
SCWH NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXVIII No. 2

Society of Civil War Historians

Spring 2016

A Letter from the President

It is hard to believe that this is my final letter to you as president of the society. The time has gone by very quickly! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank two people who have been incredibly helpful to me during my tenure and do more for the SCWH than many of you may realize: Bill Blair and Barb Singer. Under the auspices of the Richards Civil War Center at Penn State, Bill and Barb oversee the biennial conference, Tom Watson Brown Book Award dinner, and the *Journal of the Civil War Era*. Their help has been indispensable to me. They have answered questions and offered guidance on countless occasions. I offer them a sincere and heartfelt thank you for everything. And speaking of their help...

Biennial Conference: Our biennial conference will be held at The Chattanooga Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee, from June 2 through 4, 2016. Please plan to join us for the Thursday night dinner as well as the Saturday closing reception. The Society is also sponsoring a tour of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park on Thursday, June 2, from 12:00 to 4:30. The cost is \$12 per person and pre-registration is required. Conference registration forms can be found on the website (scwhistorians.org) and are due on or before **May 13, 2016**.

A reminder to graduate students: please remember to sign up for the graduate student lunch. For those presenting at the conference, you are eligible to submit your paper for the Outstanding Paper by a Graduate Student Award. All submissions must be received by May 1 (please see the SCWH website for more details).

President-Elect: Please join me in congratulating and welcoming **Nina Silber** as the new president-elect. Silber has been a member of the faculty at Boston University since 1990 where she teaches in both the department of history and the program in American and New England Studies. Her research and teaching have focused mainly on issues related to historical memory, gender, and the Civil War.

The recipient of numerous awards—including fellowships from the Fulbright Commission, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Harvard University's Warren Center—Professor Silber has also published works that have helped to expand the scholarly horizons in the study of the Civil War. Among her most important publications are: *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (1993); *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (1992); *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (2005); and *Gender and the Sectional Conflict* (2008).

Tom Watson Brown Book Award: We are in the earliest stages of planning for the Tom Watson Brown Book Award dinner held at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association. This year the meeting will be in St. Pete Beach, Florida, from November 2-5. One of the benefits of membership is attendance at the dinner and a copy of the prize-winning book. This dinner has become one of the highlights of the Society, and I would like to take a moment to thank Tad Brown for his generous and enthusiastic support. I would also like to thank this year's committee of Gary Gallagher, James Marten, and Lorien Foote for their hard work.

Membership: Please remember that seating at the dinner is limited, and invitations will be sent to current members in mid-to-late August. RSVP's are due by October 1. Your membership needs to be current as of August 1 in order to receive an invitation. In addition to the dinner and a reduced registration price at the biennial conference, membership comes with a subscription to the *Journal of the Civil War Era*, edited by Judy Giesberg, and published by UNC Press. If you are unsure of your membership status, feel free to contact the UNC Press Journals Department at 919-962-4201 or UNCPress.Journals@unc.edu.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Chattanooga. Until then, please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions or questions about the society.

Carrie Janney

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Stephen D. Engle, Book Review Editor

Brian Allen Drake, ed. *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015. Pp. 250. \$69.95.

In this aptly titled work, Brian Drake has gathered eleven intelligent and original essays that cover topics as varied as drought, disease, fertilizers, tobacco culture, weather and climate, aesthetics and art, walking through nature, and more—all to wave the “muddy shirt” of environmental history as essential to understanding the ways the physical world affected, and was affected by, battle, camp life, and the home front. The essays traverse much terrain, from Appalachia, to the Piedmont, to the Shenandoah Valley, to the New Mexico desert, and elsewhere, though they slight northern places while emphasizing those places where armies tramped and fought or where the deprivations of war were most keenly felt. No single interpretive line drives the collection. The essays scatter their seeds too widely with little common interest except to show through case studies how environmental concerns intersected with wartime ones. That said, the book succeeds in helping readers appreciate the hybrid dynamics of the war, whereby, in Drake’s words, “intricate and ever-changing fusions of human and non-human actors and activities” (p. 7) occurred.

Randall M. Miller, Saint Joseph’s University

David Ross Zimring, *To Live and Die in Dixie: Native Northerners Who Fought for the Confederacy*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014. Pp. 469. \$59.95.

Aside from references to a few prominent leaders such as John Pemberton and Josiah Gorgas, the thousands of Northerners who lived in and sided with the Confederacy have largely been slighted by scholarship. David Ross Zimring corrects this oversight with a provocative, insightful study demonstrating the power of Confederate identity and nationalism. Drawing from his database of 303 Northerners residing in the South during the Civil War era, Zimring argues that many of these men and women defended slavery, embraced the Confederate cause, exercised influence “far out of proportion to their numbers” (p. 7), and remained diehard rebels long after defeat. The author disproves earlier assumptions that such individuals were necessarily influenced by their southern wives or concerns over property, giving many examples of

Northerners who moved south and became enthusiastic converts to the region and its institutions, and struggle for independence. Zimring generally makes a persuasive case for the primacy of choice over birth in Civil War-era identity formation.

