



Bugle Call Echoes

San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table

April 2006

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San Joaquin Valley
Civil War Round Table
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April Dinner Features Talk on Alexander Stephens

On April 27 Zoyd Luce of Castro Valley will discuss the life of Alexander Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy. We last heard Zoyd give a very interesting presentation on 'The American Indian During the Civil War' at the West Coast Conference in Clovis in November. You won't want to miss this informative presentation.

A little background on Zoyd Luce. He serves as a member of the Bay Area Rapid Transit 5th District Board of Directors. He has bachelor's degrees in History and in Law and a Master's degree in Medieval English which provides a foundation for a consulting firm that specializes in environmental protection, safety, and security as they relate to transportation. His motto is: Heroic Management for an Unheroic Age. Zoyd is a member of the East Bay Civil War Round Table and a frequent presenter at meetings throughout California.

You will learn much about the problems of the Confederate government and Vice President Alexander Stephens in particular by attending our April Round Table Dinner on Thursday, April 27th at the Fresno Ramada Inn on Shaw Avenue just off Highway 41. No host bar and social hour starts anytime after 6 PM. with dinner at 7 PM, and Zoyd is on at 8 PM. We hope to see you there. Please RSVP to our Secretary Phyllis Mann so that Ramada has a count for meal preparation.

Alexander
Stephens

Early in 1861, delegates from the seceded states met to draft a constitution, and elected Jefferson Davis President and Alexander Stephens Vice President. With few responsibilities and little power, Stephens most notable act came in early February 1865, when he met secretly (and unsuccessfully) with President Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward to negotiate a peaceful settlement on condition of Confederate independence. Stephens's enjoyed a vigorous career for nearly two decades after the end of the war, writing several long histories of the Civil War, and serving again in Congress.

Civil War Book REVIEW

Private chats with the men who won the Civil War

Generals in Bronze came out November 2005. This review came out in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on October 24, 2005. Thanks to former Bugle Calls Echoes Editor Charles Jorgensen for forwarding it.

BY NAHAL TOOSI

NEW YORK - Late in his life, artist James Edward Kelly tried to publish his memoirs, a book that would have featured his colorful interviews with the many Civil War figures who posed for him. But by then, the Great Depression had set in and publishers told him no one was interested in the war long past.

Seven decades after his death, Kelly's dream is being fulfilled. Civil War historian William B Styple has written a book that chronicles Kelly's life and includes the artist's interviews with key 19th century figures.

The book, *Generals in Bronze*, comes out Nov. 1, and is already generating tremendous buzz in the world of Civil War buffs.

"I was absolutely fascinated by it because it gives such a feeling of intimacy, said Richard Snow, editor of *American Heritage* magazine.

Generals in Bronze provides valuable insight into the personalities of the era, thanks in large part to Kelly's meticulous notes. His interviews covered a range of subjects, from Gen. George A Custer's "boyish chuckly" and his canteen of iced tea to whether Gen. George Meade wished to retreat from the Battle of Gettysburg [apparently so].

One general told Kelly how Gen. U.S. Grant's drinking had led him to resign as a captain in 1854. The account claims that Grant remarked: "I'll make my mark yet. I don't propose to remain in the gutter."

"These are the things they wouldn't write about in their memoirs," Styple, 45, said. "In those days, they didn't write tell-all books."

According to Kelly's interview with Gen. Winfield S Hancock
please continue on next column



RSVP
for dinner
reservations on
Thursday's,
April 27th
meeting, at the

Ramada Inn at the Shaw off-ramp on Freeway 41. Contact Secretary Phyllis Mann at 229-3778 [afternoons or evenings, please] or e-mail her at:

pfm02@cvip.net

BOOK REVIEW cont.

Meade considered leaving Gettysburg but his men did not want to.

Hancock said the Union general remarked: "As you wish gentlemen; but Gettysburg is no place to fight a battle in." Meade turned back Gen. Robert E. Lee's forces in the war's turning point.

