

The Eagle Eye

Volume III, Issue III

Non Facilie Viridis Est

JUNE/JULY 1863 {2006}

2006 CAMPAIGN CALENDAR

THE BATTLE FOR GIBSON RANCH AS TOLD THROUGH THE DIARY OF PVT. TIM PEDERSEN, AN ACTUAL PARTICIPANT!

Fort MacArthur
JULY 8 & 9
Multi-Period Living History
w/ Civil War Battles

May 19: Union army headed to the town of Gibson Ranch and got camp set up in good order. The camp was visited by a large number of children from the nearby schoolhouses and were quite the inquisitive lot. Several sharpshooters from Company C went out to talk to the children and spoke to them about our unique uniforms, the faithful Sharps rifles we use, and the manner we use to fight. These children were quite an observant lot and I have no doubt that the future of the Union would be bright with those minds. Friday evening it rained. Found something for the company to eat that was better than salt horse. Couldn't start much of a fire for dinner but we moved under a fly and got a decent meal cooked.

Wells took Pvt Collins and myself on picket duty while Cal 100 and rest of Company C searched town. Got jumped by Rebs and driven back to town. Private Collins ran back to town from the picket line yelling that there were thousands of Rebs. There weren't. Collins has a bad habit of exaggerating. Last time he sounded the alarm in this way he was being chased by some mules that got loose. Didn't cry wolf this time but nobody cared. We held the line for a bit but had to withdraw 'til the infantry came up. Got shot but the ball went clean through my thigh and missed the bone. Surgeon says I will be fine. Regrouped and went back to camp. Hoped we'd get rations, but got in trouble. Guess Friday night's pig had an owner. The guard was called for and all we ended up with was hard-tack.

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Duncans Mills
JULY 15 & 16
CHAS / NCWA Event

Fort Point
AUGUST 5TH
ACWA Event
Living History

Ardenwood
AUG. 19 & 20
NCWA Event / ACWA Supporting

Old Sacramento
GOLD RUSH DAYS
SEPT. 1, 2, & 3
NCWA Supported
{Details not yet available}

May 20: Saturday – drill, drill and more drill. No time for rest as we went to town looking for Rebs and sympathizers. Sgt

Nevada City
SEPT. 9 & 10
ACWA Event

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

Galt / Dry Creek
SEPT. 23, & 24
RACW Event

Seems to me that Gibson Ranch might need to be renamed Knight's Ferry North. Even with the NCWA moving the event to later in the year, we find the rain relentlessly pursuing us. With that in mind, I would like to thank everyone who made the event and stuck it out despite the weather.


was that I got to step back a bit and watch Company C perform. Our occupation of the town, our movement on the battlefield is very impressive when you get the chance to see it. Not nearly as much fun as being in it, mind you, but something we should all have a chance to witness.


As the Duncan's Mills approaches, please consider doing this event. We will have guard duty for the weekend just as we

Modesto
OCT. 7 & 8
ACWA Event

Kearney Park, Fresno
OCT. 20, 21, & 22
NCWA Event
w/Friday School Day

It was my first event in command and I want you to know how much I appreciate everyone's positive attitude and camaraderie. One of the benefits of rank at Gibson

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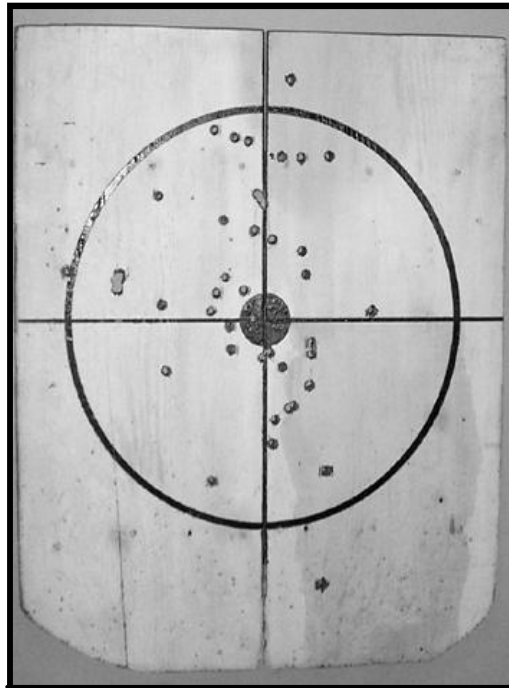
BERDAN SHOOTING CONTESTS

by Brevet Pvt. Ted Stahr

While at the White Oak Museum during my trip last March, I was shown some papers about a shooting contest in January 1863. The papers listed the companies and the results shown below. The papers said that there was an inter company competition held on 13 & 14 January 1863. This was while the regiments were in Winter Quarters near Falmouth, Virginia.

