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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

Putting Covid-19 in our rear view Mirrors

The Board of Directors of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table will be meeting soon to chart a path where we can return to monthly meetings. Dennis Kohlmann has been our acting President even though he was the elected President when Covid-19 landed. Unfortunately, Dennis is currently struggling with health problems and needs relief from those duties. The Board will move forward by appointing a one-year President so activity can resume immediately and in the fall of 2022, we will hold our next elections. We hope that each of you has missed our monthly meetings as much as we have and are anxious to return. This newly appointed President will lead the charge forward wherever it takes us. If any of you have ideas that you would like to be considered as we move forward, please email or call a Board Member.

Please stay tuned, more news will reach you soon.

Paul Ruud, Member at Large

for

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, September 8, 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 open to decreased inside dining but closes at 6:30 PM.
2. The next Board Meeting is unknown at this time.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on September 8th was \$4,405.31. No meeting and no raffle.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2021 & 2022

Date	Speaker	Topic
October 13th	"No Speaker"	"No Topic"
November 10th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
December 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
January 12th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
February 9th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
March 9th	"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:

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

Slave Funerals

Death was no stranger to anyone bound into the American chattel system. Between one and two million Africans died during the Middle Passage. Their bodies were summarily thrown overboard. The death rate for slave children under the age of sixteen was one in three.

In the early years of slavery, it was almost impossible to hold any kind of funeral by the slaves for one of their own. Slaves were forbidden to congregate due to fears of revolts. They were usually buried in haste with no ceremony, their graves dug by slave children too young to work the fields. The graves were mostly unmarked. Sometimes, wood plaques were placed on the graves, but these soon rotted, paint flaked away. Occasionally, a favored slave received a more permanent marker from the master. Traditionally, a yucca plant or small prickly bush would be planted atop the grave to keep the "haints" away.

Eventually, slaves were encouraged to practice Christianity. Masters believed this would guarantee obedient servants. As for the slaves, they wanted no part of a White God and a heaven where masters might make their afterlife a hell too. They believed that when they died, their souls would return to Africa. Sunday services merely gave them a reprieve from work and a chance to gather with their family and friends.

Some slaves died of old age. Most died of disease, malnutrition, overwork, and beatings. Some were murdered by their masters for an infringement of the rules or trying to withstand sexual attacks. Slaves did not have wakes or viewings. Upon death, the body was washed and the hands of the deceased were crossed upon the chest with either a coin or a piece of metal scrap between them. The metal hindered the soul from reentering the body. The body was then wrapped in a white cloth, white being the color of death. If a white cloth was unavailable, often "Negro cloth" was used, the cloth that was doled out at Christmas for the making of slave clothes. Mirrors were covered so the soul could not hide inside their reflected image. It was up to the family and friends of the deceased to gather wood to make the casket. Sometimes, the coffin was so makeshift, it needed to be blackened with shoe polish to make it presentable. It was then nailed shut so no spirit could escape or enter the coffin. Some slaves were merely buried in their shrouds, not fortunate enough to have a protective casket.

