

# Battle Cry



**Vol. 43 No. 8 August 2003 Newsletter of Sacramento Civil War Round Table**

## Presidents Message:

I was very impressed with Don Hayden's presentation on Lew Wallace. Once again one of our own members presented an outstanding talk on a pertinent topic.

This topic got me thinking about a host of people North and South who were present at the start of the civil war but who disappear along the way. Since I have been reading the Time-Life book on Gettysburg I won in last months raffle, I got to thinking about Gen. Alfred Pleasonton. One thing I learned about him was Pleasonton CA was named after him by a friend from the Mexican War. He was a West Point Graduate from the class of 1844. He fought in the Mexican War and was assigned to Utah when the Civil War broke out. In 1862 he was McClellan chief of cavalry. His biggest problems were his bragging about the exploits of the cavalry and his habit of beginning way behind the lines when the cavalry was fighting. One example is that his troops fought a minor battle around Chancellorsville yet he claimed his troopers stopped Stonewall Jackson's

men and in fact were the ones who shot Stonewall!

Pleasanton was a very good administrator, like Gen. Hooker. Pleasanton reorganized the Calvary into three brigades and got it the equipment it needed. He should get credit for the battle of Brandy Station, not for what was accomplished, but for the fact that the Northern cavalry was now the equal of JEB Stewart's cavalry. Indeed, never again was the Union cavalry driven from a battle field again. On the 3rd day of the Battle of Gettysburg a smaller force of Union Cavalry drove off the larger Confederate force thus preventing Stewart from wreaking havoc on the Union rear.

Gen. Pleasanton was finally relieved by Gen. Grant and replaced by Gen. Phil Sheridan, a man with no cavalry experience. He spent the rest of the war out West. The rest is history.

I am looking forward to this months presentation by Helen Trimpi on "Harvard's Contribution to the Civil War." For all the time I have spent studying the Civil War, the only colleges that come to mind are West Point and Bowdoin.

**MINUTES**  
**SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**  
**WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2003**

Sizzler Restaurant, 2030 Fulton Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95825-1908

**ATTENDANCE-32**

**MEMBERS-31**

Dennis Kohlmann, Pres.  
Kit Knight, Vice Pres. H.  
George Foxworth, Treas.  
Dudley Albrecht  
George Beitzel  
Joan Beitzel  
Roy Bishop  
Carol Breiter  
Steve Breiter  
Ardith Cnota  
Mitch Cnota

Alan Geiken  
Jim Harper  
Claire Hayden  
Don Hayden  
Janet Junell  
Robert Junell  
Arthur Knight  
Mary Lentz  
Virginia Martin  
Leslie Michaels

Jim Middleton  
Mark Hayden  
Betty Mitchell  
Maurice Mitchell  
Blair Palmer  
Andrew Sneeringer  
Nancy Swanson  
Ted Swanson  
James Taff  
Susan Williams  
Maxine Wollen

**GUESTS-1**

1. The meeting was called to order by President Dennis Kohlmann who reviewed this day in Civil War history. New members and guests were introduced and welcomed.
2. Program—Don Hayden, SCWRT Member, presented a program on General Lew Wallace. SCWRT Member Hayden presented an excellent exposition on the life of General Wallace, before, during, and after the Civil War. During the Battle of Shiloh, Wallace was tardy on the first day of battle. As a result, he was offered as a scapegoat for the near-disaster. Later in the War, General Wallace met General Jubal Early's 1864 drive on Washinton at Monocacy. At the end of the War, General Wallace sat on the court-martial that tried President Lincoln's conspirators and presided over the court that sent Andersonville Chief Henry Wirz to the gallows. After the War, Wallace became a Major General in the Mexican Army until the venture failed. Later, he was governor of the New Mexico Territory and a diplomat to Turkey. He also became a prolific writer. He is best remembered for "Ben Hur, A Tale of the Christ"(1880), one of the most popular novels of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two other novels were also popular. One is "The Fair God, A Tale of the Conquest of Mexico" (1873). The other is "The Prince of India, Why Constantinople Fell" (1893). An active and lively question and answer period followed. Thank you Member Hayden for an excellent view of General Lew Wallace.
3. Committee/Activity Reports
  - a. Minutes of April 2003 approved.
  - b. The next meeting is August 27, 2003. The speaker will be Helen P. Trimpi and the topic is "Harvard Grads in the Civil War, North and South."
  - c. SCWRT Members John and Bev Passerello arrive at Gettysburg and find that the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gettysburg is postponed until August due to the wet Summer.
  - d. Monthly raffle.
4. Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

*George W. Foxworth,*  
Acting Secretary

### **Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance following the meeting of July 30, 2003 was \$1,922.05.

Thanks to members and guests, the raffle brought in \$58.

