September 16, 2009 Volume 23, Number 09
Monthly newsletter of the San Diego Civil War Round Table (SDCWRT)

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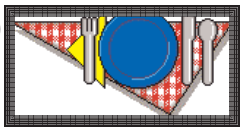
☎ A Call for Programs

If you're interested in giving a program contact Bill Cooper at 619/422-6745

We are having technical difficulties with the website. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

See you at the September Social (see page 4)

September Social Meeting



On Wednesday September 16, 2009 at **7:00 pm** the SDCWRT will hold its 277th meeting at Palisades Presbyterian Church, 6301 Birchwood St. San Diego, CA 92120.

The theme of this year's Social will be "***Food of the Civil War***". What did Billy Yank and Johnny Reb eat during the war?

Join us and not only find out what kind of food was available to them, but you will also have a chance to sample some of the items for yourself. Dinner will be somewhat pot-luck with the club serving the main course. Dinner will be Beef, Ham, Baked Beans, Vegetables and Dessert. If you would like to bring something, please bring one of the following. Corn bread, A whole loaf of white bread (unsliced), salad or a side dish. There will also be a $5.00 donation per person. It should be a fun evening and please feel free to bring a friend.

August Meeting

by Travis Fuqua

Rich Marcell presented John Brown: His Soul is Marching On at the Palisades Presbyterian Church on August 19, 2009. John Brown is every bit as controversial today as he was 150 years ago. Today as then, some see him as a lunatic while others see him as a savior. One point that can be agreed upon more easily is that his actions shocked the nation in a manner that was not too dissimilar to the terrorist actions that shocked us at the beginning of this decade.

John Brown was born in Connecticut on May 9, 1800. He was descended from the original Pilgrims of 1620 and was thus a devout member of the Congregational Church. Brown's family and he in particular were ardent abolitionists, even fanatical, and he felt that slavery went against the Bible. As a boy, Brown had intended to become a minister, but a lack of money forced him to become a tanner instead.

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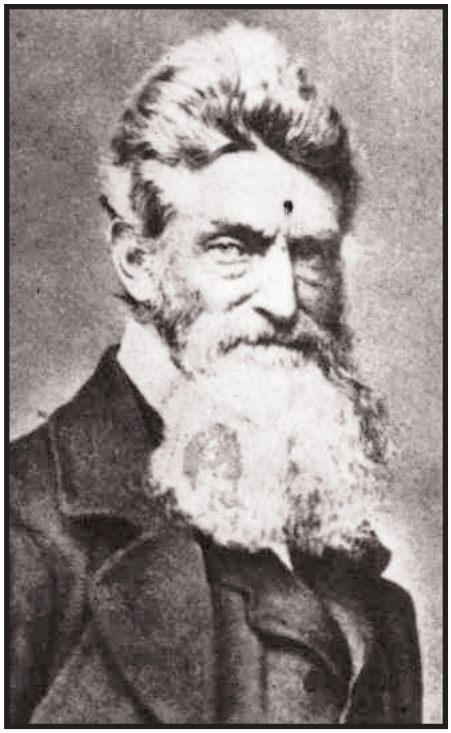
August Meeting

(continued from page 1)

John Brown first married in 1820 and had seven children with this wife. She died not long after their seventh child died as newborn, and soon after, Brown was remarried to a sixteen-year-old girl.

With his second wife, Brown would have thirteen more children for a total of twenty children. Brown continued in his tanning business as he moved to Pennsylvania and then Ohio, but illness and an economic crisis forced him into debt.



John Brown

Once in debt, Brown was forced to try several different businesses in order to regain his credit. Not long after, Brown became involved in the wool business in Massachusetts. At the same time, he became a fanatical abolitionist after the murder of Elijah Lovejoy, an abolitionist in Illinois.

In the late 1840s, John Brown moved to a homestead in New York. In 1847, Frederick Douglass, who had only recently been made legally free, paid John Brown a visit and it was there that Brown told Douglass of a plan to lead an armed raid into the South to arm slaves and lead them to revolt.

Brown leaned towards violence as he was disgusted with the lack of force that had thitherto been shown by the abolitionists. In the days before the Civil War, the only actions that Eastern abolitionists took were to publish anti-slavery pamphlets and newspapers and to publically speak out against slavery.

