

THE BATTLE CRY



NEXT PROGRAMS

Gordon has been re-elected as President of the Round Table and has already lined up speakers and topics, which is probably the most difficult to do. It remains to have volunteers for Vice Pres., Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor.

In just a few days we will be without 3/4 of our administrator, please don't back away or we could soon be without aRound Table!

Welcome Back
We Trust Your Summer Has
Been Most Rewarding.
Expectations are High for this
Campaign to Provide You With New and
Very Interesting topics

PRELIMINARY CALENDER OF MEETINGS & SPEAKERS

SEPT. 2017-MAY 2018

THE BATTLE CRY

This newsletter is our means of communication with our membership, it also provides articles of interest, Trivia, Civil War news, issues, and more.

YOU CAN DO THIS!

Campaign Year 2017-2018

9/12/17-Gordon Balme-The Dearing Battalion at Gettysburg

10/10/17-Rodney Kite-Powell-Ft Brooke History

11/13/17-Wayne Motts-Harrisburg Civil War Museum Artifacts Slide Presentation

12/12/17-Philip Leigh-Reconstruction After the Civil War

1/17/18-Brian Steel Wills-Nathan Bedford Forrest

2/13/18-Frank Crawford-The Shenandoah Valley in the Civil War

3/13/18-TBA

4/10/18-TBA

5/8/18-TBA

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

- To whom did Ulyses S. Grant assign the honor of receiving the official surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia?
- How did the Federals get Southern soldiers to desert?
- What was the name of the Confederate army that fought at Shiloh?
- What general's name was a statement of the Southern cause?
- Where was Andrew Johnson administered the oath of office as the president of the United States?
- When New York newspapers hailed the destruction of a Florida "factory" as "worth more to the Union than the capture of twenty thousand rebels," What were they describing?



Judah P. Benjamin

RELIGION IN THE CIVIL WAR

It's abundantly clear, as recent scholarship has demonstrated that religion stood at the center of the Civil War for both sides. Both [North](#) and South looked to God for meaning, and each side believed—with equal fervor and certitude—that God was on its side. Many ministers, generals, leaders, and editors went so far as to proclaim that God had ordained the war and would determine its length, its damages, and its outcome. The victor would show, in other words, whose side God really supported. New England political and religious leaders had long proclaimed themselves God's "chosen people." With the start of the Civil War, southerners laid claim to the title and, through speech, print, and ritual actions, proceeded to "prove" their claim. (Stout)

If there is one sober lesson Americans seem to be taking out of the bathos of the Civil War sesquicentennial, it's the folly of a nation allowing itself to be dragged into the war in the first place. After all, from 1861 to 1865 the nation pledged itself to what amounted to a moral regime change, especially concerning race and slavery—only to realize that it had no practical plan for implementing it. No wonder that two of the most important books emerging from the Sesquicentennial years—by Harvard president Drew Faust, and Yale's Harry Stout—questioned pretty frankly whether the appalling costs of the Civil War could be justified by its comparatively meager results. No wonder, either, that both of them were written in the shadow of the Iraq War, which was followed by another reconstruction that suffered from the same lack of planning. (Guelzo)

After Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter in April 1861, the vast majority of Northern religious bodies—with the exception of the historic "peace" churches which on principle adhered to pacifism—ardently supported the war for the Union. Of these groups, Protestants still enjoyed a significant numerical and cultural dominance in the 1860s. Catholics and Jews provided notable (and heretofore insufficiently researched) support for the war; but Protestants, given their numbers and position in American life, contributed religious or theological justifications of the war that had wider social and political impact. To examine Protestant attitudes in the 1860s is thus to learn much about the popular mood and motivations of Northerners as their "boys" marched off to war. (Moorhead)

SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE: (Stout; Guelzo)

Prior to the Civil War, politics from the pulpit, religious devotion to the Bible had generally been lacking in the South. However, once war began there became a movement to "... interpret God's involvement with the Confederate cause and define the role of the Christian churches in the Confederate nation." The Southern "win" at First Manassas (July 21, 1861) vindicated, for the South, that God was on their side. For example, William C. Butler preached in Richmond:

