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Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
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President's Message

Merry

Christmas

&

Happy

New Year

Vacant, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, November 9, 2022
DENNY'S RESTAURANT, 3520 AUBURN BOULEVARD, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 17:

MEMBERS – 17: James Juanitas, Vice President; George W. Foxworth, Treasurer; Carol Breiter, Harvey & Marsha J. Cain, Mark Carlson, Arnd Gartner, Ron Grove, Wayne & Nina Henley, Alejandro Lizarraga, Joe & Michelle Matalone, Eric Norman, Bernie Quinn, Program Director; Paul (MAL) & Patty Ruud.

GUESTS – 00: There were no guests.

1. The meeting was called to order by Vice President James Juanitas at 7:00 P.M. He asked people to consider running for office at the December 14, 2022 meeting. The office seekers are: President, **James Juanitas**; Vice President, **Carol Breiter**; Immediate Past President, **Paul Ruud**; Secretary, **Open**; Treasurer, **George W. Foxworth**; Program Director, **Bernie Quinn**; Members at Large, **Ron Grove & Joe Matalone**; & Editor, **Open**.
2. VP Juanitas also spoke about the success of the Fresno Civil War Conference in November 2022. He presented the Jerry Russell Civil War Preservation Memorial Award (2021) to George W. Foxworth. The Award is given at each West Coast Civil War Conference. Joseph & Michelle Matalone conducted the raffle.
3. The speaker was Bernie Quinn and his topic was the Battle of Little Round Top on the second day of The Gettysburg Battle. Mr. Quinn discussed many participants of the day and noted their ages.
4. They were: Colonel Strong Vincent, age 26, commanded the 3rd Brigade, 5th Corps, and died on July 7, 1863. (Colonel Vincent was promoted to Brigadier General on July 2, 1863.) Colonel William C. Oates, age 28, commanded the 15th Alabama Regiment, and survived the War. Brigadier General Stephen H. Weed, age 31, commanded a division in the 3rd Brigade, 5th Corps, and died on July 2, 1863. Colonel Patrick Henry O'Rourke, age 26, commanded the 140th New York Regiment, and died on July 2, 1863. 1st Lieutenant Charles E. Hazlett, age 25, 5th US Artillery, and died July 2, 1863. Brigadier General Gouverneur K. Warren, age 33, Chief Engineer Army of the Potomac, and survived the War. Colonel Joshua L. Chamberlain, age 35, commanded the 20th Maine Regiment, and survived the War. Major General Daniel L. Sickles, age 43, commanded the 3rd Corps, and survived the War.
5. Little Round Top became a major battle because Major General Sickles deviated from his orders by moving his III Corps to a position that left Little Round Top undefended. Brigadier General Warren recognized the tactical importance of the Hill and urgently sought Union troops to occupy it before the Confederates could. A staff officer sent by Warren encountered Vincent's Brigade nearby. Vincent, without consulting his superior officers, decided that his Brigade was in the ideal position to defend Little Round Top.
6. One of Vincent's Regiments, the 20th Maine, led by Colonel Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, received most of the fame for the defense of Little Round Top, but there is no doubt that the efforts and bravery of Vincent were instrumental in the Union victory. Vincent impressed upon Chamberlain the importance of his position on the Brigade's left flank.
7. Due to the determination of the 20th Maine, the 44th New York, the 140th New York Infantry Regiment, the 83rd Pennsylvania, the 16th Michigan Infantry, and 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters, the Union line held against the Confederate charge.
8. The next Board Meeting is Wednesday, December 14.

George W. Foxworth for Vacant, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on November 9th was \$4,441.19. The raffle brought in \$43.00. Thanks to Joseph & Michelle Matalone and members.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2022 & 2023

Date	Speaker	Topic
December 14th	"Nicholas Scivoletto"	"Civil War Quiz"
January 11th	"Arnd Gartner"	"Union Intelligence Services: Part 2"
February 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
March 8th	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
April 12	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"
May 10	"To Be Determined"	"To Be Determined"

2023 Membership

The 2023 membership renewal is due on January 1, 2023. The dues are \$30.00 and you can renew at a 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

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.

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

Dr. Basil Biggs

Basil Biggs was born on August 10, 1819 in Carroll County, Maryland. His mother, Elizabeth, was a free Black woman. Current DNA testing proves that his father, William Biggs, was Caucasian.



