



Volume 60, No. 12  
December, 2020

### 2020 Officers:

**Dennis Kohlmann**, President  
(916) 726-4432  
[gkohlma@aol.com](mailto:gkohlma@aol.com)

**Anne M. Peasley**, IPP  
(530) 320-5112  
[apeasley22@gmail.com](mailto:apeasley22@gmail.com)

**James Juanitas**, Vice  
President  
(916) 600-4930  
[jcjuanitas@aol.com](mailto:jcjuanitas@aol.com)

VACANT,  
Secretary

**George W. Foxworth**,  
Treasurer  
(916) 362-0178  
[gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net)

**Bernard Quinn**,  
Program Director  
(916) 419-1197  
[bwqcrypto@gmail.com](mailto:bwqcrypto@gmail.com)

**Paul G. Ruud**, MAL  
(530) 886-8806  
[paulruud@gmail.com](mailto:paulruud@gmail.com)

**Richard E. Sickert**, MAL  
(916) 564-4608  
[r.sickert@comcast.net](mailto:r.sickert@comcast.net)

VACANT,  
Editor

**SCWRT Website**  
[www.sacramentocwrt.com](http://www.sacramentocwrt.com)

**Kim Knighton**, Webmaster  
[webmaster@digitalthumbprint.com](mailto: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

My first West Coast Civil War Round Table Conference was in Fresno ( November 2002). It had many great speakers including Ed Bearss and Richard M. McMurry. McMurry talked about Civil War VD, Virginia Disease.

According to the Richard M. McMurry's VD Theory, everything important happened in Virginia. The War started with the firing on Fort Sumter, followed by the first Battle of Bull Run. Then came the 7-Days Battle. This was followed by the Second Battle of Bull Run, followed by Chancellorsville, and ended with the surrender at Appomattox Court House.

I think most of us start out learning about the War in the East. In truth, the War was lost in the West. (Richard McMurry agreed with that fact.) The front was a couple of hundred miles in the East and almost 1,000 miles in the West. In the East, the major rivers ran East to the Atlantic Ocean and served as barriers for the North.

In the West, the major rivers flowed North to the Ohio River and were highways into the South.

Early on, the best generals in the East were Southerners; Lee, Jackson, and Longstreet versus McClellan, Pope, Hooker, and Burnside. The opposite was true out West. The North had Grant, Sherman, and Thomas while the South had Bragg and John Bell Hood.

The War ended because the South collapsed in the West and bled to death in the East.

**Dennis Kohlmann, President**

**MINUTES**  
**SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**  
Wednesday, November 11, 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. Meetings are cancelled for the remainder of 2020 due to COVID-19. The next meeting in 2021 is unknown at this time. The Hof Brau is still closed to inside dining.
2. The next Board Meeting is unknown at this time.

**George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary**

**Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance on November 11th was \$4,881.76. No meeting and no raffle.

**George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**

# Coming Programs for 2020 & 2021

| Date          | Speaker            | Topic                  |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| December 9th  | "No Meeting"       | "No Topic, No Meeting" |
| January 13th  | "To Be Determined" | "To Be Determined"     |
| February 10th | "To Be Determined" | "To Be Determined"     |
| March 10th    | "To Be Determined" | "To Be Determined"     |
| April 14th    | "To Be Determined" | "To Be Determined"     |
| May 12th      | "To Be Determined" | "To Be Determined"     |

## 2020 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:

[qwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:qwfoxworth@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](http://northandsouthmag.com) or call Keith on (559) 260 3852 (Pacific time).

# ANN VESSEY ANNIS

Ann Vessey was born under an unlucky star on October 2, 1816 in Welton Le Marsh, Lincolnshire, England. On December 29, 1840, Ann married a young sea Captain, Jim Laird, in Liverpool. On their maiden sea voyage together in their sixth month of marriage, their ship was wrecked and Ann's husband drowned. Three days later, a passing vessel rescued Ann and the few surviving crew members from a tiny island where they had taken shelter.