*George W. Foxworth,*  
Treasurer

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### **"Cornerstone Speech" Alexander Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy Savannah, Georgia March 21, 1861**

...The new Constitution has put at rest forever the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institutions—African slavery as it exists among us—the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson, in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the "rock upon which the old Union would split." He was right. What was conjecture with him, is now a realized fact. But whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which that rock stood and stands, may be doubted. The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old Constitution were, that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally and politically. It was an evil they knew not well how to deal with; but the general opinion of the men of that day was that, somehow or other, in the order of

Providence, the institution would be evanescent and pass away. This idea, though not incorporated in the Constitution, was the prevailing idea at the time. The Constitution, it is true, secured every essential guarantee to the institution while it should last, and hence no argument can be justly used against the constitutional guarantees thus secured, because of the common sentiment of the day. Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They vested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation, and the idea of a Government built upon it—when the "storm came and the wind blew, it fell.

Our new Government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race is his natural and moral condition. This, our new Government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth....

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What do you think Stephens thought was the cause of the Civil War? This speech was made 1½ years before the Emancipation Proclamation. He states very clearly the basis of the Confederacy. The North may have been fighting to restore the Union but Stephens knew the South was fighting to defend slavery.

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*The Civil War Archive page 566*

## **CIVIL WAR CONFERENCE**

I received this information about a Civil War Conference that the Huntington Library in San Marino is hosting, October 17 - 18, 2003. Some Civil War "heavy weights" like, Pulitzer Prize winner, James McPherson will be there contributing his talents. The line-up is a definite "who's who" of Civil War scholars. All the registration information, costs (it's a bargain!), schedule of events, is included in this announcement

### **Crossing Boundaries: New Perspectives on Civil War Military and Cultural History**

**Friday, October 17, 2003**

8:30 Registration & Coffee

9:30 **Welcome: Robert C. Ritchie** (The Huntington)

Remarks: Joan Waugh (University of California, Los Angeles)

#### **Session 1 The Citizen-Soldier**

**Moderator: Daniel W. Howe** (Oxford University)

**James M. McPherson** (Princeton University)

Onward Christian Soldiers: Religion in Civil War Armies

**Joseph T. Glatthaar** (University of Houston)

The Soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia: Who Were They?

**12:00 Lunch**

#### **1:00 Session 2 Narratives of the War**

**Moderator: Alice Fahs** (University of California, Irvine)

**James A. Martin** (Marquette University)

Usable Childhoods: Civil War Children as Adults

**Drew Gilpin Faust** (Harvard University)

We should grow too fond of it: Why We Love the Civil War

#### **Session 3 Borders**

**Moderator: Stuart McConnell** (Pitzer College)

**Edward L. Ayers** (University of Virginia)

The Border at the Middle of the Civil War

**Patrick J. Kelly** (University of Texas)

Confederate Mexico: Rethinking the Boundaries of the U.S. Civil War

**Saturday, October 18, 2003**

**9:00 Registration & Coffee**

**9:30 Session 4 Modern Representations of the War in Art and Popular Culture**

**Moderator: Brenda E. Stevenson** (University of California, Los Angeles)

**Gary W. Gallagher** (University of Virginia)

Brushes, Canvases, and the Lost Cause: The Ascendancy of Confederate Themes in Recent Civil War Art

**David W. Blight** (Yale University)

Why Has War Induced So Much Interest in Memory? An Intersection of Cultural and Military History

**Catherine Clinton** (The Gilder Lehrman Center, Yale University)

Impermissible Patriots: Women's Roles in Military History and the Civil War

**12:30 Lunch**

**1:30 Session 5 Home Front and the Battlefield**

**Moderator: Joan Waugh**

**William Alan Blair** (Pennsylvania State University)

Making War on Their Own Citizens: The Culture of Union Domination and Resistance

**Lyde Cullen Sizer** (Sarah Lawrence College)

Space and Time: Situating the Civil War Soldier in Social and Cultural History

**Mark Grimsley** (Ohio State University)

The Union Army and Emancipation

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Conference registration and meals by reservation only. No confirmation will be sent.

Conference registration fee \$25.00

Buffet lunch (Oct. 17) \$16.50

Buffet lunch (Oct. 18) \$16.50

Vegetarian (circle one) Yes No

Mail check payable to the Huntington with Name and address by Oct. 10, 2003 to:

**Carolyn Powell, The Huntington**

1151 Oxford Road

San Marino, CA 91108

(626) 405-2194 [cpowell@huntington.org](mailto:cpowell@huntington.org)

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## **CWPT ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR ENDANGERED BATTLEFIELDS**

**(Washington, D.C., 08/19/2003) -**

The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), the nations largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization, is accepting nominations for its 2004 *Americas Most Endangered Battlefields* Report. The report identifies the ten most threatened Civil War sites in the United States and what can be done to save these precious links to our nations past.

