

The Eagle Eye

Volume V, Issue II

Non Facilie Viridis Est

APRIL/MAY 1863 {2008}

**MAY
&
JUNE
EVENTS!**

SHARPSHOOTING AT MARIPOSA

By Private Ted Stahr



**Gibson
Ranch**
SACRAMENTO
MAY 16, 17 & 18
FRIDAY SCHOOL
DAY
NCWA Event

Crack rifle team Stahr and Lemke proved deadly over the distances at Mariposa

YREKA
Yreka
MAY 16, 17 & 18
RACW Event

Our scoped target rifle has always been a great crowd-getter during our events. But for some reason, we have never taken it out to field during our battles. Not sure of the reason, we just never did.

Officers, sergeant, flag bearers and especially artillery crews were all fair game. At ranges of about 200 yards plus; targets were very visible through the 4X scope of the rifle.

Roaring Camp
MAY 21 THRU 26
ACWA Event

During the recent Mariposa event, our gallant and fearless commander suggested that we use the rifle during one of the battles. This seemed to be the perfect setting due to large size of the battlefield. So as the most experience and senior privates (also read oldest and lamest) Privates Lemke and I were picked to utilize this weapon.

We received little or no return fire , obviously we were not seen or perceived as a threat. The scenario was so successful, we did it again during both battles on Sunday. During one battle alone; the CSA lost upwards to 16 key personnel. This certainly pointed out the potential and dangers of precise and aimed rifle fire.

May 31 & June 1
A New Event in
LONG BEACH!
{See page 7 for details!}

With Private Lemke as my spotter, we set out to find the position to utilize the rifle. A large granite boulder at one end of the gully which bisected the battlefield was a perfect location . Here we had a perfect view of the CSA artillery pieces on a hill to the right and the main battlefield to the left.

We hope to continue these scenarios at future events. The plans are to coordinate our activities with the CSA sharpshooters and gun crews. Scenarios where gun crews are driven from their gun and have to be rescued by their own sharpshooters would be a great way to start a battle.

Acton
JUNE 7 & 8
ACWS Event

After a few test shots, having never fired the weapon before, we settled down to deadly business. With Private Lemke locating suitable targets, we proceeded to devastate the CSA ranks.

Another scenario might be where the CSA artillery targets our position and either kills or drives us away from our position. I think we have opened up a whole range of potential scenarios using this rifle. - Ted

Casa de Fruta
JUNE 21 & 22
ACWA Event

**For a more
complete calendar
of the
2008 campaign
season,
see page 7**

THE NCO COLUMN

Our Non-Com's chance to prove they can pick up a pen as well as some stripes

MEET ME IN MARIPOSA

Friends,

In this article I choose to digress from my usual confabulations about the proceedings at our various events and in its stead extol the virtues of this relatively new and wondrous site. While this was my second visit to this field, this would be my first battle as I was part of the invalid corps and unofficial camp provost.

The site is located in the Central Valley foothills east of Merced near the little town of Mariposa. In my opinion, the terrain reminded me much of the rolling hills of some of the battlefields I've visited back east. There were various small and large hills, a few trees here and there, at small creek bed, a pond and a few rocks. Not to mention a lot of space to maneuver.

With that lovely field to play with during the weekend all we needed was some good scenarios that would be worthy of the land. The Confederates had set up an artillery battery on a hill that loomed over the battlefield. You knew sooner or later that we would have to charge up that hill and try to take that position. On the second day we did just that along with the Cal 100 and we paid dearly for that charge by eating some canister. At the foot of the same hill we had some tremendous cover in a small creek bed. In one battle we had orders to keep down and take head shots at the cannon crew. Orders for head shots!

The creek bed made for great help in moving around the field and we used it once to turn our position around to take on some Rebs who were trying to flank us. We raced along the creek bed, under some trees and then popped out on the opposite side of the Rebs who came after us. Too bad I got "killed" after that little maneuver.

