote to his cousin, "Had I been as assiduously devoted to wife and children as I was to the Army, I would not today be rootless...sans spouse, sans children." In 1851, bored and restless, dissatisfied with the Army's slow promotion system, Kearney again resigned his commission and began a world tour. He traveled to China, Ceylon, and eventually to Paris. His military reputation, good looks, and vast wealth, opened many doors to him in The City of Light. Kearney became smitten with the twenty year-old auburn haired Agnes Maxwell, daughter of the customs collector of New York, who he had met at a reception at the Tuileries. The twosome became inseparable. Against every convention of the age, they began openly living together. "Need I give ear to the cackling of hens...I love Phil...This is the only way I can be with him," Agnes wrote.

Kearney visited Diana in Louisville, Kentucky in 1854 to beg for a divorce. She adamantly refused. Agnes and Kearney fled to his mansion, Bellegrove, in New Jersey to avoid the wagging tongues in Paris and New York. Agnes furnished the mansion, while Frederick Law Olmstead landscaped the 106-acre grounds. In 1855, Philip and Agnes went to Russia to escape the gossip and attend the coronation of Tsar Alexander II. From there, they headed to Paris where Agnes gave birth to their first child, a girl named Susan after his lost daughter. Their son, Archibald Kennedy Kearney, was also born in Paris, on January, 25, 1860. (A third child, Virginia, was the only one of their children born in the United States.)

In 1858, when Kearney threatened to remove their son from her custody, Diana finally agreed to a divorce that included a clause stating he could not remarry. Kearney was assured by his attorneys that while a marriage to Agnes would be illegal in New York, it would be legal in New Jersey. Shortly after the divorce, Agnes took her place as the second Mrs. Philip Kearney.

In 1859, once again succumbing to his inability to live a retired life, Kearney returned to aid France in her fight against Austria. He was awarded the Legion of Honor.

Kearney returned to the United States with his family at the beginning of the Civil War. Immediately recruited by the South, he refused them, saying, "What am I, if not an American." But between his scandalous marriage and the loss of his arm, the Northern Army rejected him for service. But experienced soldiers were few and far between. Kearney was commissioned by New Jersey to train soldiers. Eventually, he was able to participate in the action, fighting bravely at Williamsburg, the Peninsula Campaign, and the Second Battle of Bull Run. He received a second well-deserved nickname from his

men, "Kearney, the One-Armed Devil."

After the Battle of Seven Pines, Kearney came up with a way to distinguish his troops in the "fog of war." His men were ordered to sew red flannel diamond shapes onto their caps, making them immediately identifiable. The work also broke up the ennui of camp life that Kearney so detested. Corps badges became widely used during the Civil War and are still in use today.

Kearney detested McClellan who he had nicknamed, "The Virginia Creeper." When McClellan ordered a retreat after the successful Battle of Malvern Hill, Kearney protested, writing that, "...such an order can only be prompted by cowardice and treason." Luckily for Kearney, McClellan chose to ignore the insult.

In February, 1862, Kearney received a telegram from Agnes, "Come At Once. Archie Desperately ill with Typhoid." Kearney rushed home in time to be at four year old Archie's side when he died on February 22, 1862. A friend wrote, "It appeared as if Phil did not greatly care to live after the death of lovely Archie." A week later, Kearney returned to the front, burying his sorrow in work.

During a violent thunderstorm on September 1, 1862, after the Battle of Chantilly, Kearney stumbled into Confederate pickets while investigating a gap in the Union line. Calling out "What troops are here?" he was answered by a volley of shots from the 49th Georgia. Kearney was shot through the spine and killed instantly. AP Hill, approaching with a lantern, spit out, "You've killed Philip Kearney; he deserved a better fate than to die in the mud."

Major General Kearney's body was released under a flag of truce and embalmed in Washington, DC. He lay in state at Bellegrave until his burial at the family crypt in Trinity Church, NY. In 1912, he was disinterred and reburied in Arlington Cemetery.



John Watts Kearney, as the eldest son, received the bulk of the estate, rumored to be the largest inheritance ever received in the United States. Rumors were that he detested his father for shaming his mother with divorce and had even considered enlisting in the Confederate Army as revenge. Bellegrave remained in the family until 1926, when it was torn down.

