



# Bugle Call Echoes

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

**Volume 16 Number 5**

**P. O. Box 5695 Fresno CA 93755**

**May 2008**

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY  
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

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## *From the President's Desk:*

*AS I watch 'American Idol' I am reminded of Ross Perot, a Presidential contender, who had promised to make voting as instantaneous and easy as making a phone call. At first I thought this progressive. After all, 54 million votes were recorded after the last 'Idol' finished singing! Imagine 100 million voting after the last presidential debate or speech! In one sense that's involvement; in another sense, our votes to mean much, require more thoughtfulness. The long Democratic process has given voters a chance to learn important details about the candidates. The voters who ushered in Abraham Lincoln had decades to think about the values of their viewpoints. They were willing to make the final sacrifice for those decisions. Once done, the Nation has not looked back. We stand united.*

*Come and listen to one episode that showed the price that some were willing to pay. Learn about the "The Crater" from Joe Wagner's informative presentation at our next dinner meeting on May 29th.*

*Brian Clague*

## **Joseph Wagner, M.D. to Present 'The Battle of the Crater'**

**Orthopedic surgeon Joe Wagner from the Los Angeles CWRT returns to Fresno to present his PowerPoint program on The Crater. Dr. Wagner and his wife were last in here in August 2007 with our Round Table when he presented 'The History of Dr. Richard Jordan Gatling', the inventor of the Gatling gun.**

**Dr. Wagner is from Canada and graduated from the University of Toronto. He came to the U. S. for five years of postgraduate training in his field of orthopedic surgery. Deciding to remain in the U. S., Dr. Wagner began to study American history in preparation for his U S. citizenship exam. For 50 years he has enjoyed reading and studying about the Civil War.**

**Wagner has made prior presentations of "The Battle of the Crater" to many CWRTs throughout California, the United States, and overseas before the American Civil War Round Table at the National Army Museum in London, England, and before the History Society in Wales. Like his previous talk, you will enjoy his visit and presentation and come away with new insights of what took place at The Crater.**

**Remember to RSVP with Secretary Bryce Kuykendall at 787-3632 if you are planning to attend the Round Table Dinner and Program on Thurs., May 29th, featuring Dr. Joe Wagner.**

# Book Review

## Stealing Lincoln's Body

Dr. Davenport reports that among the recent non-fiction acquisitions of the Fresno County Library is **Stealing Lincoln's Body** by Thomas J. Craughwell (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007). The call number is 973.7092 CRA. The 250 page work is indexed, end noted, and illustrated. The dust jacket provides the following information about the work.

"On the night of the Presidential election of 1876, a gang of counterfeiters out of Chicago attempted to steal the entombed embalmed body of Abraham Lincoln and hold it for ransom. The custodian of the tomb was so shaken by the incident that he willingly dedicated the rest of his life to protecting the president's corpse.

"In a lively and dramatic narrative, Thomas J. Craughwell returns to this bizarre, and largely forgotten, event with the first book to place the grave robbery in historical context. He takes us through the planning and execution of the crime and the outcome of the investigation. He describes the reactions of Mary Todd Lincoln and Robert Todd Lincoln to the theft -- and the peculiar silence of the nation. He follows the unlikely tale of what happened to Lincoln's remains after the attempted robbery and details the plan devised by the Lincoln Guard of Honor to prevent a similar abominable occurrence.

"Along the way, Craughwell offers entertaining sidelights on the rise of counterfeiting in America and the establishment of the Secret Service to combat it; the prevalence of grave robberies; the art of nineteenth-century embalming; and the emergence among Irish immigrants of an ambitious middle class -- and a criminal underclass.

"This rousing story of hapless con men, intrepid federal agents and ordinary Springfield citizens who honored their native son by keeping a valuable, burdensome secret for decades offers a riveting glimpse into late 19th-century America and underscores that truth really is sometimes stranger than fiction."

## AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEETING OF 4/24/08

By Ron Vaughan

We had a good turn out of 22 persons. Dave Davenport informed us that Peter Cozzens will be joining our list of speakers at the Nov. 7 - 9, 2008 West Coast CWRT Conference.