There were all sorts of little rises of hills that you could get some cover after just moving a few feet. You can see how units could not see each other back east as this happened a few times on this field. In one of our encounters the Rebs looked really good coming up over one of these little hills. The way the field was laid out the spectators had a nice



view of the proceedings and even got a good close up look at the Reb infantry being wiped out by our fine boys in Blue. One of my favorite features was a foul looking pond that a small creek drained into. In one battle, the sharpshooters were somehow split into half by this pond and we almost had a little accident with First

Sergeant Manzo nearly being a casualty of the pond. It was quite an interesting little obstacle.

During the second battle on Saturday, Ted and Vern had an excellent adventure as a sharpshooting team, using a few trees and some large boulders to do their work. Vern was a spotter and Ted used the target rifle with great effect on the Confederates. I found the same boulder to be of great advantage for the school program skirmish when Reb Tony Fuzie obliged to take a hit when I fired on him from behind that rock. It was about 150 yards or so. Maybe more. Heck it was only one Reb, Ted shot over a dozen if they only knew it. The following day the target was rifle was brought out again and used to great effect.

Anyway, the terrain made it some had work but it was worth it. We got ordered all over the place and I even got winded once. But I'll tell you, after we lost to the Rebs in the second battle on Saturday all I could say was that was the best battle scenario I was in that we lost. The best testimony was that Cpl. Collins was smiling all weekend. He had fun.

I look forward to seeing you at Mariposa next year. The hosts are wonderful and want us back. Let's oblige them and make this event bigger for 2009.

*Respectfully Submitted —
2nd Sgt. Tim Pedersen*

**Watch this page for future columns by
1st Sgt. Ernie Manzo and our newly minted
Corporal Jim "Flapjack" Collins**

BATTLES IN THE DESERT

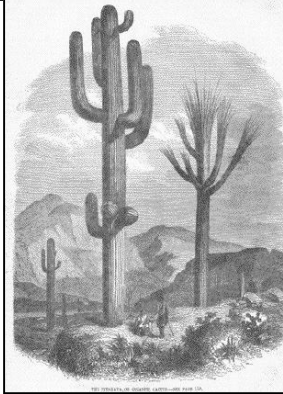
In March after the Mooney Grove event, I continued on down to Arizona for the annual Picacho Peak reenactment. This event covered not only the skirmish at Picacho (the western most battle in the Civil War), but battles Of Valverde & Glorieta Pass in New Mexico.

Due to local reenactor politics (yes we have politics in the hobby) , one complete company of Confederates boycotted the event. As result, the CSA was very short of line infantry.

So the company that I usually join up with galvanized for the weekend. We portrayed a company of the 7th Texas Mounted Infantry, part of General Sibley's invasion army into New Mexico.

As a result, I not only had to learn to talk "Rebel", but also "Texanese". I can now brag better then anyone else in the company. The uniform change was easy, blue pants (captured from the Yankees) , white civilian shirt and straw hat. With the weather being very mild for the event, this was a very comfortable uniform.

Since the ground was mainly dirt, rocks, cactus, plus



more rock and more cactus, you tended to take wounds as apposed to throwing yourself on the ground. In other words, the hardened ground of Mariposa was a bed of soft green grass as compared to Picacho.

While the numbers were not great, the battles were hot and furious with great crowds. As an aside, my niece's husband joined me for the Sunday battles. Although a spectator at previous events, this is the first time that he has actually participated in one of the event. Afterwards, he kept talking

about how fun it was, how into it he got, both scared and pumped while on he firing lines . In other words he got into the "zone" as we sometimes mention at really great events.

The event is held the 2nd weekend in March at the site which is between Phoenix and Tucson. It is a great event which I highly recommend for something different from our normal fare.

By Brevet Pvt. Ted Stahr

LOCAL SHARPSHOOTERS OF 1863?

FROM THE

The California State Military Museum Website

From the website:

“This appears to be a one of a kind hand made jewelers piece. It has a beautiful carved eagle with a sharps rifle in its talons.

The bottom planchet is attached to a folded hook type protrusion. There is fancy scroll work and a white enameled target in the center.

Above are the words "S F HUSARS". The reverse has some very faint engraving.

At the top is the date "1863". At the bottom it states "2nd".

I could see the word Sharpshooter that is now just about totally eradicated with the exception of the letter "S".

Again at the top, it appears to me in script engraving below the 1863 is the very faint word presented", which can make out the "ented."