At first I thought that this was the contest mentioned in Stevens' book on pages 232-233, but the dates were wrong; this last contest being held on March 1863. Also, this match involved both regiments while the other only seem to involve the 1st Regiment (Co K being mention & there being no "K" in the 2nd Regt).

The competition took place on a ridge with the targets being at various distances across a deep ravine on another ridge. The weather on the 14th was described as strongly cloudy with variable wind. The standard Sharps Rifle with open iron sights and sets triggers were used by all participants.



This reproduction, housed in the White Oak Museum, gives an idea of the type of target most likely used in the competitions between the several Sharpshooter companies.

As you can see, the three Michigan companies (C, I & K) were the top three winners of the match. Although this seems to be just a competition among the companies of the 1st Regiment, Stevens' book goes into details about a match held in March 1863. There the companies of both regiments competed to select a winner to compete against each other. The winner of this match was again Michigan sharpshooters. This was a five off-hand shots at 100 yards contest.

Another contest was a three-shot string from a tree top at 200 yard target. Several long shots of 1000 yards were then made using both Sharps and target/telescopic rifles. Gold medals and a cash purse were awarded in both contests.

Affairs like these are just another reason that the Sharpshooters were so effective and deadly. They had the opportunity to practice their deadly trade during nonfatal times. This continued practice was an opportunity only very rarely afforded to the ordinary line infantryman.

RESULTS

<u>Company</u>	<u>Distance(yds)</u>	<u>Tgt Size</u>	<u>Shots fired</u>	<u>Hits</u>	<u>% hits</u>	<u>String</u>
C	n/a	n/a	70	37	52	11 - 31/31"
D	200	3'1" x 2'11"	42	21	50	11-3/4 "
E	200	23" x 26 "	16	5	31	10-2/5 "
F	180	5' x 4'	79	16	20	13 - 17/19 "
G	250	2' 3' x 1' 4.5"	56	15	26	8 "
H	200	2' x 2'	90	25	27	9 - 1/2 "
I	180	27" x 28 "	105	68	64	8-13/18"
K	180	4' x 4"	73	58	79	9"

Hispanic Service in the American Civil War - Quiz Question:
Which commander of the Army of the Potomac was born in Spain?

Answer may be found on back page

BACK EAST WITH ERNIE

Private Ernie Manzo on his recent trip to the Eastern Theater and the Smithsonian

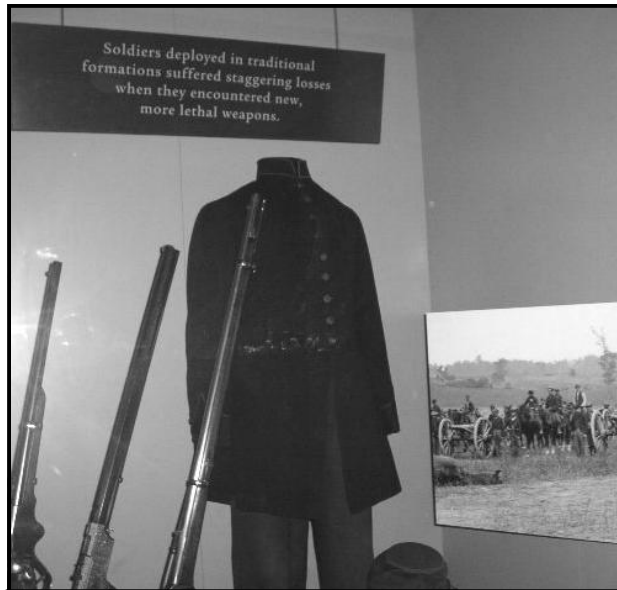
Two years ago, on my last trip to Washington D.C., my family wanted to see all the Smithsonian exhibits. When there are 17 building to view, maybe that was an unrealistic goal. All I remember seeing last time, in the American History Museum, was the gowns of the 1st Ladies and an old fire engine. Well this trip proved more fruitful to my personal taste. For those of you whom have not had a chance to see the exhibit, you are missing a real treat.

From mentions of the French Indian War right down to Operation Desert Storm, the Smithsonian has pieced together an inspired collection of artifacts, quotes, presentations, personal recollections and activity stations that invite all to explore and learn. The overall exhibit contains nine chambers with the four largest ones focused on our fight for "Independence", the "Civil War", "World War II" and "Vietnam".

