

“The Late Unpleasantness”

May 2010



South Bay Civil War Round Table

May 25th Meeting Speaker: Larry

Comstock on “The Lincoln Writ:
Abraham Lincoln and the New Almaden
Mines”

Holder's Country Inn

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The President's Message

We had another excellent presentation in our recent series. Our own Dr. Helen Trimpi (Harvard, English Literature) shared her experiences in the writing of her recently published book, *Crimson Confederates, Harvard Men Who fought for the South*. The presentation was delivered with all the depth and polish one might expect from a Professor of English Literature! Helen will also be sharing her presentation with the Peninsula Round Table in May. I had the pleasure of visiting with Helen recently and looking over her 1,000+ volume library that she accumulated over the 15 years it took to write the book. She has decided to sell most of her collection and donate the profits to the Civil War Preservation Trust.

We had a surprise guest at our April meeting, Matthew Broderick, a contributing columnist to the *Civil War News*. Based in New Jersey, he was on the west coast for a conference and decided to join us for the evening. His timing could not have been better as he had recently completed an upcoming article on the San Jose Civil War Round Table which is scheduled to appear in the June edition of the *Civil War News*. He has been writing a series of articles on Civil War Round Tables from around the country.

Debbi Petite, one of our 2009 Book Award recipients, has decided to donate her \$100 prize to preserve the two acres of ground at Snyder's Farm, Gettysburg. As a "long time Longstreet enthusiast," she thanks the members of the SBCWRT for making this donation possible.

Bob Hubbs circulated information on the upcoming 26th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference in San Francisco, November 12 - 14. For more information: www.friendsofcivilwaralcatraz.org.

John Herberich

Preview of May 25th Presentation

The Lincoln Writ: Abraham Lincoln and the New Almaden Mines

Larry Comstock will give a talk on a writ issued by Abraham Lincoln in May 1863 to the U.S. Marshall in the district of Northern California to seize the New Almaden mine from the owners. The New Almaden quicksilver mine is located in Santa Clara County south of San Jose. Larry will discuss the history of the mine, the litigation on the ownership of the mine and why Lincoln was persuaded to sign the writ. He will also discuss the reaction of the miners in California and Nevada to Lincoln's writ and how the Copperhead's in California tried to use the controversy to have the state succeed from the Union. He will then discuss the final disposition of the controversial writ.

R. Larry Comstock served as President of the South Bay Civil War Round Table for two years and also served as the Program Director. He has a thirty year interest in the Civil War and is related to Bvt. Brg. Gen. Cyrus B. Comstock who was ADC to Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant. Larry holds a Ph.D. degree from Stanford in Electrical Engineering and retired in 1990 from IBM where he managed departments involved in disk drive development. He spent fifteen years teaching in the Department of Materials Science at San Jose State University and is now retired and enjoys traveling, especially to Civil War battlefields and sailing on his boat in Santa Cruz. Larry and his wife Marilyn have two children, four grandchildren and celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary last year.

April Quiz answers Winfield Scott Hancock – A Man for the Ages submitted by Tom Roza

1: In what year was Winfield Scott Hancock born? **1824**

2: There were 25 cadets in Hancock's West Point graduating class. Where did Hancock place? **18th**

3: What was the name of the first battle that Hancock fought in the Mexican War? **Battle of Vera Cruz**

4: While stationed in Mexico, who besides Lewis Armistead became Hancock's good friend? **Henry Heth**

5: Name the Federal Commander of California that Hancock reported to in 1861? **General Edwin Sumner**

6: What Union General was instrumental in getting Hancock his first combat assignment in the Civil War? **George B McClellan**

7: What was the name of General Lee's orders that came into the hands of George B McClellan prior to the Battle of Antietam?

Special Order 191

8: What was the name of the commander of Hancock's lead brigade on the assault of Marye's Heights at the Battle of Fredericksburg? **General Samuel K Zook**

9: When General Hooker took command of the Army of the Potomac, he implemented an insignia for each of his Corps. What was the insignia of the 2nd Corp that Hancock's division was part of? **Trefoil**

10: What was the name of the 2nd Corp commander who resigned out of frustration after the Battle of Chancellorsville and provided the opportunity to for Hancock to become a Corp commander? **Darius Couch**

11: At Gettysburg, east of what section of terrain did Hancock bivouac his 2nd Corp on the night of July 1st? **Big Round Top**

12: Which regiment did Hancock commandeer on July 2 to prevent a Confederate breakthrough on Cemetery Ridge? **The 1st Minnesota**

13: On July 3, what event by the Union forces influenced General Longstreet to give George Pickett the approval to begin his famous charge? **When Generals Meade & Hunt ordered all Union batteries to cease returning fire**

14: How did Hancock describe the effect of Longstreet's flank attack at the Battle of the Wilderness? **You rolled me up like a wet noodle**

15: What was the name of the Colonel in the Irish Brigade who was killed during one of the Union attacks at Petersburg? **Patrick Kelly**

16: In 1867 what action by Hancock sparked a long series on battles with the plains Indians in Kansas? **When he burned down their village**

17: While Military Commander of the Fifth Military District based in New Orleans, what was the name of Hancock's first order? **General Orders No. 40**

18: Which state cost Hancock the 1880 presidential election? **New York**

19: What was the health problem that led to Hancock's death? **A large boil on his neck**

20: Which ex-President gave a speech commemorating Hancock in which he used these words "...we can say truthfully of Winfield Scott Hancock that he was through and through was pure gold"?