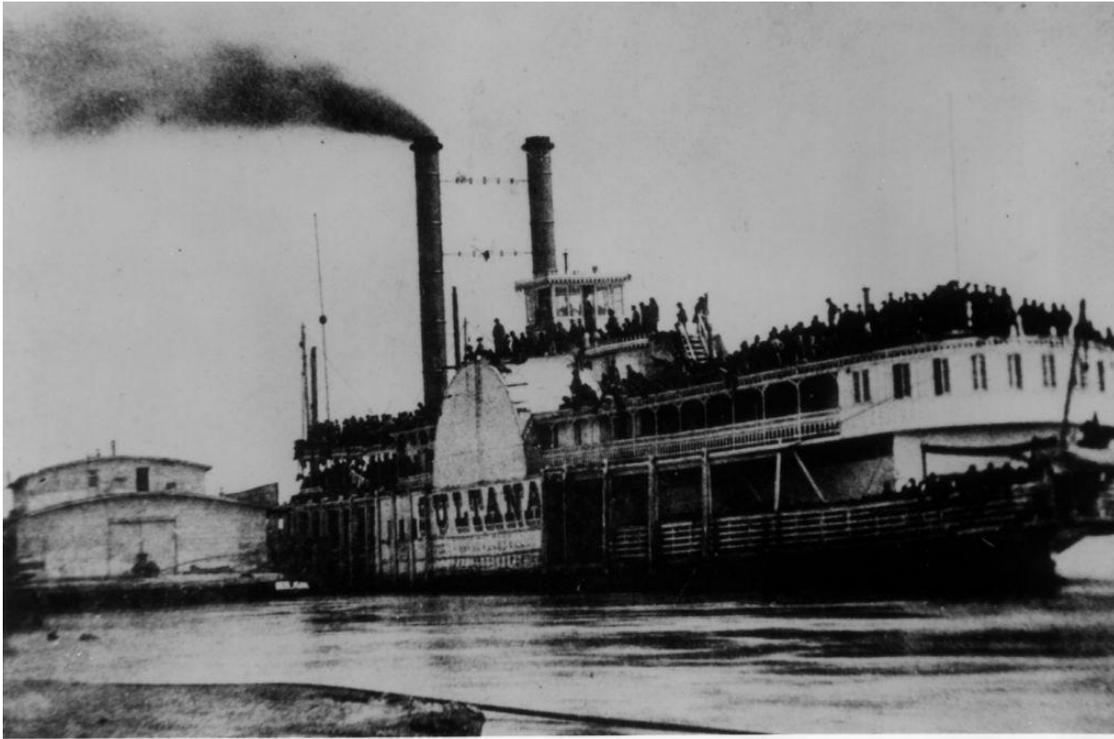
By 1842, things were looking up for Ann. She had married another seaman, Captain Francis B. Simms, and they had three children together, Margaret and Francis (both born in 1845), and Alexander (born 1848). A year later, Simms was lost at sea.

Deciding to change her fate by changing her location, Ann decided to immigrate to the United States. She arrived with her three children and her parents in New York City on July 3, 1850. From there, they headed to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, perhaps sponsored by the organizations that often sent new immigrants west.

Ann soon met Harvey Annis, a carpenter and pumpmaker. Annis was willing to marry Ann and be father to her children. They were wed on November 13, 1850 and had four children of their own, Lewis (born 1851), Angelina (born 1854), James Willis (born 1856), and Isabelle, known as Belle, (born 1858). Life was going well for the Annises and their large brood. But once the Civil War began, Harvey Annis felt it was his duty to volunteer. He was sworn into Company F, 18<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin on November 22, 1861.

Annis performed well and rose in the ranks. He was promoted to Sergeant of Company K, 18<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin and soon after, to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with the 51<sup>st</sup> United States Colored Infantry. In November of 1864, Annis became extremely ill. Near death from fever, dysentery, and an enlarged spleen, he sent for his wife to come care for him in Vicksburg or, if needed, to bring his body home. Ann arrived accompanied by their youngest daughter, Belle, leaving her oldest daughter home to tend to the other children. Ann's nursing skills must have been superb because Annis began to recover. Realizing he'd never be fit for battle again, Annis resigned his commission on February 11, 1865. He booked passage in a private cabin on the Mississippi steamboat, the *Sultana*. He continued to wear his officer's uniform and work until the ship arrived. The plan was to sail to Cairo, Illinois and then take the train to Wisconsin. His discharge papers would follow him.