The Confederate Constitution (Feb. 8, 1861, ratified March 11, 1861) signaled its turning to a Christian identity opposite, they posed, from the "godless" government of the North that ignored God in its constitution and put secular concerns above sacred duties of Christian service ... ""

Before the war the South had avoided politics in the pulpit, however, after the Confederate success at First Manassas (July 21, 1861) God's involvement with the Confederate cause, suggests Stout, helped to define the role of the Christian church in the Confederate cause. Also on the 21st, in Richmond, VA, William C. Butler stated:

God has given us of the South today a fresh and golden opportunity—and so a most solemn command—to realize that form of government in which the just, constitutional rights of each and all are guaranteed to each and all, ... He has placed us in the front rank of the most marked epochs of the world's history. He has placed in our hands a commission which we can faithfully execute only by holy, individual self-consecration to all of God's plans.

Not only did church goers hear the message that their war was a holy one, but so did virtually anyone who read a newspaper, attended a public gathering or served in a military camp or on the battlefield.

Mostly women attended churches in the South during the war and heard preachers praising the southern war cause. Of course, their men, sons, and fathers who went to war left women at home and to tend to chores that women rarely did at that time. The preaching, emotions, and hardships grew, in women, a new sense of their place in politics and public action in support of the war as well as a strong opposition to the North. General Sherman's awareness of the support from the southern home-front gave credence to his decision to implement his "March to the Sea" with a policy of total destruction of the home-front without decency or the rules of war.

As the momentum of the war seemed to shift to the North and news of victories decreased for the South, the dispirited southern soldiers turned to religion in ways that were increasingly visible. The southern religious press began printing stories of revival in the military:

"There is a mighty work of the Spirit going on now in the camps of this regiment and brigade," (*Central Presbyterian*, Richmond, VA, June 1863)

The attempt to encourage the populace of the South caused a demoralized people to turn to the army for their spiritual hope. Other papers adding to the propaganda included, the Tennessee "*Southern Churchman*" that wrote, " ... 1,000 men ... in [one] division had professed the faith."

The Richmond Daily Dispatch (January, 1864) reported, "The religious interest in the army is unchilled by the cold weather. Meetings are still held in every part of the army; and in many, if not all the brigades, meeting-houses have been constructed for their own use, and faithful chaplains nightly preach to large and deeply attentive congregations."

Stout continues, " ... there are no atheists in foxholes—the idea that the fear of imminent death can make a 'believer' of anyone. Did soldiers of the South experience 'conversion' out of terror? Did they turn to religion out of a growing certainty that theirs was a lost war?"

Andrew Dyrli Hermeling interprets Allen Guelzo's question, "Did Religion Make the Civil War Worse?" (August 24, 2015/ September 2, 2015) as "No." rather, Politicians and political ideals, and not religion ... were responsible for the Civil war.

Guelzo concludes:

From the Civil War onward, American Protestantism would be locked deeper and deeper into a state of cultural imprisonment, and in many cases, retreating to a world of private experience in which Christianity remained of little more significance to public life than stamp-collecting or bridge parties. Appeals to divine authority at the beginning of the Civil War fragmented in deadlock and contradiction, and ever since then, it has been difficult for deeply rooted religious conviction to assert a genuinely shaping influence over American public life.

When all was said and done, religion formed the backbone of the South in the Civil War. It affirmed the spirituality of the southern church, and it gave the white South its self-proclaimed sacred identity. Go had not deserted the South, they declared, but had rather disciplined them in a refining fire that would hone them for a higher calling, yet to be revealed. For the black South, religion formed a mighty rallying point for freedom fighters and the cause of equality. It empowered African Americans with a cultural and shared language that would fuel their entry into leadership, civil rights, the arts, an education. (Stout's ending)

NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE: (Moorhead)

The blood baptism received a final ritual enactment on April 14, 1865 (Good Friday) when Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth only five days after Lee's surrender to Grant. Northern ministers were not unmindful of the symbolism. Like the death of Jesus, said the clergy, Lincoln's blood—a token of all the blood shed over four years—purchased new life for the nation. As one group of ministers suggested: "He [Lincoln] has been appointed . . . to be laid as the costliest sacrifice of all upon the altar of the Republic and to cement with his blood the free institutions of this land."

