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Battle Cry

Founded 1961,
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table
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**Battle Cry deadline is
1:00PM Wed. two
weeks before the regu-
lar meeting. Items can
be given the editor by
hand, mail or e-mail.**

President's Message

About 2 weeks ago, I realized that this will be my last News-
letter. When I first became president of this organization I was
quite apprehensive. Fred Bohmfalk kept assuring me that I could
do it. With a lot of help from you all, he was correct.

I want to especially thank every member of the board that
did so much work to keep this roundtable going so smoothly.
When I look back and see that we moved our meeting place 3
times, it is remarkable that we still have an organization.

I am extremely confident that our new board will do an out-
standing job. It contains numerous potential future presidents.

A rather remarkable thing happened at the Civil War Con-
ference. At the end of his presentation on "the Legend of J. E. B.
Stuart is born", Jim Stanberry, made some remarks about the
latest Presidential election. He said there have been other times
when our country was divided. The prime example was the elec-
tion of 1860. We will survive these times too. He then said that in
20 years of Civil War Conference, there has never been an alterca-
tion against any speaker. Even though many present held far dif-
ferent ideas. He thought we were a model for how Americans with
different points of view can come together. His remarks were ob-
viously sincere. At the end, he got a standing ovation.

Our December 6th speaker will be Paul Wagstaffe. He will
speak on Reconstruction. I am very eager to hear what he has to
say. This is the aspect of the Civil War that most haunts us today.

Next Meeting

**Monday December 6th at the Hof-Brau, El
Camino and Watt Ave. at 7PM. Come for Din-
ner and conversation at 6PM.**

MINUTES
SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2004
HOF BRAU RESTAURANT 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO

ATTENDANCE 23

Members – 23	Kyle Glasson
Dennis Kohlmann, President	Don Hayden
George Foxworth, Treasurer	Robert Junell
Eddie Keister, Secretary	Janet Junell
Jim Armstrong	Kenneth Kitchen
Bob Baskerville	Maurice Mitchell
Fred Bohmfalk	Betty Mitchell
Bernie Buenrostro	Robert Williams
Lynn Buenrostro	Susan Williams
Mitchell Cnota	Maxine Wollen
Ardith Cnota	

1. Meeting began at 7:04. Guest and members were welcomed. Hand count for members who dined at the Hof Brau. “This Day in Civil War History” was read.
2. The trip to Alcatraz was shared. Members attending learned the history of the island before it became a federal prison in 1934, and it’s importance during the Civil War. Docents are still needed to volunteer.
3. New Officers were presented and voted on – the yeas prevailed.
4. President Dennis Kohlmann was our speaker. “The Election of 1864,” was a very well prepared talk, with many facts and figures, with similarities of today’s election – some things never change. Thanks Dennis, for your presentation!
5. Our next meeting, Monday, Dec 6, will feature Paul Wagstaffe speaking on Reconstruction.
6. The raffle was held – more nice items contributed, thank you all. Meeting ended at 8:03.

Eddie Keister
secretary

Treasurer's Report

The cash balance following the October 26, 2004 meeting was \$1,411.27. Thanks to members and guests, the raffle brought in \$37.00.

George W. Foxworth,
Treasurer



Fred Bohmfalk, Jim Stanbery (behind Fred), Robert K. Krick, Robert E. L. Krick, Bill Head and Craig Symonds.

A Report on the 20th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference

By George W. Foxworth

The 20th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference was held on November 5-7, 2004, at the Doubletree Hotel in Modesto, California.

The Conference was hosted by the Stanislaus Civil War Association (SCWA) and Civil War Round Table (CWRT) Associates of Little Rock, Arkansas. "The Seven Days 1862 Peninsula Campaign" was the theme and many enlightening presentations by the distinguished speakers filled the weekend. The speakers were Jim Stanbery, Robert Krick Sr., Craig Symonds, Robert E. L. Krick Jr., and Jim Hollabaugh. Also in attendance were Ted Savas, Shelley Jones, Lee Meredith, and other Civil War buffs throughout the West.

The Elk Grove CWRT was represented by George and Joan Beitzel, and Courtnie Braziel.

The Sacramento CWRT was represented by George and Joan Beitzel, Fred Bohmfalk, Ardith and Mitch Cnota, Don Hayden, Dennis Kohlmann, Jim Middleton, John Nevins, Paul Ruud, Brad Schall, Bob Williams, Susan Williams, and George W. Foxworth.

All presentations were excellent. Jim Stanbery spoke on "Peninsula Campaign Overview" and "The Legend of J.E.B. Stuart is Born." Robert Krick Sr.

spoke on "Driving the Yanks From Richmond" and "Stonewall: Sleepless in the Saddle." Craig Symonds spoke on "Confederate Grand Strategy and the Peninsula Campaign: Davis and Johnston at War" and "Johnston's Management of the Battle of Seven Pines." Robert E.L. Krick Jr. spoke on "General Magruder," "Drewery's Bluff, Gibraltar of the South," and "Gaines Mill." Jim Hollabaugh spoke on the "Monitor and the Merrimack."