Built in 1863, the Sultana's passenger capacity was three hundred seventy six with room for a crew of eighty five. Unknown to the Annis family, Captain J. Cass Mason had made a deal with Lt. Col. Reuben Hatch, Quartermaster at Vicksburg, to load the boat with men recently released from the Confederate POW Camps, Andersonville and Cahaba. The Union soldiers, many half dead as a result of starvation and the horrific unsanitary conditions in the prisons, had been waiting for months to be sent home. Hatch told Mason that the Federal Government would pay \$5 per enlisted man and \$10 per officer for their passage. All Hatch wanted was a kickback.



Mason and Hatch were men of no conscience. Mason had had a boat confiscated from him for carrying Confederate contraband and was once again in desperate need of money. Hatch had previously been convicted for taking bribes. Ten days earlier, a military commission had decided he was "totally unfit" for his job as Assistant Quartermaster in New Orleans. Now somehow he had acquired the position of Chief Quartermaster of the Department of Mississippi. Hatch's brother, Ozias M. Hatch, was Secretary of State in Illinois and one of Lincoln's closest friends.

The nefarious get-rich-quick scheme of Mason and Hatch would result in hundreds of horrific deaths.

One of the Sultana's boilers had exploded on April 21. Instead of being replaced, it was patched together. Then "...1,978 paroled prisoners, 22 guards, 70 paying cabin passengers, and 85 crew members" were herded onto the Sultana like cattle. A last photo of the boat shows the overcrowding on the deck. The ship carried a total of seventy-six life preservers. Ann Annis, seeing the Hurricane deck of the boat was sagging, was reassured by the crew that all would be well. The ship set sail on April 24, 1865. At 2:00 AM on April 27, the mended boiler exploded, followed by two more boilers exploding. The ship began to take on water and exploded in flames. Some of the weakened POWs simply sank to their knees and were consumed by fire. Others threw themselves into the icy waters of the Mississippi River even while knowing they had no strength to swim. Somehow able to obtain life preservers for himself and his wife, Harvey Annis put his daughter on his back and rushed to the stern of the boat. He shimmied down a rope with Belle's arms wrapped tightly round his neck. Desperately clinging to a plank, he waited for Ann to follow. Slowed by a man who had knocked her down, Ann

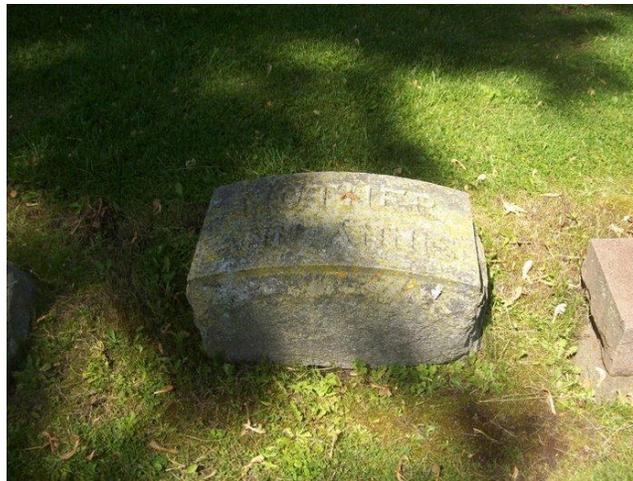
was finally able to lower herself into the River. Horrified, she realized that her life jacket was slipping off. Ann held on to a flaming ship's rudder, severely burning her hands and arms. The last thing she remembered before losing consciousness was seeing her husband and daughter disappearing under the waves.

The Sultana went down about seven miles outside of Memphis. Of the estimated 2,200 - 2,300 persons on board ship, about 760 were picked out of the water by passing boats. Of that group, another 40 died. Ann and the other survivors were taken to Gayoso Hospital in Memphis to be treated for burns, hypothermia, and shock. For months, decomposing bodies were found bobbing in the River. Captain Mason's body was never recovered.

