

April 1996

ECHOES

Experiences Of Combat

What was it like for the Civil War soldiers to face death? How did they react to the danger and the constant threats to their lives? How did they fare in inclement weather? How did they react to the insects, the lack of proper equipment, the sudden appearance of a new weapon by the enemy? How did they react to being wounded, to seeing their comrades die, to actually killing another person?

Despite the thousands of books and diaries of the Civil War, it is difficult to comprehend the answers to these questions. The only approximations are the somewhat similar experiences of other men at war.

Therefore, the SJVCWRT program Thursday evening, April 25, in the Remington-restaurant is entitled, "The Experience of Combat." Four men who have seen



war up close and personal will relate some of their experiences. They are:

Jerry Eckenrod, an infantry platoon leader during World War II in Europe. He landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy on D-Day, was wounded twice, and was captured by the Germans in the Hertgen Forest.

Verne Cole, a tail gunner on a B-17 bomber who was wounded and his plane shot down while on his 26th mission over enemy territory.

Ken Moats, an infantry sergeant in two wars, Korea and Vietnam, who saw a great deal of combat in both countries.

Stan Todd, an infantryman in Vietnam, who was a veteran of numerous jungle fire fights, and who was seriously wounded.

These men will answer questions about their experiences and their emotions as they might relate to those of Civil War veterans.

The evening will begin with a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7. Dinner costs are \$15 per person. Reservations should be made by mailing checks for the dinner to the San Joaquin Valley CWRT, P.O. Box 5695, Fresno, CA 93755.

The San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table officers for 1996 are:



President Bill Head
Vice President Barbara Moats
Secretary Carol Berry
Treasurer Wayne Bowen

Other board members are Linda Clague, membership; Tim Johnson, publicity; Verne Cole, newsletter editor; Rick Kubiak, historian; and the immediate past presidents, John Taylor and Charles Jorgensen.

Change of address? Call
Verne Cole, 435-8410 or Wayne Bowen,
291-4885.

Hardtack: A Soldier's Staple

Here is the story on Hardtack from The Little House Cookbook, Frontier Foods, from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories, 1979.

"Hardtack is the simplest of all nonperishable meals. Until as recently as World War I it was the staple food of traveling armies, who called it 'sheet iron,' 'tooth-dullers,' 'crown-breakers,' and other names best forgotten. It was eaten dry only in emergencies, and then was more sucked on than chewed. Dipped in hot coffee, hardtack becomes edible; soaked well in water and fried in salt pork fat it is palatable as well.

"All modern crackers are dimpled in the manner of hardtack, which was pricked with nail holes to keep it compact and breakable

For 16 pieces of hardtack you will need: White flour. 3+ cups unbleached all purpose. Salt, 3 teaspoons. Bowl, 2-quart; rolling pin and breadboard; eight-penny nail; baking sheets, 2.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. In the bowl, mix 3 cups flour with the salt. Add 1 cup of tap water and stir until it becomes too difficult. Knead dough in bowl with hand, adding more flour to make it very dry.

Press, pull and roll the dough into a rectangle that can be divided into 3-inch squares of 1/2 inch thickness. Use a table knife to cut dough into squares. Holding each square in hand, punch 16 holes through it with the nail, being careful not to hurt yourself. Place dough squares on ungreased baking sheets and bake for 30 minutes, until crisp and lightly browned. Cool before storing in a closed container.

Civil War on the Internet

There's a great resource for Civil War buffs on the Internet Web, the American Civil War Homepage at <http://coweb.utcc.utk.edu/hoemann/warweb.html>. The site is maintained by George Hoemann and Mary E. Myers and links to stores of information about the Civil War, including historic documents, battlefield maps, photos, eyewitness accounts and excerpts from historical works.

A quick brushup on dates and events is yours with a click on General Resources, where you can view a Civil War timeline. Click Graphics to find maps, illustrations, and photos including more than 1,000 downloadable photos of African Americans, officers, soldiers and battle scenes from the Library of Congress' Civil War collection.

Another section links to official documents, letters and personal accounts. A more complete article on subject can be found at <http://web.ccurrents.com/crom>

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