Images and text courtesy of Mr Bob Albertini.

Black Hussars

(San Francisco Hussars)

Other or Official Titles: Black Hussars, (San Francisco Hussars) Company B, First Battalion of Cavalry, Second Brigade

Location: San Francisco, San Francisco County

Mustered in: December 16, 1859



DID JOHN WILKES BOOTH SHOOT A DYING MAN? PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH REVISITED

By Lisa M. Krieger, San Jose Mercury News

That's the controversial conclusion reached by Palo Alto physician and amateur historian John Sotos, who says that President Abraham Lincoln was suffering from a lethal genetic cancer syndrome when he was shot at Ford's Theatre 143 years ago today.

"Lincoln was a rare man with a rare disease," said Sotos. He has self-published a 300-page book and 400-page database to support his conclusion, based on an exhaustive analysis of Lincoln photographs and historical eyewitness descriptions of the president's health. "This solves a puzzle."

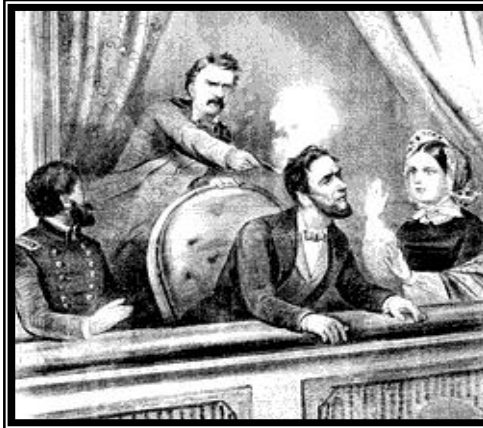
While most Americans only reflect on dead presidents during long weekends in February, Sotos and other physician historians pore over ancient accounts of long-gone symptoms, studying aches and pains as if the patient had stepped out of the grave into the clinic.

These hobbyists have crafted a collection of retrospective diagnoses: George Washington may have suffered dementia during his last years in office; James Madison suffered seizures; Calvin Coolidge grew depressed after the death of his son; after a lifetime of heavy drinking, Franklin Pierce died of cirrhosis of the liver.

Lincoln's health has fascinated medical sleuths. In 1962, it was suggested that his great height and long limbs were linked to a genetic disorder called Marfan syndrome. Others have proposed alternate ailments - Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, perhaps, or Stickler syndrome. Some say he suffered from depression or exhaustion. The late president's health had long puzzled Sotos. Last year, while assembling a medical database about the 16th president, Sotos read an unrelated article about thyroid cancer, the deadly and inevitable outcome of multiple endocrine neoplasia type 2B, or MEN 2B.

Many of the symptoms matched Lincoln's, and at 3:15 a.m., Sotos made a link. The condition, which causes aggressive thyroid cancer, explains Lincoln's lanky build, chronic constipation, hooded eyes, asymmetric jaw and the lumps on his lips, he said. His health was weakening in the months prior to the assassination, Sotos asserts. If true, Lincoln's death could have been messy and lingering, Sotos speculates, not sudden and shocking. For a nation in post-war turmoil, "it would have been a much different ending."

The medical community is divided on the theory. "Sotos has presented a very compelling case," said Dr.



Charis Eng, director of the Genomic Medicine Institute of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. "It is fascinating. But the jury is still out."

More skeptical is Dr. Jeffrey F. Moley, an expert in the disease at Washington University in St. Louis. "I strongly doubt that Lincoln had MEN 2B. I have seen a hundred patients with MEN 2B and I see none of the characteristic features. It's very, very unlikely."

This isn't the first president Sotos has diagnosed, living or dead.

He's compiled meticulous medical histories on all 43 U.S. presidents - as well as Vice President Dick Cheney ("a vasculopath with an almost 30-year history of coronary atherosclerosis.") He diagnosed severe sleep apnea in William Taft and graphed the president's weight gains and losses.

Only a DNA sample will prove if Lincoln might have soon died a natural death had Booth lost his nerve. That sample won't come from Lincoln; he's buried in concrete. It won't come from his living descendants; there are none. Only a precious sample of blood, from a saved swath of soiled fabric, would be definitive.

