
SCWH NEWSLETTER

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Society of Civil War Historians

Summer 2016

Earl Hess Wins Tom Watson Brown Book Prize

At the biennial meeting in Chattanooga, President Carrie Janney announced that Earl J. Hess of Lincoln Memorial University has won the 2016 Tom Watson Brown Book Prize for his work, *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Training, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness* (Louisiana State University Press, 2015). Born in Missouri, Hess completed his graduate training in the American Studies Program (with an emphasis in History) at Purdue University in 1986. After several one-year appointments, he has been teaching for twenty-seven years at Lincoln Memorial University, where he holds the Stewart W. McClelland Chair in History. The author of twenty-one books, eighteen of which deal with Civil War topics, he also has written thirty-two articles and more than one hundred book reviews. Additionally, Hess has written production histories of two classic film musicals, *Singin' in the Rain: The Making of an American Masterpiece* (University Press of Kansas, 2009) and *The Cinematic Voyage of the Pirate: Kelly, Garland, and Minnelli at Work* (University of Missouri Press, 2014) with his wife, Pratibha Dabholkar. His Civil War work includes studies of cultural analysis but mostly focuses on the military history of the conflict. He has written nine campaign and battle studies, including *Kennesaw Mountain: Sherman, Johnston, and the Atlanta Campaign* (North Carolina, 2013), and his *The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat* (University Press of Kansas, 1997) pioneered in exploring the experience of battle in the Civil War. *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Training, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness*, a finalist for the 2016 Lincoln Prize and winner of the 2016 Tom Watson Brown Book Award, is part of a stream of research which involves a re-evaluation of fundamental aspects of how armies operated in the Civil War. In a similar vein as his books on field fortifications and the role of the rifle musket in combat, *Civil War Infantry Tactics* offers a new interpretation of tactics and sets the subject within the long sweep of both American and European military history. Hess argues that, rather than outdated by a revolutionary new weapon, the standard infantry tactics system (adopted almost wholly from European models) worked very well in the Civil War. Contrary to popular

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SCWH Announces New President

SCWH outgoing president Carrie Janney turned the reins of the association over to Daniel E. Sutherland from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, at the biennial conference in Chattanooga in early June. A native of Detroit, Sutherland received his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Wayne State University, where he also played football. His university education was interrupted for two years when, as a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve (1964-72), he was called to active duty. He then completed his MA and PhD under the direction of Grady McWhiney, co-founder of the SCWH. Including his years as a graduate assistant, Sutherland has taught history for forty-two combined years at Wayne State, Mercy College of Detroit, University of Alabama, McNeese State University, and University of Arkansas. He joined the faculty at Arkansas in 1989 and now holds the rank of Distinguished Professor.

Sutherland's fifteen books and nearly seventy articles and book chapters address a variety of topics in the social, cultural, political, and military history of nineteenth-century America. Five books have been offered by the History Book Club. Those titles include *The Confederate Carpetbaggers* (LSU, 1988), *Seasons of War: The Ordeal of a Confederate Community* (Free Press, 1995), *Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville: The Dare Mark Campaign* (Nebraska, 1998), *Guerrillas, Unionists, and Violence on the Confederate Home Front* (edited, Arkansas, 1999), and *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (North Carolina, 2009). His most recent publications include *American Civil War Guerrillas: Changing the Rules of Warfare* (Praeger, 2013) and *Whistler: A Life for Art's Sake* (Yale, 2014). As suggested by the latter title, Sutherland is in a hiatus from writing on the war, his current project being a biography of Whistler's famous mother: *Anna M. Whistler: No Ordinary Life* (Yale, 2017). Sutherland has received over fifty grants, awards, and other honors for teaching or scholarship, including appointments as the Douglas Southall Freeman Professor at the University of Richmond and Visiting Fellow at Wolfson College, University of Cambridge. A founding member of the SCWH and veteran of its Advisory Board, he has lectured extensively in the United States and in seven foreign countries.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Stephen D. Engle, Book Review Editor

Patrick A. Lewis. *For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015. Pp. 272. \$50.00

In *For Slavery and Union*, Patrick Lewis argues that Kentuckians like Benjamin Buckner understood that slavery's perpetuity lay in a preserved Union. Buckner's war had nothing to do with emancipation and his allegiance towards slavery strengthened as his allegiance to the Union waned. Slavery, and therein mastery, underpinned Kentucky's economy, military academy, and understanding of gender. Lewis situates Buckner's post-war policy in a southern state not subjected to Congressional Reconstruction.

