



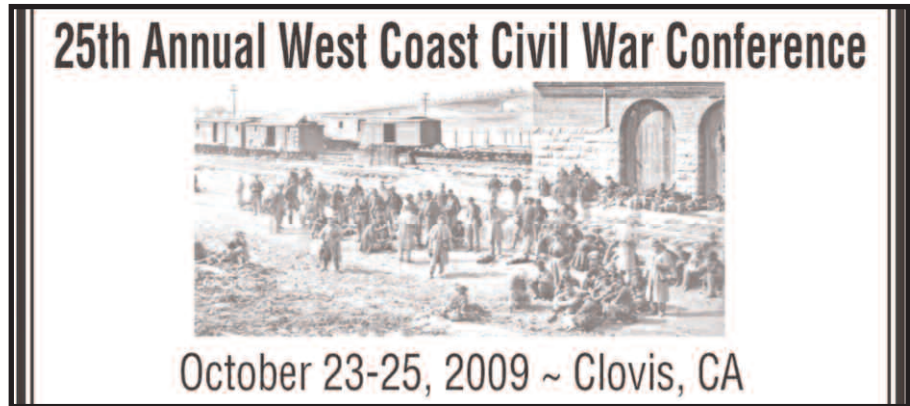
October 21, 2009 Volume 23, Number 10

Monthly newsletter of the San Diego Civil War Round Table (SDCWRT)

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October Meeting

On Wednesday 21, 2009 at **7:30 pm** the SDCWRT will hold its 278th meeting at Palisades Presbyterian Church, 6301 Birchwood St. San Diego, CA 92120. A *“Surprise Topic”* will be presented.”



The conference, to be held in Clovis, California, October 23-25, 2009 on the Campaign for Chattanooga, Tennessee, represents the best of what the West Coast Conference offers.

The keynote speaker, Professor Steven Woodworth, was described by Dr. Gary Gallagher as the "Dean of Civil War Historians for the study of the Western Theater." Other speakers include Dr. William Glenn Robertson, director of the Combat Studies Institute at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Professor Robertson is regarded as the world's expert on the battle of Chickamauga. Also speaking, Wiley Sword, author of the definitive book on the battle of Chattanooga, in addition to four staff historians from the Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park and Dr. Jim Stanbery of Los Angeles Harbor College.

<http://www.chattanooga2009.com/speakers.html>

In brief, the nation's leading scholars on the Chattanooga Campaign will be gathered for this occasion. Never before has the West Coast Conference offered such an ambitious program.

Information detailing our program, speakers, registration, hotels, etc is available at: www.chattanooga2009.com or see **Page 3**.

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

See you at the 25th Annual West Coast CWRT Conference
(see page 3)

September Social by Travis Fuqua

The September Social was held at the Palisades Presbyterian Church and began around 7:00 pm on September 16, 2009. The social consisted of a meal and a presentation. The food that was served was like that which was served to Federal soldiers in the Civil War. The main course consisted of items such as ham, boiled beef, boiled



Building "The Spread"

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

President: Dave Tooley.....858/672-2593
VP/Membership: Chuck Reynolds..619/426-5546
VP/Programs: Bill Cooper.....619/422-6745
Secretary: Travis Fuqua.....858/270-9277
Treasurer: Paul Champlin.....858/455-0782
Chaplain: Dennis Mikulanic,STD619/423-0242
Historian: Mikey Lambirth.....619/596-4005
Librarian: Al Haun.....858/565-8664
Preservation: Carla Schwartz...619/582-7824
Master at Arms: Larry Corbett....619/429-5607
Skirmish Line Editor: Dave Taylor 858/272-9849
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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potatoes, beans, and corn bread. Beverages were limited to those that the soldiers would have had such as water, tea, and coffee. The complete list of food is very extensive as is the appreciation of the SDCWRT towards those who contributed their time and effort to the occasion.

Bill Cooper presented Army Chow During the Civil War as the meal portion of the social reached its end. As to be expected the chaotic situation in the South during the war prevented better record keeping and thus Mr. Cooper focused more on the Federal Army.

Before the war began, the regular army was not tremendous in size only numbering around 16,000 men spread out across the country. The provisioning of these 16,000 men was the responsibility of the Army Quartermaster Department under the command of the Quartermaster General. The largest conflict in recent memory—the Mexican War of the late 1840s—had seen the deployment of an efficient supply system, but the army was far smaller than the one required after 1861. With the outbreak of the war and the vast enlargement of the army, the peacetime system was quickly strained to its limit and an immediate expansion was required.

