

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable
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430th Regular Meeting

DATE: 16th April 2010

PLACE: Fairview Village, Downers Grove, IL. 60532

TIME: 8:00 p.m.

SPEAKER: Brian Seiter

TOPIC: William Starke Rosecrans

This month the topic of discussion is the life and military career of "Old Rosey", Union General William Starke Rosecrans. Brian will focus on Rosecrans' relationships with Dana, Garfield, Grant, Halleck, Lincoln and Stanton as well as the Union high command fight among the generals for leadership and control of the Union Army and the end result for Rosecrans.

Brian Seiter is a 1986 graduate of Northern Illinois University. He is a member of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table, the Civil War Round Table of Chicago and the Civil War Preservation Trust. He has seven ancestors in the Union Army which started his life long interest in, and the study of, the Civil War. This is Brian's second presentation to the SCCWRT. "Back by popular demand", we welcome Brian and look forward to an enlightening presentation.

MARCH MEETING BY RICK BENSON

On March 19, 2010, Dr. Ray Glick gave a very comprehensive presentation on “The Use and Role of the Horse in the Civil War”. He began his presentation by showing a picture of a typical Union battery, that was pulled by a team of 6 horses. A typical like Confederate wagon would be pulled by 4 horses. As was the case with almost everything, the South did not have a sufficient quantity of horses to draw from. Initially, both sides were sorely lacking in the care and treatment of their horses. This was due to a couple of factors. First, many of the newly recruited soldiers that were assigned to become wagon teamsters were city boys, and totally unfamiliar with these animals. Secondly – at least for the Union soldiers – they did not literally personally own this type of animal, or did not have experience working around horses, so they really did not care about proper feeding, grooming, and health for these animals.

When the Civil War broke out, there were 175 Cavalry Officers in the United States. Out of this number, 104 went with the South. Southern society was much more agrarian; hence Southerners had at least initially a much better understanding of the care required for horses and mules. Cavalry used the roughly 7% of the horses. Mules were heavily used in pulling cannons and Quartermaster supply wagons – both for food and ammunition. However, horses had to be brought along, as mules would go literally wild at the sound of cannons, and run off. The Quartermaster Corps had to organize the wagon trains of cannons, munitions, food supplies, etc. Each wagon had a distinct position / location it had to be in the wagon train when the Army was on the move. That way, if an engagement unexpectedly ensued, the soldiers would be in a position to go to, and bring up the proper wagons. About 6% of the horses in the CW were dedicated to the artillery. The balance of the horses were assigned to usage by the infantry. This included the Command and Staff Officers, the Signal Corp, Mail Service, Engineering Services, etc. The men in the field were emotionally involved with both the Command officers and their horses. Generals were allocated between 5 to 7 horses. Colonels were allocated up to 5 horses. The lower the rank, the less horses were allocated.

When the war began, it was estimated that there were roughly 7 million horses in the US. The horse population in the “border states” thus took on a significant importance to both sides. The North obtained many of their horses from Canada. Mules were used extensively as they were better “pack animals”, and could carry bigger loads, and had higher endurance. They also did not require as much attention as horses. Horses must be both fed and watered specific portions. If they are not, they will continue to eat or drink themselves into illness. Mules are smart enough to know when they have had enough. Mules also understand voice inflections, and can respond better.

In the North, procurement of horses was done by the Government. Many of the Southern Cavalry units later in the war, were at 50% strength, as its members would be on “horse furlough” looking for replacement mounts. Northern cavalry volunteers later in the war had to bring their own horse, saddle, etc. Officers on both sides generally provided their own horses. In the South, they paid cavalry soldiers \$.40 per day for the use of their horse. If the horse went lame, got sick and died, that was the extent of the compensation for the horse. However, if the horse was killed in combat, it would be replaced by the Confederate

Government. In 1864, potential Southern cavalry soldiers said “if you want me to be in the cavalry, you (the Government) need to supply the horse.

The North was the first to have Central Procurement of horses by specifications. The North also realized that they were making a significant investment in these horses, so they setup hospitals for horse care. The North also established 5 “remount depots” to rehabilitate the horses, around the country. Because these depots were so nice, the Union had to stop having individuals bring the horses to the depots, and then bring them back to the front. They started shipping the horses both to the depot, and back to the front, via railroad.

