



Bugle Calls



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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President's message For October, 2010.

On October 14, 2010 we will learn from Tom Lubas of Santa Rosa of the Civil War on the Kansas-Missouri border. Although the small unit actions which took place here pale in comparison with the slaughter elsewhere, the savagery of fighting was probably unsurpassed. It certainly lasted a great deal longer since it started in the mid-1850s when Kansas was thrown open to settlement. Pro-slavers and abolitionists took up arms against each other and a case can be made that in 1861 the rest of the country simply joined what was already a full-blown civil war on the Kansas-Missouri border. Tom's talk will be enlightening.

As is our custom we will gather at Denny's restaurant in Clovis on Shaw Avenue east of Willow at 6 pm for conversation and eats. Please order from the menu as soon as you arrive so that we can have our program underway at 7:15 after a short business meeting. In deference to those of our group who travel as much as an hour to our meetings we will try to finish by 8:15.

Best wishes,
David D

AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEETING OF 9/9/10 By Ron Vaughan

I was very excited to come to our first meeting in months, and hoping to see many friends and familiar faces. I was disappointed to meet only 10 other persons present (plus the speaker and her husband, despite President David's strenuous efforts at advertising the meeting and our special speaker. Mary Townsend is the great - great granddaughter of General Peter

Osterhaus, and she has spent eight years researching and writing his biography (The only one in existence!). For CW buffs afflicted with “V.D.” (“Virginia Disease” Dr. McMurray’s term for being overly focus on the war in the Eastern Theater), General Osterhaus is an unfamiliar name. But for an enthusiast of the Western Campaigns and Trans-Mississippi, he is well known, but we actually know little about his personal story. In her opinion, he was one of the best of the “political” German generals. He was present at the first actions of the war, Camp Jackson and Wilson’s Creek, rose to the rank of Major General, and signed the surrender of the last Confederate force under Kirby-Smith. He performed well at Pea Ridge, the campaigns of Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Atlanta, and the March to the Sea. He was competent, steady, reliable, good at keeping his troops healthy, well fed, and well trained. Why is he so little known? Besides “V.D.”, some reasons are that he was “not flashy”, not a subject of a big scandal or debacle, not a West Pointer, served under generals with big egos, and there was less press coverage of the West. Peter was born Jan. 4, 1823 in Koblenz, Rhineland Province, the son of a prosperous contractor. He grew to 6’- 2”, with auburn hair, freckles, and piercing blue eyes. He excelled in academics, and dreamed of becoming a professor of history. His father had other ideas and put him into a business apprenticeship. At age 20 he was inducted into the 29th Jager Regt. of the Prussian Army. He received officer training for one year, learning “strict discipline, precision drills and maneuvers, and the values of patriotism, obedience, and honor that Osterhaus took with him throughout his life.” When his compulsory year was up, he was appointed 2nd Lieutenant of the 29th Reserve Regt. with the requirement to attend two weeks training each year.

Peter moved to Mannheim, in Baden, for business opportunities, and became caught up in the political climate of what would lead to the 1848 Rebellion of some of the German states that resented Prussian authoritarianism and oppression, in favor of a constitutional confederation form of government. He was appointed commander of the defenders of Mannheim, during this time he met Franz Sigel. Eventually he had to flee Germany for the USA in Nov. 1849. Peter, his wife Matilda, and baby daughter settled in St. Clair County, Illinois, with a few other German émigrés. He was soon appointed postmaster of Lebanon, and became a US citizen in 1854. He moved to St. Louis shortly before the 1860 election, and his military experiences came in handy when the CW erupted. He had joined one of the German American Union rifle clubs and began secretly drilling, while Secessionist militia were doing the same in the streets of St. Louis. On April 15th, Peter joined the new 2nd Mo. Volunteer Regt. as a private, but his elected Captain, Otto Schadt, was his former Ensign in the Jager Regt., and Otto resigned command in favor of Osterhaus. He began drilling his men, and soon was elected major in command of a btn. of three cpys. He led these in the capture of the Secessionists at Camp Jackson, the Booneville “Races”, and Wilson’s Creek. When their three month enlistment ended, he was appointed Col. to form the new 12th Mo. Volunteers. In June, 1862 he was promoted to Brigadier General, and finally Major General of the XIII Corps in July, 1864. At the end of the war, he served as Governor of Miss. for 6 moths, before becoming US consul at Lyon, France.

Mrs. Townsend, is a nurse by trade, but her talk was informative, and her book (which I purchased) is well written, very clear, with many insightful comments, and is enjoyable to read.

A review of Across Five Aprils.

It is well-worth remembering that a goodly number of very good “children’s books” have been written about the Civil War. The scholars among us tend to overlook fiction in favor of non-fiction and therefore are poorly equipped to recommend works to youngsters that are “age appropriate.”

I recently reread Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt, a novel published in 1964. The story takes place in Southern Illinois and revolves around 9 year old Jethro Creighton who must grow up quickly when his brothers and future brother-in-law leave for the war. Not long after this his father has a heart attack. News of the war comes to the family in newspaper articles that are often incomplete and usually

contradictory and in letters from the boys at the front. Jethro and his family are also on edge because the community knows that one of Jethro's brothers is fighting for the Confederacy. Another is a deserter.

Across Five Aprils is a pretty easy read. I highly recommend it for its "home front" perspective on the war especially to those of you who might teach 8th grade social studies and language arts. It has much to offer as the basis for teaching both history and writing. Study guides and learning activities are readily available on the Internet.

Best wishes,
David D

MINUTES SJVCWRT

Meeting of September 9, 2010

The meeting of September 9th called to order by President David Davenport at 6:10p.m at the Denny's on the corner of Willow and Shaw in Clovis.

The meeting began with our Vice President Mike Green presenting photos of a cannon which we had bought in honor of Robert Quist, our past Bugle Calls editor, and a plaque engraved with our organization name at the battlefield at Raymond, which represented our contribution to the preservation of the battlefield.

Mike then reminded us of the Civil War conference in San Francisco from November 12th to the 14th.

He finally informed us of the symposium hosted by the Rocky Mountain Civil War roundtable in Colorado.

Our President, David Davenport, then asked for volunteers for the booth at the Kearny Park reenactment on October 2nd and 3rd.

Our resident President Lincoln impersonator, Wayne Scott, told us of the reenactment in Nevada City, taking place on the 10th-12th of September.

Our treasurer Walter Schulze gave his report, our current bank balance is \$1653.99. Then Dave introduced our speaker, Mary Townsend, who spoke about her great- great- grandfather, Peter Osterhaus.

After our speaker's informative presentation, President Dave wished everyone well and informed us that our speaker for the meeting on October 14th would be Tom Lubas, who will have a presentation on "Bloody Kansas".

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From "The Blue and The Gray Laughing"

General Rosecrans was dinning with his staff at a hotel. Unfortunately, he tasted the Tennessee butter, where upon, he immediately arose and saluted the plate before him, remarking, Gentlemen, that butter outranks me!"

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