



Battle Cry

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

During the month of April we would like to enlist as many volunteers to help us with the 2012 Gibson Ranch Civil War education and reenactment event. This event is held every year at Gibson Ranch Regional Park which is particularly well suited for the Civil War Reenactment activities occurring on Friday, Saturday and Sunday May 18, 19 and 20. Friday is our special day where we typically have our volunteers guide groups of middle school students from one display venue to another. The children are truly regionally located in that they come from as far away as schools in the east of Placer County and west to Woodland, and include private as well as public schools. We also have a need for a few people on Saturday and Sunday when the event is open to the public.

Bob Hanley, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, March 14, 2012
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 33

MEMBERS – 30

Robert E. Hanley, President
Anne E. Peasley, Vice President
George W. Foxworth, Treasurer
James M. Armstrong
Roy Bishop
Ardith A. Cnota
Mitchell M. Cnota
James P. Cress
Jerry C. Cress
Donald J. Hayden, IPP
Scottie Hayden
Nina L. Henley, MAL
Wayne J. Henley, MAL
James Juanitas
Edie C. Keister

Dennis Kohlmann, PD
Lowell L. Lardie
Ken M. Lentz
Mary Lou Lentz
Kim Grace Long
Rick A. Peasley
Horst Penning
Paul G. Ruud
Nancy B. Samuelson
Robert Schroeder
Nicholas Scivoletto
Richard Sickert
Silver N. Williams
Maxine Wollen
John V. Zasso

GUESTS – 3

Brian Miller
Sherri Patton
John Rice

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. by President Bob Hanley.
2. Program Director Dennis Kohlmann presented a Civil War Sanitary Commission Quilt to Vice President Anne Peasley.
3. President Hanley led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. President Hanley mentioned a few books that are of interest: "1493," "Founding Fathers," "Killing Lincoln," and "Private Yankee Doodle."
5. President Hanley updated the 2012 West Coast Civil War Conference. The Conference is November 2 – 4 and the Conference location is Hotel Hanford in Costa Mesa, California.
6. President Hanley then introduced the speaker, Sherri Patton. Her topic was: Rice, Race, and Reconstruction: The Civil War and its Aftermath in the "Low Country." Professor Patton's lecture showed that rice defined the "low country" in South Carolina and Georgia. Lively questions and answers followed the presentation. Professor Patton is on a sabbatical and is headed to Turkey for a few months.
7. President Hanley thanked Professor Patton for the talk and gave her a bottle of wine.
8. President Hanley announced that the Gibson Ranch Civil War event is May 18 – 20, 2012 and the Schools' Day Program is Friday, May 18. Volunteers are requested to lead the children and staff the Round Table booth on Saturday and Sunday.
9. John Zasso sold additional raffle tickets and read the numbers.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

9. George W. Foxworth, Treasurer, gave tax reports for 2011. Federal and State tax returns were prepared and submitted in March 2012 to the Internal Revenue Service and California Department of Justice.
10. Program Director Dennis Kohlmann updated the 2012 monthly speakers.
11. Getting a new Secretary was discussed with no solutions at this time.
12. The Board of Directors' meeting was adjourned at 8:38PM.

George W. Foxworth, Acting Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance following the March 14, 2012 meeting was \$2,146.58. Thanks to John Zasso, other members, and guests, the raffle brought in \$75.00. **George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**



BOOK REVIEW



The CSS Arkansas: A Confederate Ironclad on Western Waters

By Myron J. Smith Jr

Illustrated, photos, maps, notes, bibliography, index, 360 pp., 2011, McFarland, www.mcfarland-pub.com, \$45 softcover.

(December 2011 Civil War News)

<http://www.civilwarnews.com/reviews/2011br/dec/cssarkansas-smith-b121109.html>

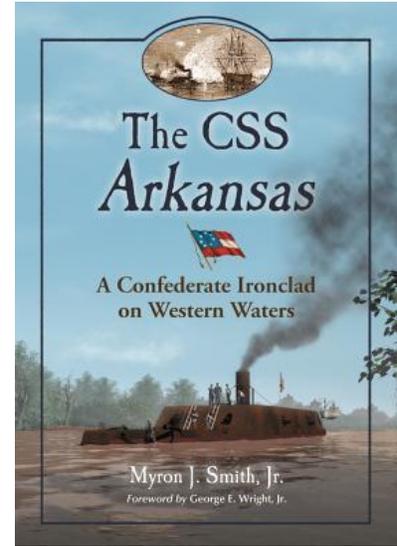
Over the past few years, Myron Smith of Tusculum College in Tennessee has written a series of books about the “brown water navy” on the inland waterways during the Civil War. These have greatly added to our knowledge of this very important and largely overlooked sector of the conflict.

He has now written *The CSS Arkansas*, which provides an account of the truly remarkable career of a Confederate ironclad. This vessel, in just a total of 23 days of active service, had a significant effect on the Vicksburg Campaign. As one Union veteran recalled in 1900, “I know of no more interesting event of the War than the career of the Confederate ram *Arkansas* ...”