There were isolated incidents of violence, but Brown felt that only a significant act of violence would convince anyone of the necessity to end slavery.

In the following decade, Brown had a chance to act upon his wishes. The ordeal that was to be the 1850s began in its first year with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Brown was enraged that the North had become partners with the South to protect slavery.

Brown's rage continued when he heard of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 which allowed those territories to decide if they were to be slave or free states. Brown immediately rushed to Kansas to support the abolitionists. In late-May of 1856, Brown led a group of men to Pottawatomie, Kansas and killed five supporters of slavery in the Pottawatomie Massacre.

Later that year in August, Brown defended Osawatomie, Kansas against pro-slavery forces and earned the name "Osawatomie Brown" for his bravery.

John Brown returned to the East at the end of 1856 and spent the next couple of years raising money and support. Brown sought financial and military support and began to train a small army. He also became acquainted with prominent abolitionists. During his preparations, the Kansas issue was quieted and he began to focus on Virginia. Throughout 1859, Brown finalized his plans for the attack as he acquired numerous arms, but he only had an army of less than two dozen men.

On October 16, 1859, John Brown led nineteen men in an attack to capture the federal armory at Harpers Ferry.

He planned to use the weapons in the armory to arm slaves and then cause a large scale slave rebellion. The raid began as planned and Brown took several prominent hostages from the local farms including Colonel Lewis Washington, the great-grandnephew of the great General Washington.

The raid began to have trouble when a train approached and Brown as demanded it to stop, he shot the baggage master when the baggage master confronted the raiders.

The baggage master was ironically a freedman. The train was surprisingly allowed to continue and then alerted its owners of the situation who then sent the message to the government in Washington by late morning of October the 17th. That afternoon, President Buchanan ordered a detachment of U.S. Marines to Harpers Ferry.

At the same time, the locals and the local militia surrounded and engaged Brown and forced him and his party to barricade themselves in the engine house of the armory, which later became known as "John Brown's Fort."

(continued page 4)

San Diego Civil War Round Table
Founded January, 1986
Officers/Appointments

President: Dave Tooley.....858/672-2593
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Council at Large: Curtis Dryer 619 267 0806
Photographer: Bob Batten.....
Public Relations:Mikey Lambirth.619/596-4005

The $25 donation per year helps defray cost of hall rental, maintaining a Civil War Library and publishing the ***Skirmish Line*** newsletter.

Be a part of the Civil War information gateway!
Submit articles, ideas, comments, etc.by the 1st day of the month to **Dave Taylor**
E-Mail to **cwdave@aol.com**
or **at the meeting.**
Submit your information via
diskette format (MAC/IBM ASCII text)
or **voice** *or* **paper.**

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SAN DIEGO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

September 16, 2009
7:00 PM

September Social

FOOD OF THE CIVIL WAR

Learn what the Troop's Ate during the War.

Dinner will be served at 7:00 PM
Program will follow.
There will be a $5.00 Donation Per-Person for Dinner.
Please bring as many Guests as you wish.

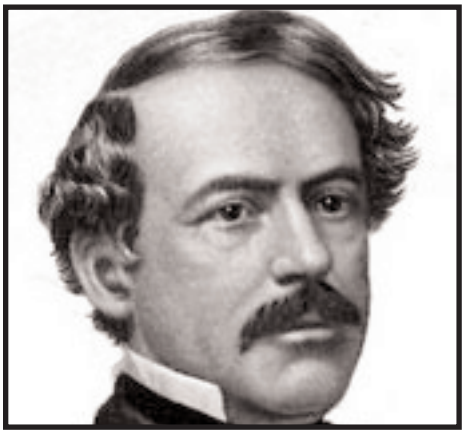
Time Life Civil War Set
All 28 Volumes
Will be part of Raffle.

August Meeting

(continued from page 2)

Brown sent one of his sons and a supporter with a white flag to negotiate, but they were killed by the angry crowd. The two groups continued to exchange fire and another of Brown's sons was killed.

The next day on October the 18th, the Marines under General Robert E. Lee along who was accompanied by a young lieutenant aide-de-camp J. E. B. Stuart



Gen. Robert E. Lee

arrived to end the situation.

They offered to allow Brown to surrender but he refused. Brown attempted to negotiate with J. E. B. Stuart by offering to set the hostages free if his party were allowed safe passage to Maryland, but Stuart refused.