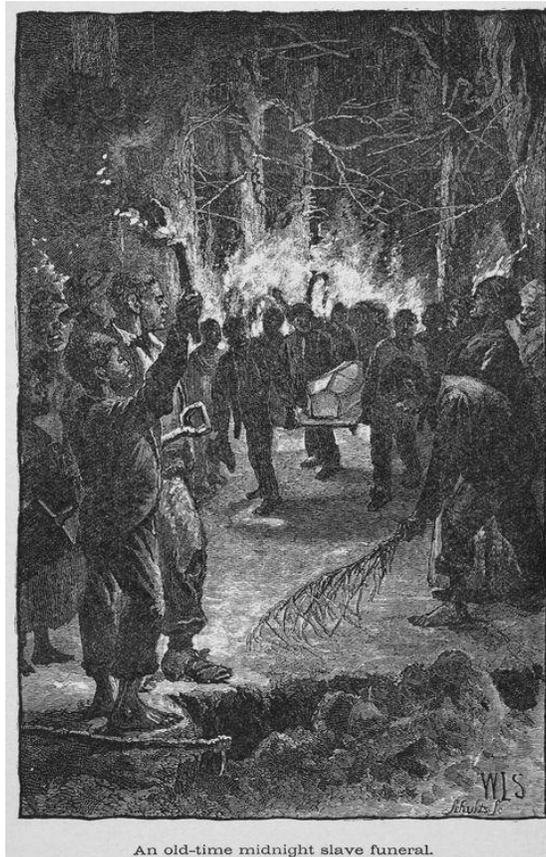
Slaves preferred to be taken out through a hole in the wall of the house. They were removed feet first, so the soul could not beckon the family to follow them. Once the body was removed, the hole was quickly closed so the spirit could not find its way back into the house. The body was placed upon a cart, if available, or carried by the survivors if not. A zig zag path was taken to the cemetery to further confuse the soul and thorny plants or broken pottery were strewn on the ground to make the way back more arduous.

The slave cemetery was usually situated on land deemed unusable by the plantation owner. Sometimes it was strewn with rocks, covered with trees and bush, and had a high water level. Water would often flood into these graves when half dug.



An African-American cemetery from the Beaufort County, South Carolina, area in the early twentieth century showing an array of grave goods - including bottles, plates and bowls. Also present are a large number of grave markers - stone monuments, wooden slabs, wooden stakes or posts, and even some ornamental plants.

Funerals were held at night so as not to interfere with the work day. This was welcome as the slaves felt darkness lent a solemnity that was missing from their lives. Night funerals allowed large groups of friends and families to travel from neighboring plantations in order to attend.



An old-time midnight slave funeral.

It was important to the slave to have a “good funeral.” It would help him with his “homegoing.” The good funeral was central to the soul becoming “detached” or it could remain to haunt those left behind.

Children and unmarried adults were not allowed to attend the burial. The coffin was placed into the ground with the head toward the West. The family stood to one side of the grave while it was filled with dirt. The name of the deceased was repeated three times as it was believed the soul becomes confused when the body dies and needs to be reminded of who they were. Each attendee threw a handful of earth over the grave. Offerings were left atop the mound. Such personal items as clothes, toys, coins, marbles, cups, plates, spoons, pots, pans, medicine bottles, toothbrushes, and blankets would be appropriate. These items were all broken or marred in some way at the cemetery so as not to be confused as something to be used by the living. White seashells were almost always placed on the graves. Many African Americans believed their Heaven was beneath the oceans and rivers. “The sea brought us. The sea shall take us back.” A handcrafted wooden speaking tube was plunged into the ground. It was important to be able to communicate with the deceased even after burial. Bits of mirrors were scattered over the grave, their reflections meant to catch the light of the spirit and hold it there.

On the return home, a cleansing ritual took place. A piece of cut aloe was placed in a ewer of water and the dust of the graveyard washed from feet and hands. Songs of jubilation were sung. Dancing and feasting celebrated the release from forced labor for the deceased. Whites saw this as pagan and tended to stay away from these funerals. To the Blacks, death was a festival, liberty from bondage, and a reason to celebrate. They preferred to mourn without the presence of their White masters hovering about them.

During the Civil War, Black soldiers were responsible for the dead. They removed the bodies from the field, dug the graves, buried the remains, and maintained the cemeteries. They were made assistants to doctors and taught embalming and record keeping.

When freedom came, African Americans no longer wanted to use White funeral homes that made them enter through back doors to see their loved ones. Black churches began forming burial societies. Some of the first black owned businesses were funeral parlors situated in the homes of the owners. Usually, the residence was on the second floor, while the parlor floor served as the viewing room and mortuary. In the early 1900’s, bodies were collected by funeral directors in horse drawn carts. The body was then embalmed, cleaned, dressed, and placed on a “cooling board.” Viewings would take place there before the burial. Funeral homes became a safe place to gather. Some were even instrumental in hiding people from lynch mobs.

