



**Volume 54, No 6
June, 2014**

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Battle Cry

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

Greetings Fellow SCWRT Members:

While I watched last month's presentation of the magnificent Battle of Gettysburg re-enactment, I was struck by how many of our members have had similar travel experiences. Because our monthly meetings are so tightly scheduled, we don't have enough time to "visit" with one another and share memorable trips to the group at large. We all would appreciate hearing about Civil War Adventures. I would like to interview willing members and put a short write up in our newsletter. This way we can benefit from inside information on accommodations, what to skip, and what not to miss. Any volunteers, fellow wayfarers?

This month we have our own Donald Hayden presenting Battlefield Medicine. As you know, I always attempt a brief biography of the current speaker. I approached Don about this and he told me he'd get back to me. When next I saw him, he handed me his Curriculum Vitae. All I can say is, "WOW!" Don Hayden hails from the arctic Great Lakes region of the United States and is brilliantly educated; graduating with High Honors in everything he's attempted academically, culminating in a Doctor of Medicine.

His military history coincides with his medical career and he served as a medical officer in the United States Navy. All this while married to the lovely Scottie, and having SEVEN children. Don does nothing halfway. He has years of private practice and has served on more Boards of Directors than I can count. On top of all that, he's an avid lover and participant in live theatre.

His interest in the Civil War sparked after his retirement when he traveled to Civil War historical sites. He's been a member of the SCWRT since 1999 and claims he's loved our group from the very first meeting. Don has made many friends and has been passionate about our Round Table's continued success. He's been President for a total of five years! I'm certain that we are in for a very informative evening, and in Don's inimitable style, a very entertaining one.

We are having the best of luck and good will with our conference donations. Please keep spreading the word!

Cheers,

Anne Peasley, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, May 14, 2014
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 32

MEMBERS – 26: Anne M. Peasley, President; Donald J. Hayden, Vice President; Paul Ruud, Secretary; Silver Williams, Program Director; James M. Armstrong, George Beitzel, Joan Beitzel, Roy Bishop, Fred Bohmfalk, Alan Geiken, John Greer, Robert E. Hanley, IPP; Jim Harper, Scottie Hayden, Jim Juanitas, Dennis Kohlmann, Garda Kohlmann, Barbara Leone, Rick A. Peasley, John Rice, Nancy Samuelson, Roxanne E. Spizzirri, Susan Williams, Maxine Wollen, John V. Zasso, Vivian Zasso

GUESTS – 6: Ester Boeck, Vicki Contente, Bob Hankey, Martha Hanley, Chris Osborn, Lawrence Spizzirri

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Anne Peasley.
2. President Peasley led the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced guests.
3. President Peasley thanked the membership for its support of the Gibson Ranch re-enactment, particularly the Friday student educational opportunity. She commented on the inevitable glitches and indicated she is talking to the organizers in the hope of correcting those for next year.
4. President Peasley reminded the audience to contribute raffle prizes for the November conference. She then introduced members Garda and Dennis Kohlmann who displayed the Civil War flag that Garda has made for the Conference raffle. Garda's flag will be in a separate raffle at the conference – indeed if you are not able to attend the conference, you will be able to purchase a raffle ticket at the last regular meeting before the conference.
5. Jim Harper thanked members for their assistance in getting him reoriented to Gibson Ranch student docent duties.
6. John Greer was introduced to present the evening's program, "The 150th Anniversary re-enactment of the Battle of Gettysburg. John gave a brief introduction and then showed the beginning portion of the DVD covering the three day event. The length of the DVD prevented watching it in its entirety. It would have shown us re-enactments of the major clashes of the three day battle.
 - A. John had driven to Gettysburg and parked his camper in a designated location with dozens of fellow campers. The event was well attended – some 300,000 visitors over three days.
 - B There were an estimated 10,000 re-enactors, 400 horses, and 150 cannons. There were two different re-enactments - John attended the Blue-Gray Alliance re-enactment.
 - C. The timing for John's presentation could not have been better. The local Gibson Ranch re-enactment had just happened the previous weekend. He drew some comparisons – comments at Gibson Ranch were heard that the 7 cannons were awfully noisy – try the sound of 150 at Gettysburg.
 - D The re-enactments were not held on the actual battlefields, but rather on appropriate fields west of the town of Gettysburg.
 - E The re-enactment featured all of the shopping opportunities imaginable. There were also period dancers, Zouaves in uniform, food to include hard tack to mention some high lights.
 - F. John was clearly impressed with the enormity of the re-enactment – his recommendation to all included that it was a once in a life time experience.
7. President Peasley thanked John with words and wine for both entertaining and inspiring his audience.
8. John Zasso sold additional raffle tickets and read the lucky numbers.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM. The June board meeting will be Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 10 AM, at Brookfield's Restaurant. Come one, come all!