More people lost their lives in the sinking of the Sultana than on the Titanic. It was the worst maritime disaster in American history. No one was ever charged as being responsible though The Memphis Daily Appeal ran as its headline, IT WAS MURDER! The deaths of hundreds of thousands of young American men, the murder of Lincoln, the trials of the conspirators, and the capture and killing of John Wilkes Booth, the day before the explosion, had left the Nation numb.

Ann remained in Memphis for about 6 weeks, fruitlessly searching for the bodies of her husband and little girl. Returning home, she found that two of her sons had run off to join the Army while she'd been gone.

Ann was turned down when she applied for her husband's pension. She was told that his discharge papers had been "...signed, sealed-and all but delivered" before he died. It took her seven long years and a special Act of Congress to receive Annis's \$17 a month pension. Ann ran a boarding house until she was unable to work. She always kept her arms covered, hiding the burns received when she clung to the burning ship's rudder. In her old age, she lived with one child or another, constantly changing residences.



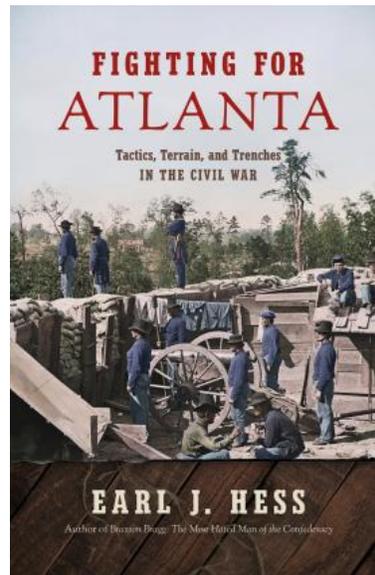
Ann died of a cerebral hemorrhage on June 13, 1900, at eighty-four years-old. She had lost three husbands to the waters and had outlived four of her children and a daughter-in-law. She is buried in Riverside Cemetery, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

**Submitted by Judith Breitstein**

# Fighting for Atlanta: Tactics, Terrain, and Trenches in the Civil War

By Earl J. Hess. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Illustrations, maps. 408 pp. \$45.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-4696-4342-7.

Reviewed by Thomas Army (University of Massachusetts Amherst). Published on H-CivWar (March, 2019), Commissioned by G. David Schieffler.



On August 22, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln received a letter from his close friend and political champion, Henry J. Raymond, cofounder of the New York Times and Chairman of the Republican National Committee. Raymond's message was both pessimistic and realistic: If the 1864 President Election were held tomorrow, Lincoln would lose to Democratic candidate George McClellan, and the Republicans would lose their opportunity to pass permanent emancipation legislation and perhaps even the chance to save the Union. The following day, Lincoln penned his now famous memorandum stating, "This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be re-elected."

Eleven days later, General William T. Sherman telegraphed Washington with news of the most significant achievement of Union arms in 1864: "So Atlanta is ours, and fairly won." The announcement of Sherman's victory flashed across the North and inspired countless celebrations, including fireworks, prayers of thanksgiving, and in Washington, New York, Boston, and other cities, one hundred-gun salutes. Only two months later Lincoln won re-election, and the Confederacy's eventual demise was virtually assured.

How Sherman successfully campaigned over the tall ridges of northern Georgia against Joseph E. Johnston's formidable Army of Tennessee and eventually

captured Atlanta is a question military historians continue to debate. Now Civil War historian Earl J. Hess has turned his considerable talent and skill to investigating the most critical and central aspect of the Atlanta Campaign. In *Fighting for Atlanta: Tactics, Terrain, and Trenches in the Civil War*, Hess more than delivers on his promise to demonstrate the relationship between tactical operations, the landscape, and fieldworks in the campaign. In describing the nascent dawn of trench warfare that culminated in World War I, Hess pays close attention to the engineers, pioneers, infantry, and bondsmen who constructed the trenches outside Atlanta, as well as the emotional, physical, and psychological impact on the men who lived, fought, and died in them.

Brilliant and extensive primary source research is the *sine qua non* of Hess's books, and this work is no exception. His thesis, skillfully argued and thoroughly supported, is that "the Federals used field fortifications more effectively than their opponents did because they learned how to use them for offensive purposes, not just defensive aims." (P. 4). Using the Official Records, personal letters, diaries, memoirs, historical photographs, and his own remarkable field research--including his own photographs of the remains of Confederate breastworks at Dug Gap and Rocky Face Ridge near Dalton, Georgia--the author has produced a readable but dense volume that will appeal to Civil War students and scholars but not to casual readers looking for an introduction to the grand tactics and strategy of the Atlanta Campaign.