William Biggs died during his son's infancy. Elizabeth passed away when Basil was just four years-old. Somehow, she had managed to save \$400. Her will stipulated that the money was to be used for her son's education. Basil never received any of the money and was forced to work as an indentured servant. Finished with his servitude by the time he was 17, he moved to Baltimore where he began to work as a teamster, caring for and training horses. He seemed to have a magic touch when it came to animals.

Basil married Mary Jackson in 1843. By 1850, they owned \$300 worth of real estate. The Biggs' were to have seven children, with only one dying young, just before her thirteenth birthday. Maryland law forbade Blacks from learning how to read. Determined that his children would have an education, in 1858, Basil moved his family to a farm he purchased in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. In the small town, free Black children had been allowed to attend local schools since 1824.

The founders of Gettysburg, Samuel Gettys and his son, James, had been slave owners. Their slaves were freed upon their deaths and a small but thriving free Black community began to flourish in the Town. Black residents founded churches, opened businesses, and made their homes stops on the Underground Railroad, as did Basil Biggs. By 1860, 186 free Blacks lived in the Town. Basil soon became known to the community as Dr. Biggs because of his ability to successfully care for horses and other farm animals.

When War came to Gettysburg, anyone of "African descent" was in danger of being captured and sent South to be put into slavery. Biggs sent his family out of Town. He followed soon after on a borrowed horse. The Biggs family hid in the home of friends in Wrightsville until the area was safe from Confederates.

On their return to Gettysburg, they found their home destroyed. Their house was

the only African-American residence used as a hospital by Confederates during the Civil War. Forty five Confederate soldiers had been buried and left on their property. Battle debris littered the fields. Biggs filed a claim with the U.S. Government for losses of \$1,506...“eight cows, seven steer, ten hogs, six beds, sixteen chairs, ninety two acres of destroyed crops, ten crocks of apple butter, two sets of dishes and assorted jellies.” He was never paid.

Dead and rotting bodies of men and horses lay everywhere in the Town. Bodies buried in shallow ground were uncovered by rain and rooting animals. Animals and birds could be seen picking at the putrid remains. Bodies buried in sandy soil disintegrated slowly. Corpses had been tossed down wells by the enemy to pollute them.

A plan was soon devised to inter all the remains in a new National Cemetery. Basil Biggs added “Undertaker” to his résumé of veterinarian and farmer. He was subcontracted by Rufus Weaver to exhume the remains of 3,500 soldiers and rebury them. He would be paid \$1.25 for each burial. Basil gathered a crew of eight to ten laborers, all African Americans. They began their work on October 27, 1863 searching through all of Adams, Franklin, and York counties for bodies.

The burial details picked up government issued coffins at the Gettysburg railway terminal. The coffins were placed in wagons drawn by horse teams. Before a body was placed in its coffin, it was scrupulously searched for clues to its identity by the Supervisor of Exhumation, Rufus Weaver. Only then would the remains be placed in the coffin and taken to the Cemetery. One of the men that Basil Biggs exhumed was Amos Humiston, a former subject of our Grave of the Month.

What did Biggs and his men think as they gathered the bits and pieces that were left of what had once been young men?

We will never know “...whether they grew inured to the dead and learned to work mechanically, or whether the smell and sight of humans turned from flesh to dust exacted a lasting psychological toll...” By the time Lincoln spoke at the New Soldiers’ Cemetery on November 19, 1863, Biggs and his laborers had buried over 1,000 soldiers. Their work continued until the end of March, 1863, four months of grisly toil and gruesome discoveries. A total of 3,500 men were eventually buried by the team, many into unmarked graves. No soldiers from the United States Colored Troops fought at Gettysburg. Ironically, if they had, they would have been denied burial in the New Cemetery as it was strictly segregated. Only two Black soldiers lie in the National Cemetery, Charles Parker and Henry Gooden. They were buried there, grudgingly, many years later.

Using the money he had earned, Biggs purchased a larger farm. By 1867, he banded with Nelson Mathews and Thomas Griegsby to form The Sons of Good Will. Their purpose was to establish a burial ground for the veterans of the United States Colored Troops and the Black citizens of the Town. They purchased a half

acre of land for \$60, which they paid for in two installments. The Sons of Good Will Cemetery eventually merged with the cemeteries of the other Black churches in Town to become Lincoln Cemetery. Thirty Black Civil War soldiers from the United States Colored Troops are buried there. Additional land for the Cemetery was purchased a little at a time from the Black community, as the Cemetery lay in the African American section of the Town, on South Washington and Long Streets. When another “Colored” cemetery in Town closed in 1906 to make way for new houses, the bodies were moved to Lincoln Cemetery.