Paul Ruud, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance following the May 14, 2014 meeting was \$4,233.30. Thanks to John Zasso, other members, and guests, the raffle brought in \$58.00.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2014 and 2015		
Date	Speaker	Topic
June 11th	Don Hayden	"Battlefield Medicine"
July 9th	Ted Savas	"22 Days of Terror: CSS Arkansas on the Mississippi River"
August 13th	Nicholas Scivoletto	"General Joseph E. Johnston"
September 10th	Dennis Kohlmann	"The Blockade"
October 8th	Tad Smith	"The Coins and Currency of the Confederacy"
November 12th	Tom Lubas	"Chicago, That Toddlin Civil War Town"
December 10th	Tim & Ginny Karlberg	"Captain John Groetsch"
January 14 th	Erin McCabe	"Women Who Fought in the Civil War"
February 11th	Nancy Samuelson	"Nathan Bedford Forrest"
March 11th	George Beitzel	"Flight To Oblivion"
April 8th	Richard Sickert	To Be Determined
May 13th	To Be Determined	To Be Determined

NEWSLETTER CIVIL WAR ARTICLES

Civil War articles/book reviews are welcome. The submission deadline is the 1st of each month for that month's Battle Cry. 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.



C.S.S. Alabama **versus** ***U.S.S. Kearsarge***

The *USS Kearsarge* sank
the *CSS Alabama* on June 19,

1864, after a 70-minute battle off the coast of France. Since its construction in England and furtive purchase by the Confederacy in August 1861, the *Alabama* had: sailed 75,000 miles as a “raider” (some say “pirate”); been at sea 534 of her 657 days; captured or sank 69 unarmed merchant vessels valued at \$6.5 million; taken 2,000 prisoners; never visited a North American port; fought only one other battle against an armed opponent. That battle was with the antiquated, converted gunboat *U.S.S. Hatteras*, sunk near Galveston on January 11, 1863. This was an enviable record for a pirate ship, but not so for a war ship.

The *Alabama* (Captain Semmes) entered the Cherbourg harbor on June 11 for repairs and recoaling. Hearing of this, the *Kearsarge* (Captain Winslow) blockaded the harbor; whereupon Semmes announced that he would fight his way out! The reasons for his decision to do battle are unclear, however, since the odds were rather good that the rebel vessel could easily have run out of the harbor on a dark and foggy night without an encounter. Was his act of bravado due to a troubled conscience, or was it for résumé enhancement purposes?

The table of comparison and photos show the many similarities between the two ships, but there were two significant differences unknown to Semmes at the time. The federal ship was retrofitted with chain link armor, and it had heavier guns. *Kearsarge*’s 11-inch Dahlgren smooth bore cannons could fire a 190-pound ball with awesome power and reasonable accuracy over the 700 to 400 yard range at which the battle was fought. Two other reasons that may also have contributed to the one-sidedness of the battle were the very poor marksmanship of the *Alabama*’s international crew (though officered by Americans), as measured by number of shots fired (370) versus hits (38) and the possibly related gunpowder quality problems.

Semmes’ later stated that the powder problems might have resulted from the ships’

seawater-to-freshwater distillation device that vented some steam into the adjacent powder magazine. In other words, “He didn’t keep his powder dry.” Or perhaps it was because his powder had deteriorated over time for lack of use, since not much would have been needed to capture and burn unarmed ships.

The *Kearsarge*, assisted by two harbor pilot boats, rescued most of the *Alabama*’s surviving crewmembers and a few officers; while Semmes, most officers and a few crewmembers were rescued by the *Deerhound*, a private English steam yacht which carried them directly to England and permitting their escape. This latter act created considerable irate from Captain Winslow.