Thus these religious themes had a major impact on the North during the Civil War.

- Belief that America was preparing the way for the kingdom of God on earth helped to inspire the loyalty of both the Union soldiers and those on the home front.
- The conviction that blood needed to be shed in order for the nation to be reborn undoubtedly stiffened the resolve of bluecoats and civilians alike to endure unprecedented staggering losses.

Continues on p.4

SOURCES QUOTED, EDITED AND PARAPHRASED

Guelzo, Allen. (Professor, Gettysburg College) (<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/08/did-religion-make-the-american-civil-war-worse/401633/>)

Moorhead, James Howell. *Religion in the Civil War: The Northern Perspective*. Princeton Theological Seminary. © National Humanities Center, 2000.

Stout, Harry S. *Religion in the Civil War: The Southern Perspective*. *Divining America*, TeacherServe®, National Humanities Center. April 28, 2017.



Officers

President: Gordon Balme
 Vice President: Matt Donovan
 Treasurer: Pat McInerney
 Newsletter Editor: M. Bruce Maxian

DUES FOR THE 2015-2016 CAMPAIGN ARE PAYABLE TO PAT McINERNEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DUES KEEP THE PROGRAMS AND NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Our Annual Campaign runs from Sept. through May, dues are \$30 .

Anyone interested in receiving "The Battle Cry" by e-mail please see Bruce Maxian at one of our meetings or e-mail me at:

Sarasota.cwrt@gmail.com

**Meetings 3rd Tues. of the month (7 pm)
 GRACE CHURCH
 ADULT ANNEX, 8000
 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, Fl 34236. On Occasion time and location of the meeting may be changed.**

PLEASE WEAR YOUR T-SHIRTS TO THE MEETING. IN THE MEANTIME WEAR THEM WHEREVER YOU ROAM.

OUR MONTHLY RAFFLE ALWAYS NEEDS YOUR DONATED BOOKS & MAGAZINES.

- Without the churches' growing conviction that the hand of Providence was indicating the need to end slavery, it is unlikely that the government would eventually have embraced full emancipation as a war aim. In a similar fashion, the Protestant churches appear to have helped sustain, at least for a few brief years after the war, "the energy that was devoted to achieving a Reconstruction based on the ideals of the so-called Radical Republicans. This was a Reconstruction in which the vote would supposedly be available (in the language of the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution) without regard to "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

DEPARTURES

Last year, at this time, I had no idea of the events that were to bring me to this moment. The only activity/hobby to sustain me in retirement has been the study of the American Civil War, lecturing on it, and building a large, quality library collection that is unique. It is so, as a personal collection which is representative of nearly all aspects of the period.

This year, primarily due to the death of my wife, Constance, I plan to move with my daughter's family to Columbia, South Carolina sometime before September. Therefore I must step down and out as your editor of *The Battle Cry*. A replacement is needed right away in order to be prepared for the September issue and to allow time for me to pass on the template, production guidelines, initiate both hard and digital copies. Finally, posting by a computer to our webpage each month. The last part of the process is to label, address, stamp, fold, stuff into Envelopes; then mail.

In addition, The Office of Treasurer will be vacated by our long-time "CPA" Pat McInerney. Who will step up to this vital post? Finally,, I have it that our faithful Vice President, Matt Donovan will join the ranks of the vacated officers of the Round Table.

Meanwhile, this is my opportunity to announce my leaving and the need for someone to fill the editorship of our newsletter.

In the trenches,
 Bruce Maxian

**HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER
 ALL Y'ALL**

LIMERICK FUN

**At first he was war secretary,
 Where the generals found him too wary.
 But as secretary of state
 His performance was great
 And this was a weight he could. carry**

Who am I?

Check our monthly newsletter, *Battle Cry* at:

<http://www.sarasotacwrt.yolasite.com>