Lewis outlines efforts to maintain mastery as the emancipated practiced freedom. The author unravels policies instated by Buckner as he buttressed white supremacy through legislation and used a federally funded militia to terrorize freepersons demanding recognition as citizens while Republican congressmen kept their attentions focused further south. Lewis's book enlightens with a slight readjustment in geographical focus during Reconstruction that ensures more work is needed once we re-center the Civil War map.

Katharine Dahlstrand, University of Georgia

Lisa Tendrich Frank. *The Civilian War: Confederate Women and Union Soldiers during Sherman's March*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. Pp. 256. \$38.25.

Lisa Tendrich Frank's long-awaited *The Civilian War* takes readers into the parlors and bedrooms of elite Southern women as they faced down Sherman's bummers in 1864 and 1865. Frank argues convincingly that there was no distinction between homefront and battlefield during the March, and that Sherman explicitly encouraged his men to make war on Confederate domesticity. The looting of personal property—clothing, jewelry, bedding, musical instruments, furniture—were not the collateral damage of a campaign targeted at material resources. Rather, they were the target. Sherman's soldiers turned elite Confederate women into enemies to be subdued, whose gender no longer afforded them special protections. Sherman wanted his March to attack the Confederacy in two ways: materially, by depriving the armies of supplies, and psychologically, by

showing both soldiers and civilians that the Union army was unstoppable. Frank's main contribution is showing that while the March certainly succeeded in the former, it bred a resentment that strengthened elite women's commitment to their cause, a commitment that would continue well into the twentieth century.

Anne Sarah Rubin, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Patricia A. Donohoe, ed., *The Printer's Kiss: The Life and Letters of a Civil War Newspaperman and his Family*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2014. Pp. 300. \$39.95.

The Printer's Kiss, a reference to the name of the first satisfactory page that comes off a press, is an edited collection of itinerant Union newspaperman Will Tomlinson's private letters and published editorials. Tomlinson, an avid Democrat, ardent unionist, and editor of ten newspapers between 1844 and 1863, also served in the Civil War as quartermaster sergeant in the Fifth Ohio Infantry, captain of an anti-guerrilla company in western Virginia, independent scout in Kentucky, and nurse aboard a hospital boat. Tomlinson was also a drunken absentee husband and father. Most correspondence in this volume is between Will and his wife, Eliza, who lived in Ripley, Ohio—an abolitionist stronghold and proslavery target on the Ohio-Kentucky border. The letters, skillfully explained by Donohoe's well-researched and informative commentary, tell a personal and at times tumultuous story of one northern family's struggles to survive the war.

David Schieffler, University of Arkansas

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thinking, the longer range of the rifle musket was not utilized by soldiers and their officers and thus the tactical system, which was adapted to short-range smoothbore weapons, remained the correct system to use with the rifle musket in the 1860s. Moreover, most volunteer soldiers and their officers learned the complicated tactical system well and became proficient at it, demonstrating that with a commitment to the cause, enough time to train, and adjusting to experience through repeated engagements, volunteer armies could become as effective as (or even better than) professional armies in achieving national goals. While the Civil War was not exceptional within the sweep of European military history, it was an unusually exceptional episode of American military history. *Civil War Infantry Tactics* offers the field an example of how traditional military history can inform readers with new interpretations of old assumptions in a way that links seemingly mundane, technical aspects of military history with larger perspectives on the institutions and nature of American society. For more information on Hess' work, see www.love-and-learning.info.

SCWH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The SCWH held its biennial conference at The Chattanooga Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee, on June 2-4. Two hundred thirty-five people registered for the conference, approximately the same number that have registered for previous conferences.

A. Wilson Greene, Executive Director at Pamplin Historical Park and the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier, and **Jim Ogden**, Chief Historian at Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park, led a battlefield tour Thursday afternoon for approximately fifty people. Fought in September 1863, the Battle of Chickamauga marked the only major Confederate victory in the Western Theater at the combined cost of more than 34,000 casualties. The tour covered the highlights of this three-day engagement, with special emphasis on the action on September 20, the battle's decisive day.