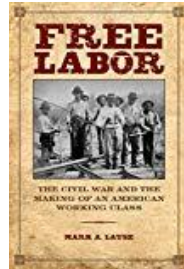
In 1868, Agnes married a widower with several children, Admiral John Upshur. Agnes died on July 2, 1912, having outlived all three of her children. She is buried in Arlington Cemetery at the foot of the grave of her second husband and his first wife.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

FREE LABOR: THE CIVIL WAR AND THE MAKING OF AN AMERICAN WORKING CLASS

Mark A. Lause. *Free Labor: The Civil War and the Making of an American Working Class.* Chicago: [University of Illinois Press](#), 2015. 296 pp. \$28.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-252-08086-9.

Reviewed by Paul M. Taillon, (University of Auckland). **Published on** H-SHGAPE (December, 2016). **Commissioned by** Jay W. Driskell.



Decades after the advent of the new (and newer) labor history, not to mention the new social history of the Civil War, the history of the American working class during the sectional conflict remains remarkably understudied. Understandably, the central drama of the Union's sundering, the clash of armies on a mass scale, the ending of slavery, the social and political reconstruction of the Union, and the agency of enslaved African Americans and freed people in shaping these events has captured Civil War-era historians' attention. Labor historians, by contrast, have fleshed out the contours of antebellum workers' workplace, community, and political experience. They have also charted the formation of a permanent union movement in the years during and after Reconstruction. Yet a stubborn disconnect between the ante- and postbellum labor movements persists in the scholarship, and our understanding of workers' contributions to the War and the impact of the War on class formation remains underdeveloped. How did the Civil War shape the American working class and how did American workers shape the Civil War? Mark Lause's *Free Labor: The Civil War and the Making of an American Working Class* offers long overdue answers to these questions.

Lause begins with a simple contention: the Civil War was central to the making of an American working class. Working in the tradition of E. P. Thompson, Lause approaches "class as a process of self-definition through which workers come to see themselves as playing a distinct role in society" (p. x). Lause finds evidence of this developing self-definition in the familiar cadences of artisan republicanism as well as in the elastic concept of "free labor." At bottom, though, Lause centers on workers' identity and their conscious prioritization of solidarity over matters of religion or politics as the yardstick of class. The War, Lause demonstrates, took laboring people through a series of processes that remade the workforce, instituted new and more powerful structures of government and employer authority, and complicated the meaning of solidarity.

The War restructured the workforce and labor movement in several ways. In its early years, from 1861 to 1863, the War drew men into armies and combat, swallowing up union memberships North and South. The absence of male workers left behind home front women who contended with worsening working conditions. Union advances into the Confederacy produced a Federal emancipationist policy that sanctioned the movement of hundreds of thousands from slavery ("the largest mass strike in U.S. history to that point," Lause writes, drawing upon W. E. B. Du Bois) and into the wage-earning workforce (p. xv). Industrial expansion increased the importance of unskilled and immigrant workers, leading to a series of urban-based mass actions and strikes in 1863, including the infamous New York City draft riots. These changes upended the old labor movement and created a new workforce from which a new labor movement began to emerge in 1863 and 1864 as Northern workers rebuilt old unions, formed new ones, and drew them together in new trades assemblies. This process was uneven in the South, but workers in both sections contended with civil authorities and employers who asserted their power to dictate

wages and working conditions and quash labor dissent as the War entered its most intense phase. In the end, Union victory resulted in an ambiguous “free labor” political order when it came to worker organization, forcing the post-War labor movement into a circumscribed politics and a strategy of respectability.

This thumbnail sketch only begins to do justice to Lause’s detailed and complex narrative. Lause takes care to document the involvement and contribution of workingmen, unionists in particular, to the War. Indeed, the Civil War may stand as the most working-class of American wars as, building mass armies from scratch, both the Union and the Confederacy relied on existing social institutions like unions to fill out the enlisted ranks and officer corps (conscription did the rest). With men like Isaac J. Neill of the Molders Union and J. Richard Lewellen of the Typographical Union serving on both sides, “proportionately larger numbers of commissioned officers had associations with the labor movement than had been or would be the case in any American war,” writes Lause (p. 51). Northern workers took up arms because they recognized the importance of the conflict to the future of free labor, but their very dedication to the “free labor” ideal and the Union decimated the pre-War labor movement. Workers’ involvement in the War reshaped their perceptions, just as slaves’ “mass strike” remade the meaning of “free labor” itself. At the same time, the turbulent mass strikes of unskilled urban immigrants across 1863 encouraged employers and the press to identify such disorder in ethnic terms as unrespectable and un-American. The attachment of ethnicity to constructions of class dovetailed with the failure of White workers to extend any meaningful solidarity to Black workers and women workers. Lause takes pains to document exceptions to this trend. Nevertheless, a narrowed sense of class identity and practice of solidarity characterized organized labor as unionists and labor reformers built trade unions and political movements, increasingly national in scope, over the latter years of the War.

