
SCWH NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXVIII No. 3

Society of Civil War Historians

Summer 2015

SHAUNA DEVINE WINS TOM WATSON BROWN BOOK AWARD

The Society of Civil War Historians and the Watson-Brown Foundation are pleased to announce that Shauna Devine, research fellow in the Department of the History of Medicine and assistant professor of history at the University of Western Ontario, is the recipient of the \$50,000 Tom Watson Brown Book Award for 2015. Devine received the award for her book, *Learning from the Wounded: The Civil War and the Rise of American Medical Science*, published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2014.

Drawing on the copious reports of Union army physicians and surgeons, *Learning from the Wounded* recounts how the war presented an unprecedented opportunity to study and report on new methods of treatment and gain fresh understandings of the nature of disease and human anatomy. In her introduction, Devine notes that the Civil War “created the context for the most significant medical experience of the nineteenth century in the United States and in the process set American medicine on a new course.” Watson Brown Award jurors praised the book as “breathtaking in scope” and “ambitious, compelling, and original,” noting that it challenged many longstanding assumptions about the state of medicine during the Civil War while also making a major contribution to our understanding of the relationship between war and society.

Dr. Devine received her M.A. in History from McMaster University in 2004 and her Ph.D. in History from the University of Western Ontario in 2010. Her dissertation was “Producing Knowledge: Civil War Bodies and the Development of Scientific Medicine during the American Civil War.”

The Watson Brown Book Award jury consisted of John Inscoe, Albert B. Saye Professor of History and University Professor at the University of Georgia; Judith Giesberg, Professor of History at Villanova University; James Huston, Regents Professor of History at Oklahoma State University; and Tad Brown, president of the Watson-Brown Foundation. Tad Brown will present the award to Devine at the Tom Watson Brown Book Award dinner, which will be held on Friday, November 13, at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association in Little Rock, Arkansas.

SCWH TO MEET IN LITTLE ROCK IN NOVEMBER

Mark your calendar for November 12-15 in Little Rock. The headquarters for the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association and the Tom Watson Brown Award dinner for the SCWH will be the Marriott Hotel. Enjoy Little Rock’s revitalized downtown. Visit the nearby Clinton Presidential Center or walk through the popular River Market district.

The River Market district is the lifeblood of Little Rock’s downtown scene. The district is the unofficial cultural center for the city. On any day you can find a wealth of cuisine from every part of the globe, skilled Arkansas artists practicing their crafts and even live music in various River Market venues or shop for clothing and more in nearby boutiques. The River Market district is just a short walk or streetcar ride from the Marriott. President Clinton Avenue exemplifies Little Rock’s strategic vision, planning, and work of the past 20 years transforming the once desolate downtown area into a true vacation destination. Walk the paths along the Arkansas River and cross the old railroad bridge that adjoins the Clinton Library campus.

The Clinton Presidential Park Bridge is a pedestrian and cyclist bridge that connects Little Rock to North Little Rock and allows pedestrian access to attractions on both sides of the river, including the Presidential library, Heifer International, Verizon Arena, the River Market, and the Argenta Arts district.

The William J. Clinton Presidential Center & Park, located on the banks of the Arkansas River, opened in 2004, and was instrumental in the renovations of the nearby historic River Market district and the river walks.

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, a department of the Central Arkansas Library System, is located on President Clinton Avenue in the Arkansas Studies Institute building, which it shares with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s Center for Arkansas History and Culture (CAHC). The ASI has more than 10 million documents and photographs on Arkansas history available for public use. The Butler Center’s five art galleries, including a retail gallery, feature the work of Arkansas artists and exhibit art related to the state. Also, the Butler Center and the CAHC have fabulous collections of Civil War letters and photographs.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Stephen D. Engle, Book Review Editor

Heath Hardage Lee, *Winnie Davis: Daughter of the Lost Cause*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press [Potomac Books], 2014. Pp. 214. \$29.95.