It was then that the Marines stormed the engine house and in minutes, Brown and a few supporters were captured, while others escaped or were killed.

Brown was injured during the storming of the engine house, but was taken prisoner and questioned later that day by the governor of Virginia and several senators. His trial began not long after and he was charged for murder, treason, and conspiring to cause a slave rebellion.

The trial was held in Virginia despite the armory being on federal ground for political reasons. Brown was found guilty on all three charges after 45 minutes of deliberation two weeks later and sentenced to death. John Brown was hanged on the morning of December 2, 1859 and was buried at his farm in New York.

The Senate began an investigation that month which lasted until June of 1860. During the investigation, named the Mason Committee after its chairmen, the Democrats tried to implicate the Republicans as supporters of Brown—a charge which the Republicans flatly denied and throughout the election that year, they distanced themselves from Brown by claiming that he was a misguided madman who was justly hanged.

Before his death, John Brown had somewhat prophetic words about the future of the country as he said that the United States would have to pay for slavery with blood.

This was, of course, to come true not long after. There was both celebration and horror at his hanging. The South was jubilant as were some in the North, but there were many prominent people who did not agree, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and even the French author Victor Hugo who tried to obtain a pardon for Brown.

John Brown is best remembered for his role in starting the Civil War. It was the actions of Brown that brought the thought of large scale violence on the behalf of slavery to the minds of Americans.

His raid also further polarized the country as the South became increasingly worried about the future of slavery and the North became even more vociferous about its abolition.

Some historians believe that the South began to see secession as a viable option if the North could not protect them against future John Browns. They also saw the Republican as at war with South, despite claims to the contrary.

When Lincoln was elected, they feared the worse and began to secede. Today, we debate about this controversial man whose soul continues to march on.

Letters to Editor

Subject: Confederate Flags
From: HThaete@aol.com

Confederate flags: For the first time, the Museum of the Confederacy's 685-item flag collection is available in a searchable database. Each entry includes a photograph, measurements and, when available, a battle history. http://www.moc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ce_col_flags

Battlefield Preservation

By Carla Schwartz

Vote for your Battlefield

- ☐ Fort Gaines, AL
- ☐ Port Gibson, MS
- ☐ Port Republic, VA
- ☐ Monocacy, MD
- ☐ Spring Hill, TN
- ☐ Wilderness, VA

Fort Gaines, AL - History:

The history of Fort Gaines is intertwined with one of the most important battles of the Civil War. In 1864, the entrance to the last major Confederate shipping harbor, Mobile Bay, was guarded by two fortressed batteries including Fort Gaines, on the eastern point of Dauphin Island, Alabama. Controlling Mobile Bay was crucial to ending Confederate resistance. Union Admiral David Farragut looked out over treacherous water mines, known then as torpedoes, littering the middle passage to the bay. When the lead boat, the ironclad USS Tecumseh, sank after striking a mine, panic and disorder overtook much of the fleet. To embolden his shaken forces, Farragut shouted the most famous command in maritime history, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

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Battlefield Preservation

(*Continued on Page 4*)

Preservation:

Dredging practices in the Gulf of Mexico have greatly increased the rate of erosion on Dauphin Island. More than 400 feet of historic coastline have already been lost, complicating the continued operation of the Fort Gaines Historic Site. The loss of established dune systems means that the Gulf could eventually bisect the island, stranding Fort Gaines and other culturally important areas. Money would be used to stabilize its shoreline, including the possibility of an engineered beach, which has proven successful for stabilizing neighboring beach areas in Alabama.

Port Gibson, MS- History:

Grant's army, on its way to Vicksburg moved across the river at Bruinsburg. McClernand's corps headed rapidly inland toward Port Gibson, about thirty miles south of Vicksburg. A small confederate force at Grand Gulf, outflanked, hurried towards Port Gibson to intercept McClernand. Throughout the day McClernand's men fought with those under Maj. Gen. John S. Bowen in a land of steep, sharp ridges and gullies, covered with thick vines and snaring undergrowth. Pushed slowly backward by the overwhelming Union force, Bowen retired to Port Gibson and then evacuated the town. Grant's bridgehead on the east side of the Mississippi was now secure and his army had room to move towards Jackson and Vicksburg. Grant famously called Port Gibson "a town too beautiful to burn."

