



BUGLE CALLS, JANUARY 2022

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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1. COMING EVENTS:

**A. JANUARY 2022 MEETING: “Meet Colonel Fremantle”
Peter Lee**

DENNY’S RESTURANT, 710 W. SHAW

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Meeting:

**B. FEBRUARY MEETING: Tom Ebert: “The Prelude to
War: 1850s”**

C. MARCH MEETING: Bernie Quinn: “Berdan’s Rifles”

**D. APRIL MEETING: Part 2 of Bernie Quinn’s “Berdan’s
Rifles”**

E. MAY MEETING: To be determined

2. PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE:

Hello Members,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all, hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. After an extensive process and receiving a tax ID # Ron and I were able to set a new business account for the round table. Hopefully we can get the ball rolling ahead of time for the West Coast CW conference for November 2022.

As you may already know our group has lost some important people. David Davenport, a longtime member. Lisa Peters' mother. And finally, Ken Moats, also a longtime member and friend to the SJVCWRT. With humbled and sincere condolences you will be missed deeply.

Our next meeting will be January 13th at Denny's, 6:00 pm. The speaker for the night will be Peter Lee, and the topic will be Colonel Arthur Fremantle.

Civil War Tidbits....

Taking Photographs During the Civil War

**Wagons and camera of Sam A. Cooley, U.S.
photographer, Department of the South**

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During the Civil War, the process of taking photographs was complex and time-consuming.

- Photographers mixed their own chemicals and prepared their own wet plate glass negatives.**
- The negatives had to be prepared, exposed, and developed within minutes, before the emulsion dried.**

It was a difficult process to master in a studio setting and even more difficult to work outdoors.

Photographers transported their supplies in a wagon, improvised a darkroom, and learned to use their chemicals in both the blistering heat and bitter cold.

The Wet Plate Process

Producing photographs from wet plates involved many steps.

- A clean sheet of glass was evenly coated with collodion.**

- In a darkroom or a light-tight chamber, the coated plate was immersed in a silver nitrate solution, sensitizing it to light.
- After it was sensitized, the wet negative was placed in a light-tight holder and inserted into the camera, which already had been positioned and focused.
- The "dark slide," which protected the negative from light, and the lens cap were removed for several seconds, allowing light to expose the plate.
- The "dark slide" was inserted back into the plate holder, which was then removed from the camera.
- In the darkroom, the glass plate negative was removed from the plate holder and developed, washed in water, and fixed so that the image would not fade, then washed again and dried.
- Usually the negatives were coated with a varnish to protect the surface.
- After development, the photographs were printed on paper and mounted.

In the 1880s dry plate negatives were introduced. These glass negatives were commercially available and did not need to be developed immediately after the exposure.

3. AFTER ACTION REPORT:

By Ron Vaughan

Eight persons were present for our Christmas Party. We missed the Scotts, as they were sick. I reported that I have applied for a Tax ID number, I received recognition of the application, but still waiting. I reported that in September I called the Wyndham Gardens to cancel the rooms for our conference speakers. However, a \$700 charge showed up on my credit card. I spoke to the manager, who said they had made a mistake, but could not refund my card. We worked out an agreement to give credit to our expenses for the 2022 conference.

I showed a dozen slides of Civil War Christmas pictures that I found on the internet. Then I read an essay on how the Civil War changed the way the Nation celebrated the holiday. Before the war, the holiday was

not celebrated, except by European immigrants. But during the war soldiers missed their families more than ever during the Winter encampments. In many cases groups of civilians sent boxes of food and presents to the regiments from their State. They provided some jolly relief for the soldiers. Some of the newspapers published images of Saint Nicholas, which established the concept we share today. After the war, President Grant declared it a National Holiday, celebrated all over the country.

The gift exchange went well with not too much “stealing”. Several persons shared their favorite Christmas memories. Meeting ended at 7:45.

4. CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From “The Blue & Gray Laughing”

“A Texan soldier, trudging along one day all alone, met a Methodist circuit rider, and at once recognized him as such, but affected ignorance of it. ‘What army do you belong to?’ asked the preacher.

‘I belong to the –TH Texas Regiment, Van Dorn’s Army,’ replied the soldier. ‘What army do you belong to?’

‘I belong to the army of the Lord,’ was the solemn reply. ‘Well then, my friend,’ said the soldier dryly, ‘you’ve got a very long way from headquarters!’”

5. “ECHOES FROM THE PAST”:

I came across an article from our November 1994 newsletter by former member Professor Verne Cole. Here are excerpts: “The book ‘America Goes to War’ by Bruce Catton has some outstanding gems for thought. These are examples: ‘We are a people to whom the past is forever speaking. Far out of that dark nowhere before we were born, men who were flesh and bone went through fire and storm to break a path to the future. We are part of that future they died for. What they did—the lives they lived, the sacrifices they made, the stories they told, the songs they sang, and finally, the deaths they died—make up our own experience. It is a basic part of our heritage as Americans.

We have paid and will continue to pay tribute to the men who fought in the Civil War, and will commune with them as their voices reach us from the past. Although we have heard their story a great many times, it is always worth a re-telling...’”