Heath Hardage Lee's *Winnie Davis: Daughter of the Lost Cause* is an easy-to-read biography about Varina Anne "Winnie" Davis, the youngest daughter of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his second wife Varina Howell Davis. The book analyzes Winnie Davis' life in relation to the history of her famous father, to her parents' troubled marriage, and to the post-Civil War South. Lee clearly shows how Davis became a symbol for the Lost Cause that shaped her family and the South. One weakness does detract from Lee's otherwise readable volume. Specifically, Lee might have provided additional historical information about the themes, like childhood death, the quality of medical care during the Civil War, and Reconstruction that she noted; instead, she depends on popular historical and media sources to explain historical context. Other than that minor drawback, the book is highly recommended.

Karol Kovalovich Weaver, Susquehanna University

David K. Thomson, ed. *We Are in His Hands Whether We Live or Die: The Letters of Brevet Brigadier General Charles Henry Howard*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013. Pp. 281. \$52.00.

Maine native, Bowdoin College graduate, and younger brother of Union General Oliver Otis Howard, Charles Henry Howard had a distinguished military career in his own right. The 110 Howard letters included in this work, dating from 1853 through 1865, are only a portion of his letters in the Bowdoin Library. The editor included correspondence "that provides the reader with the greatest understanding of Charles Howard's beliefs and thoughts on life in the nineteenth century" (xxvi). Howard's military career was lengthy and varied. It began at Bull Run as a drum major in the Third Maine Infantry, followed by service on his brother's staff. Present at most of the major eastern campaigns in 1862 and much of 1863, Howard moved to the western theater with the transfer of his brother's corps. After participating in parts of the Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Atlanta campaigns, was sent on army business to Vicksburg, New Orleans, and Washington, D.C., before accepting a commission as colonel in the 128th U.S.C.T. Despite some gaps in coverage, Howard's letters contain details on the military campaigns in which he fought and

also provide insights into Union command issues, northern politics, and conditions in the south. They are well worth examining.

David Coles, Longwood University

Michael B. Ballard, *Grant at Vicksburg: The General and the Siege*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013. Pp. 196. \$32.95.

Despite being one of the most important campaigns of the Civil War, conducted by one of the most famous generals of the war, surprisingly little has been written on the Siege of Vicksburg itself. Mike Ballard has thus produced one of the first studies to put the two major topics together, examining Ulysses S. Grant at Vicksburg during the siege. Ballard manages the analysis with deft and skill, mainly following a chronological outline in dealing with a vast array of topics that Grant himself had to deal with, including military operations, political considerations, strategic efforts apart from Vicksburg, and personnel. He also conclusively deals with Grant's alleged binge on a trip up the Yazoo River, finding nothing to the long-held myth. In all, Ballard's analysis is a major contribution to our understanding of both Grant and Vicksburg, but then we should expect nothing less from a historian the caliber of Ballard.

Timothy B. Smith, University of Tennessee at Martin

**Funding for the Newsletter is provided by
The McWhiney Foundation, Abilene Texas**

The *SCWH Newsletter* is published quarterly. Regular dues are \$60.00 and include the newsletter and a journal subscription. Dues should be forwarded to the UNC Press Journals Department, 116 South Boundary Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

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CHECK OUT THE NEW SCWH WEBSITE

On June 19, the 150th anniversary of the day that General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston and announced to Texans that the war was over and slavery had ended, the SCWH launched its new website at <http://scwhistorians.org>.

Fully integrated with the Society's Facebook page and Twitter feed, the site will be a resource for information about publications, conferences, and Society news for members and non-members alike.

One of the key features of the new website—which will be edited by Megan Kate Nelson—is the opportunity for members and other interested parties to contribute content directly to the site, particularly in the following categories:

- Member News
- Calls for Papers
- Fellowship and job announcements
- Events at museums, libraries, and archives

The SCWH Outreach Committee (Jim Marten, Megan Kate Nelson, Megan Bever) welcomes feedback and encourages members to engage their colleagues and the profession via the new website.

UVA ANNOUNCES NEW CENTER FOR CIVIL WAR HISTORY

A new center for Civil War history will build on the University of Virginia's distinction as a widely recognized leader in the research and teaching of 19th-century American history, aiming to serve as the preeminent academic center for scholars, archivists and students studying that era.