Will Hickox, University of Kansas

Barton A. Myers, *Rebels Against the Confederacy: North Carolina’s Unionists*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. 288. \$90.00

In *Rebels Against the Confederacy* Barton Myers argues that military history and home front history are, in many cases, one and the same. He calls on scholars to rethink the role of anti-Confederates in the war. His research on dissenters, white and black, free and enslaved, from across the socio-economic spectrum and across the state of North Carolina, encourages us to see that their various acts of resistance on the home front actually amounted to a real military threat to the Confederacy and that civilian and military attempts to silence them helped lead to the breakdown of southern society. Myers taps a rich and diverse source pool to expose this dangerous dialectic. For this first-ever, state-wide study of anti-Confederate sentiment and its effect on residents, government leaders, and the military in North Carolina, a map illustrating Myers’s noteworthy findings would have helped clarify and amplify his complex argument. Nevertheless, this study is well worth a read.

Amy F. Morsman, Middlebury College

**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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Biennial Conference Set for June

The SCWH will host its biennial conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee, from June 2 through June 4. The Chattanooga Hotel, 1201 Broad Street, will serve as the headquarters for the meeting. Single/double guestroom rate is \$129.00 per night plus state and local taxes.

Thursday, June 2, 6:00 P.M.:

WELCOME: Caroline E. Janney, President (Ballrooms A and B)

INTRODUCTION OF NEW OFFICERS
TOM WATSON BROWN BOOK AWARD
ANNOUNCEMENT PRESENTATION OF
THE OUTSTANDING PAPER BY A
GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

6:15 P.M.: DINNER: (Ballrooms A and B)
Sponsored by the Society of Civil War Historians.
(pre-registration by May 13 is required; cash bar available)

7:00 P.M.: PLENARY SESSION: Teaching and Writing About Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction in the 21st Century (Ballrooms A and B)

PRESIDING: Gregory Downs, University of California, Davis

PANELISTS: W. Fitzhugh Brundage, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Anne Marshall, Mississippi State University; Kidada Williams, Wayne State University

Saturday, June 4, 4:30 P.M.: RECEPTION
(pre-registration required; cash bar available)

Battlefield Tour, Thursday, June 2, 12:00-4:30 p.m.:

Cost is \$12 per person; pre-registration is required. Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the oldest park in the nation, preserves a large portion of the Chickamauga Battlefield. The tour will cover the highlights of the three-day engagement, with special emphasis on the action on September 20, the battle's decisive day. Moderate walking will be required at some of the tour stops. The tour will conclude with a brief stop at the Visitor Center, which features an outstanding bookstore along with exhibits on the engagement.

Graduate Student Luncheon, Friday, June 3, 12:45-2:15.

Advance registration is required.

The luncheon will involve thematic tables where grad students will be able to have a frank discussion of a given topic within the field of Civil War historiography. Graduate students will be asked to submit a one-page dissertation abstract to moc.liamg@noehcnulhwcs6102 and to make first and second choice selections on the registration form.

Faculty Tables:

- *Judkin Browning, Appalachian State University: military
- *Judy Giesberg, Villanova University: gender
- *Caroline Janney, Purdue University: memory
- *Brian Luskey, West Virginia University: labor/capital/ class
- *Yael A. Sternhell, Tel Aviv University: slavery and emancipation
- *Elizabeth Varon, University of Virginia: politics and political culture

Go to the website for a full program and other important information:
scwhistorians.org/?page_id=13

Things to Do in Chattanooga

Chattanooga offers an incredible combination of breathtaking scenic beauty, revitalized riverfront; 13-mile paved Riverwalk scattered with attractions, parks, and restaurants, as well as a thriving arts scene.

Downtown is just the springboard for *things to do in Chattanooga*. The downtown attractions, restaurants, shopping venues and convention center are conveniently connected by a FREE, electric shuttle. The drive from downtown to atop Lookout Mountain is only six miles.

The *Southern Belle* boasts panoramic views of the riverfront and Lookout Mountain aboard a vintage steamboat. Take a leisurely cruise and learn about the Tennessee River's history, legends, and places. Afterward explore Ross' Landing and The Passage Trail of Tears site, which offers water cannons, a waterfall down the stairs and a small playground overlooking the river.

2016 Civil War Institute Summer Conference

Meeting Dates of the SCWH and SHA

Every summer for the last thirty years, the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College has hosted a summer conference where public audiences and leading historians come together for small group discussions, battlefield tours, panel debates, and presentations. Sessions, lodging, and meals are held on the 200-acre college campus.

Despite the fact that media outlets have already proclaimed the end of the sesquicentennial with retrospectives on the anniversary, at CWI, the commemoration continues. There is no one date that definitively marks the end of the war, and ending anniversary commemorations in 2015 obscures the close linkages between the conflict and its aftermath. For that reason, CWI's chronological march through the war will continue in 2016 with Reconstruction and the Legacy of the War. This conference – one of the first of its kind for a popular audience – will include a number of exciting new formats: small-group overview sessions, battlefield tours exploring postwar use of the Gettysburg battlefield, and breakout sessions devoted to Reconstruction through biography. Some of the topics to be explored include: James Longstreet and the Battle of Liberty Place; Reconstruction and Civil War Memory; The World Wars at Gettysburg; Reconstruction in the West; Veterans' Return Home; and Reconstructing Southern Womanhood.

For more information, go to:
<https://www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference/>

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

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

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

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

Submissions for publication in the SCWH Newsletter should be emailed to Dr. Anne J. Bailey at:

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Funding for the SCWH Newsletter is provided by

*The McWhiney Foundation
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Buffalo Gap, TX 79508*