



## **BUGLE CALLS, AUGUST 2019**

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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1. AUGUST 17TH BARBEQUE AT THE CLAGUE'S CABIN

Rock Haven, Cabin #13 Shaver Lake [CLICK FOR MAP](#)

BARBEQUE POTLUCK: Last name A-M bring dessert or salad, N-Z appetizer or side dish.

Call Brian & Linda for RSVP & directions (559) 284- 4969

E-mail address: brianhclague@gmail.com

Program to be determined. (Wheatfield at Gettysburg?)

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## 2. UPCOMING EVENTS:

### a. SEPTEMBER MEETING:

Tom Ebert will present on John George Nicolay, Lincoln's private secretary. He will no doubt have his book "Nicolay" available to buy and autograph.

### b. OCTOBER MEETING:

Steve Madden will speak to us, "Shades of Grey".

### c. KEARNEY PARK CIVIL WAR REVISTED: Oct. 26 & 27.

d. NOVEMBER MEETING: Mike Carter speaking: "An Evening with Edward Porter Alexander."

### e. DECEMBER CHRISTMAS PARTY:

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## 3. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MICHAEL SPENCER

Greetings,

Happy summer everyone, hope your being "cool"! Well time for another fantastic message from me. I would like to remind everyone that the summer potluck Shaver Lake is just around the corner August 17th, @1pm bring your appetites, I sure will.

I'm always looking to some tidbits of information regarding the CW to post in the newsletter, here is some on Ulysses S. Grant on July 31st he was promoted to Brigadier General. The following is an excerpt from this day in CW history.

### **Ulysses S. Grant**

Born Hiram Ulysses Grant, in Point Pleasant, Ohio, the future General-in-Chief's name was changed due to a clerical error during his first days at the United States Military Academy at West Point. To his friends, however, he was known simply as "Sam." After a mediocre stint as a cadet, he graduated twenty-first out of the thirty-nine cadets in class of 1843. Yet despite his less than exemplary school record, he performed well as a captain during the Mexican War (1846-1848), winning two citations for gallantry and one for meritorious conduct. Only when the fighting stopped and Grant was assigned monotonous duties at remote posts far from his wife and family did he again begin neglecting his work

and drinking heavily. He resigned in 1854 to avoid being drummed out of the service.

Grant spent the next six years in St. Louis, Missouri with his wife, Julia Dent Grant. After several short-lived pursuits, including a brief episode as a farmer, he moved to Galena, Illinois to be a clerk in his family's store. When the Civil War began in 1861, he jumped at the chance to volunteer for military service in the Union army. His first command was as the colonel of the 21st Illinois Infantry, but he was quickly promoted to brigadier general in July 1861, and in September was given command of the District of Southeast Missouri.

His 1862 triumphs at Fort Henry and [Fort Donelson](#) in western Tennessee won him the nickname “Unconditional Surrender” Grant, and placed him before the public eye. However, when a surprise attack by Confederate forces at the [Battle of Shiloh](#) yielded devastating casualties during the first day's fighting, President [Abraham Lincoln](#) received several demands for Grant's removal from command. Nevertheless, Lincoln refused, stating, “I can't spare this man. He fights.” The following day, Grant's Army - bolstered by troops under Maj. Gen. [Don Carlos Buell](#) - fended off Confederate advances and ultimately won the day.

Grant's hard-won victory at [Vicksburg](#), Mississippi, in May of 1863 was a strategic masterpiece. On May 1, 1863, Grant's army crossed the Mississippi River at the battle of Port Gibson. With Confederate forces unclear of his intentions, Grant sent a portion of

his army under Gen. [William T. Sherman](#) to capture the state capital, Jackson, while setting his sights on Vicksburg with a view toward permanently closing the Confederate supply base. When initial assaults on the city demonstrated the strength of Vicksburg's defenses, the Union army was forced to lay siege to the city. On July 4, 1863, after 46 days of digging trenches and lobbing hand grenades, Confederate general [John Pemberton](#)'s 30,000-man army surrendered. Coupled with the Northern victory at [Gettysburg](#), the capture of Vicksburg marked the turning point in the war. It also made Grant the premier commander in the Federal army. Later that same year, Grant was called upon to break the stalemate at [Chattanooga](#), further cementing his reputation as a capable and effective leader.

In March 1864, President Lincoln elevated Grant to the rank of lieutenant general, and named him general-in-chief of the Armies of the United States. Making his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, Grant was determined to crush [Robert E. Lee](#) and his vaunted Army of Northern Virginia at any cost. Though plagued by reticent subordinates, petty squabbles between generals and horrific casualties, the Federal host bludgeoned Lee from the Rapidan River to the James in what one participant would later describe as "unspoken, unspeakable history." The battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and the subsequent siege of [Petersburg](#) effectively destroyed the rebel army, leading to the fall of Richmond and Lee's surrender at [Appomattox Court House](#).

Though Grant's forces had been depleted by more than half during the last year of the war, it was Lee who surrendered in 1865.

After the Civil War, President Andrew Johnson named Grant Secretary of War over the newly reunited nation. In 1868, running against Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant was elected eighteenth President of the United States. Unfortunately, though apparently innocent of graft himself, Grant's administration was riddled with corruption, and scandal.

