



**Volume 59, No. 9
September, 2019**

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Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
P.O. BOX 254702
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President's Message

The Election of 1864 was the first election where some soldiers in the field could vote. All the Union armies combined had about 800,000 men. It has been estimated that about 80% of those eligible did vote. In one Michigan regiment of about 300 men, 188 voted. Remember, that back then, only men could vote. Their votes were spread over 14 states. Because of fears Lincoln would get re-elected, states with Democratic governors did not allow voting in the field. Wherever possible, these men went home on furlough to vote. There was no voting in the 11 Southern States. Still, the soldier vote was the deciding votes in about 3 states.

Lincoln got 212 electoral votes to McClellan's 21. Lincoln got 55% of the vote and McClellan got 45%. Then as now, that doesn't tell the whole story. Had 85,000 gone the opposite way, McClellan could have won.

When Lincoln won re-election, he was the first president to win a second term since Andrew Jackson in 1832. Nine presidents had been one term presidents in between.

Back then, voting was a very open affair. One party had pink paper ballots and the other blue. You went to one side of the room, picked up a ballot and put it in the box in the middle of the room. It was not until the Presidential Election of 1892 that all states had a secret ballot.

Dennis Kohlmann, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
Wednesday, August 14, 2019
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE – 32

MEMBERS – 25: Dennis Kohlmann, President; Don Hayden, Vice President; Barbara Leone, Secretary; Roy Bishop, Harvey & Marsha Cain, Arnd Garnter, Ron Grove, Wayne Henley, James Juanitas, Arnold Kunst, Alejandro & Jaime Lizarraga, Joseph and Michelle Matalone, John Rice, Paul Ruud (MAL); Bernie Quinn, Program Director; Nancy Samuelson, Tracy Samuelson, Nick Sciovoletto, Richard Sickert (MAL); Roxanne Spizzirri, James Taff, John Zasso.

GUESTS – 7: Esther Boeck, Jane Jackson, Joe Maxwell, Rob Orr, Larry Spizzirri, Richard Spizzirri, Jack Tucker.

1. President Dennis Kohlmann led the Pledge, Nick Sciovoletto conducted the raffle. Dennis called for volunteers for the Board; Jim Juanitas is a candidate for Vice-President. Ted Savas has provided some of his best authors who are also excellent speakers for the 2019 Conference. Dennis introduced Rob Orr who presented "Vicksburg Part B." Joe Maxwell and Jack Tucker joined Rob.
2. South Fork was the anchor of the City's defenses. Rob's friend, Paul Roth, was with him. A gun called a bottle drop did a lot of the bombardment. This is where the Confederates fired on the Union flotilla.
3. Vicksburg Military Park, established in 1898, is the third one established by the U.S. Government. Ninety percent of its monuments were established in the first twenty years. Each red wreath denotes a state monument except for the Naval Monument discussed in Part A.
4. In 1935, the South Carolina Palmetto State was dedicated. The Florida Monument dedicated in 1954 is one of the more recent. Some markers are not state monuments but markers of the battlefield.
5. Grant's Canal is in Arkansas; only about 100 yards remain. In Vicksburg, there are murals that are illuminated at night; one shows the USS Sultana that went down with over 2,000 released Union prisoners of war and another shows the CSS Arkansas doing battle with a Union gunboat.
6. The Mississippi Monument is a Daughter Monument, one that includes a female figure. The sculptor used his wife's face to model Cleo the Greek and Roman goddess of history.
7. The Texas State Monument is made of Texas red granite and is the largest. The writing on the columns lists all the units that fought. The Georgia Monument is made of Georgia blue granite.
8. The Alabama Monument is a Daughter Monument. Named the Death Squad, it shows the color guard going into battle. Rob's family is from Alabama.
9. The Ohio Marker is the highest point the Union ascended on March 22nd. On that day, 96 soldiers received the Medal of Honor. Ohio did not build a single marker, but thirty-five representing each regiment.
10. The bronze sculptures on the Iowa Monument are reliefs depicting individual battles.
11. There are busts of Confederate generals except for Pemberton who said "I was only involved to the extent I was in command."
12. A Kentucky Monument shows Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln standing on the State Seal since both were from that State. Lincoln's quote is "United we stand, divided we fall."
13. Until the Kentucky Monument was erected, the Missouri Monument was the only one representing both sides.
14. Illuminaries were set out for the 50th anniversary representing soldiers killed on both sides, a total of 19,233. The head ranger sent Rob several excellent images.
15. The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, September 11, 2019, 10 AM, at Brookfield's Restaurant.