Since it was Bryce Kuykendall's birthday, his parents utilized the occasion for some surprise presents, which included a replica Springfield rifle.

Dr. Brian Clague spoke on his topic, **"It weren't the cuttin' what killed 'um, it were the disease."** Brian discussed the development of the medical services to cope with the immense number of casualties that were beyond what anyone could have anticipated. At the beginning of the Civil War, the U. S. Army had a mere 120 surgeons, but by the end of the war there were over 1,500 surgeons, U. S. and CSA. Assisting the medical services were the Sanitary Commissions, established in the North and to a lesser extent, in the South. The U. S. Sanitary Commission was called "Lincoln's 5th Wheel."

U. S. medical practice was 30 years behind European medicine. For example, in France, doctors were actually testing various treatments and their outcomes. Many U.S. doctors followed the theories of Philadelphia Dr. Rush's "heroic medicine"-- extreme treatments, such as bleeding and blistering. Others followed the teaching of Boston's Dr. Jackson, who advocated "Nature's Way"-- letting the patient heal on his own. Of course neither of these practices were suitable for the ghastly wounds caused by large caliber soft-lead minie bullets, and artillery shells. Dr. Drake of Cincinnati, advocated the use of chemicals to combat infections and disease-- like alcohol, iron, cod liver oil, quinine, mercury and others. Of course mercury is poisonous, but many of the substances are still used today, although alcohol has been found to be more useful topically, than taken internally! The use of quinine was especially important in treating malaria, which affected many troops in the South. The Confederates suffered more from not being able to obtain sufficient supplies of quinine. Inoculations helped reduce the incidence of smallpox and measles to less than 1%.

The U.S. troops suffered 174,206 gunshot wounds, of which 90,000 were extremity wounds, with low mortality. As we know, the common treatment for extremity wounds was amputation, from which 29,581 (26%) died. The treatment of wounded improved through the war. In the Peninsula Campaign 26% of the wounded died, but by the time of Gettysburg, only 9% were fatalities.

As deadly as were the casualties (about 250,000) from guns and blades (few of the latter), disease killed 350,000 American soldiers during the war, roughly 70%. Typhus was the most deadly disease, with a 35% mortality rate, but fortunately it only attacked 2.6% of the troops. The most common disease was diarrhea and dysentery, affecting some 40% of troops, but except for chronic cases, the mortality was only .3%.

Sanitary Fairs ultimately collected \$25 million worth of goods for the Union soldiers. Following Florence Nightingale's example, thousands of women volunteered to help provide care in hospitals and on rare occasions at the front.

It was an informative presentation, but at times I had flash-backs to some of the HIV treatment seminars I have attended in the past! That is, an overwhelming amount of medical data in a brief period of time! I mean that as a compliment, Great Job Brian!

A Daveport photo taken at Knights' Ferry reenactment in March of bugler Sgt. Brown.



## Learn more about Civil War Genealogy, Military Records On-Line

*David Davenport picked up a flyer at the library yesterday about how to conduct research in military records on-line. He notes, "It should be of interest to our membership."*

*Military Records On-line will be the subject of a presentation on June 10, 2008, at the Sarah McCardle Room of the Fresno County Library. Kathy Burrow, a genealogist with the Fresno County Genealogical Society will discuss the availability of military service records of the United States from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War. Ms. Burrow will begin her talk at 7:05 but attendees need to register beginning at 6:30PM.*

*The Sarah McCardle room is on the second floor of the Fresno County Library at 2420 Mariposa Street in downtown Fresno. Access is through the "N" street entrance, not the Mariposa Street entrance. Further information may be obtained by calling 299-5932 or 299-9676.*

### Remaining 2008 SJVCWRT MEETINGS AND SPEAKER SCHEDULE

May 29: Dr. Joe Wagner - "The Crater: a great plan, poorly executed".

Saturday, July 5: Annual picnic at Clague's "cabin" at Shaver Lake.

October 18th & 19th: Kearney Park Civil War Re-enactment

October 30: TBA

November 7-9: 24th Annual West Coast Civil War Round Table Conference at the Clovis Memorial Building in Clovis, CA

Saturday, December 6 or Dec. 13: Annual Christmas party.

