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Review

Peter S. Carmichael

The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion

In *The Last Generation*, Peter Carmichael looks at a group of male Virginians born between 1831 and 1843. Many of them, scions of slave owning upper middle class families, grew to manhood in the 1850s and then served as company and field grade officers in the Army of Northern Virginia. Carmichael depicts a generation of youth in the 1850s who were very much at odds with their elders, depicted as “old fogies” who stood in the way of the progress Virginia needed to make in order to regain her rightful national prominence.

Many of these young men saw Virginia as a place where all of the good jobs, and properties, were already held by men who had no intention of dying soon. In this regard, this “last generation” faced a situation that would be confronted by German youth in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Although many were not ardent secessionists, all who could served devotedly in the Army of Northern Virginia. After the war, many embraced the New South as a chance to secure the progress they had wanted before the war.

Ultimately, however, they turned away from what they regarded as the excesses of the Southern youth of the “Gilded Age.” Thus, in their old age, they turned into “old fogies” themselves. If anything, this excellent study will confirm what teenagers have known forever; that parents are just not cool.

The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion by Peter S. Carmichael. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Pp. xiv, 342. Illus., notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 0-8078-2948-X

-- Richard L. DiNardo

USMC C&S College, Quantico

Review

Barnet Schecter

The Devil's Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America.

The Devil's Own Work is a comprehensive treatment of the New York “Draft Riots” within the framework of American political and social life before, during, and following the Civil War.

Schecter, author of the well-received *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution* (New York: Walker, 2002), rightly points out that the draft was only the spark that ignited an

explosive mixture of “race, class, and religion” that was exacerbated by political manipulation and ineptitude in high places. Schecter’s sympathies clearly lie with the victimized black citizens of New York, and the other northern cities in which draft resistance erupted into rioting. He also explores the grievances of the city’s Irish immigrants, who suffered under religious and quasi-racial bigotry as well, with ample evidence of the vicious anti-Catholicism of some of the notable figures of the abolitionist movement and the state’s Republican establishment, such as the Beechers, Samuel Morse, George Templeton Strong, Horace Greeley, and Thomas Nast.

As part of his investigation of the riots, Schecter examines at the role of supposed agitators and Copperheads, concluding that their influence was exaggerated by both sides for their own ends.

While his discussion of the events of the riots is excellent, his account of events in the war is often characterized by outdated interpretations or mythic events (e.g., Longstreet’s “slows,” Grant’s “excessive” casualties during the Overland Campaign, Edmund Ruffin’s “first shot” at Sumter). But these are minor errors in an otherwise excellent work.

The Devil's Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America, by Barnet Schecter. New York: Walker, 2005. Pp. xiii, 434. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$28.00. ISBN: 0-8027-1439-0. --Albert A. Nofi, CNA

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Battles & Campaigns

The Peninsula Campaign: A Military Analysis, by Kevin Dougherty, with J. Michael Moore. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005. Pp. ix, 183. Illus., maps, append., notes., biblio., index. \$45.00. ISBN: 1-57806-752-9.

As the sub-title indicates, this is less a history of the Peninsula Campaign than an analysis of the actions taken by the various commanders during it. As such it necessarily provides a general treatment of the campaign. But the stress is on the analysis, which is done using modern U.S. concepts, though with concessions to period practice. The book’s main drawback is its rather heavy reliance on several older treatments, such as accounts by Douglas Southall Freeman and Clifford Dowdey, that are highly

hagiographic of Lee. Nevertheless, the analysis is thoughtful, and the authors point out critical errors in decision making by all participants, while offering some interesting thoughts on how McClellan *might* have done better, e.g., briefing the President on his plans and being more flexible.

Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign, by Kent Masterson Brown. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Pp. xv, 534. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$34.95. ISBN: 0-8078-2921-8

Beginning where most books on Gettysburg end, with the repulse of “Pickett’s Charge” on July 3, 1863, *Retreat from Gettysburg* examines the tactical, strategic, and logistical situation and options available to the two armies over the two days following the battle, and then follows the Confederate retreat and Union pursuit in considerable detail, on an almost hourly basis. This story has been told before, but not with such care or in such depth, or with such careful attention to the management of troops and supplies on the march. As a result, this is an immensely important read for anyone with a serious interest in the war.