Carrie Janney, SCWH president, presented **Kathleen Logothetis Thompson** of West Virginia University with the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award for her paper, "*That the soldier was insane is not established*": *Insanity and Suicide in Civil War Pensions*. The \$500 award is sponsored by the Society of Civil War Historians.

A plenary session, *Teaching and Writing About Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction in the 21st Century*, followed a banquet dinner Thursday night. The panelists were **W. Fitzhugh Brundage**, University of

North Carolina, Chapel Hill; **Anne Marshall**, Mississippi State University; and **Kidada Williams**, Wayne State University. **Judith Giesberg**, Villanova University, presided over the discussion.

GRADUATE STUDENT CONNECTION COMMITTEE: The Society sponsored a graduate student luncheon on Friday with thematic tables where grad students had the opportunity to have a frank discussion of a given topic within specific fields of Civil War historiography. Partnered with a scholar in the field, the small group of grad students worked with the faculty member to discuss great models of Civil War scholarship within their subfield, other books perhaps even outside of the Civil War Era that people find useful, how to incorporate the given theme into the classroom, and ways to pitch themselves to publishers. Faculty participants were Judkin Browning, Appalachian State University; Judy Giesberg, Villanova University; Carrie Janney, Purdue University; Brian Luskey, West Virginia University; Yael A. Sternhell, Tel Aviv University; and Elizabeth Varon, University of Virginia.

CONFERENCE CLOSING EVENTS: A roundtable discussion, "*New Approaches to Old Questions*," with Margaret Story, DePaul University, presiding; and panelists Lorien Foote, Texas A&M University; Barton A. Myers, Washington and Lee University; Amy Murrell Taylor, University of Kentucky; and Susannah J. Ural, University of Southern Mississippi. The Saturday afternoon roundtable "*Go West, Young Historians! Expanding the Boundaries of Civil War Studies*," featured Michael Green, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Matthew Hulbert, Kentucky Historical Society; Megan Kate Nelson, www.historista.com; and Kevin Waite, University of Pennsylvania. The final roundtable of the conference was chaired by Brian Jordan, Sam Houston State University, and was titled, "*New Perspectives on the Gettysburg Campaign*." It featured panelists David Silkenat, University of Edinburgh; Hilary N. Green, University of Alabama; Timothy Orr, Old Dominion University; and commentator Chris Gwinn, Gettysburg National Military Park. During the closing reception, Daniel Sutherland was introduced as SCWH president, and he led the conference in thanking outgoing president Carrie Janney for her service to the Society.

THE TOM WATSON BROWN BOOK AWARD DINNER is to be held in the Tarpon Key room of the Trade Winds Island Resort Grand Palm Colonnade Conference Center, on Thursday, November 3, starting at 5:30 p.m. during the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Admission is free to SCWH members, and dinner attendees will 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 UNC Press Journals Department at UNCPress_Journals@unc.edu or call 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. Please note, effective **January 1, 2017** all SCWH memberships will increase by \$5.00. New rates will be \$65 per year for regular memberships and \$30 for graduate student memberships. Memberships can be renewed on-line at:

<http://journalofthecivilwarera.org/society/>

NEW LEADERSHIP: We would like to thank Anne Sarah Rubin, University of Maryland-Baltimore County; A. Wilson Greene, Pamplin Historical Park and the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier; and Joan Waugh, University of California, Los Angeles for their dedicated service to the Society. They formally completed their terms of service on the advisory board at the conclusion of the biennial conference in Chattanooga. We also wish to thank Carrie Janney, Purdue University, for her dedication to the Society as she completed her two-year term as president. We are excited to welcome SCWH president Daniel Sutherland, University of Arkansas, and president-elect Nina Silber, Boston University, as new members of the board.

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

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

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or
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Tom Watson Brown Book Prize Nominations Sought

The SCWH gives an annual Tom Watson Brown book Award of \$50,000 for the best book published on the causes, conduct, and effects, broadly defined, of the Civil War. This includes, but is not exclusive to, monographs, synthetic works presenting original interpretations, and biographies. Works of fiction, poetry, anthologies, and textbooks are not considered. Jurors consider nominated works' scholarly and literary merit as well as the extent to which they make original contributions to our understanding of the period. For information on how to submit an entry, go to:

<http://scwhistorians.org>

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 8-11
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama

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