Barbara Leone, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on August 14th was \$6,526.54. Thanks to members and guests, the raffle brought in \$39.00.

George W. Foxworth, Treasurer

Coming Programs for 2019 & 2020

Date	Speaker	Topic
September 11th	Richard Sickert	"A Prelude to America's Civil War"
October 9th	James Juanitas	"The Navy in the Civil War"
November 13th	Jim Lane	"The Great Locomotive Chase"
December 11th	Nicholas Scivoletto	"General Order 100"
January 8th	Michael Werner	"The First Battle of Charleston Harbor, 1863"
February 12th	Robert Orr	"Civil War Music"

2019 Membership

The 2020 membership renewal is due as of January 1, 2020. The dues are \$20.00 and you can renew at a monthly 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

Remember, you can also pay at any monthly meeting.

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**. However, you can submit articles at anytime. Please submit your items in Microsoft Word or regular email to:

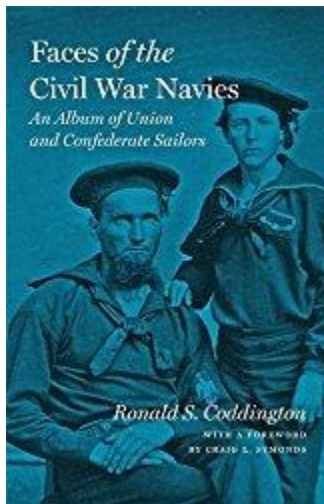
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The **Battle Cry** is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento CWRT. Submissions are subject to availability of space and size limitations. Submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization or the Editor. The official address of 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.

Faces of the Civil War Navies: An Album of Union and Confederate Soldiers

By Ronald S. Coddington, Review by Thomas G. Palaima, The University of Texas, Michigan War Studies Review. Descriptors: Volume 2018, 19th Century, US Civil War, Naval Warfare Photography.

In *Faces of the Civil War Navies*, Ronald Coddington continues his project of "documenting the photographic history of the U.S. soldier and sailor." The nonscientific sample of seventy-seven images chosen for the present volume derives mainly from the 4 x 2.5 in. calling cards (*cartes de visite*) that were so "enormously popular during the Civil War era." Although commercial photography was only twenty-two years old in 1861, the cards had become affordable for the men, both Union and Confederate, "who served, mostly anonymously, as acting volunteer lieutenants, master's mates, ensigns, and midshipmen, as well as ... enlisted men: firemen, boatswains (bo'suns), even landsmen" (ix-x). They depicted their owners in full-length images, standing or seated, posing with props that conveyed who they were or aspired to be in service of their nations.



For example, Lt. Benjamin Horton Porter, the greatest popular hero of the men Coddington profiles (264-71), poses seated in full uniform with an elaborate sheathed sword cradled in his left arm, its impressive haft secure against his upper left jacket sleeve. Friends back home had given him the weapon "as a testament of their pride in his achievement" during an amphibious attack against Confederate artillery and infantry dug in on Roanoke Island (7 February 1862), when he was just seventeen years old. His face is calm, confident, movie-star

handsome, but somehow trance-like and unworldly, gazing far beyond the camera's lens. Porter's image made me wonder what Achilles or Diomedes in the *Iliad* or the hero of the *Aeneid* would look like, had they sat for *carte-de-visite* photos. Homer and Vergil never describe their heroes' faces.

Porter certainly behaved like a Homeric hero: according to his after-action report, he led his crew members and their battery of six howitzers onto land where, as marines, they joined ten thousand infantry troops and advanced in stages, firing and then pulling, to "the open space directly in front of the Rebel battery, where we made a stand under the most destructive fire from the Rebel infantry." As he manned one of the howitzers, "a slug passed into [his crewmate's] ... throat, from which the blood streamed out; he looked into my face, choked, fell down, and died. This made me *madder* than ever and I went in on my muscle." Like the World War I poet Wilfred Owen, Porter wrote this matter-of-fact account of death in battle in a letter to his mother.

