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Table of Contents

President's Message	1
Minutes	2
Sarah Morgan	3
Programs	3
Milliken's Bend	4
Mother Superior	5
Instant Coffee	5
Book Review	6
Sherman's Generals	7

The Battle Cry

April 2002

Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
 Founded 1961, <http://sacramentocwrt.com/>



President's Message

Thanks to Phil Avila for his informative presentation on Colonel Robert Goule Shaw! I believe I'm the only member who has not seen the movie, "Glory!" I'll fix that as soon as a free evening pops up – assuming cooperation from Blockbusters! The effort, time, and expense for someone to make a presentation is considerable, so I know they appreciate our words of thanks. Keep up the good work on that score!

Don't forget the Gibson Ranch Re-enactment on April 26-28th! If you signed up to be present at our booth on Saturday or Sunday, please give me a call (530-886-8806). I managed to leave the sign-up list at the Sudwerk so please confirm your intention to be there. I also could still use more people on Friday to escort school children, so don't be bashful – give me a call. I will be getting logistical information to those who have volunteered, hopefully before the 26th! On that score, I hope that I am teasing!

Several months ago we had a regular "Show and Tell" segment to our Wednesday night meetings. The Board is evaluating whether it should be reinstated? We might call this new segment, "Show and/or Tell, and ask displayed items or shared conversations to be limited to the Civil War era." On the "show" side, we would arrange for a professional display of members' memorabilia. The "tell" side could explain an item on display, quickly re-cap a battlefield visit, or share other relevant topics of interest. Whatever is Civil War related and fits into three minutes! Please let me or any board member know your desires on the possible return of "Show and Tell."

The next muster is on Wednesday, April 24th, at the usual time and place. Professor Dan Defoe of Sierra College will provide the program discussing the reconstruction period. The title of his presentation is "Reconstruction – the revolution that went backwards." He has been doing considerable research and we will get the benefit of it all! See you there.

Paul Ruud, President

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2002
 Sudwerk Restaurant, 1375 Exposition Boulevard, Sacramento

ATTENDANCE – 43

MEMBERS – 38

Paul Ruud, President	Ardith Cnota
Kit Knight, Vice President	Mitch Cnota
George Foxworth, Treasurer	Bill Donaldson
Walt Bittle, Secretary	Lydia Donaldson
Dudley Albrecht	Alan Geiken
Claudia Andres	Warren Holloway
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Mark Aulman	Robert Junell
Mary Aulman	Ken Kitchen
Roy Bishop	Arthur Knight
Fred Bohmfalk	Gatha Lee
Carol Breiter	Ken Lentz
Bernie Buenrostro	Mary Lou Lentz

GUESTS – 5

Robert DiRosario
Connie Gipson
Mary Muttera
Sondra Schonwasser
Andrew Sweeringer

1. The meeting was called to order by President Ruud, who reviewed This Day in History. New members and guests were introduced and welcomed. The February minutes were approved as printed. Treasurer Foxworth reported a current balance of \$1755.48, of which \$63 was raised by the February raffle.
2. Program – Phil Avila, of the North Bay CWRT, presented an excellent program – obviously well documented and researched. His study of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment was called “Brahmin Child, Ebony Soldier”. Phil followed Shaw’s life and career from birth into New England society to his death leading his beloved 54th into battle at Battery Wagner. Surely, Phil will grace us with another program in the future.
3. Committee/Activity Reports
 - a. President Ruud announced some changes to the meeting format, including a new procedure for the raffle. He is attempting to streamline the meetings overall.
 - b. A sign-up sheet was distributed to garner signatures to work our booth at the April 27 and 28 reenactment at Gibson Ranch.
 - c. Carol Breiter reported that she has scheduled Lee Meredith to lead a guided tour of the USS Hornet on May 25. The tour will be limited to the first fifteen who sign up.
4. Adjournment – Following the new procedure, the raffle was held prior to adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Walt Bittle
 Secretary

NOTICE: The sign-up sheet for volunteers to work at Gibson Ranch was misplaced at the Sudwerk Restaurant. If you will be able to work Saturday, April 27 and/or Sunday, April 28, please call Paul Ruud at 530-886-8806. (Or e-mail to prrud1@quiknet.com)
 (Paul will attempt to order parking passes for volunteers.)

