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July, 2022

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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

No Message until further notice.

Vacant, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, June 8, 2022
DENNY'S RESTAURANT, 3520 AUBURN BOULEVARD, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 14:

MEMBERS – 14: James Juanitas, Vice President; Harvey & Marsha J. Cain, Mark Carlson, Wayne & Nina Henley, Christopher Highsmith, Joseph & Michelle Matalone, Bernie Quinn, Program Director; Nicholas Scivoletto, Steve Shiflett, Larry Spizzirri, & Richard Spizzirri.

GUESTS – 00:

1. Vice President James Juanitas led the Pledge. Vice President Juanitas recognized new members and guests. He also announced the 2022 West Coast Conference in Fresno, CA in November. The raffle was conducted.
2. Vice President Juanitas was the speaker. His topic was "Admiral Farragut & the Battle of Mobile Bay."
3. The **Battle of Mobile Bay** of August 5, 1864, was an engagement of the American Civil War in which a Union fleet commanded by Rear Admiral David G. Farragut, assisted by a contingent of soldiers, attacked a smaller Confederate fleet led by Admiral Franklin Buchanan and three Forts (Morgan, Gaines, & Powell) that guarded the entrance to Mobile Bay. Farragut's order of "Damn the torpedoes! Four bells. Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, full speed!" became famous in paraphrase, as "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!".
4. The Battle was marked by Farragut's seemingly-rash but successful run through a minefield that had just claimed one of his ironclad monitors, enabling his fleet to get beyond the range of the shore-based guns. This was followed by a reduction of the Confederate fleet to a single vessel, ironclad CSS Tennessee.
5. The *Tennessee* did not retire, but engaged the entire Northern fleet. *Tennessee's* armor enabled her to inflict more injury than she received, but she could not overcome the imbalance in numbers. She was eventually reduced to a motionless hulk and surrendered, ending the Battle. With no Navy to support them, the three Forts also surrendered within days. Complete control of lower Mobile Bay thus passed to the Union forces.
6. Mobile had been the last important port on the Gulf of Mexico east of the Mississippi River remaining in Confederate possession, so its closure was the final step in completing the blockade in that region.
7. This Union victory, together with the capture of Atlanta, was extensively covered by Union newspapers and was a significant boost for Abraham Lincoln's bid for re-election three months after the Battle. This Battle concluded as being the last naval engagement in the State of Alabama in the War. It would also be Admiral Farragut's last known engagement.
8. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, July 13, 2022.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on June 8th was \$4,518.68. The raffle brought in \$33.00. Many thanks to members.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2022

Date	Speaker	Topic
July 13th	"Bernie Quinn"	"Lee's Sharpshooters by Major Dunlop, CSA"
August 10th	"Arnd Gartner"	"Union Intelligence Services"
September 14th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
October 12th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
November 9th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
December 14th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

2022 Membership

The 2022 membership renewal was due as of January 1, 2022. 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

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:

gwofforth@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.

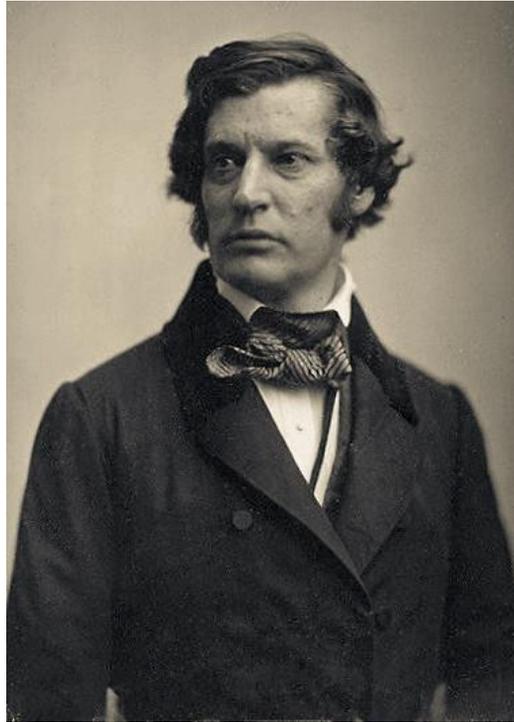
Some of our members are also National Park Service volunteers who assist the rangers in giving public programs, in uniform, about the Union soldiers stationed on the Island and interesting events that occurred there between 1859 and 1865. We publish a newsletter every month, which can be found on our 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

CHARLES SUMNER

Charles Sumner's family emigrated from England in 1637 and settled in what was to become Boston. His mother, Relief Jacobs, was a seamstress, descended from a line of Christianized Jews. She had been raised as a Puritan. Charles' father, Charles Pinckney Sumner, was also a Puritan. He'd been educated in the law at Harvard. It was difficult rearing nine children on an attorney's salary of \$1,000 a year.



