
SCWH NEWSLETTER

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Society of Civil War Historians

Summer 2014

ARI KELMAN WINS TOM WATSON BROWN BOOK AWARD

The Society of Civil War Historians and the Watson–Brown Foundation are proud to announce that Ari Kelman, McCabe-Greer Professor of the American Civil War Era, The Pennsylvania State University, is the recipient of the \$50,000 Tom Watson Brown Book Award for 2014.

Kelman will receive the \$50,000 award at the Tom Watson Brown Book Award dinner to be held at the Hilton Atlanta, on Friday, November 14. The Hilton Atlanta will serve as the conference hotel for the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association in Atlanta, Georgia, on November 13-16. The SCWH holds its annual banquet in conjunction with the Southern (<http://sha.uga.edu/meeting>).

The Tom Watson Brown Book Award

Dinner will be in the Crystal Ballroom at the Hilton Atlanta, starting at 5:30 p.m. Admission is free to SCWH members, who also receive a copy of the prize-winning book. Members must make certain that their memberships are paid and current as of August 1 in order to receive an invitation to the dinner. Membership questions should be sent directly to The University of North Carolina Journals Manager, Suzi W. Waters, at sww@email.unc.edu or 919-962-4201. Invitations will be mailed out by September 1 with an RSVP date of October 1; questions regarding the dinner should be directed to RichardsCenter@psu.edu.

BIENNIAL CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

The SCWH held its biennial conference at the Sheraton Inner Harbor, Baltimore, Maryland, on June 12-14. Two hundred-thirty people registered for the conference, approximately the same number that registered for the previous conference in Lexington, Kentucky. The Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore graciously offered free admission to its museum and library for all Society conference attendees. The conference began with a banquet dinner and plenary session, *Dwelling in the Archives*, with panelists Jim Downs, Connecticut College; Jennifer Morgan, New

York University; Seth Rockman, Brown University; and Yael Sternhell, Tev Aviv University. Stephen Berry, University of Georgia, presided over the roundtable discussion. The panel discussed the nature of archival research and the opportunities and challenges presented by the ongoing digitization of archival materials.

On Friday, Megan Kate Nelson, Brown University, chaired a discussion of the depictions of slavery in cinema, particularly recent films like *Twelve Years a Slave* and *Django Unchained*. The panel featured Catherine Clinton, Queen's University Belfast; John Inscoe, University of Georgia; and Brenda E. Stevenson, University of California, Los Angeles. A crew from CSPAN filmed the session for later broadcast on their American History TV program. Also on Friday, the Society of Military Historians sponsored a roundtable discussion, *Teaching the New Military History*. The panel was presided over by Susannah J. Ural, University of Southern Mississippi, and included Aaron Astor, Maryville College; Judith Giesberg, Villanova University; SCWH president-elect Daniel Sutherland, University of Arkansas; and Amy Murrell Taylor, University of Kentucky. (Continued on page 3)

EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HISTORY AWARD

One of the highlights of the opening session of the conference in Baltimore was the presentation of the 2014 Excellence in Public History Award to the “Civil War on the Western Border” from the Kansas City Public Library. Jason Roe, the digital history specialist at the library and David LaCrone, digital branch manager, accepted the award.

The committee was chaired by Kevin Levin of Gann Academy and the blog Civil War Memory, and also included Garry Adelman of the Civil War Trust and Antoinette Van Zelm of Middle Tennessee State University. They chose “Civil War on the Western Border” because of its breadth and ease of use. As they wrote in their committee report:

“The Kansas City Public Library's ‘Civil War on the Western Border’ offers something for everyone. At the center of this project are roughly 6,000 pages of digitized primary source documents from 25 Missouri

(Continued on page 3)

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Stephen D. Engle, Book Review Editor

Roger Pickenpaugh, *Captives in Blue: The Civil War Prisons of the Confederacy*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013. Pp. 320. \$49.95.