SARAH MORGAN, 1862: FLY AWAY**by Kit Knight**

The dirty Yankees have taken
 New Orleans. My town
 is next. Baton Rouge is only
 up the river. I gather
 essentials and put them in
 my "running bag." Mother tells
 each of us girls to be sure
 we have a comb. She wants
 to save my father's attorney
 papers, but when
 the shells start screaming,
 can't remember which
 are important and grabs
 two undershirts. Soiled.
 The ground shakes and
 it seems as if the house
 takes a deep breath.
 Walls heave in, then
 bulge out. Furniture
 flies. Outside,
 we run and I clutch
 my canary's cage. My baby
 brother gave me the bird
 because James knew, with him
 gone, I'd need something
 to pet or I'd go
 mad. Even if
 I could carry the cage,
 the little bird would
 starve. Around me, women
 are screaming, searching
 for babies, frantically
 looking for that one last
 important thing to save.
 I'm going and I don't
 know where. Opening
 the cage, I kiss
 his tiny yellow head and
 toss Jimmy
 toward the trees, away
 from the Mississippi. Once,
 feebly, he chirps, as if
 he doesn't know where to go
 either. Fly. Away from home.

Sacramento CWRT
The next three programs:

April 24th: "Reconstruction - the revolution that went backwards," by DanDefoe, Sierra College

May 29th: "The Flight of the Confederate Government," by Walt Bittle, Sacramento CWRT

June 26th: "General George McClellan," by Jim Harper, Sacramento CWRT

The May program is a change from what I had passed out before.

Thanks, Paul

In 1862, it was common to destroy crops and supplies to keep them out of the hands of the enemy. General W.T. Sherman advised one of his subordinates:

“. . .and if the owner of cotton consents to its being burned, let him know he may burn his cotton, his house, himself and family, but not his corn. We want that.”

I hope all of you enjoy Kit Knight's poetry as much as I do. Contributions to the BATTLE CRY are welcome. Send them to my e-mail address or give them to me at the meeting or the Board of Directors. Contributions by the membership make this newsletter more personal and lively. Thanks in advance.
 Jim Middleton, editor.

THE BATTLE AT MILLIKEN'S BEND



Source: Harpers Weekly July 4, 1863, page 428

THE FIGHT AT MILLIKEN'S BEND

Two gentlemen from the Yazoo have given me the following particulars of the fight at Milliken's Bend, in which negro troops played so conspicuous a part. My informant states that a force of about 1000 negroes and 200 men of the Twenty-third Iowa, belonging to the Second Brigade, Carr's Division (the Twenty-third Iowa had been up the river with prisoners, and was on its way back to this place), was surprised in camp by a rebel force of about 2000 men. The first intimation that the commanding officer received was from one of the black men, who went into the colonel's tent, and said: "Massa, the secesh are in camp." The colonel ordered him to have the men load their guns at once. He instantly replied: "We have done did dat now, massa." Before the colonel was ready the men were in line, ready for action. As before stated, the rebels drove our force toward the gun-boats, taking colored men prisoners and murdering them. This so enraged them that they rallied and charged the enemy more heroically and desperately than has been recorded during the war. It was a genuine bayonet charge, a hand-to-hand fight, that has never occurred to any extent during this prolonged conflict. Upon both sides men were killed with the butts of muskets. White and black men were lying side by side, pierced by bayonets, and in some instances transfixed to the earth. In one instance, two men -- one white and the other black -- were found dead, side by side, each having the other's bayonet through his body. If facts prove to be what they are now represented, this engagement of Sunday morning will be recorded as the most desperate of this war. Broken limbs, broken heads, the mangling of bodies, all prove that it was a contest between enraged men; on the one side from hatred to a race, and on the other, desire for self-preservation, revenge for past grievances, and the inhuman murder of their comrades. One brave man took his former master prisoner, and brought him into camp with great gusto. A rebel prisoner made a particular request that his own Negroes should not be placed over him as a guard. Dame Fortune is capricious! His request was not granted. The rebels lost five cannon, 200 men killed, 400 to 500 wounded, and about 200 prisoners. Our loss is reported to be 100 killed and 500 wounded; but few of this number were white men.

Robert Gould Shaw



Fort Wagner II, Morris Island, South Carolina (SC007), Charleston County, July 18, 1865

After the failed assault on July 11, US General Gillmore reinforced his beachhead on Morris Island and brought up siege guns and mortars to bombard Fort Wagner, defended by 1,620 men with fifteen guns and a mortar. On July 18 Gillmore's batteries opened fire and were soon joined by six monitors, which approached to within three hundred yards of the fort. The bombardment continued for eight hours and sent the Confederate gunners into their bombproofs. However, the sandy walls absorbed much of the cannon shot, and the garrison survived unscathed.

US Brigadier General Truman A. Seymour drew up his 5,100-man division. The 650 men of the 54th Massachusetts spearheaded the attack of the lead brigade. They charged at dusk along the narrow open beach through heavy artillery and small arms fire. Some scaled the parapet, but the Confederates drove them back in brutal hand-to-hand combat. The unit's commander, US Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, was killed in the attack. The nine regiments that followed also reached Wagner's parapet but were thrown back with severe losses, including US General Strong, the brigade commander. US Colonel Haldiman S. Putnam's brigade overran Wagner's seaward salient, but in the resulting melee Putnam was killed, and the survivors were forced to withdraw. With two brigades wrecked and Seymour wounded, Gillmore called off the attack. The Confederates continued to strengthen their defenses in the inner harbor.

