



BUGLE CALLS, MAY 2023

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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1. MAY 11th MEETING

Program will be slides of Mike Green's recent trip up the Mississippi

DENNY'S RESTAURANT

710 W. SHAW, CLOVIS

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Meeting:

7:30 Program

8:30 Book Raffle

Note: No meeting in June Or July.

Barbeque at Clagues' Cabin, 3rd Saturday in August.

2. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MICHAEL SPENCER

Hello members,

An update to this year's West Coast Conference is now in full swing. I have started to communicate the details to other Roundtables (via email and snail mail).

If you haven't already heard, the topic for the conference is the Vicksburg Campaign of 1863. Two of our main speakers, Parker Hills & Kurt Fields, have signed on. Many of you may or may not know Parker of the Raymond Battlefield in Mississippi, to which we have donated multiple times.

I'm not sure how many past members get our Newsletter, it would be nice to see some old familiar faces. Our next meeting is May 11th, the second Thursday, at 6:00pm. The location is Denny's on Shaw & Willow.

Michael J Spencer, SJVCWRT President

April U.S. Civil War History

1862 - Seventeen ships under the command of Union Admiral David Farragut moved up the Mississippi River past two Confederate forts toward New Orleans. Only one ship was lost.

1863 - Union Colonel Benjamin Grierson's troops tore up tracks and destroyed two trainloads of ammunition headed for Vicksburg.

1863 - The Union army issued General Orders No. 100. The orders provided the code of conduct for Federal soldiers and officers when dealing with Confederate prisoners and civilians.

U.S. Civil War Quote:

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present... fellow citizens, we cannot escape history... The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union... In giving freedom to the slave, we ensure freedom to the free--honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last, best hope of earth."

- *U.S. President Lincoln, the last paragraph of his State of the Union address on December 1, 1862.*

3. AFTER ACTION REPORT, 4/13 MEETING

By Ron Vaughan, Secretary & Treasurer

Treasurer's Report: As of 21st, we have \$4,041 in our bank account.

10 persons were present at our meeting. We discussed our 2023 Conference. General Parker Hills will be our keynote Speaker, as he is a top expert on the Vicksburg Campaign. Also attending will be General U. S. Grant, (AKA Dr. Curt Fields, an excellent Grant impersonator). We may also have President Lincoln (Wayne Scott).

Tom Ebert reported he is speaking to the April meeting of the Westerner's Club, which Meets on the third Wednesdays at Mimi's. He will talk about Custer at the Little Big Horn.

My talk and slides was on the little known Battle of Milliken's Bend, July 7, 1863. It took place during the Siege of Vicksburg. Milliken's Bend, on the East Bank of the Mississippi, had been an important supply depot for the Union Army, but when Grant established a new base on the Yazoo River, it became a training camp for newly recruited freed slaves from the Mississippi valley. The regiments of the "Brigade of African Descent" were intended to be used as laborers, so had received little training with their rifles. Colonel

Herman Lieb (a Swiss Immigrant) was in command of the four regiments, which totaled only 1,000 men. A Texas brigade of four regiments (15000 men) led by Col. Henry McCulloch, were assigned by Confederate General John Walker to assault the camp. They made a night march and attacked at dawn. The defender's fire as inaccurate, so the Texans were able to come to grips hand to hand. They outflanked the Union left, and rolled up the line. However, two companies of the 23rd Iowa, debarked from a steamboat, and helped cover the retreat to the riverside barricade.

The melee was quite vicious, with some Blacks wounded several times, but still fighting. At this point, the Union gunboats Choctaw and Lexington opened fire, and the Texans withdrew. The butcher's bill was 682 Union casualties and the Texans lost 185. About 50 of the Black troops were captured and returned to slavery.

The significance of the battle was that the bravery of the raw Black troops changed the perception of the effectiveness of Black troops. Secretary of War Stanton, read the report of Charles Dana, and concurred that the Black troops had exhibited great bravery and changed the sentiment to the army regarding them. He wrote, "The slave has proved his manhood, and his capacity as an infantry soldier." At a time when casualties and desertions were depleting the Southern armies, the influx of Black recruits further swelled the size of the Union Army, tipping the scales in favor of a Union victory.

4. CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From "The Blue & Gray Laughing"

"An Irishman from Michigan, was at Bull Run battle, was startled when the head of his companion on his left was knocked off by a cannon ball. A few moments after, a spent ball broke the fingers of his comrade on the right! The latter yelled with pain. The Irishman exclaimed, 'Blasht your soul, you owld woman, shtop crying': you make more noise about it than the man that lost his head."