Complementing the author's recent book on Confederate prisoners of war, Roger Pickenpaugh presents a narrative of the Confederacy's efforts to provide enough prisons, food, clean water, shelter, blankets, and clothing for the captured Union soldiers and officers in its more than fifteen camps. Although no thesis is stated, several themes emerged. The most important is: although POWs often had inadequate clothing and shelter and very little food, it was not the fault of John Henry Winder, who commanded southern prison camps, or Henry Wirz at Andersonville, who worked very hard to find food, blankets, etc., but rather it was the fault of Jefferson Davis and an "unresponsive Confederate bureaucracy" (p. 227). This book describes in detail life in Confederate POW prisons and the efforts of those in direct control, utilizing a strong primary source base of POW diaries, letters and memoirs and a wide range of Confederate and U.S. government documents, as well as newspapers. It is a contribution to knowledge.

Judith F. Gentry, University of Louisiana

David T. Gleeson, *The Green and the Gray: The Irish in the Confederate States of America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. Pp. 307. \$35.00.

Historians usually associate the Irish with the Union, but in this compelling new book David T. Gleeson shows that the Irish played a significant role in the Confederacy. Gleeson's research impressively proves the importance of his subject. As Gleeson shows through exhaustive archival, newspaper, and quantitative research, the Irish were slightly less enthusiastic about the Confederate cause than other white Southerners. The author faces a difficult task of deciding just who was "Irish." He defines them as immigrants and those he describes as "Irish-identified." His definition the Irish is a bit fuzzy, but that is a small objection to a

very good book. On the whole, Gleeson documents the small but important role played by the Irish in a book that is well worth reading.

Wallace Hettle, Northern Iowa University

J. Christian Spielvogel, *Interpreting Sacred Ground: The Rhetoric of National Civil War Parks and Battlefields*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013. Pp. 190. \$34.95.

Civil War memory studies seem to be the rage these days, but Christian Spielvogel approaches the topic from a different perspective: as a communications expert rather than a historian. *Interpreting Sacred Ground* is essentially a study of information presented to the public. Spielvogel seeks to differentiate the "contested" ways Gettysburg, Harper's Ferry, and Cold Harbor have presented information to visitors over the decades. He delineates three major approaches: the older "reconciliationist memory" of white reunion, the more recent "emancipationist memory" of racial causes of the war, and a third "savage memory" of the horrors of war. *Interpreting Sacred Ground* is an important contribution to the study of memory, although it is a difficult read. While not definitive, and certainly stronger in rhetorical analysis than history, it is nevertheless thought-provoking.

Tim Smith, University of Tennessee, Martin

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Biennial Conference, cont'd.

The conference's sessions closed Friday afternoon with *Waging Peace*, a roundtable that assessed the state and future of Reconstruction scholarship. Participants included Edward L. Ayers, University of Richmond; Joseph G. Dawson, III, Texas A & M University; Sarah E. Gardner, Mercer University; Margaret M. Storey, DePaul University; Frank J. Wetta, Kean University; and George Rable, University of Alabama, who presided over the panel. The society hosted a reception at the conclusion of the panel. During the reception, Megan Kate Nelson thanked outgoing president Anne Rubin for her service and efforts in helping to organize a successful conference.

Anne Rubin, University of Maryland-Baltimore County, and Amy Murrell Taylor, University of Kentucky, completed their terms of service on the advisory board at the conclusion of the biennial conference in Baltimore. Anne served as president for the past two years, overseeing the society's membership drive and planning for the Baltimore conference. At the conference, Caroline Janney, Purdue University, began a two-year term as president of the society. Amy joined the board in 2011 and served on the board's Outreach Committee, helping to shape the society's digital outreach efforts. We wish to thank Anne and Amy both for their dedicated service to the society, and we also are excited to welcome SCWH president-elect Dan Sutherland, University of Arkansas, and Kenneth Noe, Auburn University, as new members of the board.

Barby Ann Singer

Public History Award, cont'd.

and Kansas archives. Students, scholars, and Civil War enthusiasts alike can access these sources. The accompanying website combines encyclopedia entries, scholarly essays, timelines, and images, all of which are easy to navigate. The library also offered an extensive line-up of scholars and other speakers that explored topics related to the Border War and beyond and resulted in a collection of essays published by the University of Kansas Press. Overall, the project highlights an important subject that goes beyond the popular battles and leaders of the East that have all too often dominated our collective memory of the war."