Preservation:

A controversial proposal to widen Church Street through the heart of town would threaten historic neighborhoods. The CWPT recently helped save 661 acres at the battlefield site. However, a proposed bypass could nullify this accomplishment.

Port Republic, VA- History:

The Battle of Port Republic was fought on June 9, 1862, in Rockingham County, Virginia, as part of Confederate Army Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's campaign through the Shenandoah Valley. Port Republic was a fierce contest between two equally determined foes and was the most costly battle fought by Jackson's Army of the Valley during its campaign. Together, the battles of Cross Keys (the previous day) and Port Republic were the decisive victories in Jackson's Valley Campaign, forcing the Union armies to retreat and leaving Jackson free to reinforce Gen. Robert E. Lee for the Seven Days Battles outside Richmond, Virginia.

Preservation:

Money would be used to purchase farmland in the battlefield site and surrounding area. Also, aid would be given to private landowners, who face development pressure, to maintain their land in rural areas. Work is underway to prepare interpretive plans and a driving tour.

Monocacy, MD- History:

In the summer of 1864, with the Union army closing on Richmond and laying siege to nearby Petersburg, Confederate leaders devised a daring plan to threaten Washington while the majority of the capital's defenders were deployed elsewhere. After crossing the Potomac at Shepherdstown, a small but well-led Confederate army moved on Washington from the north. On the morning of July 9, a hastily assembled Union force under the command of Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace encountered elements of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's force on its trek to Washington. Badly outnumbered, the Federal force had little chance of defeating the Confederate; instead, their strategic goal was merely to hinder the invading enemy's advance long enough for reinforcements to be rushed to Washington by rail. Delayed by a day, Early arrived outside the capital on July 11, to find it defended by veterans freshly arrived from the siege of Petersburg. After losing the Battle of Fort Stevens and failing to capture the city, Early retraced his steps back into Virginia.

Preservation:

A proposal is currently under consideration by Frederick County, Md., to construct a waste-to-energy facility just outside the boundary of Monocacy National Battlefield. The incinerator on the facility would have a 150 foot tall smokestack, making it visible from much of the battlefield, and its footprint would be within the battlefield's boundary according to the National Register of Historic Places.

Spring Hill, TN- History:

Spring Hill was the prelude to the Battle of Franklin. On the night of November 28, 1864, General John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee marched toward Spring Hill to get astride Major General John M. Schofield's Union Army's life line. Cavalry skirmishing between Brig. General James H. Wilson's Union cavalry and Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest's Confederate troopers continued throughout the day as the Confederates advanced. On November 29, Hood's infantry crossed Duck River and converged on Spring Hill. In the meantime, Major General Schofield reinforced the troops holding the crossroads at Spring Hill. In late afternoon, the Federals repulsed a piecemeal Confederate infantry attack. During the night, the rest of Schofield's command passed from Columbia through Spring Hill to Franklin. This was, perhaps, Hood's best chance to isolate and defeat the Union army. The engagement has been described as "one of the most controversial non-fighting events of the entire war."

Preservation:

General Motors is seeking to sell approximately 500 acres of unused land surrounding the battlefield. It has volunteered to donate 100 acres for preservation. While that land will form a buffer around Rippavilla Plantation, plans call for high-density development — apartments, a hotel, a theater, restaurants, retail and office space — on approximately the 400 remaining acres. Money would be used to purchase land.

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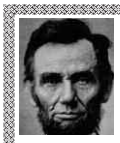
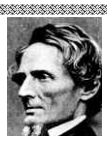


Coming Attractions



SDCWRT

(Contact Bill Cooper for programs)

2009

Oct 21 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

Oct 23-25 West Coast CWRT Conference 2009, The Campaign for Chattanooga, in Clovis, California. http://www.chattanooga2009.com/ for all the info.