The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862, edited by Gary W. Gallagher. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. Pp. xxii, 255. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$34.95. ISBN: 0-8078-2786-X

Another in the excellent series of volumes in which Gary Gallagher has collected the most notable recent contributions to various aspects of the Civil War. These have been regarded by some as disrespectful to the memories of certain heroes, yet have usually broken new ground and often pointedly demonstrated that often revered figures were even *better* commanders than their reputations would have us believe. Given the subject matter, this volume naturally tends to focus on Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, but these essays are by no means usually hymns to Jackson’s greatness. As one essay points out, Stonewall was truly fortunate in the quality of his opponents, who were uniformly poor, unwilling to coordinate their actions, and most often out-numbered at the critical moment. Nor have minor characters been neglected. The rather sorry lot of Union commanders in the Valley is given some attention, and some sympathy. And there’s a splendid essay on Turner Ashby, which suggests strongly that the “first cut” of history is often not very useful, while one on Charles S. Winder points out that deserving commanders often don’t get much attention. A valuable look on an important aspect of the war in the East in 1862.

The Civil War in Arizona: The story of the California Volunteers, 1861-1865, by Andrew E. Masich. Norman, Ok: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. Pp. xiv, 368. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$32.95. ISBN: 0-8061-3747-9.

This account of the services of California troops in Arizona and across the entire west during and after the

Civil War, covering the role of these troops in the defeat of Confederate efforts to secure control of Arizona, coping with various Indian nations, keeping the peace among settlers, securing the border against Imperial Mexico, and relieving regulars for service in the East (to the disappointment of many of the Californians, who volunteered to serve there). Of special interest are looks at “Native” (i.e., Mexican) Californian troops, the logistical problems of operating in so vast and arid a region, and the numerous documents that are included.

Key Command: Ulysses S. Grant’s District of Cairo, by T. K. Kionka. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2006. Pp. xii, 229. Illus., map, notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 978-0-8262-1655-7.

Key Command tells two stories well. The first is the role of the southern Illinois city of Cairo in the critical opening months of the Civil War. The second is how operations in the vicinity of Cairo, and ultimately U.S. Grant’s command of the military district centered there, helped shape him as a commander. Sited at the choke point at the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi, Cairo lay amidst country rife with Confederate sympathizers and bordering two slave states of disputed loyalties, Missouri and Kentucky, and was a critical post for the Union in the early days of the war. Grant arrived at Cairo at the head of the 23rd Illinois. Although a West Pointer and combat veteran, he was new to command, and many—including perhaps himself—doubted his ability. Grant’s experiences in the military district of Cairo, starting at the bottom and working his way up, proved vital to his evolution as a field commander, while other seemingly more talented officers, such as John C Frémont and George B. McClellan, both of whom make cameo appearances, were elevated early to commands beyond their levels of competence. A good book for anyone interested in the first year of the war, the war in the West, and Grant.

The Battle of Monroe’s Crossroads and the Civil War’s Final Campaign, by Eric J. Wittenberg. New York: Savas Beattie, 2006. Pp. xxiv, 336. Illus., map, append., notes, biblio., index. \$32.95. ISBN: 1-932-71417-0.

A well-researched, well-mapped, profusely illustrated, and readable account of the duel between Wade Hampton’s cavalry, covering the retreat of Joe Johnston’s Army of Tennessee, and Judson Kilpatrick’s, scouting for Billy Sherman’s army in the final days of the Carolina Campaign. Military history doesn’t get any better than this, a careful analysis of what took place and why, including critical looks at the decisions affecting the course of events. In the process, Wittenberg also gives us a look at some of the most interesting characters in American History, warts and all, yet manages to be even-handed throughout. And be sure to read the notes! An excellent effort

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## Lincoln

*Lincoln's Last Months*, by William C. Harris. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Harvard, 2004. Pp. ix, 303. Illus, notes, index. \$27.95. ISBN: 0-674-01199-6

While not precisely a biography, *Lincoln's Last Months* looks at the President's activities from his re-election in November of 1864 to his assassination in April of 1865. The author uses a thematic rather than a chronological approach. Chapters are devoted to specific topics, such as the election itself, the President's health and appearance, the "Burden of Patronage," peacemaking, his visits to the Army, and so forth, culminating in on titled "Martyrdom." This provides an unusual look not only at Lincoln during this period, but also at some of the problems of the presidency in general.