Rutherford B Hayes

COMING IN NOVEMBER

The 26th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference presents

BLOOD ON THE RAMPARTS: CIVIL WAR COASTAL DEFENSES
San Francisco, California November 12-14, 2010

For questions: friends.of.civil.war.alcatraz@gmail.com

Sponsored by Friends of Civil War Alcatraz and San Francisco Civil War Round Table

The Conference is a Friday evening of dinner and presentations by Craig Symonds, and James McPherson, all day Saturday of Civil War lectures, and a Sunday of tours of Historical Civil War sites including Alcatraz Island, Fort Point, Fort Mason, and The Presidio. You may attend all three days, any combination of two days, or any single day - the choice is yours. The Sunday event is unique in that the four Civil War site tours are visited in a single outing.

For more information: www.friendsofcivilwaralcatraz.org

26th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference

Please forward donated items for Raffles and Auctions to:

Robert R. Hubbs

1537 South Mary Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94087-4156

Please include the completed following with donation.

Name _____

Address _____



Blood on the Ramparts

Civil War Coastal Defenses

The 26th Annual 2010 West Coast Conference Registration Form

November 12-14, 2010

War Memorial Building, 401 Van Ness, San Francisco, CA 94102
Across the street from San Francisco City Hall

The registration fee of \$199 includes dinner and lecture on Friday; lunch, dinner, and a full day of lectures on Saturday; and on Sunday, transportation from Alcatraz to Fort Point, the Presidio and Fort Mason, including a box lunch.

Register early - prior to October 1, 2010 - and get the reduced rate of \$179.

Name: _____ Guest: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ For confirmation and special announcements

Friday only (includes dinner) - Nov. 12	\$75 ___	Guest meals Friday \$40 ___
Saturday (lunch, dinner and lectures) Nov. 13	\$100 ___	Guest lunch Saturday \$15; dinner \$30 ___
Sunday (activities, bus, box lunch) Nov. 14	\$35 ___	No guest meals on Sunday
Sunday only	\$50 ___	
All three days	\$199 ___	

Check here if you are attending Sunday ___ We need this information for bus reservations.

Make checks for the days you will be attending payable to:

FOCWA or West Coast Civil War Conference
Send registration form and check to:
Brad Schall, Treasurer, FOCWA
P.O. Box 893, Lincoln, CA 95648

Preservation Report

Va. battle over Wal-Mart continues

A judge on Friday kept alive the fight to block a Wal-Mart Supercenter near an endangered Civil War site where Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant first met on the field of battle.

Circuit Court Judge Daniel R. Bouton rejected a bid by Orange County, Va., to dismiss the challenge and instead ruled that residents who live near the Wilderness Battlefield and a historic group can contest the county's approval of the store at trial.

The decision resurrects a fierce national effort to protect a battlefield in Northern Virginia where 180,000 soldiers fought and 26,000 were killed or injured 146 years ago.

More than 250 historians, Civil War preservationists and celebrities such as actor Robert Duvall and filmmaker Ken Burns have taken a stand against the store and its possible impact on the battlefield. The Supercenter planned by Bentonville, Ark.-based Wal-Mart Stores would be outside the limits of the protected national park but within an area where troops prepared for battle, marched and died of their injuries.

The challenge was brought by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, six residents who live within 3 miles or less of the Walmart site and a group that maintains an historic estate on the battlefield. They argued that the county Board of Supervisors ignored or rejected the assistance of historians and other preservation experts when it approved the special use permit for Walmart last August.

In his ruling, Bouton decided that the National Trust had no legal standing in the dispute but ruled for the residents and the local preservation group. The judge cited

another national chain in ruling for the residents: Starbucks.

While the residents would have a tough case proving one of the ubiquitous coffee chain's stores several miles away would disrupt their lives, the judge said the construction of a 138,000-square-foot Walmart was another story. He said residents had legitimate fears about increased traffic and litter.

"Thus, the use of land by an establishment like Walmart could have an adverse and immediate impact on far more property owners than would a Starbucks," Bouton wrote.



The judge also concluded that the Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield had standing in the case and could move forward with a legal challenge. The group maintains an historic property at the battlefield, Ellwood Manor, a former plantation house that dates to the 1700s and served as a hospital for Confederate troops. It is located less than 1 mile from the store's site.

Bouton said the group would be "significantly affected" by the county's approval of the store.

In a statement, National Trust President Richard Moe said, "While the National Trust will not serve as a plaintiff in this lawsuit, we are very pleased that local Orange County residents and Friends of Wilderness

Battlefield will be able to challenge this Wal-Mart project that threatens an historic place they care about."



Zann Nelson, president of the Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield, said members "eagerly await trial."

"We are grateful for the ruling of the court that allows us to speak on behalf of preservation and the Orange County community that care about this national treasure," Nelson said.

An attorney representing Orange County had not reviewed the ruling and had no immediate response. Walmart, which was

not a party to this dispute, did not immediately respond to an Associated Press request for comment.

The ruling focused on the legal question of whether the residents and preservation groups could further pursue their challenge and did not debate the historic arguments against the store.

Preservationists and some local residents argue the retail center will bring more commerce, traffic and pollution to the gateway of what is considered one of the nation's most hallowed Civil War sites.

Walmart and its supporters have said the store would be in a commercial zone that's already crowded with small retail outlets, and it would provide tax revenues and jobs in this rural county of approximately 15,000.

-- Associated Press

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/local-breaking-news/va-walmart-battle-continues>

Cartoons at: <http://www.civilwar.org/take-action/speak-out/wilderness-walmart/walmart-cartoons>

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