



BUGLE CALLS, MAY 2022

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1. MAY 12 MEETING
 2. COMING EVENTS
 3. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
 4. AFTER ACTION REPORT
 5. CIVIL WAR HUMOR
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1. MAY 12 MEETING

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Denny's Restaurant, 710 W. Shaw, Clovis

6:00 Dinner hour

7:00 Meeting & Speaker: Ron Vaughan speaks on the 1st Black Union Regiment in the Civil War (It may not be what you think!)

8:15 Book Raffle

2. COMING EVENTS:

- A. August Barbeque? Depending on sale of Clague's cabin.
 - B. September 8th Meeting: (Tentative) Professor Alan Sissenwein on General "Kill Cavalry"
 - C. October: Kearney Park Civil War?
 - D. October 13th Meeting: Tom Ebert on Lincoln and Emancipation.
 - E. November 4th, 5th, 6th: West Coast Civil War Conference, Fresno
 - F. Nov. 10th Meeting: Tentative—Ron Vaughan presents "10 Critical Decisions" that determined the outcome of the Civil War.
 - G. December 8th: Christmas Party and Michael Spencer sharing about R.E. Lee's 2nd Home at Derwent.
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3. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Hello All,

If you missed our meetings for April or March, Bernie Quinn talked about the Berdan Sharpshooters. Last month was the conclusion of the talk. As with most talks given, it was very informative and educational. It was a pleasure to have him as a guest speaker. I'm sorry you missed it, Brian. Next meeting May 12th, Ron will be entertaining us with a topic on Black soldiers.

Summer is just around the corner, so no meetings June – August. The summer potluck will be held tentatively in August. We still have plenty of time before the conference, in November, to register. The link is on our website sjvcwrt2.com. Let's spread the word, we will have great speakers.

My Tidbit of History from Antietam:

Private Andrew J. Proffitt, 18th North Carolina, Branch's Brigade

A native of Wilkes County, Proffitt, a schoolteacher, was one of four brothers who served in the Confederate army. Together with his brother Alfred Newton (A.N.), Proffitt enlisted August 22nd, 1862, but

his regiment was held in reserve at Antietam. In a letter to his parents, Andrew described his first encounter with the Yankees at the Battle of Shepherdstown...

“We turned on them and had a bloody engagement. We formed in line of battle about one mile from them and made a general charge, exposed the hole way to the heaviest bombing said to be by old soldiers that they ever saw but we routed them and drove them back across the river about 9 or 10 o’clock. I supposed we lost a great many but the yankees lay on the field in heaps and piles. We got all their arms and knap sacks and all they had with them many prisoners as they crossed the river we give them fits. A. N. and I shot as long as we could see a blue coat exposed to the fire of 8 batteries. The bombs burst around our heads with terrific and showers of grape and cannisters fell mingled with limbs of trees thick around us but the God of heaven protected us from their which I hope he will ever do. We were so much exhausted from the fatigues of the charge that we threw all away all our clothes & blankets only what we have on, but that is alright we’ll get more. A soldier was slightly struck on the arm with a piece of shell or something. He dropped his gun. I asked him if he was hurt he said not he grabbed his gun and fought like a hero while sweat dropped from his brow.”

This is from Voices of the Civil War (Antietam) from the Time Life Books series my grandmother had. A more detailed back story can be found at this website: <https://nccivilwarcenter.org/the-profit-brothers-of-wilkes-county-north-carolina/>

4. AFTER ACTION REPORT FOR MEETING OF 4/14/2022:
BY RON VAUGHAN

Fourteen persons were present. As of 3/31 our bank balance is \$1481. Michael Spencer signed a check for \$178.40 to cover cost of speaker's lodging tonight. I gave him \$60 for gas. \$65 was collected for raffle tickets and donations.

Guest speaker Bernie Quinn spoke about the battles of Berdan's Sharpshooters. He stated that with their breech-loaders, they could shoot three times faster and a muzzle-loader, and since they were all crack shots (hit a dinner plate 10 x in row at 200 yards), they were very deadly. In their first action on the Peninsula, a riflemen known as "California Joe" shot a Rebel who was sniping from inside a chimney.

At Gaines Mill, Trimble's Brigade lost 180 men, while Berdan's lost only 11. At Malvern Hill the Sharpshooters were way out in front, and beat off the first charge by themselves! At Antietam, General Phelps stupidly ordered the Sharpshooters to attack in close order, and they

suffered heavy casualties. At Blackburn's Ford, the Sharpshooters captured 4 cannon and beat off an entire brigade. At Marye's Heights they pinned down the opposing Confederates, who then called for a truce.

Perhaps their most famous action was at Pitzers Woods, Gettysburg, where they shot up an entire brigade. Bernie opined that if General Sickles had paid attention to their report, he may have avoided the disaster at the Peach Orchard. During Pickett's Charge, the Vermont Brigade and Sharpshooters devastated the right flank of the attack. By February 20, 1865, the Sharpshooters had suffered so many losses, that the Regiments were broken up, and the men sent to units from their home states.

5. CIVIL WAR HUMOR

FROM "BLUE & GRAY LAUGHING"

For many years I have been using jokes from this book, but I only recently noticed that the Forward was written by Jerry Russell, former National Chairman of Civil War Associates! Silly me! Jerry was instrumental in founding and encouraging so many CWRTs.

Here are some of his comments in the Forward: “How many soldiers in how many wars have opened the evening campfire discussions with, ‘Did you hear the one about...?’ Someone once said, ‘Soldiers must laugh to keep from crying.’ This old saw must be true. Civil War soldiers loved to make fun of authority, to complain about just damned near anything, and to toot their own horn whenever possible. Also, we remember that Abe Lincoln loved to tell jokes.”