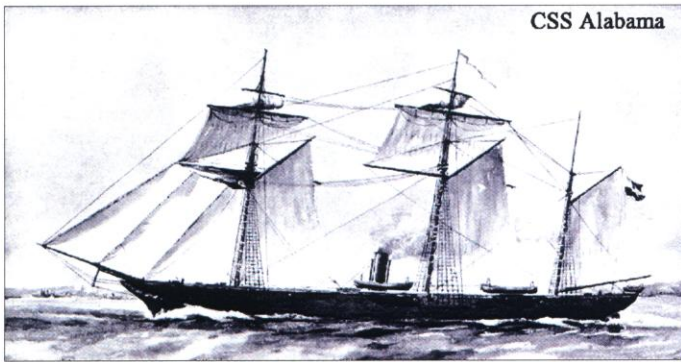
The Lincoln administration considered the *Kearsarge*’s triumph a sweet moral and political victory over the British, who had built and armed the *Alabama*, as well as the Confederacy. Captain Winslow was voted the “Thanks of Congress” and was promoted to Commodore. He retired as Rear Admiral in 1873.

Captain Semmes also returned as a hero, notwithstanding that he had lost his ship. He was promoted to Rear Admiral and in February 1865 was given command of the CSA James River Squadron, consisting of the iron clads *Virginia II*, *Fredericksburg*, and *Richmond*, plus escort gunboats. On the morning of April 3, upon the evacuation of the city of Richmond, he ordered the iron clads then in the vicinity of Drewry’s Bluff eight miles down river to be blown up. Forming their crews as infantry units he joined Johnston’s army in North Carolina. Upon surrendering, he signed his parole as Rear Admiral and Brigadier General, his final opportunity for résumé embellishment. Also, perhaps, not to have ended up at the end of a rope as a pirate!

In December 1865, Raphael Semmes was imprisoned while Union authorities considered charging him with treason and piracy. This was not done, however, and he was released in April 1866. He became a lawyer, with presumed expertise in maritime law!

Bob Williams: 3-07-03 rev. 4-17-14

CSS Alabama versus USS Kearsarge Graphics Page



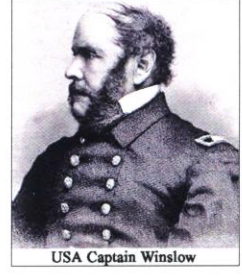
CSS Alabama



USS Kearsarge



CSA Captain Semmes



USA Captain Winslow

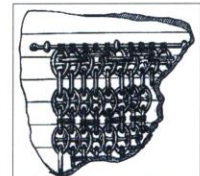
U.S.S. Kearsarge and C.S.S. Alabama

A Comparison

Item	Kearsarge	Alabama
Type:	Steam Sloop	Steam Sloop
Built:	Portsmouth, Me. 1861	Liverpool, U.K. 1862
Tonnage:	1031	1050
Length, overall, ft.:	232	220
Length, at water line, ft.:	199	210
Beam, ft.:	33	32
Depth, ft.:	16½	17
Draft, ft.:	14	14
Engines, two each at:	400 h p	300 h p.
Maximum speed, knots:	13	10
Armament:	7 guns: 2-11in Dahlgren pivots, 1-30pdr rifle, 4-32pdr S.B	8 guns: 1-68pdr pivot, 1-100pdr rifle pivot, 6-32pdr S.B.
A armor:	Iron chain sheets	None
Crew:	19 officers, 144 men	25 officers, 148 men
Captan:	John Winslow	Raphael Semmes
Executive Officer:	James Thornton	John Kell
Killed and wounded:	3w	26k, 21w
Shots fired: 6-19-1864	173	370