*Lincoln's American Dream: Clashing Political Perspectives*, edited by Kenneth L. Deutsch & Joseph R. Formieri. Washington: Potomac Books, 2005. Pp. xi, 500. Notes, index. \$29.95. ISBN: 1-57488-589-8.

In a sense, *Lincoln's American Dream* is a "debate" about the 16<sup>th</sup> President's role and legacy in the history, politics, and life of America. In another sense, it is also a very effective conservative defense of Lincoln's legacy against attacks by neo-Confederate, ultra-leftist, and "Libertarian" scholars and occasional pseudo-scholars. The 33 essays are grouped into eight chapters, each of which deals with a broad theme, such as "Lincoln, the Declaration [of Independence], and Equality," "Lincoln, Race, and Slavery," "Lincoln and Executive Power," and so forth, including Lincoln's religion and the relationship between the Union and the States. Of particular value are the essays that "debunk the debunkers," citing the frequent use by what might be termed the "anti-Lincoln" bloc, of highly selective quotations, unverifiable statements, and otherwise irrelevant evidence in their efforts to demonstrate that Lincoln was some sort of dictatorial proto-fascistic war-monger.

### NYMAS.ORG

#### On the Web for Seven Years, Nymas.org Seeks Additions to Its Full Text Resources

The NYMAS website, [nymas.org](http://nymas.org), was launched in January of 1999. It has since grown from a one page notice of our regular Friday evening talks to being listed by Google and The Open Directory Project as one of the ten most valuable sites on Wars and Conflicts on the Web.

The website helps announce and promote the more than 46 talks NYMAS sponsors each year and even helps manage our schedules. In June, the site counter recorded 66,743 visitors and an average of 40 visitors per day. A recent search on Google using "New York Military Affairs Symposium" showed 640 links to our site.

Our site search engine tells us NYMAS.ORG has 449 web pages (some equivalent to 10 paper pages) containing 1,525,424 words. The website has many areas for almost unlimited growth, in particularly in the Full Text Resources section. These resources already include works not published elsewhere, including the complete 506 page *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*, the ongoing *Changjin Journal*, now 60 chapters, and back issues of this publication, *The NYMAS Review*, all entirely keyword searchable.

We are seeking historical or current event-worthy articles in military affairs, including monographs, slide shows (esp. PowerPoint) and podcasts. Also, we're looking for associate webmasters to update our link pages, maintain a current news and events page and similar tasks. You don't have to be in the NYC area to volunteer for this!

If you are interested in helping out, please contact the NYMAS webmaster, Bob Rowen, at [browen@nymas.org](mailto:browen@nymas.org) or 718-834-1414.

## Politicians

*Broken Glass: Caleb Cushing and the Shattering of the Union*, by John M. Belohlavek. Kent, Oh.: Kent State University Press, 2005. Pp. xiv, 482. Illus., map, notes, biblio., index. \$65.00. ISBN: 0-87338-841-2.

A solid biography of the Massachusetts Democrat who was variously diplomat, politician, volunteer (in the Mexican War), U.S. Attorney General, and advisor to three presidents, Lincoln, Johnson, and Grant. The book is particularly good for its insights into the political life of the Civil War era, but is most likely to be valuable to the specialist.

*"War Governor of the South": North Carolina's Zeb Vance in the Confederacy*, by Joe A. Mobley. Gainesville, Fla.: University Press of Florida, 2005. Pp. xiv, 264. Illus., notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 0-8130-2849-3.

*"War Governor of the South"* addresses one of the most overlooked aspects of the Civil War, the role of the state governors in the war effort, in this case in the Confederacy. Zeb Vance was one of the governors often considered hostile to Jefferson Davis' efforts to create a government capable of carrying on a successful war. This extensively researched book takes a look at that assertion – essentially a part of the "Lost Cause Myth" – to reveal the complexities behind Vance's actions, ranging from a concern about the erosions of "state rights" by Davis' alleged centralizing policies, to the need to cope with widespread internal dissent. In the process, the book also demonstrates Vance's commitment to the cause and his many unheralded positive contributions.

## Commanders

*Wade Hampton: Confederate Warrior, Conservative Statesman*, by Walter Brian Cisco. Washington: Brassey's/Potomac Books, 2004. Pp. xiii, 399. Illus.,

maps, notes, biblio., index. \$35.00. ISBN: 1-57488-626-6.