Kelly once asked Gen. James H Wilson to describe President Lincoln, and after some hesitation Wilson said: "I saw nothing to justify the melancholy way artists represented him; he seemed cheerful, and there was generally a sort of twitter in the corner of his mouth. He was not a leader of men ... But he was a philosopher. Lincoln felt his humble birth, and did not seem to assert himself as his position warranted."

Grant sat for Kelly, and while he didn't say much the artist described him as kind. The general reflected on his appearance by musing: "I have got rather fleshy, much to my regret."

Battlefield Preservation Update

AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEETING 3/30/06

By Ron Vaughan

A Visit with President Abraham Lincoln

I just received the latest copy of
History Under Siege -
A Guide to America's Most
Endangered Civil War
Battlefields, 2006

Listed alphabetically they are as follows:

Chattahooche River in Georgia
Circle Forts in Washington, D.C.
Fort Morgan in Alabama
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
Glendale in Virginia
Glorieta Pass in New Mexico
New Orleans, Louisiana
Raymond in Mississippi
Shenandoah Valley in Virginia
The Wilderness in Virginia

As you can see, the sites are scattered with the exception of three in Virginia. This is not surprising as over 60% of the battles fought in the Civil War were fought on Virginia soil.

I have requested copies of this informative pamphlet from CWPT to pass out at one of our upcoming monthly meetings so everyone can have the full details. Perhaps if you are not already

a member of Civil War Preservation Trust [CWPT] you will consider joining and adding your personal contributions to those made by

SJVCWRT

Thanks,

Tom Carr

The 21 persons were entertained by a visit by a visit of The President (aka Wayne Scott), who entered to the strains of *Hail to the Chief*, with his escort of a Union major and a sergeant. He spoke from a platform trimmed with red, white, and blue bunting, flanked by The U.S. and Presidential Flags.

Dr. Davenport had invited Lincoln to speak about his handling of Constitutional issues, specifically: The legitimacy of Southern secession, suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus, and control of the press. Lincoln stated that one "may not agree with my methods— but surely you must realize that my motivations are true and just. I must preserve the Union."

He talked about the actions of previous administrations who tried to deal with the North-South split. He indicated he was like a man in the middle of a herd of stampeding cattle and any way he turned he was bound to step in it! He maintained that the Constitution did not contain any right of secession in word or implication. The Preamble states that the purpose of the Constitution was "to form a more perfect union", and secession is disunion. No state should be able to leave without the consent of the other states.

Dr. Meux was present in the audience and adamantly disagreed with many of Lincoln's points. As to his suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus, in this deadly struggle, where loyalties and beliefs are mixed within states, cities and even families (including his own), with spies "as plentiful as fleas on a sick hound", the danger is so great that H.C. must be temporarily suspended. Tens of thousands have been slaughtered per battle, but in contrast, only 1500 people have been detained in this manner. Such expedients are necessary for the survival of the United States "this "noble experiment in liberty...."

As to the press, in the Southern press he is vilified daily, and also in many Northern papers. He believes it is okay to criticize him, but the press should not disclose military plans. The press is not suppressed, Horace Greeley's paper alone has 56 war reporters, and there are many papers with more.

In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the Union. "If we fail— a 1,000 angels saying I was right will make no difference."

2006 MEMBERSHIP FORM - Membership year is from January to December

Please begin/renew my membership in the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY membership - \$25.00

STUDENT membership or NEWSLETTER ONLY - \$12.50

*\$5.00 of each membership goes toward Civil War Battlefield Preservation

Name _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Address _____

Bring this membership form and your check to our next monthly meeting, or mail it to our Post Office Box listed on the return address below:

DID YOU KNOW ???

Who was the only soldier to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War who was killed at the massacre at the Little Big Horn in 1876?

Thomas Ward Custer, the younger brother of Gen. George A. Custer. Still only 19 in the last days of the war, he captured the rebel flag in two engagements within three days, on April 3 and April 6. In the latter battle of Saylor's Creek, Thomas was wounded in the face but continued to fight. His older brother had to place him under military arrest and have him forcibly removed from the field to get medical attention.

The Civil War Quiz Book by John Malone

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