Friday, October 23
2:00-5:00 pm Registration. Foyer of the Veterans Memorial Building, Clovis, CA. . . . . .
4:00-5:00 pm Socializing.
Book tables open. . . . . .
5:00 pm "Tullahoma, Chickamauga & Beyond: John Thomas Wilder & His Lightning Brigade." . . . . . Christopher Young
6:00 pm Dinner & Introductory Remarks Afterward: "I Think the Rebellion Must Die" The Strategic, Economic & Political Importance of Chattanooga in the American Civil War. Evan Jones, James Ogden

Saturday, October 24
8:00 am "Rosecrans Victory March and the Road to Chickamauga." Dr. Steven Woodworth
9:00 am "Clash at the River of Death, Chickamauga - Day One." Lee White
10:00 am Break Refreshments and book tables open. .
10:30 am "Confederate Breakthrough, Chickamauga - Day Two." Dr. William Glenn Robertson
12:00 noon Lunch . . . . . .
1:00 pm "William Oats and William Lytle - Bloody Crossroads at Chickamauga." Christopher Young
2:00 pm Debate: "The Generalship of Braxton Bragg" Wiley Sword, Steven Woodworth
3:00 pm "Rosecrans and His Enemies – The Federal High Command and the Campaign for Chattanooga" . Evan Jones
4:00 pm "Bull of the Woods? James Longstreet in the Western Theater" Dr. Glenn Robertson
5:00 pm "The Cracker Line" Dr. Jim Stanbery
6:00 pm Social Hour. Book tables open, tour information available. . . . . .
7:00 pm Dinner Banquet . . . . . .
8:00 pm Moderated Panel Discussion:
"The Importance of the Civil War's Western Theater" with Wiley Sword, William Glenn Robertson, James Ogden, Evan Jones, Lee White and Christopher Young. Moderator: Jim Stanbery

Sunday, October 25
8:00 am "The Battle for Lookout Mountain" James Ogden
9:00 am "The Battle for Missionary Ridge" Wiley Sword
10:00 am "The Confederate Retreat and Battle of Ringgold Gap" Lee White
11:00 am "The Consequences of the Campaign for Chattanooga." Wiley Sword
12:00 noon Lunch 12:45 pm Farewell . . . . . .

Battlefield Preservation

(continued from page 5

Wilderness, VA-History:

In the morning of May 5, 1864, the Union V Corps attacked Ewell's Corps on the Orange Turnpike, while A.P. Hill's corps during the afternoon encountered Getty's Division (VI Corps) and Hancock's II Corps on the Plank Road. Fighting was fierce but inconclusive as both sides attempted to maneuver in the dense woods. Darkness halted the fighting, and both sides rushed forward reinforcements. At dawn on May 6, Hancock attacked along the Plank Road, driving Hill's Corps back in confusion. Longstreet Corps arrived in time to prevent the collapse of the Confederate right flank. At noon, a devastating Confederate flank attack in Hamilton's Thicket sputtered out when Lieutenant General James Longstreet was wounded by his own men. The IX Corps (Burnside) moved against the Confederate center, but was repulsed. Union generals James S. Wadsworth and Alexander Hays were killed. Confederate generals John M. Jones, Micah Jenkins, and Leroy A. Stafford were killed. The battle was a tactical draw. Grant, however, did not retreat as had the other Union generals before him. On May 7, the Federals advanced by the left flank toward the crossroads of Spotsylvania Courthouse.

Preservation:

Preservationists are trying to block Wal-mart from building a 138,000-square-foot supercenter just a quarter mile from the edge of the national park. If built, it would be the fifth Wal-Mart within a 20-mile radius and ensure further commercial development nearby.

Classified Ads

Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, 1861-1865 - Nancy Hanks Lincoln Tent No. 5. Congressionally Chartered. Direct Union veteran lineal descend required. Age 8 and up. Contact Pres. Louise Jefferis at 858/274-3790, ajefferis@compuserve.com or Marilyn Steber at 619/222-6493, marilynsteber@yahoo.com.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) - Sgt. William Pittenger Camp 21. Direct or collateral descent from a Union veteran. Associate members welcome. Contact David E. Allyn, 619-561-8581, email svrsuvcw@yahoo.com

Sons of Confederate Veterans of the Civil War (SCVCW) - Father A. J. Ryan Camp 302. Direct or collateral descent from a Confederate veteran. Contact Adjutant Stu Hoffman at 619/447-7619.

United Daughters of the Confederacy, Stonewall Jackson Chapter #476, accepts members whose ancestors (direct or collateral) fought for the Confederate States of America and any other Ladies with Southern Sympathies. For more information, call Davenia Cray at 619-444-3878.