The Conference began on Friday night with three musical selections, compliments of the SCWA. Three different singers led with "God Bless the USA," "The Star Spangled Banner," and "Dixie." All participants were very pleased.

Another highlight was a tribute to Mr. Jerry Russell by Bill Head. Mr. Russell passed on December 5, 2003. An audio tape was played with Mr. Russell speaking about battlefield preservation to the Chicago CWRT shortly before his departure. Many of the Conference participants (myself included) had the pleasure of Mr. Russell's company at the 19th West Coast Civil War Conference on November 7-9, 2003. Mr. Russell will be missed by all. At the end, Mr. Fred Bohmfalk presented an award to Mr. Head and the San Joaquin Valley CWRT for their efforts to battlefield preservation.



SCWRT members at the conference

Another highlight was the recognition of Shelley Jones in the success of the West Coast Civil War Conference. Mr. Jones was recognized as the only person to have attended all 20 of the Conferences. This recognition came from

Mr. Jim Brazelton, President of the SCWA and Master of Ceremonies for the Conference. In addition, Mr. Brazelton recognized Jim Stanbery as the only person who attended the Conference for 19 years. Our hats are off to Mr. Jones and Mr. Stanbery.

The final highlight was a challenge from Jim Stanbery. To recognize the 20th West Coast Civil War Conference, Jim Stanbery spoke about the responsibility that we have to keep alive the memory of the Civil War, inform the public, and continue battlefield preservation. Finally, Mr. Stanbery's looked forward to the success of the Conference for next 20 years.

The Conference was a complete success and the SCWA is to be commended for their excellent work. The Doubletree was an excellent hotel.

Looking ahead to 2005, the 21st Annual West Coast Civil War Conference is scheduled for November 11-13, 2005. This Conference is the first of the next 20 years and will be hosted by the Scottsdale Civil War Round Table in Scottsdale, Arizona. The theme is "The Phenomena of the Civil War in the Far Southwest, Pacific, and Mountain States" and all are invited to attend.

**BRIGADIER GENERAL
HENRY JACKSON HUNT
Union Artillerist Extraordinaire**

Confederate General George Pickett, years afterward, was asked why his charge at Gettysburg failed. His response was that he thought the Union army had something to do with it. He was indeed correct. Thousands of members of the Army of the Potomac did indeed have something to do with it. This story is about one of those people. BG Henry Hunt who was serving as Chief of Artillery on General Meade's staff at that time. Moreover, Hunt's prompt action and decisive direction of the artillery arm of that Army had already been crucial to several battles in the two years before the Battle of Gettysburg.

Hunt had a genius for organization, and his keen knowledge of the science of gunnery drew admiration from his peers and subordinates. He believed in dense salvos of gunfire

from massed batteries, amply supplied. At the same time, however, he sternly preached that each gun crew should fire sparingly, taking the time to carefully acquire a target before each shot.

Hunt was born into a military family in the frontier outpost of Detroit in 1819. As an eight-year-old boy, he accompanied his father, an infantry officer, on the expedition that established Fort Leavenworth. Orphaned at age ten, he graduated from West Point at twenty and chose the artillery arm of the service. He earned fame (two wound and one brevet) for his bravery a few years later in the Mexican War, when he ran his field piece right up to an enemy cannon and destroyed it in a muzzle-to-muzzle duel.

By 1856, he was already one of the most distinguished authorities on the gunner's art in the Regular Army, chosen as a member of a three-man board to

review light artillery tactics. The report of the board was adopted in 1860 and served as the "bible" for artillerymen on both sides in the Civil War. After the Civil War began, Hunt made himself conspicuous in its first battle, heroically covering the retreat of the Union army from an exposed position with his four-gun battery at Bull Run.

In the "old" army and carrying over into the Civil War, the deployment of artillery was frequently problematic. This was particularly so with Field (Light) Artillery, lesser so with Coastal and/or Siege (Heavy) Artillery. This was due mainly to organizational arrangements. Although Artillery was considered with Infantry and Cavalry to be the line combat branches of the army, it also served largely in support roles. But unlike the other support branches such as Engineers, Ordnance Quartermaster, Commissary, Adjutant, Judge Advocate, etc (as well as Cavalry latter on) there was no overall army-wide Artillery branch chief located in Washington reporting directly through the General-in-Chief to the Secretary of War. Hence service-wide standards, assignment and staffing arrangements, activity scoping, and quality monitoring was lacking.

The Chief of Ordnance (and occasionally the Chief of Engineers) attempted to fill this void, but that was generally unacceptable to the artillerist in the field. Although General Hunt

and other senior-level artillerymen were strong advocates of a Washington-based Chief of Artillery, this never was approved for reasons not fully understood. Perhaps it was simply because Division, Corps and Army commanders liked to move individual field artillery batteries around themselves without specific rules and higher echelon interference, and perhaps they were correct? As a result, however, the artillery had a universal shortage of field grade officers. This resulted with frequently inexperienced company grade battery commanders reporting directly to general officers sometimes also with little talent in artillery deployment. Hunt and his colleagues did sell the idea of establishing army and/or corps-level artillery reserves in which batteries could be brigaded as needed to provide massed gunnery services, such as on those occasions to be mentioned

By the time of the Peninsula Campaign the next spring, Colonel Hunt was already the new Army of the Potomac's top gunner, commander of its Artillery Reserve. At the end of that campaign, at Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862, he directed his massed, well-sited guns, causing such slaughter to the insurgent attackers that the battle was won almost without the aid of the infantry. Indeed, this was not a good day for the Confederates and was perhaps, a precursor to what occurred at Gettysburg two years later.

