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Center for the Study of War and Society

Fall 2013

War Stories Fall 2013

Center for the Study of War & Society

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Fall 2013
csws.utk.edu
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THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE 
KNOXVILLE

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

This past year has been marked by a lot of activity. In cooperation with the UT Libraries, we worked on applying for an outside grant (from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission) to digitize our collection of oral history interviews and make them available online.

With funding from the UT Office of Research, we organized a productive workshop in the spring to plan our online digital archive project. Funding was also renewed for the "AfterWars" faculty research seminar we have hosted since 2009.

Our outreach efforts intensified, with a redesigned website and visits to local events and organizations to get the word out about our center. We were delighted to get more good news of graduate student successes (see page 3). It was also a thrill in June to hear our scholar in residence, Capt. Rosemary Mariner, speaking on NPR about the future of the military.

And most of all, we are grateful for the continuing support and donations of Friends of the Center like yourself!

—*Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, Director*

CSWS STAFF

VEJAS G. LIULEVICIUS, director

CYNTHIA L. TINKER, program coordinator

ROSEMARY B. MARINER, scholar-in-residence

JORDAN KUCK, graduate assistant

WILL RALL, graduate assistant



GENERAL NEYLAND AT WORK.
(SILER COLLECTION)

Football as War: The Life and Times of General R.R. Neyland

By James B. Lloyd

The name Neyland is synonymous with the University of Tennessee and its glorious football tradition, and yet people knew relatively little about the background of General Robert Reese Neyland until 1990 when his biography was published. But when Golden Coast Publishing Company commissioned Neyland: The Gridiron General in the spring of 1988, the task of reconstructing events of Neyland's childhood and years at West Point seemed almost insurmountable.

Bob Gilbert, University of Tennessee News Center Director, agreed to undertake the project, subject to Neyland's sons, Robert and Lewis, authorizing it as the official biography. They did that—and more. They provided boxes of personal memorabilia—letters, family photographs, tiny scraps of paper and the backs of envelopes on which Neyland had jotted notes, and two ledger books containing his hand-written notes about Tennessee football teams he coached from 1926 through 1952.

The United States Department of the Army provided the detailed chronology of Neyland's military career, including his years at West Point, the year he took part in combat against Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa, and his service in the China-Burma-India theatre during World War II. Still, the book would have been impossible if Neyland, after his retirement from coaching, had not composed a thirty thousand-word manuscript about his childhood, his years at West Point, and some of his experiences during World War II.

THE GRIDIRON GENERAL

At West Point, **Robert Reese Neyland**, won twenty consecutive games pitching for the Army, was a starting end

on the Cadets' 1914 national championship football team, and was the academy's heavyweight boxing champion during his final three years.

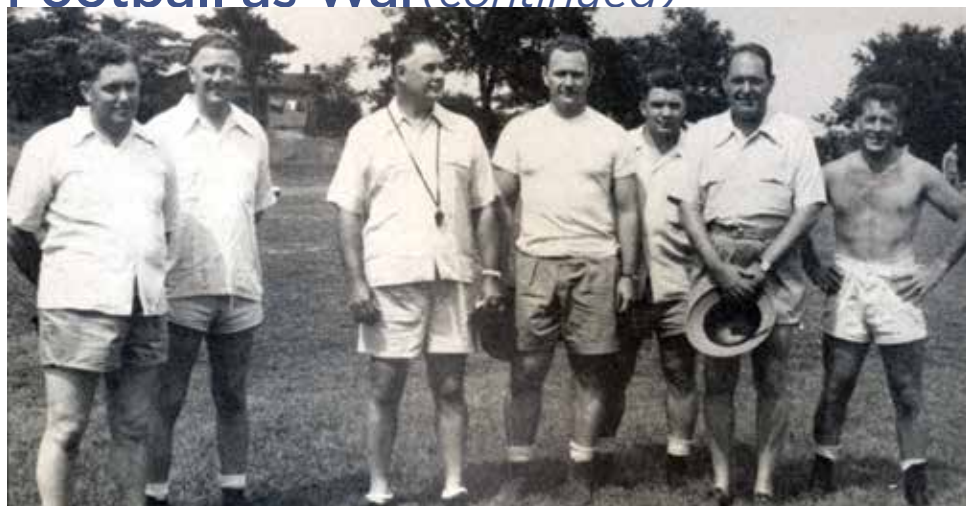
During World

War II, Neyland was decorated by the US, British, and Chinese governments. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Chinese Order of the Cloud and Banner, and the Knight Commander, Order of the British Empire.