Things get off to a great start even before you walk into this area. Just outside the entrance is one of Clara Barton's ambulances. Just looking at this covered wagon made me cringe with the thought of agony a wounded soldier suffered when transported down a rutted dirt road, especially in such tight quarters. At the entrance of the "Civil War" the display runs through the causes and triggers of the war especially focusing on the John Brown's Raid and the battle of the anti and pro abolitionist forces in the Midwest. Most remarkable were cannon and a .44 Sharps sporting rifle used by Brown's followers in "Bleeding Kansas". Then the exhibit flowed into the views of the war from the perspective of different types of people such as laborers, slaves, merchants and the so on. After this, the good stuff started.

The first uniform on display belonged to a Zouave of the 54th New York and his single trigger Sharps rifle. Immediately following were an outstanding array of jackets, frocks, coats, muskets, rifles, pistols, bayonets, caps, hats and swords. Most notable among them were the slouch hat of Mosby, Sherman's hat and McCellan's frock and pistol.

Then in one case, I stumbled onto a very unique uniform, oh yes, the uniform of the 1st United States Sharp-



The USSS uniform in the Smithsonian
"Even though I knew the pants and frock with different shades of green, the difference was substantial enough to still catch me off guard"

shooters. With a green forage cap and Hiram Berdan's Sharps rifle beside it, I thought I was dreaming. Even though I knew the pants and frock with different shades of green, the difference was substantial enough to still catch me off guard. My only complaint about this portion of the exhibit was how dark it was. In this case I could not really determine the exact shade of green of the frock and that of several of the other shells and frocks were also kept in dim lighting. There were other CW uniforms and even Revolutionary era attire that was much better lit. Maybe there an issue with the color and or dyes of the items in question that they are kept in this way

for the sake of preservation.

Berdan's personal Sharps was a rather odd duck. Its barrel and fore stock looked like a 2 band Springfield including a ramrod but the breech was definitely that of a Sharps rifle. Even the retaining clips for the barrel bands were mounted on the side not on the bottom of the fore stock.

Further on in the room, the Smithsonian had the original chairs and desk used by Grant and Lee at Appomattox. Around the corner, there stood a particularly good set of scale models, depicting the battle between the Monitor and Merrimack. In the end, there was one more final set of uniforms, highlighted by a musician's frock and vivandiere's outfit. On a personal note I was curious to see what color the canteen of the fully equipped federal soldier was, it turned out to be gray.

Gray, blue, red, butternut or green just reflect some of the colors shown here at the Smithsonian's Civil War exhibit. It took me 3 hours to find my way though the entire "Price of Freedom" and I did not get to study it nearly as well as I would have liked to, oh well there is always next time.

By the way, I tried to get a swatch of material off the Berdan frock as requested by our illustrious commander, Lt. Rogers, but I could not find a way to get the necessary equipment past the metal detectors.

ERNIE'S TRAVELS CONTINUE NEXT PAGE



“THEY ARE SMILING!”

PERSONAL VIEWS OF EASTERN BATTLEFIELDS

Ernie Manzo and Family visit more of the Eastern Theater

Slowly but surely my tour of notable battlefields of the Civil War is getting started. In 2004 it was Gettysburg, this year it was Harpers Ferry and Antietam. At Harpers Ferry, one has to be impressed with majestic power of the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers and the stature of the surrounding mountains.

Militarily, it is beyond me how the Union felt they could defend an indefensible location like that. How ironic that one of the triggers of the CW, John Brown's raid, was put down by a contingent of US troops led by Robert E. Lee. The docents at this historic park were amazing, effortless in their 1st person deliveries of their historical personas, and talented in their ability to reach each person in a crowded room as if the conversation was done one on one.

Antietam, the bloodiest single day in the military history of the Americas. A struggle of lost opportunities and great compassion. McClellan's failure to send in his final corp to attack when the Confederates had exhausted all their reverses, which could have sounded the death knell of the Army of Northern Virginia. How could Burn-

side have been so narrow minded to force a crossing only at the bridge when the Antietam Creek is fairly shallow, especially in September? Could not the artillery been deployed to clear the opposite hillside of the Georgian troops that ended so many Federal lives? Also, this battle gave Clara Barton her first true opportunity to give aid and care to the men at the front. In this time and place of such great pain, she was truly the "Angel of the Battlefield".