At Fort Wagner black soldiers made courageous assaults and demonstrated their fighting abilities, as they had at Port Hudson the previous May.

Estimated Casualties: 1,515 US, 222 CS



RESACA, GA MAY 14-15 1864

On May 9, while US Major General William T. Sherman was probing CS General Joseph E. Johnston's position at Rocky Face Ridge, US Major General James B. McPherson marched the Army of the Tennessee through the unprotected Snake Creek Gap and advanced toward Resaca with US Major General Grenville M. Dodge's XVI Corps and US Major General John A. Logan's XV Corps, about 23,000 men. Sherman's orders on May 5 were for a "bold and rapid movement on the enemy's flank or line of communications." McPherson was to cut through the gap, destroy the railroad at Resaca, then retreat to the gap. When Johnston retreated from Dalton, McPherson was to pounce on him....

McPherson was cautious, and he missed his opportunity for a major victory. However, he had received no word from Sherman all day and was concerned that if Johnston had concentrated his entire army against him, he would be annihilated. McPherson recalled Dodge to the mouth of Snake Creek Gap to entrench and bring forward supplies. McPherson later explained, "If I could have had a division of good cavalry, I could have broken the railroad at some point." For the next two days McPherson remained in his defensive stance on the Resaca side of the gap and dug in his troops. On May 10 Sherman ordered US Major General Joseph Hooker's XX Corps to reinforce McPherson, to be followed the next day by the rest of the Army of the Cumberland, except for US Major General Oliver O. Howard's IV Corps, which continued to hold the Union position at Buzzard's Roost and defend the railroad. On the thirteenth US Major General John M. Schofield's army also moved into the gap.

Johnston used the time given him by McPherson to concentrate his forces at Resaca and to prepare the battlefield. The troops of Polk's Corps who had arrived from Alabama occupied the Confederate left, their flank anchored on the Oostanaula River. CS Lieutenant General William J. Hardee's Corps held the center along the high ridge overlooking Camp Creek. CS Lieutenant General John Bell Hood's Corps was posted on the right, his line running east to a hill near the Conasauga River.

On May 14 Sherman's army closed in, enveloping the Confederate lines from the north and west. Hooker's XX Corps supported McPherson's troops, while US Major General John M. Palmer's XIV Corps was on Hooker's left with orders to fight its way to the railroad. Palmer attacked at about noon, supported on his left by Schofield's troops and later by Howard's IV Corps on Schofield's left. The fighting was severe as Schofield and Howard drove the Confederates back into their prepared positions. Palmer's subordinates were unaware of these breastworks and took heavy losses in front of CS Major General Patrick R. Cleburne's position at the center of Hardee's line.

The heaviest fighting was near the headwaters of Camp Creek, where late in the afternoon US Major General Jacob D. Cox's division of Schofield's army drove the Confederate outposts over rough and wooded ground into their works. Two divisions of Howard's IV Corps later moved up to secure the position, opposite CS Major General Thomas C. Hindman's Division on the left of Hood's line.