Construction of the *Arkansas* and its sister ship, the *CSS Tennessee*, began in Memphis in the summer of 1861, but manpower and equipment shortages caused innumerable delays. The capture of Island No. 10 in April 1862 posed a threat to Memphis. The *Tennessee* was destroyed to prevent its capture, and the unfinished *Arkansas* was moved to the Yazoo River.

Many of the vessel’s details are unknown. Its sides were covered with railroad iron and were perpendicular, not sloped as on other Southern ironclads. The color of paint, exact dimensions and details of boilers and engines are obscure. It had screw propellers, and the failure of one of the engines, a frequent occurrence, caused the vessel to steam in circles.

Fortunately for the South, Isaac N. Brown, an extremely able officer and veteran of 27 years in the prewar U.S. Navy, was appointed commander. He was tireless in completing the ironclad. On July 15, 1862, the boat began its trip to Vicksburg. After a running fight with three Union vessels on the Yazoo, she emerged into the Mississippi and sailed right through the middle of the combined squadrons of Charles Davis and David Farragut.



The Union vessels were taken completely by surprise with their steam down to conserve fuel. In spite of many design and equipment deficiencies, the *Arkansas* was a formidable threat, especially to Farragut’s ocean-going wooden warships. She received a pounding from the Northern guns but “gave as good as she got” during the 30-minute passage.

Heavily damaged and suffering many casualties, the *Arkansas* tied up at Vicksburg, where she was unsuccessfully attacked the following day by Farragut’s ships. Her achievement was celebrated throughout the South, and bitter recriminations arose between the on-scene navy officers and Washington authorities.

Before repairs could be completed, Gen. Earl Van Dorn ordered the ironclad to support Gen. John Breckinridge’s attack on Baton Rouge. After repeated engine failures, and in sight of Federal warships, the *Arkansas* was set on fire and abandoned by her crew just north of Baton Rouge.

Smith provides a well-written and thoroughly engrossing account of this extraordinary vessel, as well as background information on naval strategy in the river war and the 1862 attempt to capture Vicksburg. He supplies a vivid picture of the horrendous difficulties facing naval personnel: sub-tropical heat, disease-carrying mosquitoes, impure water and shortages of many supplies and food.

This is a truly outstanding book, essential to any student of naval warfare, the brown water navy or the Vicksburg campaign. It highlights the essential role played by the Union and Confederate navies on the Yazoo and Mississippi Rivers in 1862.

Reviewer: Patrick E. Purcell

Patrick E. Purcell, a graduate of Northeastern University, is a retired railroad manager. He is a former president of the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table in Philadelphia and was on the Board of Governors of the Civil War Library and Museum in Philadelphia.



CSS Alabama vs. USS Kearsarge Cherbourg 1864

By Mark Lardas

(03/29/12 Civil War News)

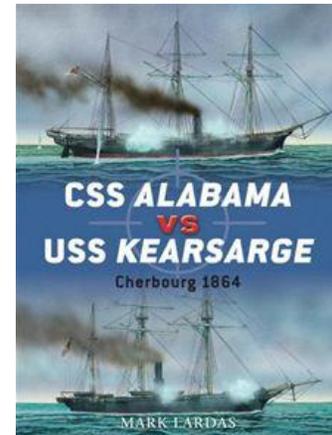
<http://www.civilwarnews.com/reviews/2012br/april/cssal-lardas-bw032912.html>

This is one of the Osprey Duel “Engage the Enemy” series featuring ship-to-ship duels. Although the title of this volume states that it is about the famous duel off Cherbourg in 1864, it also discusses the other two Civil War ship-to-ship duels, the CSS Alabama and the USS Hatteras off Galveston, Texas, in 1863 and the CSS Florida and the USS Wachusett in the neutral harbor of Bahia, Brazil, in 1864.

The volume features chapters entitled Design and Development; The Strategic Situation; Technical Specifications; The Combatants; Combat; Statistics and Analysis; and Aftermath.

Areas of particular interest are the discussion of the Deerhound controversy and a table analyzing the

number of shots fired vs. hits and the resultant hits percentage for the three actions. The Deerhound was a British yacht that observed the action between the Alabama and the Kearsarge.



As the Alabama was sinking, it rescued a number of Alabama crewman, including Capt. Raphael Semmes and executive officer John McIntosh Kell, and took them to England rather than leaving them to be rescued by the U.S. Navy and possibly tried for piracy.

The hit table shows that the Alabama fired almost twice as many shots as the Kearsarge but the total number of hits were just about the same.

The sternpost hit on the Kearsarge by a defective shell from the Alabama and what might have happened had it exploded and destroyed the Kearsarge’s steering are also discussed.