The University's Board of Visitors approved the naming of the John L. Nau III Center for Civil War History, the centerpiece of a gift of more than \$13 million to UVA's College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. Named after John L. Nau III, a UVA alumnus and outgoing member of the board, the center will enhance and support the work of the distinguished and award-winning faculty within the College's Corcoran Department of History. A 1968 graduate of UVA who majored in history, Nau is a longtime benefactor of the University and a founder of the College Foundation. Previous gifts to the University from the Naus include the \$11 million lead gift for the

construction of Nau Hall at the South Lawn, home to the Corcoran Department of History. "We are profoundly grateful for John and Bobbie's generosity in support of our distinguished 19th-century American history and American Civil War programs and initiatives," UVA President Teresa A. Sullivan said. "This gift will solidify and strengthen the University's position as a preeminent leader in American history teaching and research.

The gift will benefit today's students as well as the generations to come." Ian Baucom, Buckner W. Clay Dean of Arts & Sciences, said the gift, in addition to the creation of the John L. Nau III Center for Civil War History, will support an endowed professorship, an endowed graduate fellowship, a postdoctoral fellowship, scholarship funds, a book prize and travel funds for research, as well as other means to support faculty and students. Together, these will enhance the academic rigor of the University's world-renowned history programs.

"In the spirit of our past collaborations with John Nau, our ambition is for the center to be second to none in teaching and research about the American Civil War," Baucom said. "The center is a place that will help us think deeply about the Civil War as it relates to a range of topics, from military and political history, to African-American history, to other areas that helped shape today's society." Nau said he and Bobbie were happy to make this new investment in the University.

This spring, the University hosted the capstone event for the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission, a statewide exploration of the 150th anniversary of Virginia's participation in the Civil War.

Paul D. Halliday, who chairs the College's Corcoran Department of History, said the center and endowment funded by the new gift will add to a depth of academic resources that already separates UVA from other top academic institutions' scholarship in this field.

"This center will allow historians, archivists and students to research 19th-century American history and the American Civil War across the full breadth of its political, social and cultural circumstances," he said, "creating many opportunities for collaboration."

Nau is president and CEO of Silver Eagle Distributors, the nation's largest distributor of Anheuser-Busch products. He was instrumental in securing Anheuser-Busch's support for the University, which includes funding an alcohol awareness program and a major gift for the College's Department of Environmental Sciences. The gift helped to fund the University's Anheuser-Busch Coastal Research Center, which supports a wide variety of research activities in the coastal bays, salt marshes and barrier islands of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

SCWH CALL FOR PAPERS

The Society of Civil War Historians will host its biennial conference at The Chattanooga Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee, from June 2 through 4, 2016. The SCWH welcomes panel proposals or individual papers on the Civil War era, broadly defined. The goal of the conference is to promote the integration of social, military, political, and other forms of history on the Civil War era among historians, graduate students, and professionals who interpret history in museums, national parks, archives, and other public facilities.

The deadline for receipt of proposals is **September 11**. Please complete a submission form: panel proposal link is <http://richardscenter.psu.edu/conference-papers/panel-submission-form>; single paper proposal link is <http://richardscenter.psu.edu/conference-papers/single-paper-submission> and upload a single PDF file. Proposals should include a title and abstract for the papers (approximately 250-300 words) and a short curriculum vitae from each participant. Panel submissions should have an overall title and statement about the thrust of the session.

For more information, see the Society's new website at <http://scwhistorians.org>, or contact the Richards Center at (814) 863-0151. Final decisions on submissions will be made at the Southern Historical Association meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas.

For back issues of the newsletter, go to http://scwhistorians.org/?page_id=209

For a short history of the SCWH, go to http://scwhistorians.org/?page_id=302

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KEEP UP WITH WHAT IS GOING ON. YOU MAY ALSO ENTER THE SOCIETY OF CIVIL WAR HISTORIANS IN THE SEARCH FEATURE ON FACEBOOK. SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FACEBOOK PAGE TO BARBY SINGER AT BQS6@PSU.EDU.

Future Meeting Dates of the SCWH and SHA

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

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

2018 - November 9-12
Sheraton Dallas Hotel
Dallas, Texas

2019 - November 8-11
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Funding for the SCWH Newsletter is provided by

*The McWhiney Foundation
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