By now some of you are questioning, how does the title of the article relate to some personal observations of these two historically significant sites? To be perfectly honest with you, my reason to write this short pieces has nothing to do with the battles or the town damaged in the fights but more to do with the men that died there. On April 16, 2006, I arrived at Sharpsburg and checked in the bed and

breakfast right next to the Antietam National Cemetery. Shortly there after with plenty of daylight left my wife, my two daughters (ages 12 and 7) and myself, walked down the block to the Cemetery. The Cemetery is fairly small and nicely maintained despite containing about 2000 gravesites on its grounds (251 are non CW vets). As my wife and I wandered around looking at the headstones, unbeknownst to either of us, my daughters were doing something behind our backs. They had busied themselves gathering brightly colored wild flowers that were in great abundance all around us. Both girls took it on themselves to place a flower on each of the graves of over 450 troops from Wisconsin, Michigan and New Hampshire. Shocked that my little ones were doing something like this, I asked

my eldest why she was doing this. "Daddy, they looked like they needed a flower" was her reply. In place where so many of the headstones are weather worn and illegible, where many of interred have not been visited for some time if ever, for two young strangers one hundred and forty three years after their deaths to

make this sweet, innocent gesture, frankly nearly brought me to tears. In a quivering voice, I put my arm around my oldest and said to her, "I am sure they are looking down on your right now from heaven and smiling at you".

For me, the trip could have ended that day. I am very proud that my little ladies have learned enough from me to know how important the CW was and is to this day. Also they have learned another great pair of lessons, to be appreciative and respectful of their ultimate sacrifice.

*Corporal and Proud Father,
Ernest Manzo*



The Manzo girls proving themselves true Daughters of the Regiment amongst the graves of Antietam

ERNIE'S EASTERN THEATER REPORT
CONCLUDES ON NEXT PAGE



THE EASTERN THEATER THE TRIP CONCLUDES

After completing our schedule visits to Harper's Ferry and Antietam, I had unexpected double barrel surprise left in store. My dear wife who does schedule non-CW related excursions during our vacations (imagine that), had us stay in huge house that had been converted into a Bed & Breakfast just outside of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Little did I suspect that we would be staying at the former house of Lincoln's 1st Secretary of War and later ambassador to Czarist Russia, Simon Cameron. The huge, masonry, three-story house formerly stood on a 1200-acre farm and is magnificently maintained. Cameron's family lived in the house from the late 1830's until 1961.

On a day that was to be spent visiting the Amish countryside, Pennsylvania was blessed with fourteen straight hours of rain. Given that our options were thus limited, my wife (blessed her soul) proposed to visit the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. Even though a bit troublesome to find, the trip was well worth the drive.

The entire family found the ongoing video presentation of eight different people as each lived and suffered during different periods in the war, to be very compelling and engaging. Modern museums have done so much to create an interactive atmosphere that attracts and holds the attention of many that attend. The scene mock ups of the slave



Private Manzo the Company E & H monument

the same video it showed firing by file, rank and other variations.

Appropriately, the contribution of women and colored troops is explained and showed proper respect. In closing, a wonderful video showed old films of CW veterans' reunions, including one in Oakland. Best of all there was a display regarding the Berdans and they did have a double set trigger Sharps, unlike the Smithsonian. In the same case as the Sharps, was a private purchase green braided officer's kepi. Given another day a stop at Gettysburg and Manassas could have been possible, they were on the way back to our hotel in Virginia. Oh well I can't have everything, well at least not this time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pvt. E. Manzo

COMPANY H RIFLEMAN BURIED IN CHICO CEMETERY



Many of the boys roamed far and wide after the war and, not surprisingly, a fair number made it out west to California. At left is the gravestone of Lewis T. Clark, Company H, 2nd United States Sharpshooters.

Clark rests in the G.A.R. plot within the main cemetery at Chico, California along with about three dozen other veterans of the Civil War, including a fellow that was with the 20th Maine.

The cemetery and the G.A.R. plot are well maintained, but the statue, dedicated by the Halleck Post, No. 19 in 1910, has been damaged and the soldier's rifle is no longer present.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARALEE ROGERS



CONFESSIONS OF THE COMPANY WOOL SMITH

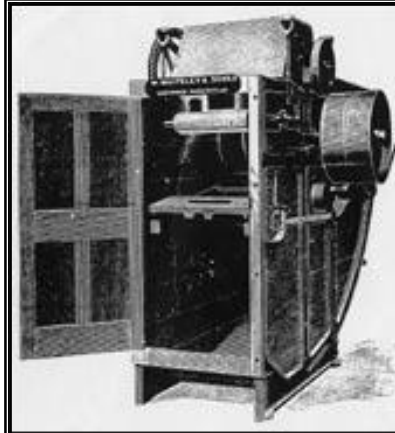
Or
PRIVATE TIM PEDERSEN, FORMERLY THE "FRESH FISH,"
DIVES INTO THE WORLD OF THE WOOL AND DYESTUFFS

Do you sometimes think that some people take the saying "if you want something done right, do it yourself" to a bizarre extreme? Here's my example and let me say that I was involved in this one.

