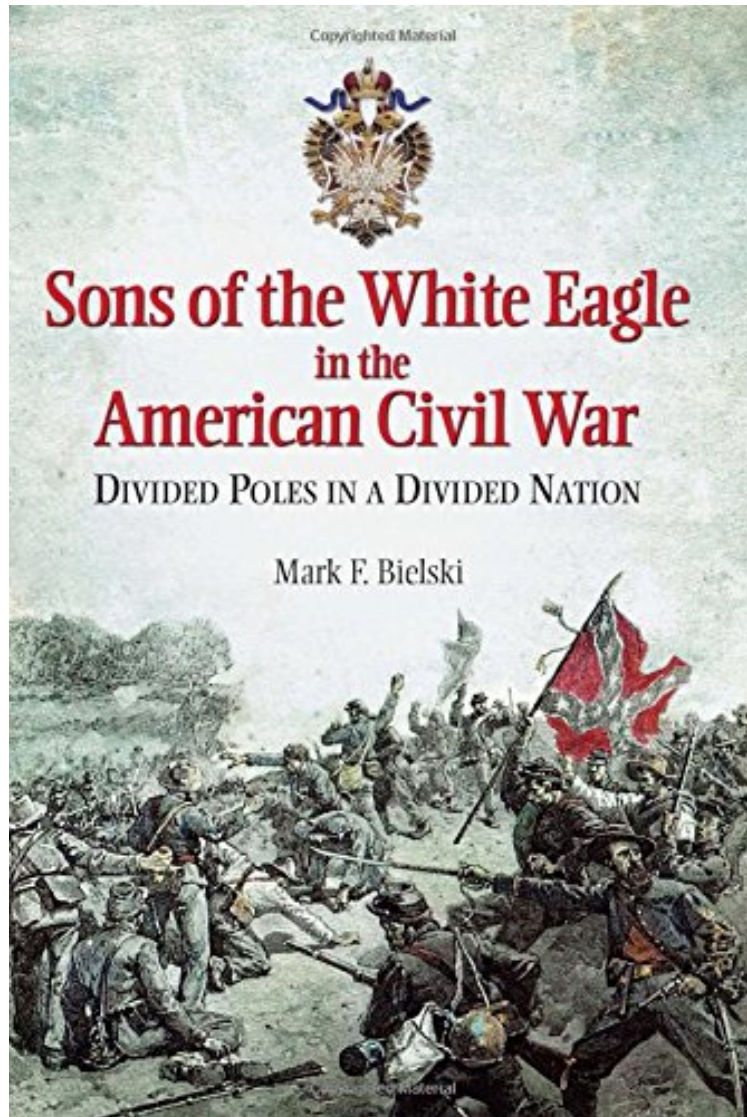


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Sons of the White Eagle in the American Civil War: Divided Poles in a Divided Nation

Mark F. Bielski

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#1914331 in Books Bielski Mark F 2016-05-27 2016-06-10Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.20 x 1.00 x 6.20L, .0 #File Name: 1612003583312 pagesSons of the White Eagle in the American Civil War Divided Poles in a Divided Nation | File size: 44.Mb

Mark F. Bielski : Sons of the White Eagle in the American Civil War: Divided Poles in a Divided Nation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sons of the White Eagle in the American Civil War: Divided Poles in a Divided Nation:

This book describes nine transplanted Poles who participated in the Civil War. They span three generations and are connected by culture, nationality and adherence to their principles and ideals. The common thread that runs through their lives—the Polish White Eagle—is that they came from a country that had basically disintegrated at the end of the previous century, yet they carried the concepts of freedom they inherited from their forefathers to the New World to which they immigrated. Once in America the pre-war political feuds, ferocious ensuing battles, captures, prison camp escapes and privations of war—often in the words of the soldiers themselves—are fully described. More highly trained in warfare than their American brethren—and certainly more inured to struggles for nationhood—the Poles made a more significant contribution to Civil War combat than is usually described. The first group had fought in the 1830 war for freedom from the Russian Empire. The European revolutionary struggles of the 1840's molded the next generation. The two of the youngest generation came of age just as the Civil War began, entered military service as enlisted men and finished as officers. Of the group, four sided with the North and four with the South, and the other began in the Confederate cavalry and finished fighting for the Union side. All but one came from aristocratic backgrounds. In a war commonly categorized as a “brother against brother,” a struggle between two American regions, history has not devoted a great deal of attention to the participation of Poles, and foreigners in general. These men fought with a belief in European democratic liberalism. Whether for the North to keep a Union together or to form a new nation from the Southern states, they held to their ideals, and in America's own greatest conflict continued to fight for their beliefs. Nominated for the Gilder Lehrman Prize

"...Complementing the well-organized text are a number of photographs and illustrations of the nine subjects and others cited therein...the maps, primarily of the battles where each man fought (Gettysburg, Second Manassas, etc.) but also including one of northern Mississippi where Karge served, are excellent, include scale and specify the location of each man's unit in the fight...The author has demonstrated an extensive use of primary as well as secondary sources from memoirs and newspapers to the Official Records and contemporary books, journals, and articles. The research is impressive as indicated in the bibliography. The historiography of this unfortunate period of American history has certainly been enhanced by Mark Bielski. It should be incumbent upon others to continue to delve into the origins, backgrounds, and service of other foreign nationals who participated on both sides of the conflict in order to more fully understand their motivations to sacrifice on behalf of their adopted country and set an example for those of their native land." (NY Journal of Books)"In recent decades, immigrant studies have assumed a much more prominent place in the Civil War literature. However, even after taking into account the comparatively minute scale of their contributions to both armies, the Polish experience has been unduly buried beneath the weight exerted by the far more numerous European ethnic groups. Sons of the White Eagle in the American Civil War not only brings into sharp focus the actions and significance of a number of prominent military figures (and one civilian), it also usefully examines the cultural and political connections between Poland and the United States throughout the turbulent first half of the nineteenth century." (Civil War Books and Authors)"...explores what these Poles were doing in the United States, what motivated them to participate in the war, and why some of them fought on the Confederate and not the Union side...At the heart of the book are detailed profiles of nine sample Polish soldiers, four fought for the North; four for the South.....gives useful insight into an underreported aspect of the war: the experience of Polish immigrants in both Northern and Southern armies." (Civil War News)"Mark F. Bielski offers a welcome take on the Polish Civil War story in his new book... The author helpfully puts his story into the larger context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Polish history as well as the previous military service of Polish heroes such as Thaddeus Kościuszko and Casimir Pulaski in the American Revolutionary War." (The Journal of Southern History)About the AuthorMark Bielski is a director at Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours and the Ambrose Institute in New Orleans, where he is involved in business and educational development, historical guiding, lecturing and itinerary design for tours that primarily involve World War II and the American Civil War. He has a Ph.D. in History from the University of Birmingham (England), and an M.A. and B.A. in English from Georgetown and Tulane Universities, respectively. His career has involved academics, history and journalism, and he is a member of the American Historical Association and the Society for Military History.