Although Hampton's role in the Civil War is the natural focus of the work, it takes up only about half the volume, leaving considerable room for his political activities during and after Reconstruction. The work provides a very detailed look at Hampton's brilliance as a military commander, though the author curiously evades addressing the question as to who – Stuart or Hampton – served Lee better as commander of his cavalry. The author repeats a number of "Lost Cause" myths, however, including the charge that Grant was careless with the lives of his troops. This reflects a rather clearly pro-Confederate stance of the work. In his treatment of Hampton's private affairs, the author omits discussion of Hampton's role as one of the major slave owners in the country.

*John M. Schofield and the Politics of General-ship*, by Donald B. Connelly. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. Pp. xiv, 471. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$49.95. ISBN: 0-8078-3007-0.

For most of the Civil War, John M. Schofield commanded military districts, most notably in Missouri, where he had to cope with widespread partisan operations. It was not until early in 1864 that he managed to "escape to the front," going on to command an army corps in the Atlanta, Tennessee, and Carolina Campaigns. In contrast to many biographies of Civil War notables, this work provides a comprehensive look not only at Schofield's wartime career, but also his rather distinguished post-war service, which included Reconstruction duty, a stint as Secretary of War, diplomatic service, and seven years as Commanding General of the Army, 1888-1895. An excellent account of the life and work of a rather overlooked officer.

*Alexander "Fighting Elleck" Hays: The Life of a Civil War General, From West Point to the Wilderness*, by Wayne Mahood. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2005. Pp. ix, 222. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 0-7864-2213-0.

One of many "second tier" commanders long in need of a biography, Alexander Hays has one at last. While never going to rank among the greatest of the war's commanders, Hays proved able and reliable, and was highly respected by his peers and his superiors. This work traces Hays' life from his boyhood in Pennsylvania, through West Point (Class of '44, with Simon Bolivar Buckner and Winfield Scott Hancock), into the in the Mexican War and then into civilian life for several years, before returning to active duty as a regimental commander in 1861. Over the next three years, Hays rose to division command before he was killed in action in the Wilderness. In addition to the Hays's life, this work provides useful insights into the nature of society, life at West Point, the military profession, and the conduct of war during the mid-nineteenth century.

*Prince of Edisto: Brigadier General Micah Jenkins, CSA*, by James K. Swisher. Revised edition. Shippenburg, Pa.: White Mane, 2002. Pp. xxii, 248. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$19.95 paper. ISBN: 1-57249-304-6.

*Prince of Edisto* continues to be the only real biography of one of the Confederacy's notable brigade commanders. The work opens with an excellent introduction to the aristocratic culture of the Carolina Sea Islands into which the general was born. It then carries the reader through the young man's education at what is now The Citadel, in the process providing the reader a good deal of background on the development of military educational institutions in the South. On graduating, Jenkins became an educator, himself founding a small college, with a corps of cadets, and then went on to command a regiment and then a brigade in Confederate service, before being killed-in-action by "friendly fire" in the Wilderness. Although not an inspired work, despite a number of errors (e.g., "Barynard" for "Bayard"), *Prince of Edisto* is useful, and informative.

*A Confederate Chronicle: The Life of a Civil War Survivor*, by Pamela Chase Hain. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2005. Pp. xvii, 273. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 0-8262-1599-8.

A biography of Thomas L. Wragg, who served as a common soldier in a Virginia regiment in 1861, fighting in several skirmishes and at Bull Run, and then entered the Confederate Navy, in which he was commissioned. Wragg served aboard the ironclad gunboat *Georgia* for time and then the ironclad *Atlanta*, which was captured in mid-1863. After about a year as a prisoner-of-war, he was exchanged, after which he served for a time in the James River Squadron, and then back in the infantry during the closing weeks of the war. Drawn from Wagg's letters and notebooks, as well as other documents, *A Confederate Chronicle* focuses on his wartime years, and provides an interesting look at both army and navy service, as well as the life of a prisoner-of-war.

*Basil Wilson Duke, CSA: The Right Man in the Right Place*, by Gary Robert Matthews. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2005. Pp. xviii, 358. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 0-8131-2375-5.