Being one of the new guys in the unit I embarked on a rather twisted journey in getting my Sharpshooter uniform. It frustrated me to no end to hear about the stories and descriptions about the "ideal" color of green for the frock and then go out into the real world and virtual marketplaces on the Internet and try to find something. Goldilocks had an easier time in making a choice in porridge compared to what I had to go through. One color was too grassy looking, another too olive drabby, and then there was too much blue or maybe more fitting for Robin Hood's Merry Men or the Keebler Elves. Don't even start me on the weight. There was one sutler that the uniform photos looked great, but at this point I had developed a keen sense of skepticism that I requested a swatch and was let down when I got it. D****d cameras. Having exhausted my options I ended up going with the Nuclear Option and decided on dyeing my own fabric.

I do not wish to rehash the research posted on other sites in detail, so at a glance the original frock material seems to be traced to England and in a color described as Rifle Green. Rifle Green is pretty much green that has been saturated with black to make it real dark without shifting it to an olive or spruce (blue-green) color. Enough on color theory. The weight was lighter than what I would call field grade wool that we'd get from the various sutlers. Other issues later appeared of material dyed from blue to green as in the case of the Tilson coat. The trousers seemed to be less of an issue, using heavier material than the frock and I had some pretty good photos from the Smithsonian collection.

What I ended up doing was that I found a relatively inexpensive source of Hunter Green 100% melton that almost was in the ballpark color-wise. I thought that I would just touch it up and make it darker then we are home free. However I kept thinking about the dye job done on the Tilson coat and thought what if I just took some lighter weight white broadcloth and see what I could do with that. So I ordered some to play with and off to the races I went.



John Dyer's Fulling Machine
patented in 1833

With an idea on how the cloth should look sort of out of way, the next bit of research was the dye to be used. There are several ways to go about doing this as I soon learned a lot about the art of dyeing material. The original method involved natural materials such as logwood and fustic in conjunction with a material called a mordant to make the color stick. While it was nice to see how it may have been done in those days, I decided to look at modern dyes to simplify the process to some degree. There are basically three dye classes that might be of use in this application, a union dye such as RIT, which can be used on any type of cloth, but it is not really designed for wool.

Since wool is a protein-based fiber, it requires an acidic environment to properly bond the dye to the fibers. Two dyes can thereby be used- a fiber reactive dye and an acid dye. Fiber reactive dyes are mainly for cellulose (cotton) fibers, but the addition of an acid like vinegar (acetic acid) makes this dye perform like the acid dye, which is what is primarily recommended for dyeing wool and requires the addition of an acidic solution as well. I went with the fiber reactive dyes due to the variety of colors available and the similarity in performance to the acid dye.

I found a dark green color that would seem suitable and as a kicker to get the green level darker I purchased some black dye. Black dyes are funny critters as they are really a combination of colors to create black. There were two types of black that interested me, one having a green bias to it and another that had a blue bias to it. In some situations, the green or blue would be slightly noticeable. I thought I would use it to my advantage to shift the green to a darker shade as well as not having any trace of olive green.

Once I had my materials in place it was time to do some small pieces to get the colors dialed in. I set up a large saucepan on my stove to do the jobs. In a nutshell, what you do is heat up water, dissolve salt into the water, add dye, add fabric, remove fabric after a bit, add vinegar, return fabric to pot, cook some more, let cool a bit, remove, rinse excess dye, and dry. Got it all? The first task was getting the trouser color. Somehow it ended up being pretty easy as the fabric used only needed to be darkened up a little bit. The frock material took a lot more work to get closer to the "ideal."

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CONFESSIONS OF THE COMPANY WOOL SMITH {CONTINUES}

When I was pondering doing this myself, the question came up about sweat resistance of home dyeing. I tested the swatches by soaking them in hot salty water and pressing them to clean white cloths and found them no worse than my loaner uniform. I even had a volunteer wear a swatch under his socks for a while doing yard work and got similar positive results.