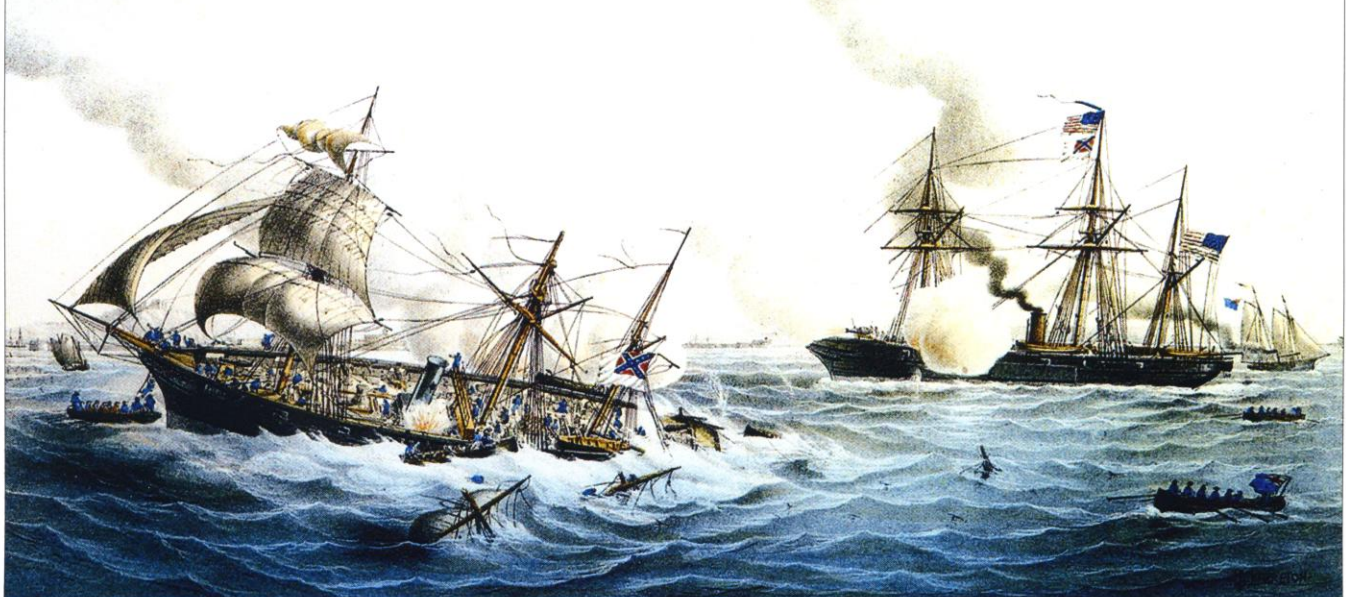
References: Navy OR's SIV3, S2V1, Battles and Leaders V4

R.A Williams 3-01-03



Chain Armor Type
Used on USS Kearsarge

CSS Alabama and USS Kearsarge off the Cherbourg Coast 19 June 1864





The Siege and Surrender of Fort Pulaski

Fort Pulaski, located near the mouth of the Savannah River, was one of the 29 masonry forts in the so-called “Third System” of seacoast defense works that were built during the 1820 to 1860 period. These forts extended from Maine to California. Pulaski’s nearest neighbor is the more famous Fort Sumter, Charleston: and the one closest to us is Fort Point, San Francisco. Similar in design to Sumter, this Fort had but one rather than two casemate tiers. When constructed, these impressive granite and brick structures were considered to be impregnable, but that thinking did not realize the advent of rifled artillery.

Two weeks before Georgia succeeded, the State Militia seized Fort Pulaski from the small federal caretaker force then occupying the Fort. Under Confederate control about 50 smooth bore artillery pieces were installed, although the Fort had a design capacity for 150 guns in its single tier casemates and barbette mounts. The Fort was held by the rebel forces from early January 1861 until 11 April 1862. During the latter portion of this period, eleven artillery batteries, containing 36 pieces, were built by the Federals on Tybee Island; a distance of one to two miles east south east of Cockspur Island, the location of Fort Pulaski.

Construction of the federal gun emplacements was under the supervision of Corps of Engineers Captain Quincy Gillmore, assisted by Lieutenants John H. Wilson, Horace Porter, and Patrick O’Rorke. Federal Department Commanders during the field artillery placement, and during the siege operations were BG Thomas Sherman and MG David Hunter, respectively. Of the 36 artillery pieces; nineteen were 10- and 13- inch siege mortars, seven were 8- and 10-inch Columbiad smooth bores, and ten were Parrott and James

Rifles (five each of varying sizes; 30 pdr. Parrott; and 48, 64, and 84 pdr. James Rifles).