This is the first biography of a very overlooked officer, and it's a good one. Duke, a brother-in-law to John Hunt Morgan, served in with distinction on all of the latter's famed cavalry raids into Union-held territory, culminating in the "Ohio Raid." Citing contemporary records, the author demonstrates that Duke often played a critical role in the success of Morgan's operations, a point which the latter himself often conceded. Even a year in a prisoner-of-war camp did not dampen Duke's ardor for the cause. Even after the war, Duke continued to fight for the Confederacy,

as one of the creators of the “Lost Cause” myth, most notably as editor of *The Southern Bivouac*. A useful addition to the lives of the Confederate generals and the literature of the war.

## Reminder

Annual dues are \$35.00,  
payable in September

### War & Society

*Enemies of the Country: New Perspectives on Unionists in the Civil War South*, edited by John C. Inscoe and Robert C. Kenzer. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2001. Pp. vii, 242. Illus., notes, biblio., index. \$19.95 paper. ISBN: 0-8203-2660-7.

Although Unionist sentiment in the Confederacy was not as extensive as Lincoln and some others believed, it certainly was widespread and presented the South with a potential – and sometimes real – internal security problem, from individual acts of opposition through communitarian resistance and outright insurgency. The ten essays in this volume cover the lives and activities of Unionists across the entire South, from thinly populated areas of Appalachia to cities such as Atlanta and Montgomery, across the range of socio-economic classes, ethnic groups, and divided families. The essays generally focus on people who were more or less actively opposed to the Confederacy, even if only by refusing cooperation or dodging the draft. An excellent look at Unionism in the wartime South.

*Banners South: A Northern Community at War*, by Edmund J. Raus, Jr. Kent, Oh.: Kent State University Press, 2005. Pp. xiv, 333. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$39.00. ISBN: 0-87338-842-9.

*Banners South* deals not only with the effects of the Civil War on the upstate New York town of Cortland, but also of the town’s role in the war, both at home and in the field. It covers the operations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> New York Volunteers, in which many of the town’s young men served, and delves deeply into their backgrounds, motivations, and views on slavery, secession, war, and more, as they fight with the Army of the Potomac during the great battles of 1862. Thus, *Banners South* is not quite a “community study,” though it is that, and not quite a regimental, though it is that too. The work is well documented, and the notes are worth reading, for they are often “mini-appendices,” providing valuable additional ideas, alternative views, and sometimes amusing side-lights to life during the war.

*The Boundaries of American Political Culture in the Civil War Era*, by Mark E. Neely Jr. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Pp. xiv, 159. Illus., notes, biblio., index. \$29.95. ISBN: 0-8078-2986-2.

This slender volume is in many ways a ground-breaking look at how the average American thought and participated in politics in the decades around the Civil War. Arguing against the modern view that most

Americans were “detached” from the political issues of the times, the author marshals considerable evidence to suggest quite the contrary. Evidence includes everything from popular songs, poems, and prints to public oratory, including sermons, and political rallies, as well as newspaper editorials and political tracts, and the widespread popular mobilization in support of the war all of which strongly support the central theme (oddly, the author omits a look at rioting as a form of political participation). Perhaps most tellingly, the book suggests that Americans were *more* connected to the political process then than today. How often are we likely to find the picture of a politician hanging in someone’s home today?

*The Business of Civil War: Military Mobilization and the State, 1861-1865*, by Mark R. Wilson. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Pp. xii, 306. Illus., tables, append., notes, biblio., index. \$45.00. ISBN: 0-8018-8348-2

A highly readable account of evolution of the Union supply system during the war. The focus is on Union mobilization, with a strong stress on the logistical aspects of recruiting and fielding the enormous numbers of troops involved. The book opens by looking at the evolution of the federal military logistical system, which sets the stage for a look at how the logistical muddle of 1861 developed into an efficient military mobilization system by war’s end. Along the way, the book discusses the rise of a “mixed military economy.” It examines the importance of the states in clothing, arming, and equipping recruits in the first year of the war, provides an analysis of contracting used, and gives us a look at corruption. A good book for anyone interested in logistics, as well as the more serious student of the Civil War.

### “Regimentals”

*Chicago’s Battery Boys: The Chicago Mercantile Battery in the Civil War’s Western Theater*, by Richard Brady Williams. New York: Savas Beatie, 2005. Pp. xxviii, 588. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$39.95. ISBN: 1-932714-06-5.