Since the mainly rank-and-file men in the author's photo album, like their counterparts in the *Iliad*, leave no trace in historical accounts, what can be said about them must be culled from unexciting sources like obituaries; local newspaper clippings; military service, state pension, and courts-martial records; and, latterly, online resources. As compared with the searing accounts of battle in Mark Bowden's *Hue 1968*, Frederick Downs Jr.'s *The Killing Zone*, or Michael Herr's classic *Dispatches*, the brief personal biographies of the soldiers Coddington presents seem at first emotionless, lacking in intensity and drama. None comes close to Benjamin Porter's personal writing.

But Coddington's profiles focus on the lives of his subjects rather than dramatizing the military actions they took part in. The seventy-seven stories and photos constitute a unique kind of social history, a cross section of ordinary human lives before, during, and after the most traumatic and lethal conflict in American history. Their cumulative effect, like Lieutenant Porter's preternaturally emotionless gaze, strikes me as a Civil War equivalent of the "two-thousand-yard stare" captured by battle-artist and correspondent Tom Lea's famous portrait of a marine at the Battle of Peleliu (15 September – 27 November 1944). The profiles also evoke the mainly poor immigrant population of Black River Falls, Wisconsin (ca. 1890–1910), whose lives Michael Lesy captured primarily through newspaper photographs (often of dead children) and bits of information in news articles, institutional records, and the work of contemporary regional novelists. Both give us cause to wonder how human beings endure and endure and endure.

Take, for example, acting master's mate William Pittman Higbee (b. 1841), the younger of two sons of a Cincinnati merchant. Higbee, whose mother had died when he was a toddler, was a high school graduate working as a clerk when the War broke out. He was aboard the warship *Lafayette* when its flotilla in the Mississippi squadron ran the "formidable enemy batteries defending Vicksburg" (125) on the night of 16 April 1863. The *Lafayette's* commander compared the hour-long barrage from Confederate artillery that struck the ship nine times to "earthquakes, thunder and volcanoes, hailstones, and coals of fire; New York conflagrations and Fourth of July pyrotechnics" (127). Higbee was promoted to acting ensign and survived to be discharged in September 1865. But he had contracted tuberculosis and died four months later, unmarried.

What do these kinds of lives mean? Battle-hospital poet Walt Whitman offered an elegy in their honor after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln:

I saw the debris and debris of all the dead soldiers of the War
But I saw they were not as was thought;
They themselves were fully at rest—they suffer'd not;
The living remain'd and suffer'd—the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child, and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

Other stories are picaresque beyond fiction. Take Hilary Cenas (1839–77) of New Orleans, whose *carte-de-visite* photo, an unorthodox head shot set in a hazy dreamlike surround, suggests he marched to a different drumbeat. By Autumn 1864, he was a Confederate naval lieutenant in charge of the heavy artillery Battery Semmes "dug into the banks of the James River just a few miles South of the Capital." In a story of comradeship across enemy lines, Cenas, taken with the accuracy of the Union artillerist returning fire on his battery, "would emerge from the works with a barrel or tobacco box and set it down atop an old stump..., wave his arms as a signal to his favorite gun-pointer on the other side" and take pleasure when "both stump and gun barrel would be knocked into smithereens" (251). Oddly, Coddington takes this chivalrous respect for the skill and tenacity of an enemy as a character flaw.

Failing to gain admission to West Point, Cenas attended South Carolina College and transferred to the US Naval Academy, graduating fourteenth in a class of twenty in 1859. He resigned his Union commission in Summer 1861 and was eventually exchanged for a US Navy officer (21 December 1861). He joined the Confederate Navy as a 2nd Lieutenant on Christmas Eve. After the abandonment of Battery Semmes (2 April 1865), he managed to make it to the Army of Northern Virginia in time for the surrender at Appomattox Courthouse.