Until then, history offers the best clues. "Physicians have an obligation to investigate everything that may shed light on their patient's health," said Sotos. "I have simply approached Lincoln as if he were my patient."

If you are interested in more information on Sotos' book, that can be found at www.physical-lincoln.com/



PRADO 2008

or

HOW TO GO FROM BREVET PRIVATE TO BREVET CAPTAIN AND BACK AGAIN!



EXTREME DANGER ALONG THE FIRING LINE AT THE BATTLE OF PRADO

During the first weekend of April, I was detached by Colonel Berdan to inspect the USSS element station in Southern California. Their written reports are scarce or non-existent and there were some rumors of a possible Rebel sympathizer in the NCO ranks. In keeping with this assignment, I was given the Brevet rank of captain.

Upon my arrival, I took temporary command of the company. In addition, I was assigned to Colonel's Fradella's staff as the Provost Marshal. There, I handled the law enforcement duties for the Union Division including guard mount, night guard duties, passes, protection for the pay details and a host of other duties.

It required me to leave Lt Oneslager in charge of running the company for most of the day. This job, he handled in an outstanding manner. The NCO suspected of Rebel sympathy was mysteriously absent from the camp. This of course raised my suspicions even more about his possible secessionist sympathies.

Four engagements were fought over the weekend. Somehow the CSA won two and the Union won two. It seems strange how it always seems to work out that way. The battlefield is some 1850 feet long & 950 wide with several roads and large hill at one end. There is also a split rail fence courtesy of the Berman company. It is one of the larger fields available to reenactors in California. One interesting aspect of the battles is very active involvement of the Signal Corps. Actual messages regarding the conduct of the battles are passed by signal flags from the headquarters to subordinate units.

The USSS was always out in front, usually teamed up with the dismounted cavalry, including members of the CAL 100.

With a field that long, we many times end up fighting

from one end to the other. During one battle, we started out as the only Union unit on the field. The company was always in the thick of the main action.

The battles staged were those of Gettysburg, including the First Day, Culp's Hill, the Wheatfield, and finally, Pickett's Charge. One observation was that the CSA leadership has a very strong hold on the conduct of their units. The CSA units seem to follow the scenarios almost to the letter. All the battles were well fought, especially the final one, Pickett's charge.

Overall the event was very well run and thoughtfully organized. As an example of how well organized, the event coordinator, Colonel Gary Fradella was thrown from his horse during the first battle, suffering three cracked ribs, so he spent the rest of the event in the hospital. In spite of his absence, members of the Union Staff stepped up to fill the gap and the event went on as if Gary was still there.

One interesting issue that will have to be examined will be the sympathies of Lt. Oneslager. Having some important staff duties, I had to be absent from one of the engagements. It was noted that during that engagement, the USSS company was shot to pieces, but he miraculously survived without a scratch. Perhaps Rebel sympathies extend beyond a certain NCO.

The next Prado event will be 4-5 April 2009. I strongly encourage all that can attend to plan for this event, It is well worth your travels and time. In addition, our parades down south are a great group of guys. Plus, the meals we are served are always outstanding.

Mooney Grove letter from the field — March 3, 1863



Death to Traitors.

Gentle Readers

A few members of the 1st U.S.S. were called up to assist in suppressing Rebel activity near the town of Visalia, a place well known for its seceder sympathies. The army has assembled at a place called Mooney Grove in preparation to meet the enemy in battle. The few locals we have encountered have been quite hostile toward us. The weather has been very nice here; too nice to not avoid a battle so I expect we will soon be going out to face the Rebels.

Lt. Rogers is commanding us and I have been requested to fill in as 1st Sgt. This should be a rather interesting experience for me and I hope I perform well.

When we first went out to meet the rebels we were assigned to the right wing of the Union line. Our orders were to hold back while the cannon crews put on their show. Soon the order came to move up and after a ways the sharpshooters broke into a skirmish line.

The company moved forward and then did a left wheel to face the rebels. There was some fire from behind us but it was mostly a nuisance so we held our line and focused on the larger problem. Later we had to move to the center as an infantry unit moved up on our right. The fighting was quite hot but with few casualties on our side. The Rebels were hit hard during this encounter and turned away with great loss.