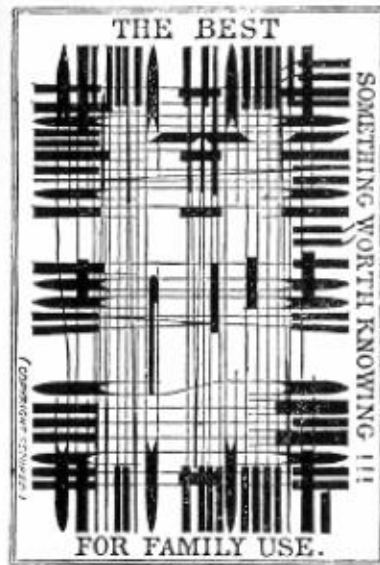
The next hurdle before me was how was I going to dye larger pieces. It was pretty easy to do test lots on small pieces of material. I got a lot of practice in honing the color and was pretty happy the direction things were going. Now I had to dye 3-5 yard pieces of wool that were about 14-16 oz per yard. The one factor that made it difficult is that I had to head up to boiling about 15 gallons of dye to near boiling. That was overcome with a big galvanized vat and a turkey fry kit. Then there was how I was going to dry it when I was done. My kid's bathroom was commandeered for that purpose. It was a sight to see with the shower curtain rods and hangers in there.

Well it was time to do this for real. Because of the time needed to dye and dry one piece, I could get in one dye job per day. I would set up the rig on the patio, get the dyes measured out, measure out the salt and vinegar needed to do the job and I would be ready to go. Dyeing trousers typically took 30-45 minutes to do and the frocks took about 1 hour in order to achieve a true dark green. The weather played a part, as it was winter and a bit cold outside while I was doing this.

I dyed all of the trowser fabric first and that went pretty well, except I had a run-in with shrinkage over what I anticipated. Anyone want a small green blanket? I got that problem figured out and got the trowser pieces dyed for Ernie, Steve, and myself. Then it was on to the broadcloth for the frocks. Because of the color needed, these took a lot of dye and time to produce. From the moment I started prepping the material to when I had the pieces starting to dry was about two hours each. It was quite challenging in the environment I was working in to get a relatively close match in the color from piece to piece. It was also

Lower the top to an angle of
45 degrees,

Shut one eye and read at
your ease.



505 BROADWAY, New York.

Clever little advertisement seen in
New York, 1865

tough to analyze the results until the following day as the color of the pieces and the indoor lighting conspired to confuse me. I'd have to take the pieces outside to see if it was done right. The final results were a bit variable with the frocks due to the amount of fabric involved. It ended up there was a bit of variation in the color of some of the pieces that might be due to uneven vinegar concentrations or something. The effect seems to mimic the wonderful quality control of that time period. Once I was done with everything, all the cloth pieces were carefully rolled up and packaged up to send to the Quartermaster Shop. Then I had to wait over a month before I'd see if my efforts were worth it. Finally the box from the QM Shop showed up. I ripped open the box and threw on the uniform and ran outside to get a good look. I was thrilled. Was it worth it, the answer would be yes, as I am very happy with how it looks and I got a reason to write an article for the EE. Would I do this again? Ask me later.

Yours,

Pvt. Tim Pedersen

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lest anyone thinks wool a simple, ready to use material, take a look at his handy poem listing all those people and processes that go into the making of our woolen goods.

This poem comes from a 17th century pamphlet

At first the **Parter** that doth cull
The finer from the coarser sort of wool.
The **Dyer** then in order next doth stand
With sweating brow and a laborious hand.
With oil they then asperge it, which, being done,
The careful hand of mixers round it run.
The **Stockcarder** his arms doth hard employ.

Then the **Knee Carder** doth (without control)
Quickly convert it to a lesser roll.
Which done, the **Spinster** doth in hand it take
And of 200 rolls, one thread doth make.
The **Weaver** next doth warp and weave the chain
And cries come boys with quills.

Being filled, the **Brayer** doth it mundify
From oil and dirt that in the same doth lie.
The **Burler** then (yea 1000s in this place)
The thick set weed with nimble hand doth chase.
The **Fuller** then close by his stock doth stand
And will not once shake Morpheus by the hand.
The **Rover** next his arms lifts up on high
And near him sings the **Shearman** merrily.
The **Drawer** last that many faults doth hide.

MEMORIAL DAY 2006 AT THE PRESIDIO

SCENES FROM A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

Memorial Day at the Presidio - Our fellow Sharpshooters from the ACWA, the Byberg brothers, once again invited us to honor the memory of Truman Head by standing vigil at his gravesite. The public in attendance at the day's events were keenly interested learning of this hero and historic character.