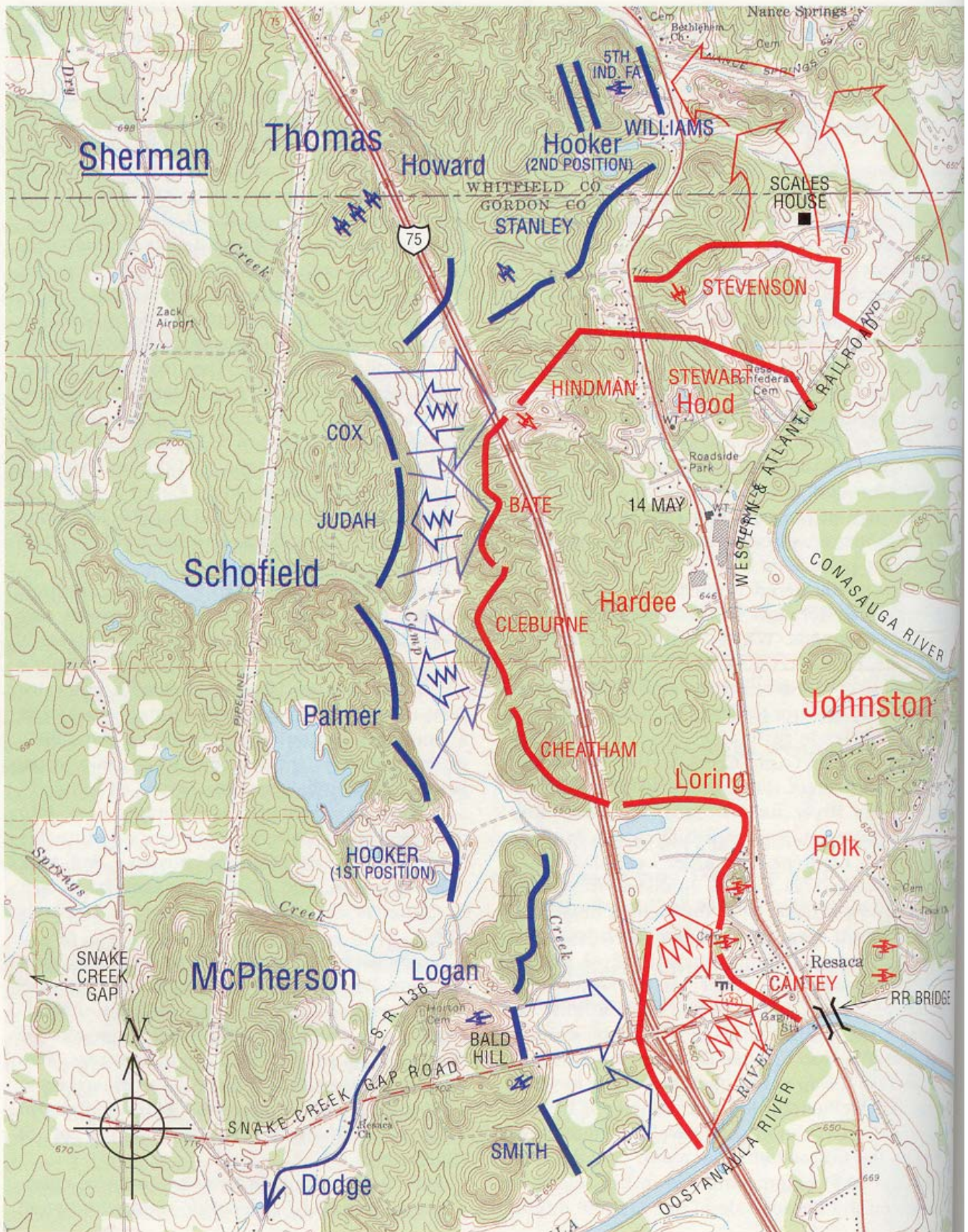
At 6:00 P.M. Johnston launched a fierce counterattack from the Confederate right with two of Hood's divisions, supported by two brigades from CS Major General William H. T. Walker's Division of Hardee's Corps. Holding with his left, Hood executed a swing movement that enabled his right to advance about two miles, overrunning a round-topped hill just east of the Dalton Road that anchored the Union flank. The lead division of the XX Corps under US Brigadier General Alpheus S. Williams rushed to the vicinity of Nancy Springs at dusk, just in time to repel Hood's assault.

The Union attacks succeeded on the right, led by a brigade of US Major General Morgan L. Smith's division of the XV Corps which stormed across Camp Creek. The fighting continued until dark, and McPherson's men held. Throughout the night the Federals dug entrenchments.

The attack on May 15 did not materialize as Sherman had planned. The rough, unknown terrain on the Union left slowed the deployment of the divisions of US Major General Daniel Butterfield and US Brigadier General John W. Geary. The configuration of the terrain gave the Confederates "unusual facilities for cross firing and enfilading," and the Union brigades were forced to attack in columns without adequate artillery support. The brunt of the Union attacks was borne by CS Major General Carter L. Stevenson's Division. In places the Federals advanced to within thirty paces of Stevenson's defenses. They briefly overran the "Cherokee Battery" of four 12-pounders, but the Confederate line held. A counterattack by CS Major General Alexander P. Stewart's Division later that afternoon against the Union left was bloodily repulsed.

During the day the Federals had laid Sherman's two pontoon bridges across the Oostanaula River at Lay's Ferry, about three miles below Resaca. US Brigadier General T. W. Sweeny's Second Division of the XVI Corps crossed the river and beat back an attack by a portion of Walker's Division. Once Sweeny's men had fortified the bridgehead, Johnston's position was turned. Johnston then concluded that he did not have enough troops to protect his rail line to Atlanta and at the same time hold his position and defeat Sherman. He crossed the Oostanaula that night, burned the railroad and damaged the wagon bridge, and headed for Calhoun.

ESTIMATED CASUALTIES: 2747 US, 2800 CS



RESACA

13 - 15 May 1864

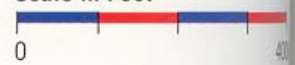
Combat Strength

110,000
60,000

Casualties

2,747
2,800

Scale in Feet



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Reenactors of the American Civil War <http://www.racw.org/>

Civil War Skirmish Association <http://www.calweb.com/~arline/>

American Civil War Association
<http://www.angelfire.com/ca5/acwa/>

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