Hunt was promoted to brigadier general in September 1862, and made Chief of Artillery by commanding Maj. Gen. George McClellan in the middle of the Maryland Campaign. An immediate indication of Hunt's value to the Union army was the nickname the Confederate veterans gave to the climactic Battle of Antietam on September 17: "Artillery Hell."

At the army's next battle, Fredericksburg, in December, Hunt spent a week posting 140 guns in a line on the Stafford Heights on the Union side of the Rappahannock River. It was Hunt's intimidating array which deterred Lee's army from any thought of counterattacking the decimated and otherwise vulnerable Union infantry formations as they staggered back from their disastrous assaults on Marye's Heights, ordered by the exceptionally incompetent General Ambrose Burnside.

The army's next commander, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker, for some reason had an unfortunate dislike for Hunt, and stripped him of his line command of massed Batteries, leaving him with only administrative duties. This cost the Federal army dearly at the Battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863, where the traditional advantages in the quality and volume of fire of the Union artillery were squandered through mismanagement, a fact that was missed by nobody. A sadder, wiser Hooker restored Hunt to his active battlefield role on the third day of the battle, but by that time

Hooker was already beaten and preparing to retreat.

Thus, as the Army of the Potomac headed toward Pennsylvania in the early summer of 1863, Hunt's value was freshly vindicated and universally acknowledged. When Maj. Gen. George Meade took command three days before Gettysburg, the army had a new chief who was very much like Hunt--thoroughly professional and rather stiff. Although the two generals were not great friends, Hunt appreciated the fact that the new commander was "a gentleman" (unlike Hooker before him), and Meade returned the respect by employing Hunt as a surrogate on the battlefield, a man whose opinion Meade sought often and whose judgment he trusted implicitly.

On July 1, after spending the entire first day of the battle in the rear at army headquarters in Taneytown, Hunt received an order from Meade sometime after 7:00 P.M. to move the Artillery Reserve to Gettysburg, an act which effectively committed the Army of the Potomac to battle there. Hunt himself rode to Gettysburg with Meade's small party of seven that night, leaving around 10:00 and arriving on Cemetery Hill at 11:30.

At about 2:00 in the early morning on July 2, Hunt and Meade rode south along the army's line in the moonlight, from Cemetery Ridge to near Little Round Top, then to the army's right, where the Baltimore Pike crossed Rock Creek. Having

scouted the excellent defensive ground the army stood on, Meade instructed Hunt to continue to study the terrain and supervise the placement of the army's artillery. By 10:30 that morning, the efficient Hunt had 108 cannon from the Artillery Reserve on hand, as well as an extra supply of ammunition in wagons that he had secreted, a supply from which all the army's batteries would borrow gratefully in the days ahead.

As he returned to army headquarters from Culp's Hill, Hunt was introduced into one of the great controversies of the battle--between Meade and Third Corps' Maj. Gen. Dan Sickles--over the placement of the Third Corps. Sickles was worried about his corps' position on the army's left, and Meade declined to go over the ground with him personally, sending Hunt instead. Sickles pointed out to Hunt the advanced position he wanted to take, on the high ground along the Emmitsburg Road, about three-quarters of a mile in front of his assigned position. When Sickles asked if he should advance to the new line, Hunt shook his head: "Not on my authority."

(continued in Jan. Battle Cry)

Bryce A. Suderow streetstories@juno.com is looking for help scanning articles by Ed Bearss on the Siege of Petersburg to Microsoft Word. Contact at the above e-mail if interested.

THE BUGS LOVE HIM: 1864

My grief is like an inward bleeding. I've received one letter from my son since the Rebels captured him. I hadn't wanted Robby to fight in America's Civil War; my son was born in Nova Scotia and didn't come to New York until he was 18. But Robert loved this country and wanted to atone for my grandfather who'd remained loyal to the British and fled the American Revolution. "Please don't worry," my Robby wrote in 1863. I've read and reread that letter for over a year. Other men who've been prisoners of the Confederacy all speak of harsh treatment and worse food. Sometimes, only a teacup of cornmeal a day. And the thousands of mosquitoes that never light on dying men. They talk of scurvy, rheumatism, constant diarrhea and typhoid. My son writes, "Don't worry, Ma." My Robby went to college; he surveyed and drew maps for the Union Army. A former prisoner tells me that ought to be a comfort because the educated class stands the severe privations of prison life better than the rougher sort. Sometimes, comfort comes from strange sources. In the final line of Robby's letter, he wrote, "The bugs love me." Those four words are practically rubbed off because I've touched them again and again and again.

-- Kit Knight