In the South, Lucius B. Northrop was named Quartermaster General by President Davis in 1861. Northrop immediately faced enormous challenges as the Confederacy was not properly equipped for such a war. Northrop managed the Quartermaster Department successfully given the Confederate situation and despite criticism and his removal from office in early 1865. One of the major challenges that faced the Confederacy was the transportation system. No new railroads were built in the South during the war and soon, the transportation system began to fail. Many times, food and supplies were not able to reach their destinations and instead rotted in the fields or warehouses leaving the soldiers to half-rations or less.

Another problem was the Confederate currency which began to inflate beyond control and soon became worthless.

Confederate soldiers were thus forced to rely on other methods of obtain their supplies as the war progressed. Packages were sent from home, but the deterioration of the rail system caused food to spoil before arriving, if it arrived at all. Sutlers followed the army to sell them their goods, but their prices were often exorbitant. Local farmers often sold their goods to the soldiers for more reasonable prices. Other times, the food was requisitioned and a promissory note was issued by the quartermaster. With



Great Civil War books for sale

the eventual inflation of Confederate currency, farmers often did not receive their repayment. Finally, as the Confederacy deteriorated, the supplies deteriorated and some soldiers were forced into theft to obtain food.

The Federal Government did not fare much better at times. The rapid expansion of the army placed great strain on the peacetime supply system. The Federal Quartermaster General was Brigadier (later Major) General Montgomery C. Meigs who was appointed in May of 1861. Perhaps the largest enemy of the Federal provisioning system was the corruption of the military contractors and sometimes those in the military itself. The contractors often charged exorbitant prices, provided inferior food, or sometimes none at all, or even all three! Other times, officers would claim the provisions for themselves and leave very little for their men. *(continued page 4)*

West Coast Civil War Round Table Conference 2009

October 23-25, 2009

West Coast Civil War Round Table Conference The Campaign for Chattanooga October 23-25 2009 in Clovis, California

presented by

The San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table

Friday, October 23

Time	Event
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."
6:00 pm	Dinner. Introductory Remarks (During Dinner) Afterward: "I Think the Rebellion Must Die" The Strategic, Economic & Political Importance of Chattanooga in the American Civil War.

The Speakers

Dr. Steven Woodworth
Lee White

Dr. William Glenn Robertson
Christopher Young
Wiley Sword
Evan Jones
Dr. Jim Stanbery
James Ogden

Saturday, October 24

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

Sunday, October 25

Time	Event
8:00 am	"The Battle for Lookout Mountain"
9:00 am	"The Battle for Missionary Ridge"
10:00 am	"The Confederate Retreat and Battle of Ringgold Gap"
11:00 am	"The Consequences of the Campaign for Chattanooga."
12:00 noon	Lunch
12:45 pm	Farewell

September Social

(continued from page 2)

The Federal Army also faced the kinds of periodic shortages that could be expected of an army in the mid-nineteenth century. The Federal Army had to learn quickly how to distribute supplies to such a vast army. In the East, this problem was solved in a couple of years, but the West continued to have this problem until the end of the war. The Federal Army also relied on sources other than the Quartermaster. Soldiers often received packages from home, but these were



Bill Cooper giving his presentation

more of a morale booster than a much relied upon source of sustenance. Sutlers and sometimes local farmers provided extra food. Since most of the war was fought on southern soil, soldiers were often sent out on foraging parties. Loyal people were given a promissory note and those who were not loyal often had their goods confiscated with the soldiers believing that the southerners had earned their misery for turning against the Union. Theft was not legal, but given the high emotional state of the war, such a ban was often difficult to enforce.

Officers had an allowance from which to feed themselves and their servants. The amount was increased correspondingly with the rank. Another innovation of the Federal Army was the company fund in which a company could sell unused rations back to the

quartermaster for cash which they could use to buy goods which were not available through the quartermaster. This idea, although a good one, was harder to practice as some officers were corrupt and kept the money while other officers did not wish to be bothered with such a system. The Federal Army certainly had the advantage, though, when it came to overall provisioning ability.

The food of the soldiers in the Civil War has been the subject of many a colorful description. Proper refrigeration and sanitation were still a few decades away and the quality of the soldiers' food suffered as a result. The staples were salted beef and pork, bread in the form of hardtack, and some kind of vegetable or fruit. Coffee was another staple and perhaps the most important. The Confederacy endeavored to have the same rations as the North, but shortages often prevented this. The food was often stale or filled with insects. In camp, a soldier received a couple of pounds of food a day, but on the march, he received not much more than a pound.

Hardtack was perhaps one of the most famous (or infamous) food items from the war. It was a thick and very hard cracker that was made from four parts flour and one part water with some salt. They were about three inches square and a half inch thick. Even when soaked in water or coffee, they never became very soft. In addition, they were often infested with insects, but these could be removed by soaking the hardtack in coffee and then skimming the top off.