Later, in New Orleans, he engaged in violence against Republicans and Reconstruction; an admirer called him "ardent, fearless and chivalrous, ... a foremost leader of his race against carpet-bag domination" (254). He died of a gunshot wound to the foot that did not heal over the last four years of his life.

Coddington's account of Cenas (251–53) has traces of bias. He writes that the President of South Carolina College was "pleased to be rid of him" because he wrote a rather standard letter of recommendation to the Naval Academy: "His standing has been fair, and his deportment, as far as I have had the opportunity of knowing, unexceptionable—and I take great pleasure in commending him to the kind regards of the Naval School." It should be noted that "unexceptionable" was not at the time a pejorative; for instance, a theater notice in the *Richmond Dispatch* (28 December 1860) lauds "the deservedly popular actress" Mrs. Waller, who will play her parts "in the most unexceptionable manner." Coddington also remarks that Cenas graduated from the Naval Academy "with less than flying colors."

Yet we can rank Cenas's gentlemanly respect for the Union artillerist alongside the "Southern" chivalry of Captain Raphael Semmes of the CSS *Alabama*. Semmes, like Cenas a former Union officer, rescued the defeated crew of the sinking USS *Hatteras*. Having taken them captive, he "minutely superintended everything" regarding their treatment, including furnishing Confederate medical supplies for five wounded Union seamen. Newspaper accounts stressed that the captured "officers and men of the *Hatteras*, without exception, speak in terms of eulogy" (98–99) about their treatment. Throughout the carnage and destruction, many Civil War soldiers maintained a gentility of manners.

Coddington reminds us that, during the Civil War period, "poetry was a fixture on the pages of the popular newspaper" (243), echoing Oliver Wendell Holmes's designation of Ensign Henry Howard Brownell as the "Battle Laureate." Brownell, standing on a deck that had become "an absolute slaughterhouse," converted the scene into poetry: "You could hardly choose but tread / On the ghastly human wreck / (Dreadful gobbet and shred / That a minute ago were men!)." Yet such were the codes of decorum that, although Admiral Farragut, lashed to the rigging, the better to see and strategize the battle, had in the moment shouted "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!," he later "ordered his ensign-poet to suppress the profane language" in his poetic account. Brownell wrote "Go on!"

Submitted by Bruce A. Castleman, Ph.D.



2019 West Coast Civil War Conference

Sponsored by Sacramento Civil War Round Table

Civil War Leadership, 1861 - 1865

November 8 - 10, 2019, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sacramento

Our Speakers are:

Chris Mackowski: A Professor of Journalism & Mass Communication at Saint Bonaventure University, & the author of more than 10 books. He works with the National Parks Service & is the founder of the Emerging Civil War Blog.

David A. Powell: A Vice-President of Airsped, Inc., a delivery firm. He has published many articles in magazines & historical simulations of different battles. He specializes & leads tours on the Battle of Chickamauga.

Sarah Kay Bierle: A Managing Editor for Emerging Civil War's Blog. She has spent the last few years researching, writing, & speaking across the Country about the American Civil War.

Paul Kahan: An expert on the political, diplomatic, & economic history of the United States in the Nineteenth Century. Dr. Kahan has published several books & is a former resident of Sacramento.

Jim Stanbery: A retired Professor of Political Science and History at Los Angeles Harbor College, and speaker at the West Coast Civil War Conference for more than thirty years. He is a frequent CWRT speaker.

Theodore P. 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.

Edwin L. Kennedy Jr.: A graduate of West Point & former Professor of the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College History Department & Combat Studies. He is the leader of staff rides, including the Battle of Chickamauga.

The Conference cost is \$200 per person which includes Friday dinner, Saturday lunch and dinner, as well as all sessions. A full hotel breakfast buffet is included for guests staying at the Hotel.

Partial day attendance: **Friday Only** is \$50; **Saturday Only** is \$125; **Saturday Dinner and Lecture Only** is \$50; **Sunday Only** is \$25.

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 877-504-0054 or www.crowneplaza.com
Crowne Plaza Hotel has rooms set aside for us at \$139 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.

Name / Organization as you want it on your badge (Please Print):

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