CALIFORNIA JOE AT REST



HOST AND ORGANIZER, CORPORAL ERIK BYBERG {ACWA} ASSEMBLES A MEMORIAL DISPLAY AT THE GRAVESITE



MOST HAD NEVER HEARD OF TRUMAN HEAD



COMPANY C WAS WELL REPPRESENTED

“OLD CALIFORNY” IN GOOD COMPANY

This year as we stood vigil over Truman “California Joe” Head’s grave at the Presidio, we noticed that the gallant neighbor to his immediate right was none other than a member of Company A, 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry, the “California 100.” Here is a bit of background on the one hundred as they appeared in later days as members of the Grand Army of the Republic at National Encampments.



Trooper Hill’s grave at the Presidio

The surviving veterans of The Hundred and Battalion gathered in Sacramento, at a [side] reunion, to tell stories and catch up on the years gone by.



There, on the Capitol grounds, twenty-one years since they last stood together, possibly for the last time as a group, the attending surviving members of The California Hundred and Battalion stood proudly under their battle flag and had their image captured for eternity.

In 1903, San Francisco would witness another gathering of these heroes of yore, but time had begun to take a toll that the war itself had not. We do not have numbers for The Hundred at that time but the Encampment statistics were as follows:

In the years after the war, the veterans of The Hundred and Battalion would meet, on occasion, at reunions of the Grand Army of the Republic veteran's organization.

Regimental Comrades spread across the full width of the country; from Maine, to Florida, to California. Those that returned to California settled anywhere from Northern California to Los Angeles, with the greatest concentration being in the San Francisco area. The Lincoln Post #1, of San Francisco, boasted thirteen surviving members as Comrades in 1886 out of the forty 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry veterans listed in California Posts.

The largest post war gathering of veterans of The Hundred and Battalion occurred in conjunction with the 1886 National Grand Army of the Republic Reunion in San Francisco.

Twentieth National Encampment, San Francisco, Calif.
August 4-6, 1886
Membership: 323,571

Thirty-seventh National Encampment, San Francisco, Calif.
August 20-2
Membership: 256,510



Souvenir pin-back medal from the August, 1903 G.A.R. National Encampment held in San Francisco

EDITOR’S NOTE:

Loyal readers of the Eagle Eye may recall our 2004 issue that featured an article from the 1903 San Francisco Call newspaper. For those riflemen recruited within the last 24 months, we



have

re-

PRESIDENT LINCOLN GRANTS A REQUEST

Carl Sandburg, in his “War Years,” tells of the time President Lincoln met a man in the street and said, “You look like an able-bodied man – why don't you join the army?” When the man answered that he’d be glad to die for his country if only given the chance, Lincoln wrote out and sealed this note, addressed to 714 Fifteenth Street, and instructed the man to take it there.

NOTE TO COLONEL FIELDING

Col. Fielding —

The bearer is anxious to go to the front and die for his country. Can’t you give him a chance?

A. Lincoln



THE BERDANS OF 1903!

A G.A.R. ENCAMPMENT IN SAN FRANCISCO AS RECORDED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO CALL NEWSPAPER OF WEDNESDAY AUGUST 19, 1903

MARKSMEN HOLD GAY REUNION

FAMOUS RIFLE SHOTS MEET AGAIN IN CONVENTION
COLONEL S.E. JAMES IS ELECTED AS PRESIDENT

Berdan's Sharpshooters held their annual reunion at Al-bion Hall, Alcazar building, at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon.

The principal feature of the meeting was the election of officers to act for the ensuing year. Colonel S. E. James was elected president. Frank D. Sweetser vice president, and A. R. Barrett secretary and treasurer.

In accepting the position of president Colonel James said: "I am very proud to be elected to fill this honored position. The only thing I leave home for is to knock elbows with the boys of '62."

Out of the 2600 gallant souls of this company who answered their nation's call, but 300 are alive today. At the meeting yesterday the following members registered:

Almond G. B. Pennell, Co. K, Berkeley, Cal.
M. E. Billings, Co. L, Berkeley, Cal.
Frank D. Sweetser, Co. E, Brentwood, Cal.
C. S. James, Co. B, Centerville, Iowa
C. B. Wilson, Co. F, Chicago, Ill.
H. N. Richardson, Co. G, Vallejo, Cal.
F. S. Holley, Co. F, Stockton, Cal.
H. O. Cummings, Co. E, San Francisco, Cal.
Jacob Doty, Co. C, Sutter, Cal.
Frank H. Cobb, Co. C, Hudson, Mich.
Freeman Tuttle, Co. G, Oakland, Cal.
Erastmus Barnes, Co. I, Berkeley, Cal.