The siege began the morning of 10 April, after the Fort’s refusal to surrender. The mortars and smooth bores did extensive superficial damage, including the dismounting of several Fort guns. However, it was the rifled guns that effectively breached the 7½ foot thick southeast salient wall (nearest to camera in the aerial picture; the other photo shows a close-up of the wall). The wall opening created a clear shot path diagonally across the parade ground to the Fort’s magazines in the northwest salient adjacent to the gorge wall. This latter situation was all that was needed to encourage Fort Commander Colonel Charles Olmstead to surrender his 380-man force to Captain Gillmore the next day.

The battle for Fort Pulaski was the first action of rifled guns against masonry forts. The intended initial result was, of course, the closing of the Port of Savannah to blockade runners for the remainder of the Rebellion. The long-term implication was, however, that the Nation’s seacoast defense system had become obsolete, and would require significant and costly modifications. In effect, this one event spelled an end to the style of fortification represented by the “Third System” then only recently completed.

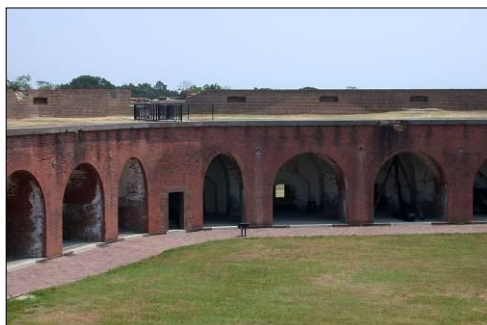
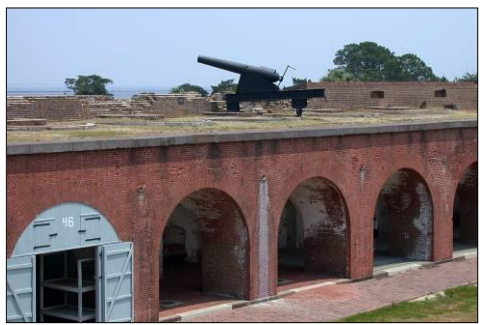
Although badly damaged during the Rebellion and generally abandoned thereafter, Fort Pulaski has gradually been restored, largely during the 1930’s by PWA funds and CCC labor. It became a National Historical Monument in 1924, and is one of the many great historical (and enjoyable) sites to visit in the Savannah, Georgia area.

References:

OR’s Vol. VI Pt. 15; Battles & Leaders: Vol. II; Quincy Gilmore After Action Report 1862

R. A. Williams; 7-2003, rev. 5-2014

Coastal Fortifications of the Third System, 1816 - 1868
Fort Pulaski Photo Group A
Savannah, Georgia





2014 West Coast Civil War Conference

Sponsored by Sacramento Civil War Round Table

1864

November 7 - 9, 2014, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sacramento

Our Speakers are:

Craig L. Symonds: Joined the United States Naval Academy faculty in 1976. He served as chairman of the history department in 1988-1992 and was appointed professor emeritus on his retirement.

Harold Holzer: Is a leading national authority on Abraham Lincoln and the political culture of the Civil War. A writer, lecturer, frequent television guest, and chairman of The Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation.

Thomas Cartwright: Is a leading authority and author on the Battle of Franklin who conducted tours of Western Theater battlefields for 20 years. Appeared on many TV shows and is a frequent CWRT speaker.

Jim Stanbery: Professor of Political Science and History at Los Angeles Harbor College, speaker at The West Coast Civil War Conference for more than twenty years.

Theodore Savas: Is an attorney, adjunct college instructor, award-winning author, partner and managing director of Savas Beatie LLC. He specializes in military history and the American Civil War.

The conference cost is \$195 per person which includes Friday dinner, Saturday lunch and dinner, as well as all sessions. A full breakfast buffet is included for guests staying at the hotel.

Partial day attendance: Friday only \$50, Saturday only \$95, Saturday dinner only \$50, Sunday only \$50. There will be a no-host bar set-up Friday and Saturday evenings for your enjoyment before dinner.

For more information, contact Paul Ruud at 530-886-8806 or by contacting www.sacramentocwrt.com where information and registration forms will be available.

Room reservations are available by calling Crowne Plaza directly 877-270-1393 or www.crowneplaza.com
Crowne Plaza Hotel has rooms set aside for us at \$99 per night, plus tax. Please mention the conference.

Please print this page, fill it out, and return the form with your check for your registration. Make checks payable to:

Sacramento CWRT and mail to: George W. Foxworth, 9463 Salishan Court, Sacramento, CA 95826-5233.

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