Around 1869, John Bachelder, a visiting Civil War artist, came across Basil Biggs cutting down trees on his property. Bachelder said that Biggs was unmoved by the historic value of the “Copse of Trees” he was about to destroy. Bachelder wrote, “I suggested to him that if he cut them, then he was only getting for them their value as rails, whereas, if he allowed them to stand to mark the spot (The High Water Mark), he would eventually get ten times as much for them.” Biggs heeded the advice. In 1881, he sold seven acres of his historic farmland to the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association for \$125 an acre. At the same time, he received an additional \$475.12 for the damage to his property caused by a new street that came to be named Hancock Avenue.



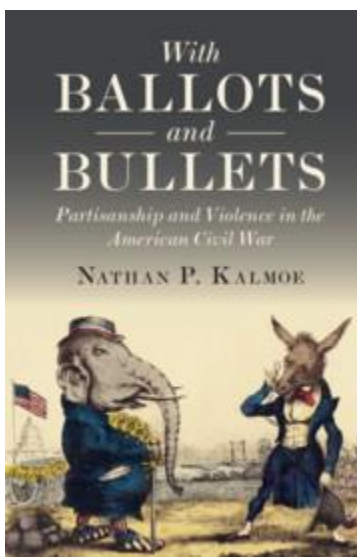
Basil Biggs died on June 6, 1906 and is buried in the Cemetery he helped to found. His wife and children are buried near him.

Submitted by Judith Breitstein

With Ballots and Bullets: Partisanship and Violence in the American Civil War

By Nathan P. Kalmoe. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2020. Illustrations, tables. 260 pp. \$29.99 (paper), ISBN 978-1-108-87050-4; \$99.99 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-108-83493-3.

Reviewed by Michael A. Catalano (Binghamton University). Published on H-Nationalism (March, 2021). Commissioned by Evan C. Rothera.



Nathan P. Kalmoe's *With Ballots and Bullets: Partisanship and Violence in the American Civil War* is a timely and pertinent analysis of what happens when one major party refuses to accept the outcome of a fair election: the real potential for violence along partisan lines. Kalmoe approaches the historical puzzle asking whether partisanship shaped elite and public outlook and action during the US Civil War and to what extent. He argues and finds that partisan politics played a significant role in the Union war effort, with divergent effects from Democrats and Republicans.

Kalmoe's book ultimately focuses on how political parties structure and organize politics for the elite and public, using the setting of the US Civil War as an exercise in how extensive partisanship motivates action and violence. Kalmoe argues that stable partisan identity of the public, coupled with party elite rhetoric regarding the War, explains much of the difference in how Democrats and Republicans acted during the War at the polls and in military service. In other words, "mass partisanship, guided by local and national leaders, was key to mobilizing and sustaining mass warfare and determining the War's political outcomes in elections" (p. 6). Specifically, Kalmoe finds that partisan splits between Democrats and Republicans occurred in support for the War, recruitment, desertion, and (least surprising) voting behavior. However, Kalmoe emphasizes the stability in partisan identity and activity, finding that surprisingly few Democrats and Republicans were swayed by national casualties and important War events, contrary to many historical narratives.

Kalmoe's greatest contribution with his book is the template it provides for scholars on how to bridge the expanses between disciplines to contribute smart and meaningful scholarship. While this book addresses the history and historiography of the US Civil War, it also resides in the growing area of political science known as American political development. American political development seeks to synthesize political science and American history in a way that identifies causal political processes to explain historical events. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, Kalmoe offers readers "broad inferences about the public," which complement historical approaches (p. 214). Furthermore, Kalmoe gives novel quantitative analysis of the important participation and sacrifice of African Americans and women for the Union War effort, two segments of the population that continue to receive a disproportionately low amount of attention from both history and the social sciences in the literatures of the US Civil War and American politics. In sum, I commend Kalmoe for a shining example of how working across disciplines builds stronger scholarship.

