



Bugle Call Echoes

San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table

February 2006

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San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table 2006 Board of Directors

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From the President:

As we get underway into the year the first duty is to invest some the money earned from the November Symposium into the areas for which we were formed, i.e.. Civil War Site Preservation. To that end, the club has donated more than half of the monies to two sites in the East. An update on specifics is given in Tom Carr's report. We can be proud of the fact that we are living up to our charter.

We also shared monies with the Sacramento Round Table in their project in the Bay Area, to restore a Civil War historic site, and an equal amount went to the Drum Barracks Museum in the southland. Both are worthwhile projects.

Our February speaker this month will speak to the money issues facing the Treasury Dept. of the Confederacy as the ever mounting expenditures placed a huge burden on the States. Come hear this most interesting and informative talk and see some of the money and bonds used in the Confederacy.

Brian Clague, MD

Mr. Fitzpatrick, our February meeting speaker, will be assisted in his presentation about currency of the United States from colonial times through the Civil War by Stephen Foster, Jr., owner of the Fresno Coin Gallery. He will allow us to see many splendid examples of coins and banknotes from the 19th century.

Dr. Davenport sadly reports that in a letter dated January 28, 2006, Ray "Harmonica Man" Silvia announced his retirement from the Fresno County Library and relocation to Oregon so as to be closer to members of his family. This was, as far as Dr. Davenport knows, quite unexpected in that Ray had not mentioned retirement to him in their conversations at the library earlier in January.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

The Devil's Own Work

By Barnet Scheeter, Walker & Co., 434 pages, \$28.

The following book review was sent by Charlie Jacobson, former Bugle Calls editor now living in Portland. It appeared under the title "A Violent Episode, Shameful Too" and appeared in the Jan. 18, 2006, Wall Street Journal.

It is a safe bet that few New Yorkers who work in Midtown or lower Manhattan realize that in July 1863, the streets they now walk every day were the scene of savage riots that left hundreds dead, countless buildings in smoldering ruin, and the city in the grip of mobs demanding the overthrow of Abraham Lincoln. No set of events in New York's history was more terrifying or more aggressively forgotten.

The riots were sparked by the introduction of a military draft to fill the depleted ranks of the Union army. The poor were particularly angry at a provision that allowed any conscript to buy his way out of the draft for \$300, a year's wages for many workingmen. Behind the riots lay a combustible mix of racism, poverty, and class resentment that was fanned into violence by pro-Southern Democratic politicians and journalistic demagogues. Not all of the rioters were Irish, but enough ... nearly erasing the reputation for patriotic sacrifice that Irish volunteers had earned on the battlefields of the Civil War.

The riots began with the sacking of a draft office on July 13, 1863, a week after Robert E Lee's defeat at Gettysburg. Over the next four days, mobs numbering in the tens of thousands trashed and burned police stations and looted businesses. Howitzers were fired point-blank into crowds; troops battled rooftop snipers and fought house to house. "Some of [the rioters] fought like incarnate fiends, and would not surrender," Capt. HR Putnam reported. "All such were shot on the spot."

The rioters targeted African-Americans from the start. In one of the cruelest acts, rioters torched the Colored Orphans' Asylum driving its 233 children into the streets; fortunately, all survived.

Decisive action by the authorities might have quashed the riots early on and saved lives. But the city was virtually defenseless, having been stripped of its militia units. The few officers who wanted to take the initiative against the rioters were stymied by antiwar Gov. Horatio Seymour, who addressed the rioters smilingly as "my friends."

Order was finally restored by the arrival of seasoned troops rushed north from the Gettysburg battlefield. In all, at least 500 died that week, including 175 African-Americans. Five thousand blacks - roughly 40% of the city's black population - were left homeless. Property losses amounted to between \$60 million and \$100 million in today's dollars.

The most tantalizing question about the draft riots has always been: To what extent were they instigated by Confederate saboteurs?



For dinner reservations for our next meeting on Thursday,

January 26th, 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 at: pfm02@cvip.net

A Great Foote Deal!

I was just in Barnes & Noble last week in Fresno (River Park). In the front of the store on the sale racks in the history section I found Shelby Foote's 3 volume edition of The Civil War in hardback at \$14.98 per volume.

The hardback set usually retails for \$165 and the paperbacks usually retails for \$75 although they can be bought somewhat cheaper on Amazon (\$103.95 and \$47.25). Basically, I got the 3 volume hardback set for the price of the 3 volume paperback set! Is that a deal, or what!?

Anyway, there were a few more copies still there when I left.

Tom Carr

Mark your calendars
2006 Programs - A Work In Progress

The Board generally tries to hold our dinner meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month, although at times the dates may change depending on the speaker's schedule.

On February 23 Mr. Robert Fitzpatrick will talk to us about "Money from the Revolution to Reconstruction". He has been collecting examples of coinage and paper currency, especially private bank notes and Civil War era currency, for the past decade. He has been a third grade teacher at Ernie Pyle Elementary for the past 22 years.

On March 30 (not the 23rd because he is working) President Lincoln (aka Wayne Scott) will talk to us in the first person about "Lincoln and Constitutional Rights". I asked him to give attention to such issues as habeas corpus in time of war, the legitimacy of secession, control of the press, etc.

On April 27 Zoyd Luce will discuss the life of Alexander Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy.

May is still open at this point.

At our June picnic Evan Jones will speak about the adjustment of Confederate soldiers to life in the post-war South. We don't meet in July and August.

Vice President and Program Chair
Dr. Dave Davenport

AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEETING

1/26/06

By Ron Vaughan

Sixteen persons were present at our first 2006 meeting. Last year we had 28 people, where were the rest of you? We had a delicious chicken dinner, which Dr. Dave pronounced as one of the best meals that Ramada Inn has served! The program was our traditional "Show and Tell". Dr. D displayed a "Mystery Box": a collection of battlefield dug-ups in a case, and challenged us to identify the various items. i.e. was the round metallic object a coin, an embalmed, a poker chip...? There were many interesting guesses!

Phyllis Mann shared information about Col. Joseph Bailey, who built a dam during the Red River campaign to allow the escape of the U.S. gunboats.

Gen. Ron M. showed the replica of Gen. Stonewall Jackson's sword, that is for sale, as a fundraiser for his veteran's group.

Since we usually have so many presentations, I had decided not to bring anything, but got roped into explaining the features of Tom Carr's shiny new replica C.W. Colt Navy Revolver.

We hope to see all of you at the next meeting!

Ronald Vaughan

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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:

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

(Stories from "Blue & Gray Laughing")

A New York Zouave in one of his scouting expeditions captured a very fine horse. In a few days the owner came into camp and claimed the animal.

"The critter's confiscated" said Zoo-Zoo.

"But it's not a rebel", said the man, "I'm Union, and the Government protects my property."

"Ya-as," drawled the Zouave, "but I wouldn't give much for your loyal rebel's sentiment. It's too elastic."

"But I've taken the oath," persisted the man.

"Can't help if you have," replied Zoo-Zoo coolly, "the horse hain't and I can't release him!"

Ronald Vaughan

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