Vegetables also received their share of infamy when they were desiccated (dehydrated). Sometimes desiccated vegetables did not contain vegetables and other times it had irregular mixtures of vegetables of poor quality. (continued page 5)

Battlefield Preservation

By Carla Schwartz

The Winners

- ☑ Fort Gaines, AL
- ☑ 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 fortified 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!"

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.

September Social

(continued from page 4)

One ration of desiccated vegetables was found to contain glass. Meat also suffered as the only way to preserve it was to salt it and sometimes it was salted too much. Salted meat often required long periods of soaking before it was palatable. Other times fresh meat was available, but it had to be eaten directly after slaughter owing to the lack of refrigeration. The Confederate Army had a shortage of meat on several occasions, especially during sieges and towards the end of the war, and soldiers were sometimes forced to eat the meat of other animals, such as mules, donkeys, dogs, and even rats and frogs. On other occasions, the Confederates were so desperate, they ate boiled dirt from smokehouse floors.

Coffee was a universal element for both armies. The Federal Quartermaster took measures to ensure that coffee was available over other rations. Southern soldiers also enjoyed coffee, but shortages in the Confederacy led to Southern soldiers finding alternatives such as chicory or trading tobacco for coffee with a willing Federal soldier.

All of the food in the Civil War was kept in a manner that did not benefit from our modern knowledge of sanitation. Basic concepts such as

washing one's hands were years away and latrines were often set up near



water sources leading to diseases such as dysentery, which killed around 50,000 soldiers on either side. Poor sanitation combined with poor nutrition led to a high disease rate that



often claimed more men than bullets. True Civil War chow combined with the manner in which it was prepared and stored was unsavory indeed!



Pedro Garcia receiving the "Presentation of the Year" from Dave Tooley



What is fast becoming a tradition at our Sept Social - Paul Champlain's fantastic ice cream for desert!

County OKs plaque plan to mark Civil War event

The Civil War never reached the West Coast, but that doesn't mean the Union Army wasn't on constant lookout for Confederate sympathizers.

When Union soldiers confronted a band of heavily armed men on their way to join the Confederate Army near Lake Henshaw in 1861, they were locked up and held so they couldn't join the fight.

The incident became known as the Minter's Ranch Affair, the only armed confrontation of the Civil War to take place in California.

Now a group called the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War wants to erect a bronze plaque at the scene of the confrontation, a ranch three miles south of the lake.

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors last week passed a resolution supporting the effort to commemorate the 1861 confrontation. The plaque will be paid for with private funds.

Supervisor Bill Horn, who represents the area and brought the proposal before the board, told colleagues in his report that the new marker could help attract tourists. -J.M.

Staff writers Mike Lee, Maureen Magee and Jeff McDonald contributed to this report.

Letters to Editor

Subject: CW Event in CA

From: Harry Thaete

Hello Ladies and Gents,

Just found this in yesterday's Union Tribune and was wondering if anybody in the SDCWRT knows anything about this incident near Lake Henshaw in 1861 known as the Minter's Ranch Affair. It was supposedly the only armed confrontation of the Civil War to take place in CA. It was news to me.

Gene Armistead also talked



about the "almost battle" in California: leaving us with a verbal visual, "If they had only fired a

shot it would have been a battle in California!"

I don't know if anyone saw this cartoon in the Union Tribune last week but I thought maybe the group might get a laugh out of it. I think you can reprint it but don't know if you have to give credit or not to Dan Piraro.

Fun time at the "Feast" last Wednesday -- especially the Hard Tack and Pedro winning the award.



Classified Ads

Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, 1861-1865 - Nancy Hanks Lincoln Tent No. 5. Congressionally Chartered. Direct Union veteran lineal descent required. Age 8 and up. Contact Pres. Louise Jefferis at 858/274-3790, ajeffferis@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

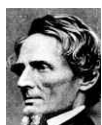
Sons of Confederate Veterans of the Civil War (SCVCW) - Father A. J. Ryan Camp 302. Direct or collateral descent from a Confederate veteran. Contact Adjutant Stu Hoffman at 619/447-7619.

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.



Coming Attractions SDCWRT

(Contact Bill Cooper for programs) 2009



Nov 18 SDCWRT "Show and Tell" - Member participation

Dec 16 SDCWRT "Civil War Christmas Poetry" - Member participation

2010

Jan 20 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

Feb 17 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

Mar 17 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

Apr 21 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

May 19 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.

Jun 16 SDCWRT OPEN Contact Bill Cooper.