The Union records indicate that they spent in excess of \$123 million dollars on horses. This translates into roughly 850,000 horses. It is estimated that this is about the same quantity of horses the Confederacy was able to put into the field. These figures do not reflect the quantity of horses that were “liberated” from the other side. Whenever a battle would occur, horses were so important that both sides had standing orders “that all horses that cannot be removed, will be shot”. The armies could not be slowed down by injured horses or mules, and did not want the enemy to possibly be able to use these “assets”. Dr. Glick also addressed normal maintenance required for horses. Horses need to be re-shoed roughly every 60 days. The Confederacy had major shortages of horse shoes too. There are reports that when the Confederates left a battlefield, they had cut the legs off the dead horses to get their horse shoes.

PRESERVATION REPORT BY LEN OVERCASH, SR.

TN -- There were many horrifying scenes of carnage throughout the Civil War, but there aren't many that testify to the ferocity of battle more than the very graphic descriptions left by those who endured the Battle of Franklin. The Battle of Franklin, fought on November 30, 1864, was one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles of the war. As nearly 8,500 casualties “literally piled up” in just five hours, you can bet that many times during that fight, men on both sides of the entrenchments sent out desperate calls for help.

Today, once again, friends from Franklin are calling for CWPT's help. The fantastic local preservation group there in Tennessee, Franklin's Charge, is taking the lead in an historic effort to reclaim this supremely hallowed ground. They are moving forward on a long-range plan that, literally, inch-by-inch seeks to purchase, preserve and restore the actual ground where the maelstrom of battle happened. CWPT has been on the forefront of the effort to reclaim Franklin, helping to purchase 110 acres near the historic Carnton Plantation, and then another ½-acre adjacent to the Carter House, land that saw some of the worst carnage ever inflicted on the North American continent.

Today, however, our focus is just a few hundred yards away from the Carter House, on property associated with the battle's other major landmark, the Carter Cotton Gin. Currently, CWPT is partnering with Franklin's Charge to preserve forever a small (1.07 acres) but crucial portion of land adjacent to the historic Cotton Gin property. (And the plan is to purchase the final few acres or so, currently occupied by a small strip shopping center, in another year or two, allowing for a near-complete restoration of this part of the battlefield.)

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Civil War Collector's Show
DuPage County Fairgrounds
Wheaton, IL 60187
Date: Saturday, April 17, 2010
Time: 9:00am to 4:00pm

"Breakfast Brunch with John Buford"
Pinecrest Golf Course
11220 Algonquin Road
Huntley, IL 60142
Sunday, April 18, 2010
Time: 11:00am to 2:00 pm

South Suburban CWRT
Vince Heier "Custer in the Civil War"
National City Bank of Frankfort
(Basement) Frankfort, IL
Thursday, April 22, 2010
Time: 7:00 p.m.

Northern Illinois Civil War
Roundtable
Rob Girardi
"The Battle of Galveston"
Arlington Heights Public Library
500 N. Dunton Ave
Arlington Heights, IL
Friday, May 7, 2010
Time: 7:30 p.m.
nicwrt.freehostia.com

Chicago Civil War Round Table
Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Chicago IL
May 14, 2010
William A. Freehling
"The Strange, Difficult Triumph of
Southern Secession"
5:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Speaker Presentation
\$40.00 Dinner
\$5.00 for presentation
Call 1-630-460-1865 to make
reservation
www.thecwrt

ALL FOR THE UNION

The flyer is out for this year's
banquet. Please get your information
into Paula Walker by May 31st, 2010.

FUTURE MEETINGS

2010 (3rd Friday of the month)

May- Panel Discussion ("What was
the Turning Point of the Civil War?")
June-Banquet (Dan Weinburg:
"Dealing in History: Adventures
Through Historical Artifacts")
Sept-Paul Walker ("A Whitman's
Sampler: A Sampling of Poetry From
the War Years")

THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

www.saltcreekcwrt.org

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