Their eldest child, Charles Sumner, was born prematurely on January 6, 1811 along with his twin sister, Matilda. They weighed three and a half pounds at birth. Charles and Matilda had sickly childhoods and Matilda succumbed to consumption on March 6, 1832, at twenty one years old. Two other siblings, Mary and Henry, also died from tuberculosis. Sister Jane died at age seventeen of spinal disease. Brother Albert, a sea captain, drowned along with his wife and daughter on the way to France where they were seeking medical help for their daughter. Sumner's brother, Horace, was lost in a shipwreck when he was twenty six years old. His body was never found.

When Charles' father was appointed Sheriff in 1826, his salary doubled to \$2,000 a year. The family was able to move to a finer home and afford secondary school educations for their children. Charles wanted to attend the Military Academy at West Point but his father insisted on Harvard. Charles graduated Harvard in 1830 and Harvard Law School in 1834.

In 1837, Sumner chose to further his education in Europe. He learned to speak French, German, Italian, and Spanish fluently. More importantly, he noted that in Europe well-dressed, educated Blacks mingled freely and amiably with Whites.

Charles had been sickened by the sight of slavery on his first visit South. On his return

home, he became a leading advocate in the anti-slavery movement. A powerful orator, his height and good looks added to the imposing figure he cut. His oldest friend, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, wrote that Sumner delivered a speech like a "*cannoneer ramming down cartridges*." Sumner joined political parties according to their stand on abolition. Starting as a Whig, he was elected to the Senate as a Free Soiler in 1851. His most noted speech was "*The Crime against Kansas*" given in May 1856. He excoriated the two authors of the Kansas Nebraska Act, Stephen Douglas of Illinois and Andrew Butler of South Carolina. He said Butler was a "*pimp for slavery*." He called Douglass "... *a noise-some, squat, and nameless animal...not a proper model for an American senator*." Douglass spit back, "...*that damn fool will get himself killed by some other damned fool*."

Two days later, a kinsman of Andrew Butler's, Senator Preston Brooks, searched out Sumner in his office. Brooks refused to duel Sumner as he did not consider him to be a gentleman. Instead, he caned him almost to death, with the type of cane used to discipline dogs. The cane broke during the beating. Brooks was sent hundreds of canes, inscribed "*Hit him again*" by delighted Southerners and feted all over the South. He resigned his seat in the Senate but was re-elected the next term.

Northern tempers flared. William Cullen Bryant wrote, "*Are we to be chastised the way they chastise their slaves?*" Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "*I think we must get rid of slavery, or we must get rid of freedom*."

It cannot be underestimated how important this beating was in sharpening the North's focus on total abolition and bringing about the Civil War. Sumner's seat in the Senate was left empty during his long convalescence to serve as a powerful rebuke to the slave states. It took Sumner close to three years to recover. He suffered traumatic brain injury, debilitating spinal pain, headaches, and nightmares. He sailed to Europe but the "*cures*" worked upon him were pure quackery and made his condition worse.

Sumner had worked closely with Abraham Lincoln years earlier protesting the War in Mexico. Now a leading Radical Republican, Sumner grew discontented with Lincoln's slow pace towards emancipation. He chided Lincoln, "...*if you had commenced your policy about slavery, this thing could and would have come and gone*..." After Lincoln's murder, Sumner was one of the few people who befriended Mary Lincoln. He was eventually successful in getting her the pension she desperately desired.

Rumormongers whispered that Sumner was a "*confirmed bachelor*," the euphemism for homosexual in the mid-Nineteenth Century. It was said his paramour was Samuel Gridley Howe, head of The Perkins School for the Blind and the husband of Julia Ward Howe, author of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Howe was a member of the Secret Six, an abolitionist group that had financed John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. It is not known if the affair was physical or just emotional. However, Samuel wrote so often to Charles during his honeymoon, that his frustrated new wife later wrote her husband, "*Sumner ought to have been a woman and you to have married her*." The Howes' marriage was not a happy one. After Samuel's death, Julia admitted they would have divorced if he hadn't threatened to take her children.

On October 17, 1866, Sumner shocked society when he suddenly married Alice Mason Hooper, twenty seven years his junior. Alice had been widowed during the Civil War.