After slavery, the opportunity to gather openly to send off a loved one properly was a cause for celebration. In New Orleans, the Black funeral became an art form.

Many funeral homes were passed down from generation to generation. The funeral directors were looked upon as friends that would help you through life’s tragedies. Quite a number of the directors served as mayors, pastors, and community leaders. Many of them assisted in the civil rights movement with bail money, safe meeting places, and covert transportation in the form of hearses.

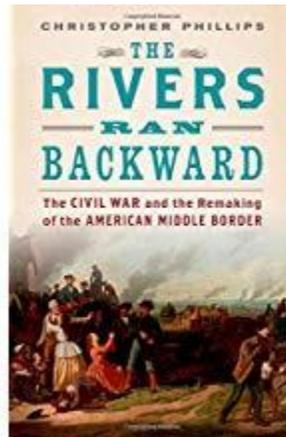
It took hundreds of years but finally, the African American community is able to bury their dead with respect and dignity.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border

H-NET REVIEWS in the Humanities & Social Sciences. Christopher Phillips. New York, Oxford University Press, 2016. 528 pp., \$36.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-19-518723-6.

Reviewed by Stephen E. Towne (Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis). Published on H-Midwest (November, 2018). Commissioned by Patrick A. Pospisek.



Christopher Phillips's important and far-reaching book examines the breakup of the "Middle Border," the once cohesive Region encompassing the States of Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, all watered by the Ohio River. Through the first half of the Nineteenth Century, that waterway connected the White citizens who lived both North and South of its banks. They shared a worldview of White supremacy established in the United States Constitution and adhered to a common acceptance of the role of slavery in their economic, social, and political lives. Theirs was a White man's country. They eschewed, Phillips writes, both the extreme views of abolitionists and proslavery militancy of the East and South respectively. Residents of the Middle Border held a middle-ground attitude to slavery, accepting it where it existed, yet comfortable with the fact that several Northeastern states had done away with human bondage. Slavery was the law in Kentucky and Missouri South of the River, and while the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 barred slavery in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, human bondage flourished in those States through legal dodges undertaken by White citizens well into the 1830s. As antislavery sentiment grew in much of the North, leading to calls to abolish the institution, many in the Middle Border saw slavery was a "negotiable issue" (p. 73) and set themselves up as the mediators in the

national dispute.

In his opening chapters, Phillips carefully shows that the Region's self-appointed moderator role in the national conflicts over slavery weakened. As abolitionism intruded in areas North of the Ohio River, regional consensus fractured. Reacting to growing antislavery sentiment, proslavery adherents in Kentucky and Missouri, aided by allies North of the River, "adopted the mantra of Southerners" (p 97) to defend the institution. Still, the moderate Middle Border consensus continued through the political conflicts of the 1850s and into the Secession Crisis of 1860-61, when proslavery Unionists in Kentucky and Missouri clutched tenaciously at the hope of compromise over slavery. Phillips argues persuasively that the Middle Border's slave States' policy of neutrality was not secessionism in sheep's clothes, but a last-gasp effort to mediate a peaceful resolution. Theirs was a conditional Unionism as long as the Federal Government protected slavery. Likewise, many moderate Unionists in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois reacted with shock at the militancy found in Republican antislavery rhetoric in the North.