*Chicago’s Battery Boys* is a richly detailed account of the Chicago Mercantile Independent Light Battery. Raised in mid-1862 by the Chicago Mercantile Association (no connection with the modern Mercantile Exchange), the battery campaigned with Grant against Vicksburg, then engaged in operations in Texas and around New Orleans until the end of the war. The author effectively combines a carefully documented traditional narrative account of the battery’s service, with profiles of prominent members, a good deal of social and political background information, and a look at the artilleryman’s life in and out of battle. He makes effective use of many first hand accounts, particularly letters from officers and men. The maps are very well done, clear and informative. Altogether an excellent unit history.

*The Union Cavalry Comes of Age: Hartwood Church to Brandy Station, 1863*, by Eric J. Wittenberg. Washington: Potomac Books, 2003. Pp. xvii, 389. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$21095 paper. ISBN: 1-57488-650-9.

An organizational and operational account of the development of the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac from its formation early in 1863 through mid-year. The book thus jumps into the middle of the story of Union mounted troops in the East, when more background might have been useful, if only to explain why it had done so poorly earlier. Nevertheless, this is a well-written account, with a good many excellent profiles of notable commanders, which often get into how their personal foibles and histories affected their performance (for example, how Alfred Pleasanton's acute xenophobia resulted in the virtual barring of several excellent European officers from senior commands). A great many fights are described in the book, many of them, especially the smaller ones, important to the development of the cavalry, but normally receiving only passing mention, if that, in accounts of the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac. A useful book for anyone interested in the war in the East.

*Shock Troops of the Confederacy: The Sharp-shooter Battalions of the Army of Northern Virginia*, by Fred L. Ray. Ashville, N.C.: CFS Press, 2006. Pp. xviii, 414. Illus., diagr., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$34.95. ISBN: 0-9649585-5-4

A very good history of light infantry units – generally designated “sharpshooters” by both sides – in the Confederate Army, with a focus on the Army of Northern Virginia. The author begins with a short account of the evolution of light infantry and then plunges into a detailed account of the organization, tactics, equipment, and missions of Confederate light infantry units. Acting as scouts, skirmishers, pickets, and even raiders, these units often proved quite important, but their operations have generally been neglected. The work ends with some treatment of Union light infantry forces and takes a quick look at light infantry operations in later wars. Well written, and generally free of egregious errors (though the author does repeat the oft-told line about Southerners being mostly country boys in contrast to “urban” Northerners), this is a valuable contribution to the literature on the war.

### The Naval Side

*Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War*, by Michael J. Bennett. Chapel Hill: North Carolina State University, 2004. Pp. xv, 337. Illus., tables, notes, biblio., index. \$34.95. ISBN: 0-8078-2870-X.

A social history of Union sailors, *Union Jacks* opens with an extensive look into the social and ethnic background of Union seamen, which differed markedly from that of their counterparts in the army, the men

generally being more likely to be foreign born, from the urban working class, and rather less well-educated than volunteers in the Army. The book goes on to discuss training, living and working conditions, race relations, particularly important given that ships' crews were essentially “integrated,” and even looks into efforts to “reform” them, as well as the experience of battle. *Union Jacks* will prove very useful to anyone interested in the naval side of the Civil War, and in the life of the ordinary man in the service.

*Fire on the Water: The USS Kearsarge and the CSS Alabama*, by James Gindlesperrger. Shippensburg, Pa.: Burd Street Press, 2003. Pp. xvi, 333. Illus., maps, append., notes, biblio., index. \$27.95 paper. ISBN: 1-57249-378-X.

*Fire on the Water* provides the reader with parallel biographies of two of the most famous ships of the Civil War and an account of their epic battle off Cherbourg in June of 1864. This helps to point out how intertwined their histories were. It book opens with a short, but good look at the reasons why the two vessels came to be built, then follows with some detail on their design and construction, in which, naturally, the complexities of covertly constructing a warship for the Confederacy in Britain necessarily takes center stage. The operations of both vessels are followed on a month-by-month basis, which not only gives the reader a good picture of the ways of a commerce raider, but also of how the ships seeking to find her operated. Although the battle between them is told in only one chapter, it is well told, helps demonstrate some of the characteristics of cruiser warfare in the period. An excellent contribution to the literature of the war at sea and of commerce raiding in particular.