To achieve his end, Kalmoe did a masterful job of leveraging unique data identification, collection processes, and analytical methods from history and social science. He pulled his data from a wide range of sources, including the American Civil War Research Database for comprehensive Civil War soldier records, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) for county-level election data, the US Census, and era newspapers. The most labor intensive, and likely useful to a range of scholars, was his effort to geo-locate over one million Union soldiers by county to match county-level election data and his sample of twenty-four newspapers from the Union region to measure partisan communication. Social scientists and quantitative historians must often be creative (and always thoughtful) in their data collection processes from historical time periods. As indicated earlier, Kalmoe provides a useful template for thinking about important and accessible sources of data to run statistical analysis to test inferences on historical phenomena, which ought to draw due attention.

The true strength of Kalmoe's book lies within his theoretical argument to explain how, why, and to what extent partisanship shaped the public's perceptions and actions around the US Civil War. In brief, he explains that political parties can mitigate or foment violence in democracies due to the durable partisan identity that individuals develop and maintain through their lifetimes and the cues they take from trusted political elite. Kalmoe first defines partisan identity as "a social identity--an enduring, emotional attachment to a group with which we belong in which we see ourselves reflected, often strongly felt" (p. 31). Based on this identity, individuals looked to, most notably, similarly aligned local and national party leaders, who provided signals and cues on how to vote and support (or not support) the War. Republicans were unified in their support of the War because their fidelity to their country and party were aligned. However, Democrats had to contend with internal conflict of whether to support their country or their co-partisans in the rebellious states. This difference in alignment of allegiances created mixed signals for Democrats, which did not exist for Republicans, stunting Northern Democratic support for the War below the level of Republicans.

Kalmoe's book leaves important opportunities for historians and social scientists alike to explore further. First, regarding the development of partisan identity for new parties, Kalmoe offers an incomplete explanation of how voters adopted such strong, durable

bonds to the new Republican Party in just a period of six years. Political science literature related to partisan attachment emphasizes the long time period of socialization into a party by family, peers, events, etc. So how could these strong attachments form in the span of six years for the Republican Party? Kalmoe does try to approach this by arguing that political networks remained intact between the disintegration of the Whigs and coalescence with Free Soilers and Know-Nothings. Correlations show there is a relationship between aggregated voting patterns of pre-Republican voters from Whigs and Free Soilers. However, the evidence used does not go far enough to show the mechanisms that allowed for such strong partisan attachments to the fledgling Republican Party that lasted through the tumult of the War.

Next, Kalmoe emphasizes the role of Senator Stephen A. Douglas early in the War as he gave his full support behind the Union before his untimely death in the War's first several months, which aligns with early support for the War from most Democrats, which fell with time. Future efforts can build on Kalmoe's overall findings to look at how specific Northern Democrats' signals kept Northern Democrats loyal in the early part of the crisis and who among the elite were responsible for waning support. His findings suggest a conditional relationship that some Northern Democratic elite were willing to put country first and continued to support the War effort, by signaling to Democratic voters and joining the military. Why do we see some Northern Democrats align themselves with country over party, and vice versa? Both statistical inference and biographical work on Northern Democratic elite would help to illuminate this difference.

Kalmoe's book focuses on political parties in the Union, leaving us to wonder what similar dynamics may have occurred in the rebellious states? There was not monolithic support for the Confederacy in the rebellious states; the extent of this support has not yet been thoroughly examined particularly by social scientists. In particular, were former Southern Whigs similarly conflicted between fidelity to their fledgling Confederacy and their former Northern Whig colleagues. In other words, why and to what extent were former Southern Whigs willing to shrug off partisan loyalties with their Northern brethren and join with Southern Democrats?

Overall, *With Ballots and Bullets* is an excellent piece of scholarship that provides a template for the fusion of history and social science. Kalmoe builds on qualitative and historical accounts of the roles political parties played in the US Civil War with novel quantitative analysis and useful theory pulled from political science literature. He argues and finds that Democrats and Republicans diverged in their voting behavior and War support through the US Civil War and beyond, based largely on how the public reacted to cues and signals from trusted political elite. Republicans remained solidly committed to the War effort and Republican candidates. Meanwhile, Democrats were conflicted in supporting their country and their Southern Democratic colleagues, which created a divergence throughout the War in Democratic support for the Union. Future work by historians and social scientists would do well to build on Kalmoe's example of interdisciplinary work in merging the best qualities of disciplines to create a superior scholarly endeavor.

Submitted by Bruce A, Castleman, Ph.D

Christmas Eve 1862 from Harper's Weekly