This is a typical Osprey, well-written, very well-illustrated book with some great color plates. Civil War naval buffs will find some surprising, generally minor, historical inaccuracies and omissions. Still it is highly recommended for those who want to find out more about the Civil War on the high seas or desire a gift for young adult readers with an interest in history.

Reviewer: Joseph A. Derie

Joseph A. Derie is a VMI graduate and a long time Civil War buff and military book reviewer. A retired Coast Guard officer and licensed officer of the Merchant Marine, he is a Certified Marine Investigator and marine surveyor.



Blue & Gray Navies: The Civil War

Afloat

By Spencer C. Tucker

(January 2011 *Civil War News*)

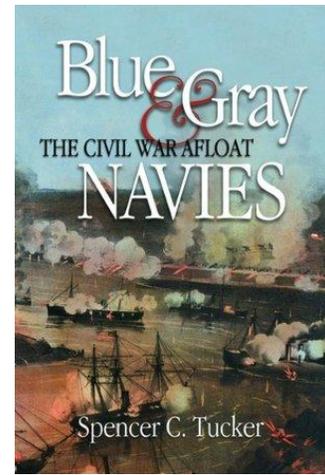
Illustrations, maps, glossary, notes, selected bibliography, index, 426 pp., 2006, Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, \$34.95.

It's been a number of years since publication of a comprehensive general history of the Civil War at sea and on the rivers. There have been a number of excellent specialized histories about specific Civil War naval personalities, vessels and campaigns but an overall lack of a recent volume to tie things together. This omission has been rectified by prolific naval and military historian Spencer C. Tucker, who has turned his literary and research skills to doing just that. Beginning with a short history of the U.S. Navy, including where it was and how it got there at the beginning of the Civil War, the volume continues with chapters on the organization and personnel of the U.S. and Confederate navies; their resources, warships and naval ordnance; and the strategies of the competing navies.

Chapters on the campaigns come next, starting with the early blockade attempts and the early riverine warfare on the Western waters. There are chapters on the epic combat of the *Monitor* and the *Virginia*, New Orleans, Vicksburg, Charleston, torpedoes (called mines today), submarines, the Red River Campaign, commerce raiders, and end-of-war coastal operations at Ft. Fisher and Wilmington.

The concluding chapter is an excellent recapitulation of the Civil War at sea and the contributions of the opposing navies. It also puts U.S. seapower in perspective in light of the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Although the U.S. Navy is often a forgotten service in Civil War history, there is no doubt it shortened the war.

Although never completely effective, the blockade was something the South couldn't recover from. What could have been done better is also discussed. The lack of a joint planning mechanism for the army and navy was not rectified until World War II. The might-have-been of a strategic vision to put large numbers of Union troops ashore in North Carolina, combined with an overland drive from Washington D.C. (a Peninsula Campaign over greater distances), is worth pondering.



Blue & Gray Navies: The Civil War Afloat is an excellent general history of the Civil War afloat. While there is little new here, it is a great retelling of an old story. It will be of special interest to those who want to know more about the subject (there is a glossary for landlubbers) and those who want another look at it. It is highly recommended.

Reviewer: Joseph A. Derie

Joseph A. Derie is a VMI graduate and a long time Civil War buff and military book reviewer. A retired Coast Guard officer and licensed officer of the Merchant Marine, he is a Certified Marine Investigator and marine surveyor.



Did You Know?

A "Squibb Pannier" was a compact medical chest. Edward Robinson Squibb (1819-1900) was a Navy doctor who saw the need to improve the quality of medicines available on ships during the Mexican War. In 1858 he founded his own pharmaceutical laboratory to produce uniform, high-quality medicines. Squibb made these medicines available to the Union Army during the Civil War with the invention of the Squibb pannier which was filled with 50 medicines to enable doctors to treat casualties on the battlefield. It sold for about \$100, and included ether, chloroform, quinine, whiskey, and herbal treatments for dysentery. The chest included a chart glued to the inside lid which showed where each of the numbered medicines was located in the box.



GIBSON RANCH CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT

May 19th and 20th, 2012!

Come participate in the 1860's: tour Civilian, Yankee and Confederate Camps, enjoy music, food, battle re-enactments (complete with cannon fire), interact with living history representatives.



EDUCATIONAL, ENLIGHTENING, ENTERTAINING!!!

May 18th, 2012

Friday May, 18th is our **School Program** which includes 90 minutes of first person commentary from our NCWA volunteer re-enactors.

Students rotate through five informational stations that may include artillery, medical, infantry, generals, civilian or cavalry.

Reservation times are: 9:30 or 11:00
Program open to fifth grade through high school.

E-mail dawn@gibson-ranch.com or call 916-991-7592 to reserve your school. **RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. A credit card number will be required at time of reservation. Final payment is due by April 20, 2012.**

\$6.00 per person (1 adult per 20 students at no cost)

Registration beginning January 1, 2012. This program is limited to one date per year only, and available to 1125 area students, therefore it will fill quickly on a first come first served basis.

http://gibson-ranch.com/civil_war.htm