The 2004 *Most Endangered Battlefields* Report is scheduled to be released in late February at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Any Civil War battlefield is eligible to be nominated. The ten sites to be highlighted in the study will be selected based on geographic location, military significance, and the immediacy of current threats. **The deadline for nominations is October 31, 2003.**

A copy of the news release is available online at:

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<http://www.civilwar.org/PressReleases/PressDetail.asp?lngPressID=26>

For a copy of the online nominations form, visit:

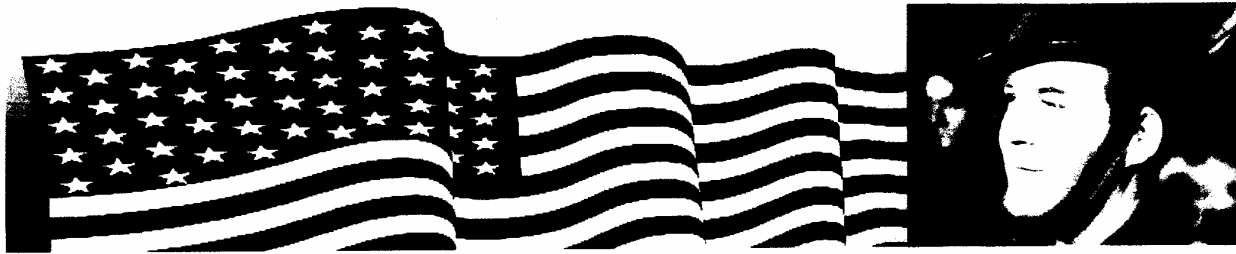
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<http://www.civilwar.org/nominationform2004.pdf>

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call Jim Campi at 202-367-1861. A text version of the news release appears below.

ETHEL ROSE JAMES, 1987:  
THE REAL ISSUE

- Only a quarter of all
- white families in the South
- owned slaves. All the men
- weren't fighting to keep
- something they didn't
- even possess. Yankees call it
- The Civil War. Rebels call it
- what it was, The War
- Between the States. I've studied
- that war because it forced
- my grandfather, Jesse James,
- into becoming an
- outlaw. Southern governors
- refused to relinquish authority
- to Lincoln. Southern people
- alone
- had the right to decide the fate
- of the South. The first
- peace negotiations were held
- in the fourth year of
- that passionate and bloody
- struggle. Davis sent three
- highly ranked men to meet
- Lincoln and Grant aboard
- a steamship. As the men
- passed the battle lines,
- soldiers on both sides
- cheered. Everybody
- just wanted to go home. If
- slavery were the only issue,
- the conflict would have ended
- on the River Queen. Any ten
- of the 36 states could have
- defeated the amendment
- banning slavery. President
- Davis said, "We are not
- fighting for slavery; we are
- fighting for independence."
- And my grandfather said,
- "We vowed never to kneel
- before any man."/



## **Veterans History Project**

**This may be the most important contribution  
we will give our future generations!**

The Library of Congress and its American Folklife Center invites you to join in an important national project - the Veterans History Project.

On October 27, 2000 the U.S. Congress voted unanimously for legislation to create the Veteran's History Project. Congress recognized the urgency of collecting wartime memories, which become more precious as the number of veterans dwindles by 1,500 every day. Congress also saw the value of engaging the American public in its own history.

The mission of the Veterans History Project is to collect the memories, accounts, and documents of war veterans from World War I, World War II and the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars, and to preserve these stories of experience and service for future generations. This project will honor our nation's war veterans and those who served in support of them. How? By creating a lasting legacy of recorded interviews and other documents chronicling veterans' and other citizens' wartime experiences and how those experiences affected their lives and America itself.

### **Tell Me More!**

While the focus is on audio and video recordings, the American Folklife Center will welcome letters, diaries, and photographs that tell the veteran's or citizen's story. One of the project's goals is to broaden public understanding of oral history, and to engage direct participation in history by means of oral history. If you would like more information please visit the Web site: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/>

The RSVP program would like to do its part to preserve the memories by inviting our World War II and Korean War veterans to join the Veterans History Project locally. We are looking for veterans and civilians to be interviewed. We are looking for people to interview others. Enlist now or for further information call the RSVP office at 875-4460 (message number).

**The Sacramento Civil War Round Table meets the last Wednesday of every month except November and December. (A meeting is held either at the end of Nov. or the beginning of Dec.) We meet at the Sizzler 2030 Fulton Ave. Sacramento, CA (Near Fulton and Cottage Way) at 7:00PM. Members and guests gather for food and conversation at 6:00PM. The Board of Directors meets at Carrows, 29<sup>th</sup> and J St. at 11:30AM to 1:00PM on the Wed. two weeks before the regular meeting for that month.**

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### **Battle Cry Editor**

The Battle Cry is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento CWRT. Please submit items to the editor for publication no later than the meeting day of the Board of Directors, either at that meeting, (see above) by U.S. mail or by e-mail. [BattleCryEditor@aol.com](mailto:BattleCryEditor@aol.com) 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 P.O. Box 254702 Sacramento, CA 95865-4702. <http://www.sacramentocwrt.org> is the web site address. Check it for past newsletter editions and information about the group.

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### **Officers of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table for 2003**

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