The Sumner marriage was acrimonious from the start. Alice had a fierce temper. Sumner was inflexible and humorless. When Alice began to spend her evenings with a German diplomat, Frederich Von Holstein, Sumner's enemies dubbed him "*The Great Impotency.*" The couple separated the following September and were divorced by 1873. Sumner forevermore referred to Alice as "*that woman.*"

Sumner had few friends among his fellow senators. He was said to have an extremely formal disposition to the point of coldness and allowed his ego to rule over common sense. He was insensitive to the needs of others and exceedingly stubborn, not able to abide any other opinion but his own. He was furious when a memorial statue to Judge Roger Taney (the Dred Scott Decision) was proposed. He refused to compromise in his fight for equal rights for the newly freed Black population. He opposed U.S. Grant's attempt to annex Santo Domingo and said things about Grant that could not be forgiven. By 1872, Sumner was supporting Horace Greeley, the Liberal Republican candidate for President. This was the end of any of Sumner's power in the Republican Party and Congress.

Sumner had been experiencing bouts of angina for some time. On March 11, 1874, Sumner died of a heart attack at his home in Washington, DC. Hundreds of freedmen gathered outside to mourn his passing. All businesses in Boston closed the day of his funeral. Sumner received the rare honor of being laid out in the Rotunda of the US Capital, having been a senator from 1851 until his death. His pallbearers were his closest friends, the literary lions of Boston, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



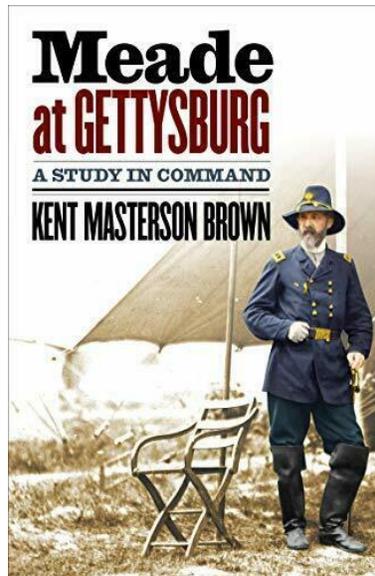
Charles Sumner is buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

Meade at Gettysburg: A Study in Command

By Kent Masterson Brown. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2021. 488 pp. \$35.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-4696-6199-5.

Reviewed by Jennifer Murray (Oklahoma State University). Published on H-CivWar (November, 2021). Commissioned by G. David Schieffler.



Scholars have devoted more attention to the Gettysburg Campaign than any other battle in American history. Approximately eighteen thousand full-length monographs have been written on the Battle of Gettysburg, evaluating, dissecting, or reevaluating the three-day (July 1-3, 1863) battle between Major General George Gordon Meade's Army of the Potomac and General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Although it would be tempting to argue that scholars have seemingly explored every facet, sometimes in excruciating detail, of Gettysburg, crucial gaps in the Battle's narrative and historiography remain. In *Meade at Gettysburg: A Study in Command*, Kent Masterson Brown offers the first comprehensive study of General Meade's leadership during the Gettysburg Campaign, June 28-July 14, 1863, and rightfully inserts Meade's role in Union victory.

Indeed, history has not been kind to Meade. Although he commanded the Army of the Potomac longer than any other general and led the Army to its first victory at Gettysburg, Meade came to be overshadowed by his contemporaries, namely, Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman, and has been too often neglected by Civil War historians. In 1960, Freeman Cleaves produced the first modern full-

length biography of Meade, titled *Meade of Gettysburg*. Since then, a few additional Meade works have been published, including Ethan Rafuse's *George Gordon Meade and the War in the East* (2003), Tom Huntington's *Searching For George Gordon Meade: The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg* (2013), and John Selby's *Meade: The Price of Command, 1863-1865* (2018), which explores the General's tenure as Commander of the Army of the Potomac. As the title suggests, Brown's book is not a comprehensive treatment of Meade's Civil War career but a study of his leadership during the Gettysburg Campaign, the General's signature victory.

Brown devotes ten of his nineteen chapters to the campaign and opening day of the Battle. In these chapters, he addresses some of the most popular canards of Meade's generalship, including the controversial Pipe Creek Circular and the purpose of Major John F. Reynolds's advance on the morning of July 1. Reynolds, Brown asserts, was to "advance on Gettysburg" but was not ordered to occupy the town (p. 97). Instead, Meade envisioned Reynolds, then in command of the Army's left wing, which constituted three infantry corps, to lure Lee's forces back to Emmitsburg, Maryland, approximately ten miles south of Gettysburg. There, Meade could establish a defensive position along the Pipe Creek line and fight Lee on the ground of his choosing.