For two years following his second term in office, Grant made a triumphal tour of the world. In 1884, he lost his entire savings to a corrupt bank. To make up some of his losses, he wrote about his war experiences for Century Magazine. They proved so popular that he was inspired to write his excellent autobiography, Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant, finishing the two-volume set only a few days before dying of cancer at the age of sixty-three. Ulysses S. Grant is buried in New York City in the largest mausoleum of its kind in the United States. Reminiscent of Napoleon's tomb in Paris, Grant's tomb is a National Memorial.

Regards,

Michael

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#### 4. AFTER ACTION REPORT

OF MAY MEETING SJVCWRT

BY RON VAUGHAN, SECRETARY

There were twelve persons present for our meeting. One was Mike Carter, a long time member, who we haven't seen for a while. Mike is prepared to do a first person impression of Edward Porter Alexander. A new member appeared, Tom Ebert, former CSUF Librarian. He shared information about his new book, "Nicolay," about Lincoln's private secretary, John G. Nicolay. Professor Alan Carden is co-author. It will be out in June. He is negotiating to get a discount for CWRT members. He volunteered to give a program for us.

President Michael Spencer called the meeting to order at 7:27. Treasurer Gale reported our bank balance is \$1382.

Mike Green had a report from Parker Hills, that about \$12,000 has been raised for the informational signs to be erected at Raymond Battlefield. It is hoped that the project will be completed in 2020.

Michael S. reported that S & A Homes wants to build houses on the site of Letterman Field Hospital, at Gettysburg. Many preservation groups are trying to prevent this.

Patty Spencer reported that after Tom Ebert's program in Sept., Steve Madden, from southern Cal., will give a talk in Oct. Mike Carter will speak in Nov.

Patty wrote up reports on two Civil War Female Spies. The first was read by Michael about Rose O'Neal Greenhow. She was

born in 1813. She moved in important political circles and cultivated friendships with presidents, generals, senators, and high-ranking military officers in Washington D.C. She used her connections to pass along key military information to the Confederacy at the start of the war. She was credited by Jefferson Davis, with ensuring the South's victory at the battle of First Bull Run.

The Federal Government found that information was being leaked and the trail led to Rose Greenhow's residence. She was subject to house arrest, but it was discovered that she continued her activities. In 1862 after an espionage hearing, she and her daughter "Little Rose", were imprisoned for nearly five months. Then she was deported to the Confederate States. Running the blockade, she sailed to Europe to represent the Confederacy in a diplomatic mission to France and Britain from 1863 to 1864. She attempted to return to the South in 1864, but her ship ran aground off the coast of Wilmington, and she drowned when her rowboat overturned. It was said that the weight of the gold coins sewn into her dress pulled her under. She was honored with a Confederate military funeral.

The story of Elizabeth Van Lew was read by Robin Hyatt. Elizabeth was born on October 12, 1818, in Richmond, Virginia. Her maternal grandfather was abolitionist Hilary Baker. Elizabeth's father had built up a prosperous hardware business and owned several slaves. Her family sent her to Philadelphia for her education at a Quaker school, which reinforced her abolitionist sentiments. When her father died in 1843, she and her mother freed the family's slaves. Many of the emancipated slaves continued as paid servants with the family,

including the young future Union spy Mary Bowser. Elizabeth used her entire cash inheritance of \$10,000 to purchase and free some of their former slaves' relatives. For years thereafter, Elizabeth's brother was a regular visitor to Richmond's slave market, where, when a family was about to be split up, he would purchase them all, bring them home, and issue papers of manumission.

Upon the outbreak of the war, Elizabeth and her mother began working on behalf of the Union, caring for wounded soldiers. When Libby Prison opened in Richmond, she was allowed to bring food, clothing, writing paper, and other things to the Union soldiers imprisoned there. She aided prisoners in escape attempts, passing them information about safe houses and getting a Union sympathizer appointed to the prison staff. Recently captured prisoners gave her information on Confederate troop levels and movements, which she was able to pass on to Union commanders. She even helped hide escaped Union prisoners and Confederate deserters in her own mansion.

Elizabeth also operated a spy ring during the war, called "Richmond Underground," including clerks in the War and Navy Departments of the Confederacy and a Richmond mayoral candidate. She reportedly convinced Varina Davis to hire Bowser as a household servant, enabling Bowser to spy in the White House of the Confederacy. Her spy network was so efficient that on several occasions she sent Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant fresh flowers from her garden and a copy of the Richmond newspaper. She developed a cipher system and often smuggled messages out of Richmond in hollow

eggs. Because of the merit of her work, General Grant appointed Elizabeth Postmaster General of Richmond for the next eight years.

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## 5. CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From "The Blue & Gray Laughing"

"During a stagecoach trip in the Southwest, a naval officer (who was an inveterate cigar smoker) said, 'Only two Havana cigars left. Well, I must fully enjoy them!' Then the stage takes on a lady passenger, so the officer says, 'Madam, do you object to a cigar?'

To which she readily replied, (much to his surprise and consternation) 'Well, Mister, I don't care if I do take one, if you got some handy. I left my pipe at home.'"