Although parts of the book include technical language (for example, soldiers protect "the embrasure with a mantlet" [p. 224]), and other parts require the reader to recognize multiple actors (such as staff officers, engineers, and regimental, divisional, and corps commanders), Hess tells a number of compelling stories. For example, in an effort to dig a new position near the enemy on June 28, 1864, at Cheatham's Hill, Lieutenant Colonel James W. Langley of the 125th Illinois and a corporal crawled out under cover of darkness and dug a new line approximately twenty-two yards from the Confederate trench line. Langley and his compatriot used empty hardtack boxes as a temporary shelter until they could fill the boxes with dirt and use them as a shield against potential enemy rifle fire. Eventually, these two courageous men were joined by others who dug a trench long enough for the entire Regiment.

Additionally, during the Confederates' attempt to hold the Chattahoochee River Line in July 1864, Chief of Artillery Francis A. Shoup proposed to create "a system of works of a somewhat novel character" that would be large enough for the entire army but also capable of being held by only one division (p. 143). Four and one-half miles long, the line's key was a system of self-contained redoubts, dubbed Shoupades, to serve as strongpoints. In Hess's words, this was "a formidable obstacle to a frontal attack. It was one of the most impressive examples of Rebel engineering in the War" (p. 147). Sherman never tested the line with a frontal

assault.

Hess adroitly describes the "unprecedented" story of the Union Seventeenth Corps's defense of its line against the ferocious assault of William J. Hardee's Confederates at the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864, during which the Federals succeeded in "repelling the enemy in two opposite directions with a line in air" (p. 181). To do this, Union troops had to jump from one side of their defensive position to the other to repel at least five uncoordinated Confederate attacks. Furthermore, the author successfully argues that in no other engagement of the War did skirmishers play as critical a role in the outcome as they did in the Summer of 1864 in Northern Georgia. Samuel W. Price of the 21st Kentucky wrote, "That campaign might properly be termed the skirmishers' war" (p. 287).

The book is further enhanced by Hess's description of life in the trenches. He writes, "The intense heat of the Georgia summer made it difficult to nap during the day, and sometimes flies swarmed so thickly during the daylight hours that sleep was impossible for that reason as well" (pp. 234-35). Additionally, the photographs taken by George N. Barnard, the official photographer of the Military Division of the Mississippi in 1864, provide superb images of Confederate fortifications, and Hess's useful legends highlight the unique aspects of the construction.

The author also discusses, albeit to a limited extent, the role slaves played in building Confederate fortifications during the campaign. He notes that slaves worked on the Atlanta City Line and on Shoup's Line north of the Chattahoochee River. Yet at the time, Union Engineer Andrew Hickenlooper believed General Johnston used "an army of Negroes" to construct nearly all Confederate fortifications from Dalton to Smyrna Station, Southeast of Kennesaw Mountain. Hess suggests these "rumors" were true, although "they tended to be greatly exaggerated" (p. 309). At a time when people are thinking more about the past and racial reconciliation, Hess could have devoted more attention to the exploitation of slave labor during the campaign. This is a missed opportunity.

Because of the nature of the book, a glossary of technical terms, such as "palisades," "traverses," "chevaux-de-frise," and "tête de pont," would have been helpful. Also, the maps throughout the book are of limited use to the reader. For example, the map on page 274 showing the Federal defenses of Atlanta lacks a compass and scale, and the symbols and overlapping lines are confusing. Furthermore, the addition of maps depicting a broader view of the campaign and highlighting the extensive Union flanking movements would have been helpful.

The ineffective maps, however, do not substantially detract from the importance or quality of this book. Hess has written another gem. It will be essential reading for any Civil War enthusiast or scholar who wants to study what was arguably the most important and complex campaign of the entire War, the campaign that ensured Lincoln's re-election and arguably saved the Union.

**Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.**

Christmas Eve 1862 from Harper's Weekly