Later in the day we came across another bunch of Rebels but the result was less favorable for the Union cause. The Rebels amassed a great number of soldiers and gave us a tremendous whipping. The commotion was tremendous and the Lieutenant yelled at me a few times keep the men in line. The casualties among the Berdams were quite severe and few were lucky to escape.

In camp we wondered about what had happened and am sure we will meet again tomorrow. I feel ill at ease about meeting up with these Rebels again.

Your Obedient Servant,

2nd Sgt. T. Berderson

MAKE YOUR OWN STADIUM SIGHT! SORT OF.....

Inspired by readings from Kautz's *Customs of Service for Non-commissioned officers and Soldiers*.

For those of you jealous of the amazing Civil War era "laser" range finding device, there may be an answer for you without resorting to purchasing your own replica of these fine pieces.

All you need is a small stick of hardwood, a piece of bone, even a handy screwdriver. Then you need to add some graduations to indicate yardage. Round up one your medium height pards to walk off say fifty yards

and stand still. Hold onto the stadium to be, and extend your arm fully. Align the top of the stadium to the top of your pards head and mark his height. Then have your pard back up to 100 yards and repeat the process.

You can mark off other distance the same way and that might be a good idea as using a field improvised stadium to measure up an armed soldier possibly 50 yards away might not be the most healthful thing to do.

2008 CAMPAIGN CALENDAR

☆ = School Day at this Event * = Tentative Date as of this printing

MAY

3 & 4	ACWS	Wooden Nickle Event *	Riverside
16 -18	NCWA	Gibson Ranch ☆ Event	Sacramento
16 -18	RACW	Yreka Wilderness ☆ Event	Yreka
21 -26	ACWA	Roaring Camp Event	Felton

JUNE

7 & 8	ACWS	Acton I Event	Acton
21 -22	ACWA	Casa De Fruta Event	Hollister

JULY

4 - 6	CCWR	Gray Eagle Event *	Portola
19 -20	CHAS	Civil War Days Event	Duncan's Mills

AUGUST

28 -1	CSRM	Gold Rush Days	Old Sacramento
28 -1	HBHS	Huntington Beach Event	Huntington Beach

SEPTEMBER

13 -14	ACWA	Nevada City Event	Nevada City
19 -20	NCWA	To Be Announced	To Be Announced

OCTOBER

4 & 5	ACWa	Modesto Event	Modesto
17 -19	NCWA	☆ Fresno Event	Fresno
	ACWS	Spring Mountain Ranch Event	Las Vegas, NV

***Remember to confirm all
dates and contact the host
clubs before attending!***



NEW SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EVENT!

A Report by Ted Stahr

The folks down South have organized a new event in the Long Beach area. It will be held at a regional park on the north side of the city. Based on the photos of the site, it appears to have the potential for a great event. This is the first time that a reenactment has ever been held in Long Beach. Our parads from the Southland Berdans will be supporting the event.

An aerial view of the park shows lots of trees, grass, a small hill and a small lake near the site. The site is some 1000 feet wide and 2500 feet long. This compares to the Moorpark site which is only about 1000 feet in diameter,

and Prado which is about 1850 feet in diameter

I plan to attend the event to support our fellow United States Sharpshooters. I also will be able to take along anyone else interested in attending. Contact me for more details.

DATE: 31 May - 1 June 2008

**LOCATION: El Dorado Park
Long Beach
Near the I-405 & I-605 Freeways**

The Eagle Eye

THE NEWSLETTER OF WEST
COAST BERDAN
SHARPSHOOTERS



Proudly serving the Berdan
Sharpshooters of the the NCWA,
ACWA, RACW, and NCWC

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NOTICE

TO INTERESTED PARTIES!

Regarding Imminent Hostilities
at or near

Duncan's Mills

July 19th & 20th of this year

The future of the annual Duncan's Mills event at the Cassini Ranch at is once again in question. CHAS, the California Historic Artillery Association, sponsor and organizer of the event has definitely secured the site for this year. Whether or not a 2009 event will happen is by no means a sure thing and cannot at present be predicted.

If you have enjoyed the Duncan's Mills in the past, make plans to attend this year as we do not know what the future may hold.