### Membership News

At its April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the NYMAS Board elected veteran member **Valerie Eds** Secretary, and added **Saul Carney** to the Board, both by unanimous votes.

**Valerie Eds** has recently presented two papers, "The Chick from I.33: Context of the Female Illustration in the Oldest European Work on Personal Combat" presented at the 41st International Congress on Medieval Studies, May 7<sup>th</sup>, "Means, Motive, Opportunity: Medieval Women and the Recourse to Arms," at the 20th Barnard Conference, "War & Peace in the Middle Ages and Renaissance", on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> (a notable accomplishment, as the Barnard Conference has a very limited number of slots), seen several articles published, including "Sichelgaita of Salerno: Amazon or Trophy Wife?", *Journal of Medieval Military History* 3 (2005), and a chapter in *John of Mantua, Treatise on the 'Song of Songs' for Countess Matilda, Selected Translations*. (TEAMS, Medieval Institute Press), and is a contributor to *The Encyclopedia of Women in World History* (Oxford) and *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Warfare and Technology* (Routledge), both forthcoming.

In June, the Naval Institute Press released the, fifth edition of *The Naval Institute Guide to World Naval Weapon Systems*, by NYMAS boardmember **Norman Friedman**. On July 15<sup>th</sup>, Chatham Press in Britain released Norman's *British Destroyers and Frigates: The Second World War and After*, which will be available in the U.S. from MBI in the United States). This is part of a projected two volume work on British destroyers, the second volume of which will cover ships designed through the early 1930s.

**Wayne Thornton** of Woburn, Mass., and **Mark Donnelly** of Manhattan, have recently joined NYMAS.

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Other

The 1862 Plot to Kidnap Jefferson Davis, by Victory Vifquain, edited by Jeffrey H. Smith and Phillip Thomas Tucker. Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 2005. Pp. xxxii, 195. Illus., map, notes, biblio., index. \$22.00 paper. ISBN: 0-8032-9630-4.

A lively account by one of the principals of a free-lance conspiracy among four French and Belgian officers in Union service to kidnap the Confederate President. They failed, of course, but their adventures were fully in keeping with the nicknames they adopted, Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and d'Artagnan. Along the way there's a good deal of interesting material about military and civilian life in the period. The editors have provided a valuable biography of Vifquain, who was a prominent early settler in Nebraska, as well as useful notes and an index. Worth reading for anyone with more than a passing interest in the Civil War.

Scandals of the Civil War, by Douglas Lee Gibboney. Shippensburg, Pa.: Burd Street Press, 2005. Pp. xi, 239. Illus., notes, index. \$9.95 paper. ISBN: 1-57249-364-X.

A wonderfully enjoyable walk through the seamier side of the Civil War, from drunkards and grafters, to womanizers and duelists, and more, including short profiles on three perennially interesting characters, Dan Sickles, Ben Butler, and Mary Todd Lincoln. *Scandals of the Civil War* is often skeptical about some of the tales, pointing out the dubious nature of many of the sources. It is thus useful in helping the reader sort out myth from reality, and will be a pleasant read for anyone with even a passing interest in the Civil War.

The Civil War: A Concise Account by a Noted Southern Historian, by Grady McWhiney. Abilene, Tex.: McWhiney Foundation/ McMurray University, 2005. Pp. 142. Maps, index. \$12.95 paper. ISBN: 1-8931-1449-X.

A well-written and comprehensive, summary history of the U.S. from the 1820s through Reconstruction, with a natural focus on the Civil War. The work is, however, marred by the author's "Southernness." Although certainly up front about it, McWhiney cannot be excused for telling us about draft resistance in the

North, but offering not a word about it in the South, nor anything about Confederate desertion, nor the role of black troops in the Union ranks (though thankfully nothing about mythic "black Confederates" either), and so forth. But this very Southernness does help make it a valuable read.

Silent Sentinels: A Reference Guide to the Artillery at Gettysburg, by George Newton. New York: Savas Beattie, 2005. Pp. xx, 259. Illus., maps, tables, append., notes, biblio., index. \$29.95. ISBN: 1-932714-14-6.

Silent Sentinels is at once a handbook on artillery in the Civil War, an account of the artillery of both armies during the Gettysburg Campaign, and a guide to the guns displayed at the Gettysburg National Battlefield Park. It is clear, very well-illustrated, has detailed explanations of the organization and working of the guns, provides some interesting battle pieces, and offers loads of hard information. This is likely to be of considerable value to anyone interested in the Civil War, and particularly Gettysburg.