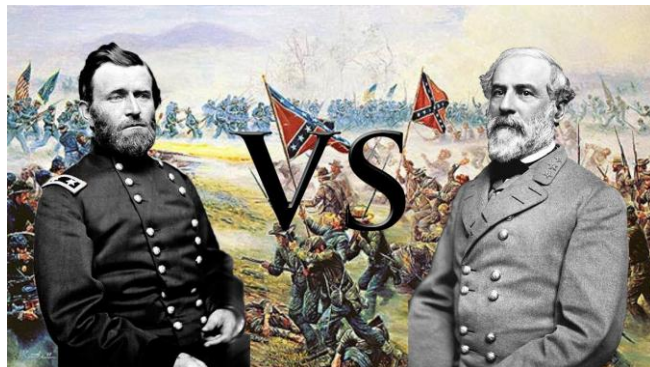
Ultimately, though, the changed circumstances following the War did not favor workers or their organizations. For state authorities, not to mention employers, labor (Black and White, male and female) stood as an object to be managed rather than accorded the full possibilities of “free labor.” Recognizing the riskiness of strikes amidst a rapidly demobilizing military, union leaders like William Sylvis worked out a pragmatic strategy of respectable unionism aimed at winning pro-labor legislation and early attempts at arbitration of workplace disputes. In setting out this line of argument, Lause locates the wartime and immediate post-War antecedents of what would later be called “business unionism.” But he also laments labor’s Faustian choice. It was not so much that unionists had other plausible options, for Reconstruction--and its betrayal of the freed people--figured as part of “the same institutional process that warred on Indians, the humanity of women, and the innately democratic character of the mass strike. Reconstruction did not fail; it succeeded as its real movers and shakers determined it should” (p. 178). Rather, in buying into Reconstruction’s myth of progress--the conviction that the War had resulted in an expansion of equality and justice alongside the extension of market capitalism--labor leaders paved the way for responsible unionism and foreclosed the democratic possibilities of mass organization and action. For Lause, the historic marginalization of the US labor movement dates to that moment.

Mark Lause brings together Civil War history and labor history in a balanced and fruitful manner. With attention to the experiences and agency of Northern and Southern White workers, immigrants, women, enslaved African Americans, and freed people, he illustrates the Civil War as a crucial moment of class formation. (Though, despite his bottom-up approach, Lause tends to amplify the voices of union and labor reform leaders.) Such scope rests on decades’ work in archives, historical societies, and libraries as well as in material available digitally. (Indeed, the challenges of researching Civil War working-class history before the age of the Internet may partially explain why it is only now that we have a book like *Free Labor*.) At the same time, however, the wealth of examples and anecdotes impart a busyness to the narrative that, for all its nuance, can obscure the big ideas. Matters of prose and style further complicate matters, requiring hard work of readers. (The manuscript could have used a good editorial once- or thrice-over.) Nevertheless, *Free Labor: The Civil War and the Making of an American Working Class* stands as a major achievement, filling a huge gap in the literature and revising our understanding of Nineteenth-Century labor history and the history of the Civil War.

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.

2020 WEST COAST CIVIL WAR CONFERENCE

November 6 - 8, 2020



WYNDHAM GARDEN HOTEL, 5090 East Clinton Way, FRESNO, CA 93727-1506, (1-559-252-3611 or 1-559-494-4992), \$99.00 per night, or wyndhamguestreservations.com, (Fresno Airport).

“COMBAT STRATEGY & TACTICS IN 1864 VIRGINIA: LOOKING WITH 2020 VISION AT GRANT VS LEE.”

HOSTED BY THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CWRT. For more information, see Website: SJVCWRT2.com

SPEAKERS:

**Gordon Rhea;
Eric Wittenburg;
Chris Mackowski;
Dana Lombardi;
Jim Stanbery, MA.; Professor (Retired)
And Others.**

TOPICS: In Progress.

Ron Vaughan, MA.; (Conference Coordinator: ronvaughan@prodigy.net).

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION: \$200.00 PER PERSON for Weekend, including meals.
(Non participants who wish Dinner Friday or Saturday nights: \$30.00 each meal.)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone(s) _____

Email _____

Member of which CWRT/ORG _____

Address Check to **San Joaquin Valley CWRT.**

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