— Editor

FROM THE PATENT PORTABLE DESK OF 1ST LT. D.W. ROGERS

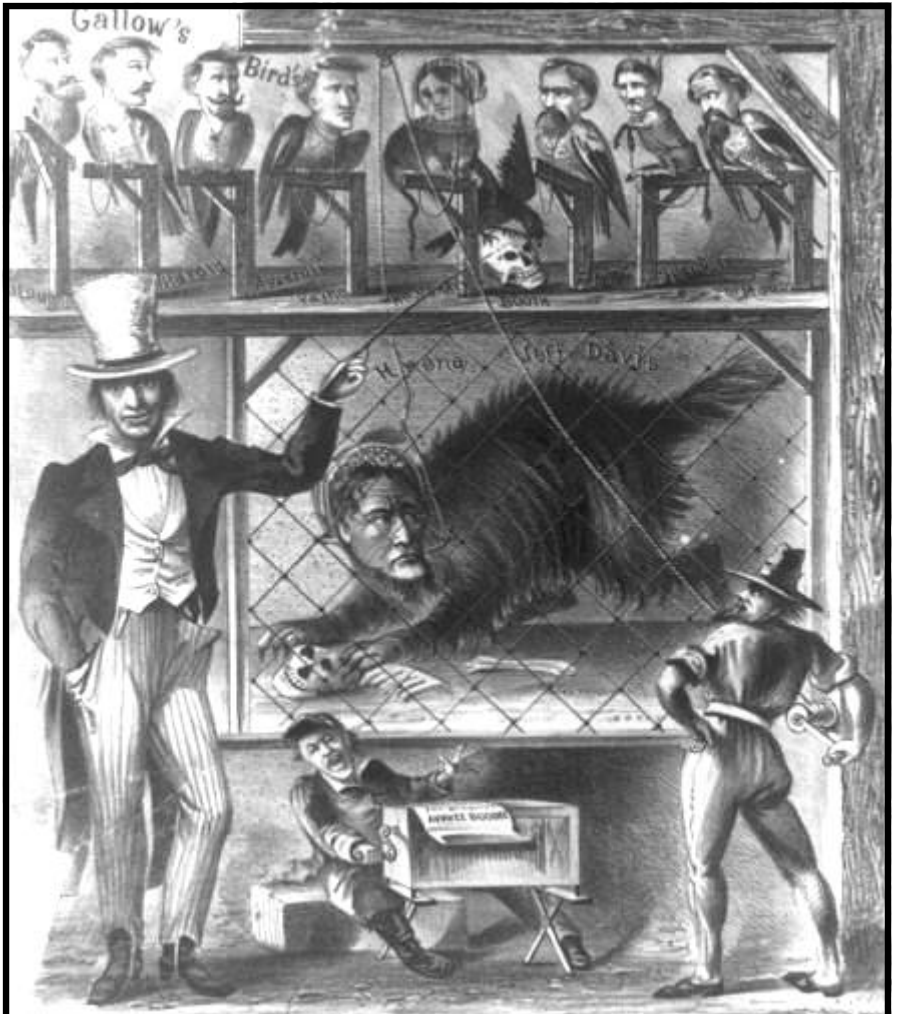
Just a few notes to pass along as we plunge fully in the campaign season.

First off, we are reminded by the Colonel, Mr. Hoshaw, that regulations stipulate the wearing of a coat when out of our company street. This means a sack coat, roundabout, or frock. Men seen out of camp in only vests and/or shirtsleeves will be considered out of uniform. This also applies to headwear. Although regulations hold that headgear is to be worn at all times, the Colonel has graciously allowed for each company's discretion in extreme temperatures, to permit our men to momentarily doff their caps if not immediately engaged with the public.

Secondly, the public has noticed that officers are often ignored when a salute is called for. This is mostly referring to soldiers walking outside of the company streets. Please salute the officers.

Finally, brevet Private Stahr, who serves as keeper of the majority of our loaner gear, requests that we get in any reservations for loaner gear, a week before the event. He does not have room, nor the inclination, to bring more than we may reasonably need.

D. W. Rogers



UNCLE SAM'S MENAGERIE, 1865