Brown's Meade was a thoughtful disciple of Nineteenth-Century military theorists, particularly Carl von Clausewitz and West Point's Dennis Hart Mahan. This is most apparent in Brown's interpretation of Meade's command on June 30 and July 1. Reynolds's purpose on July 1 was a reconnaissance-in-force. "Meade's operational plan for the left wing of the Army was straight out of Clausewitz's treatise and from the tutelage of Meade's and Reynolds's professor Dennis Hart Mahan; it was the classic operational use of an advance corps" (p. 105). Considering that military historians have questioned, if not downplayed, the influence of Clausewitz or France's Antoine-Henri Jomini's philosophies on the Civil War, some readers might find these efforts to contextualize Meade's operational planning less convincing. Ultimately, because of Reynolds's "impulsive judgment," Meade's intentions to use an advance corps to lure Lee into a more favorable position to offer battle failed and left two of the Army's Corps (the First and Eleventh) shattered (p. 149).

Readers interested in the famous Meade-Sickles controversy will find a sympathetic interpretation of Meade's role in the events on the afternoon of July 2. Major General Daniel "Sickles had been given plenty of explicit orders," Brown concludes, "but in a startling exhibition of insubordination, he refused to obey them." Indeed, Sickles had received multiple orders to post his Third Corps along Cemetery Ridge, with his left flank to anchor near Little Round Top, but

finding this position untenable, he moved his Corps forward. Brown exonerated Meade for not more closely monitoring his subaltern, even when Meade knew that Sickles was confused (or willingly defiant) over the placement of his Corps. "Likely, not even Meade's personal inspection of the positions of the Third Corps, before it moved forward, would have mattered," Brown speculates (p. 220).

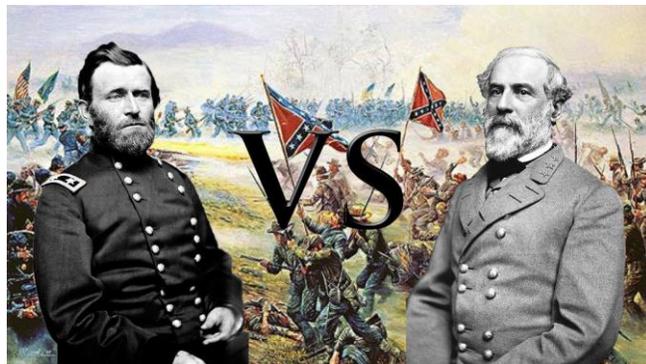
In defeating Lee's Army at Gettysburg, Meade had accomplished what no previous Commander of the Army of the Potomac had been able to. But Meade's inability to destroy Lee's forces during the pursuit to the Potomac cast a lingering shadow on the Union victory. The final four chapters of *Meade at Gettysburg* addresses the General's leadership from July 4 through July 14. Brown has established himself as a leading authority on logistics during the campaign with the publication of *Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign* (2005). Drawing on exhaustive primary research, including the little-used Quartermaster Files in the National Archives, Brown highlights the multitude of logistical problems that plagued the Army of the Potomac in the wake of their victory. In granular detail, Brown chronicles the shortages of food and various supplies, perhaps most importantly shoes, as well as the desperate condition of thousands of horses and mules that beset the Army. And although he had caught up with Lee's Army around Williamsport, Maryland, contrary to President Abraham Lincoln's assertion, Meade "had no 'golden opportunity'" to destroy his adversary (p. 369).

Brown has done much to rehabilitate Meade's reputation. Whereas Allen Guelzo claimed that the Army of the Potomac won at Gettysburg despite Meade's incompetent leadership, Brown establishes Meade as an effective operational and tactical Commander, playing a central role in the Army's victory. While many students of the Battle of Gettysburg will enthusiastically echo Brown's conclusions, at times his depiction of Meade reads as an attorney's defense of his client. Brown's Meade emerges as a near-flawless commander who committed no blunders or errors in his inaugural campaign as the Army's Commander. Surely Meade stumbled at times (arguably in his handling of Sickles on July 2) and more objectivity would offer nuance to Meade's command. Notwithstanding, *Meade at Gettysburg* is beautifully written and exhaustively researched and offers a much-needed assessment of Meade's leadership of the Army of the Potomac during the Gettysburg Campaign.

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.

2022 WEST COAST CIVIL WAR CONFERENCE

November 4 - 6, 2022



WYNDHAM GARDEN HOTEL, 5090 East Clinton Way, FRESNO, CA 93727-1506, (1-559-252-3611 or 1-866-238-4218), \$103.00 per night, or wydhamguestreservations.com, (Fresno Airport).

“Grant vs Lee: Combat Strategy & Tactics in 1864 Virginia.”

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

SPEAKERS:

**Gordon Rhea;
Eric Wittenburg;
Chris Mackowski;
Jim Stanbery.**

Friday Night Dinner Begins at 5:30 PM.

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

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION: \$200.00 PER PERSON for Weekend, including meals. Breakfast on your own. Coffee, water, and pastries provided during the Conference. (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.**

Send Check and Registration to: **Ron Vaughan (Conference Coordinator), 730 East Tulare Avenue, Tulare, CA 93274-4336.**