Congratulations to the Kansas City Public Library, and I encourage all of our members to explore the site at <http://www.civilwaronthewesternborder.org>. You won't be disappointed.

Anne Sarah Rubin

ULYSSES S. GRANT PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AT MISSISSIPPI STATE

Since 2008, Mississippi State University Libraries has hosted the Ulysses S. Grant Association and Presidential Papers. The Association was founded in 1962 during the Centennial of the Civil War, with the mission of "conducting research into the life and writings of Ulysses S. Grant and [the publication] of a collection of his writings, speeches, and such other information about his life and times [as] may seem pertinent." Historian and documentary editor John Y. Simon was Executive Director and Managing editor from 1962 until he died in July 2008. Civil War historian John F. Marszalek, an MSU Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History, filled Simon's long-held position. Since its arrival at MSU, the Grant Association has been carrying out its mission by completing the last two of 32 volumes of *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* and publishing the complete series online, working on a scholarly edition of the Grant memoirs and further projects for publication, opening its collection of over 200,000 mostly photocopied documents to researchers, and opening to the public an exhibit space which houses its ever growing collection of U.S. Grant and Grant family artifacts and memorabilia. In 2012, the Grant Association and Presidential Papers collection officially opened as the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library. Plans are underway to build a new, larger space at Mississippi State University for the 17,000 linear feet of material. To learn more about research in the Grant Presidential Library and becoming a member of the Ulysses S. Grant Association, visit www.usgrantlibrary.org

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

The SCWH sponsored a graduate student luncheon on Friday, June 13, with a panel, *Early Years in the Profession: A Forum on the Untenured Life*. Panelists included Brian Craig Miller, Emporia State University; Megan Kate Nelson, Brown University; and Rachel Shelden, the University of Oklahoma. David Thomson, the University of Georgia, and chair of the Graduate Student Connection Committee, presided.

During lunch, Rachel presented the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award to Patrick Doyle, University of Manchester, for his paper "Replacement Rebels: Confederate Substitution and the Issue of Citizenship." The paper explored how the problematic nature of citizenship in the Civil War era shaped the way in which Confederates interpreted their government's policy of substitution. The \$500 award is sponsored by the Society of Civil War Historians.

Historians of the Western Theater Meet in Chattanooga

This past May, Chattanooga History Center Director Daryl Black played host to more than a dozen Civil War historians in the soon to open Chattanooga History Museum when the historians gathered in Chattanooga for their annual meeting. Black showed off the new history center and allowed his visitors to view several Civil War artifacts including the Confederate uniform jacket worn by Colonel Garnett Andrews during the final days of the war. Black explained the concepts on which the new history center is designed, and he told his guests the center should be open to the public sometime in the fall of 2014. The facility is located in downtown Chattanooga on Aquarium Square.

The group of authors toured the facility, and held their annual business session in the center's conference room. The daylong meeting ended with an afternoon discussion of the Battle of Wauhatchie, Confederate leadership on Lookout Mountain, Thomas' 1864 demonstration against Dalton in February 1864, and a review of the pre-Atlanta campaign.

The final day of the meeting, National Park Service Historian Jim Ogden led a lecture tour focused on the ill-fated and contentious efforts of Gen. Braxton Bragg's commanders to block Union troops from Chattanooga during the Chickamauga Campaign.

The organization is a group of published scholars who meet annually in a Western or Trans-Mississippi location. John Marszalek and Mike Ballard organized the association in 1998. Their goal was to provide an informal forum for published historians with interests in the Western Theater to meet and discuss common interests. More information is available on the group's website at <http://westerntheaterhistorians.org>.

Kit Rushing

Future SCWH meeting sites:

November 13-16, 2014
Hilton Atlanta
Atlanta, Georgia

November 11-14, 2015
Little Rock Marriott
Little Rock, Arkansas

November 2-5, 2016
Trade Winds Island Resort
St. Pete Beach, Florida

November 9-12, 2017
Sheraton Dallas Hotel
Dallas, Texas

November 8-11, 2018
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama

Additional information about the meetings of the Southern Historical Association can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/~sha>

Go to <http://scwh.la.psu.edu/about.shtml> for information and a history of the Society

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