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## HFCWRT Monthly Newsletter

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- DATE:** Wednesday, October 14th, 2015
- TIME:** Dinner 7:00 PM; Program 8:00
- PLACE:** Camp Hill Methodist Church, Harpers Ferry, WV
- SPEAKER:** Calvin Goddard Zon
- SUBJECT:** *Divided We Fall: The Confederacy's Collapse from Within: A State by State Account*

### The Speaker:

Calvin Goddard Zon earned a B.A. from Davidson College where he majored in American history and an M.A. from the American University. He has taught high school American history. He was a longtime staff writer for the Washington Star daily newspaper, the Press Associates, Inc. news service, the *United Mine Workers Journal*, and worked as a copy editor for *Bloomberg BNA's Daily Labor Report*. He is past commander of the Washington area camp of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, a companion of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, and a member of the Lincoln Forum. His articles have appeared in the *Civil War News*, *The Civil War Times*, *People magazine*, *the National Catholic Reporter*, *The Progressive*, and *In These Times*. He served for six years in the U.S. Army Reserve. He has presented his

books at Civil War Round Tables and other venues from South Carolina to New England. Zon's first book, *The Good Fight That Didn't End: Henry P. Goddard's Accounts of Civil War and Peace* is based on the letters and writings of his great-grandfather.

## The Subject

Calvin Zon will speak on the subject of his latest book. *Divided We Fall: The Confederacy's Collapse from Within, A State-by-State Account* makes the case that active opposition among Southerners in the eleven seceded states played a major role in the Confederacy's downfall. The Southern war for independence was ultimately lost on the battlefield, but the collapse of the home front was equally decisive. Northern opposition to the war from the Democrat Copperheads to the New York draft riot is a familiar story. Much less is known about the widespread Southern opposition to the Confederacy which led to its downfall. Dissent took many forms: the initial rejection of secession by four Southern states, secret peace organizations, Unionist guerrilla bands, urban spy networks, resistance to the draft, a rising tide of desertions, food riots, and the states rights' dogma that undermined strategic military cooperation with the government in Richmond. Anti-Confederate activity was scattered across a surprising number of towns, cities, and counties in the eleven states of the Confederacy. Opposition to secession was especially strong in the mountainous, mostly non-slaveholding sections of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Some 100,000 white Southerners enlisted in the Union army and a state-by-state breakdown is included. Policies enacted by the Confederate Congress which favored wealthy slaveholders aggravated class disparities and contributed to a growing disenchantment and active obstruction of the Southern cause. Each of the eleven states is examined in the order of their secession and accounts are given of activities and organizations of Southern Unionists and their leaders who ranged from high-society spies and a turncoat Confederate general to dirt-farmer guerrillas, propagandists, and politicians.

## The Meal

A family-style meal will be served at 7:00 PM prior to the program. The cost of the meal is \$15.00 per person. Reservations for the meal **must be made no later than Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**, with Kyle Wichtendahl at [kfwichtendahl@gmail.com](mailto:kfwichtendahl@gmail.com) or 301-639-8855. The meal will be Italian Night: Baked Lasagna, Baked Ziti, Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Salad Bar, Iced Tea, Coffee, Garlic Bread, Butter & Dessert.

## States' Rights in the Colonies and After the Civil War

When the original 13 independent colonies announced their independence from Great Britain in 1776 they regarded themselves as sovereign (independent) states. The demands of the Revolutionary War forced the states to recognize a need for a central government. The Continental Congress established Articles of Confederation, an agreement that created a weak central government. In the years following the Revolutionary War, individual states created their own laws, attempted to make foreign treaties on their own,

etc. Europe saw the young United States as weak. The polyglot of laws, danger from Europe and the national government's ineffectual response to Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts convinced many Americans that a "more perfect union" was needed. The United States Constitution, which the country has operated under since 1789, strengthened the central government in many ways, including taxation, the ability to call up state militias for national service, etc. It also established certain individual rights throughout the nation, including freedoms of speech, assembly, religion, etc. The Ninth Amendment stated, "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people," and the Tenth Amendment says, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." These two amendments assured the states of continued autonomy in handling most of their internal affairs.

Disputes arose at times. During the War of 1812, New England states met to discuss seceding from the Union because the war was interfering with their trade with Britain. In 1832 national tariffs that benefited Northern manufacturers while hurting the economy of Southern states led to the Nullification Crisis, in which South Carolina declared the tariffs null and void. The state threatened to leave the Union, but a compromise was reached that temporarily defused the crisis.

What brought the question of states' rights to the fore was changing attitudes toward slavery. Northern abolitionists began vehemently assailing the institution and the states that continued to practice it, nearly all of them below the Mason-Dixon Line. Some Northerners aided the escape of runaway slaves (a violation of the Constitution's provisions that made a fugitive from one state a fugitive in every state) and mobs sometimes assaulted slave owners and slave hunters seeking runaways. (Slavery originally existed in all states, and the writers of the Constitution avoided addressing the matter of perpetuating or ending slavery in order to obtain ratification from all states.) When victory in the Mexican War (1846-48) resulted in the US expanding its territory all the way to the Pacific Ocean, the issue of whether or not to permit slavery in the new territories arose. The debate over slavery intensified, creating a widening gap between slaveholding and non-slaveholding states. When a "purely regional party," the new Republican Party swept the 1859 elections in the North and the party's candidate Abraham Lincoln, an avowed foe of the expansion of slavery, Southern states seceded from the Union.

It has been said that before the Civil War the country was referred to as "The United States are ..." but after the war the description became "The United States is ..." Yet questions of federal vs. state power continued to crop up. Virginia sued to reclaim certain of its western counties that had become part of the breakaway state of West Virginia during the war but was rebuffed by the Supreme Court, and Reconstruction raised many federal vs. states questions.

In recent years States' Rights philosophies have been adopted by many who oppose the growth of the federal government and its recognition of social changes such as legalized abortion. The Affordable Care Act, widely known as Obamacare, has generated intense debates over the ability of the federal government to force states to adopt a nationwide healthcare law. (Excerpted from HISTORYNET).