In Neyland's first four years as head coach, Tennessee lost one game. His winning percentage of 82.9 is the best of any man who coached twenty years or more. From 1938 to 1940, his teams recorded an amazing seventeen consecutive regular-season shutouts, and, incredible as it may sound, today, held 106 of his 173 victims scoreless.



Football as War *(continued)*



ABOVE: VOL COACHING STAFF, 1946. NEYLAND IS THIRD FROM THE LEFT. (SILER COLLECTION)

Although the book focuses solely on presenting a vivid portrait of Neyland the coach, it also introduces the reader to a multi-dimensional personality—a soldier, patriot, educator, engineer, coach, husband, and father, a man who loved flowers and music and fishing, a man who was shy and reserved in public, yet dynamic and compelling when leading men in common cause.

Editors deleted from the book manuscript much material gathered in research, but present and future generations of historians, reporters, and University of Tennessee football fans will be able to develop their own insights into Robert Reese Neyland by

visiting the Special Collections Library at UT Knoxville. The Neyland sons have assigned to the library all of the family memorabilia—the letters, official documents, photographs, hundreds of items—which had been made available to the author of his biography. “Lewis and I felt that all of that material about Dad’s life and his contribution to the University of Tennessee should be preserved in the UT library where it would be permanently available to historians,” Robert Neyland said.

Reprinted from the 1991-92 University of Tennessee, Knoxville Library Development Review. James Lloyd was Special Collections Librarian from 1983 to 2003.

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Graduate Students Win Major Research Fellowships

Graduate students in the Department of History who have been active in the programs of the Center for the Study of War and Society have won an amazing nine major research fellowships in the last five years. The awards include two Fulbright fellowships for archival research in Europe, three DAAD German Academic Exchange Service fellowships, a Berlin Program fellowship, two US Holocaust Memorial Museum fellowships, and a yearlong fellowship at the University of Tennessee Humanities Center.

Our graduate students are also gaining recognition for their research in the historical field by publishing in top venues. Brad Nichols published a chapter in the new *Routledge History of the Holocaust* on Nazi racial policies in occupied Poland. CSWS graduate assistant Jordan Kuck has an article appearing this fall in *Fascism: The Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies* on the Ulmanis regime in interwar Latvia. Former CSWS graduate assistant Michael McConnell, now returned from his archival research

in Germany on a DAAD fellowship, published his article, “The Situation Is Once Again Quiet’: Gestapo Crimes in the Rhineland, Fall 1944” in the journal *Central European History*.

One key to the students’ success is that they are busy throughout the year. During the summer, they travel to archives or participate in scholarly programs. For example, Geoff Krempa attended the Junior Scholars’ Training Seminar of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC. In addition, Josh Sander won two summer fellowships: one for the summer seminar at the Center for Jewish History Summer Archival and Research Seminar in New York City and the other to the Holocaust Educational Foundation’s Summer Institute on the Holocaust and Jewish Civilization, held in Chicago. This is a renowned, intensive, two-week course of study open to faculty at the college or university level and to graduate students who are pursuing a PhD. Interaction with leading scholars and

IN MEMORIAM

SAMUEL E. HARDMAN, World War II, US Army, 2691 1st MMIA Company Rome (Military Mission to the Italian Army)

other students at these seminars enriches Sander’s dissertation research on Nazi occupation of the Netherlands during World War II.

The center also hosts a research seminar funded through the University of Tennessee Humanities Center. This seminar, titled “AfterWars,” allows advanced graduate students to share their current work while gaining valuable experience in presentation and public speaking.

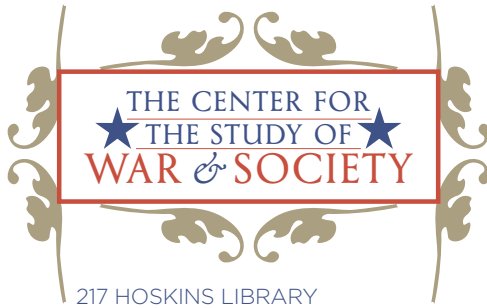
We are incredibly proud of our CSWS-involved students and their successes. The impact will be long-term, as these students become the next generation of productive historians. Thank you for your donations to the center, which help us make this contribution to graduate education at UT.



TOP LEFT: BRAD NICHOLS, JORDAN KUCK, AND MIKE MCCONNELL



BOTTOM LEFT: JOSH SANDER, WILL RALL, AND GEOFF KREMPA



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