### National Civil War Association - [www.ncwa.org](http://www.ncwa.org)

Join the National Civil War Association and The Benicia Historical Museum as they present the 4th annual Winter Quarters Conference, February 2009, in historic Benicia, California. As in past years, the Winter Quarters Conference will bring together some of the nation's pre-eminent lecturers on the American Civil War and 19th Century life.

The 2009 conference will cover a myriad of topics that will doubtlessly appeal to a variety of attendees, whether their chief interest is living history or they are simply interested in history. Topics for 2009 will range from 19th century material culture to military functions, and from living history specifics to research techniques.

Also highlighted will, of course, be the historic relevance of the American Civil War, and the various roles the West played during those turbulent times.

*You and your members can keep up to date with all the Winter Quarters goings on by clicking the link on the home page of the National Civil War Association - [www.ncwa.org](http://www.ncwa.org) The Winter Quarters site is up and running. Thanks for your interest. This is a wonderfully worthwhile conference.*

*Jen Roger*

## Dr. Davenport recommends Civil War Websites

I have run across a website today that is very informative in that it has thousands of images including a complete run of **Harper's Weekly** magazine. The following is the website description followed by the url.

"Welcome to THE CIVIL WAR, the WEB's most extensive source of original Civil War resources. This site has over 7,000 pages of original Civil War content, and is full of incredible photographs, original illustrations, and eye-witness accounts of the defining moments of this Historic Struggle. Bookmark this site, as you will simply not find this information anywhere else! We have recently completed posting the complete run of **Harper's Weekly** newspapers from the Civil War. These papers give incredible insight into this important period of our history. We strive to provide invaluable source material for the serious student of the Civil War.

We are committed to providing you a safe and enjoyable browsing experience. This site will always be free, and free of annoying popups and popunders."

<http://www.sonofthesouth.net>

Here's another good Civil War related web site, a great site for reading reviews of new books. Check it out!

<http://www.cwbr.com/civilwarbookreview/reviewers.html>

San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table  
P O Box 5695  
Fresno CA 93755  
Website: [SJVCWRT.org](http://SJVCWRT.org)

## Book Review

***Grant and Sherman: The Friendship That Won the War*** by Charles Flood. Published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 460 pages, \$27.

There still was a large Confederate army in the field, retreating, but still a fighting force, in the days following Robert E Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Joseph E Johnston's Confederates were in NC, near Raleigh, with William Tecumseh Sherman's Union forces on their heels - and news that President Lincoln had been assassinated only reaching Sherman as he was to meet Johnston to discuss surrender.

The terms agreed to were considerably more favorable to the Confederates than those US Grant had imposed on Lee eight days earlier.

"No one," writes Charles Flood in his biography of the friendship between Grant and Sherman, "would have imagined that [Sherman] would soon be in a predicament from which he could be saved only by Grant."

When President Andrew Johnson, in office for only a week, and his Cabinet learned of the terms, Sherman (long suspected of southern sympathies) was denounced as a traitor. Grant headed to NC "to undo what Sherman had done," as Flood put it.

Flood, a novelist turned historian with a special interest in the Civil War, writes, it was a friendship of "two men who were remarkable failures as civilians." Years after West Point, where they had overlapped, they met again, by chance, on the eve of the Civil War.

Their paths came together decisively during the defeat-turned-overnight-into victory at Shiloh, TN in April 1862. Shiloh was the first time the two had met up on a battlefield, and Flood captures the scene with a novelist's eye. The first day of the battle went badly for the Union, and overnight it began to rain. Sherman had sought out Grant to discuss a tactical withdrawal, but "now looking at Grant's strong, thoughtful face in the rain and lantern light, he was 'moved by some wise and sudden instinct' not to mention another retreat. Instead he said, 'Well, Grant, we've had the devil's own day of it, haven't we?'"

"Grant said, 'Yes,' and remained silent for a minute as they stood together in the falling rain ... then added 'Lick 'em tomorrow though.'"

There would be strains on their friendship in postwar years. As Sherman would later put it, referring to their personal problems, "He stood by me when I was crazy and I stood by him when he was drunk, and now, sir, we stand by each other always."

By Michael Kenney of the **Boston Globe**