Indeed, once War came, Middle Border moderates in both the Democratic and Republican Parties recoiled at the aggressive measures of both the Confederate Rebels and the Republican Administration of President Abraham Lincoln. Modifying historian Mark Grimsley's thesis on "hard-hand" policies toward slave-owners in the Region, Phillips argues that Lincoln adopted tough tactics (e.g., martial law, suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, arrests) early in the conflict in 1861, treating the many neutrals and conditional Unionist slave-owners in Kentucky and Missouri--which did not secede from the Union--as Rebels and dis-loyalists. Lincoln's policy of arming African American men to fill the army's ranks both enraged and terrified these Government supporters. Soon, slave-owning Unionists turned against the Administration and toward the Rebel Confederacy as a way to preserve their institution. Significantly, Phillips argues that their shift derived not from resonance with Southern culture; nonetheless, thereafter they identified as "Southern" in sympathy with the Confederates fighting to maintain chattel bondage. Similarly, Lincoln's Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of September 1862 confirmed in many Northern Democrats' eyes the abolitionist bona fides of the Administration. They bolted from the pro-War coalition with Republicans, causing the midterm election disaster in the Middle Border's free states. Conservative and moderate Westerners rejected the Proclamation, as well as Lincoln's military arrests of civilians and suppression of the Democratic press, as insupportable violations of the Constitution. In Kentucky and Missouri, formerly Unionist men and women aided or participated in guerrilla warfare to preserve slavery, while North of the Ohio River opposition to the War and resistance to Government measures grew increasingly violent.

The surrender of Confederate armies and the end of the War failed to end the conflict in the Middle Border. The political fights over the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, among other issues, heightened racial violence. Ex-Confederates held control of the Democratic Party in both ex-slave states. Former rebels--many still sporting their Confederate uniforms--seized control of Kentucky Government when President Andrew Johnson withdrew Federal troops in 1866, inaugurating a reign of terror over both White and Black Unionists. In the decades to come, residents of Kentucky and Missouri identified themselves as Southerners, taking up the Lost Cause as aggrieved victims of an unholy and unconstitutional abolitionist onslaught. North of the River, Republicans consolidated political power in the immediate post-War years. Later, residents of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois came to portray themselves as ever antagonistic to slavery and ever stalwart supporters of the martyred Lincoln. Soon, no commonality between the formerly middle-ground moderate alliance survived.

In *The Rivers Ran Backwards*, Phillips ranges over the whole Nineteenth Century in detailing the decline of middle border moderation. His focus, however, rests closely on the mid-Century Civil War years. Before each chapter, he provides useful vignettes illustrating how individuals or locales navigated the politics of race, War, and growing division in communities. His ample footnotes display a sweeping command of archival sources. Throughout, he engages a vast secondary literature with aplomb. Historians will consult the book with profit and will assign it to their graduate students for careful study. It is, alas, not without flaws. Along with a number of relatively minor factual miscues (e.g., John Greenleaf Whittier was from Massachusetts, not Indiana; George Washington Julian served in the US House, not the Senate; Indiana Governor Oliver P. Morton fought successfully against military authorities who desired to declare martial law in his State), sections--particularly in Chapter 8--show sloppy editorial work, where text appears garbled and some endnotes do not match the text. As well, the book's often dense prose makes it less than ideal for assignment to undergraduate students. These reservations aside, Phillips has produced a major statement on the nature and consequences of the Civil War on the Middle Border.

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.

Wisconsin Historical Museum, September 25, 1847

On this day in 1847, Vinnie Ream Hoxie was born in Madison. She was the first woman sculptor to receive a commission from the Federal Government.



Vinnie Ream with Lincoln Bust: WHI ID# 8283

Ream was 18 years old when her supporters convinced President Lincoln to sit while she sculpted his bust. She later received a commission to sculpt a life size statue of Lincoln, beating out several distinguished male sculptors for this honor.

The life-sized Carrara marble figure of Lincoln stands in the Rotunda of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Her statue, "The West," is in the State Capitol in Madison.

She was also commissioned to model busts of important people such as Senator John Sherman, General Custer, Horace Greeley, Admiral Farragut, Sequoyah and others. During her lifetime she sculpted more than 100 pieces, many of which stand in capitol buildings across the country.

She was also a writer and fighter for women's rights and other political issues. Being active internationally in the arts and politics brought much attention to her, and speculation was rampant about the nature of her friendship with her most powerful advocate, General William Tecumseh Sherman.

After working in Rome for 20 months, she married Lieutenant Richard Leveridge Hoxie at the age of 30, and they had one son. She is now buried in the Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

Submitted by Silver N. Marvin