The Confederate States of America: What Might Have Been, by Roger L. Ransom. New York: Norton, 2005. Pp. xv, 352. Maps, tables, figs., append., notes, biblio., index. \$25.95. ISBN: 0-393-0597-7.

A "counterfactual" that presupposes a different course of the Gettysburg Campaign, with Confederate victory leading to widespread disorders in the North, foreign intervention, and Southern independence. The book goes on from there to look at the implications of these events on subsequent history, well into the twentieth century. There is some value in Prof. Ransom's tinkering with history. He certainly lays out Lee's options in the Gettysburg Campaign, and discusses how different choices may have had led to a different outcome for the Confederacy. But whether this would have led to a Confederate victory in the war is much less well developed; assuming British recognition in the aftermath of the Emancipation Proclamation is a reach, as is the assumption—quite common in Civil War counterfactuals—that the South would have abolished slavery within less than 20 years. And trying to look into the implications of Confederate independence a century later is wholly unrealistic. A worthwhile read for the professional, particularly in Ransom's look at the situation mid-war.

Virginia at War, 1861, edited by William C. Davis and James I. Robertson, Jr. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2005. Pp. x, 241. Map, notes, biblio., index. \$35.00. ISBN: 0-8131-2372-0.

Eight essays that look at Virginia during the first year of the Civil War. The themes of some of the essays demonstrate the broad scope of the work, the secession convention, mobilization, military operations, "Afro-Virginians" and the war, and so forth. The book also includes portions of the diary of a woman, providing a personal look at the events. A number of the essays are quite insightful, notably that on mobilization, which takes a look at the social and

economic background of the men who stepped forward. Several of the essays take a distinctly “Southern” view of things. *Virginia at War, 1861* is intended as the first of a four volume set, each to discuss the effects of the war on the state, and the state’s role in the war, in each year of the Civil War.

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**Reference**

*Civil War High Commands*, by John H. Eicher and David J. Eicher. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. Pp. xxv, 1009. Illus., tables, chron., biblio., index. \$75.00. ISBN: 0-8047-3641-3.

*Civil War High Commands* is a “top down” look at the military command structure for both sides. It begins with the “geopolitical” organization, then goes on to the senior civil officers, state as well as national, military law, administrative, strategic, operational, and

organizational structures of the respective war and navy departments, and on to the organization of the forces themselves, including rank structures and more.

The authors then go on to cover regular and volunteer flag officers of both the armies and navies, officers with brevets, senior militia commanders in the various states (which the authors note is incomplete), as well as men holding flag posts but never promoted, those with “acting” flag rank, and those nominated for flag rank but not confirmed. The result is nearly 3,400 mini-biographies. And there’s a lot more.

As John Y. Simon comments, in his foreword, *Civil War High Commands* “is neither a book to curl up with nor one to take to the beach.” But it is an enormously valuable reference guide to the command structure of both sides during the Civil War. --*Albert A. Nofi, CNA*

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Lewis Finkelstein
1942-2006

Lewis Finkelstein, longtime NYMAS member, boardmember, NYMAS secretary, and coordinator of the NYMAS book awards program, died in late August at his home in Jamaica, NY.

Lewis served in the US Navy from 1963 to 1967 and worked as a system analyst in Manhattan.

He was a lover of books and his ongoing contributions to NYMAS’ Arthur Goodzeit Book Award program will be missed.

Lewis is survived by two younger brothers, David in Massachusetts and Mark in Pennsylvania. A memorial service is being planned.

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**Michael Pahios**  
**1946-2006**

*Michael Pahios, a member since NYMAS’ earliest days, passed away unexpectedly on August 8, 2006.*

*Michael recently retired as a graphic artist and cameraman at NBC. He was a Marine Corps veteran who saw action in Vietnam. He was later active in Veterans for Peace and other causes where Michael gave generously of himself.*

*A number of NYMAS members attended his memorial service in Brooklyn and shared many memories of Michael as a colorful personality, a caring friend and an important part of the lives of those who knew him.*

*-Bob Rowen*

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The New York Military Affairs Symposium
CUNY Graduate Center. c/o History Department, Room 5114
365 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y., 10016

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