The early part of the session took the form of a general social handshake and reunion.

In opening the formal part of the meeting Colonel James addressed the gathering as follows: "During the early sixties you were always at the front — so all step up now and take front places as in the days of yore."

Letters of regret were read from the absent officers who were unable to attend and there were many from absent comrades. Comrade Silas Giddings, Co. F, First Regiment U. S. S. S., of Castleton, Pa., wrote as follows:

Dear Comrades: I am sorry I cannot be with you at this great reunion. If it were later in the year I could make it. We farmers have to take care of our crops or we can't winter.

How much I would enjoy meeting you all again and shaking hands with the boys once more. We are soon to shake hands on earth for the last time.

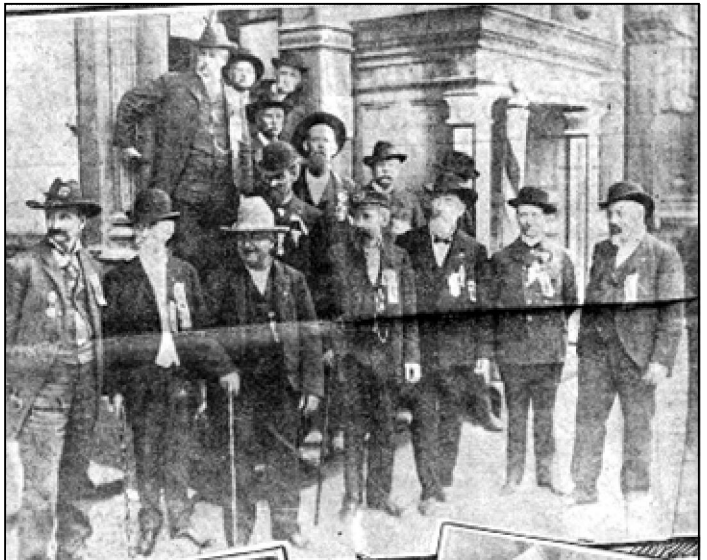
What a change in the picture when we meet to-day to look back in vision to the faces of forty years ago when we started out and camped at White Sulphur Springs. All boys then, the flower of our country. Now we are ripe. White for the harvest.

The sharpshooters enjoy the reputation of being the first in active service to use breechloading rifles.

One of the noted characters in the First Regiment was California Joe. He went from this State to New York City especially to enlist in the sharpshooters. After he was mustered out he returned to his native state and became an Indian scout. When he died his popularity was evinced by a large funeral conducted by the Lincoln Post of this city.

The sharpshooters were recruited and the regiments organized and equipped by special permission of President Lincoln under the supervision of General { then Colonel } H. Berdan.

Their business meeting over they will now devote themselves to taking in the sights of the city. They will march in the parade today.



Not former sharpshooters but never the less interesting, a group of Union veterans that had all survived Confederate prison camps!

EDITOR'S NOTES: Anybody care to do the research on the list of names in this article and pin down either 1st or 2nd Regiment for us? We will publish it in our next issue.

The reporter's reference to California Joe having become an Indian scout is questionable. He may have confused Truman Head with another California Joe, Moses Milner who was a famous scout. Anyone care to do an article on Truman Head's postwar activities? Step up lads!

GIBSON RANCH DIARY ENTRIES {CONTINUES}

Later on a Union sympathizer brought us food better than the rations served. He said he was thankful for the sharpshooters keeping the Johnnies from burning his house. Shouldn't have borrowed those fence rails.

Had a great nap in the afternoon and I hoped that we'd not see Johnny again. My leg felt a little better and could walk better. The quiet was not to last as the call went out to assemble and take the field again. The boys in blue were at their finest and the zou-zous were in particularly nasty mood. Thought I heard the clash of bayonets. Got some great shots in and sent a few Southrons home. We really put it to them and the Rebs lost their nerve to fight as they asked for a truce to tend to their wounded.

Had to escort a Reb and a woman on the field to check their boys. She laid in to one our guys about us killing her boy. Why is it our fault? She raised a secesh boy! Went back to camp and un-wound for the evening.

May 21: Sunday- it rained. Felt like the last time we came through here but it let up a bit around church call. Not too off in our singing, preacher preached a good one. Drilled for a bit in the rain. Scouts came to camp and said the Rebs were out a ways and might be up to something. Moved out of camp and somehow ended up on picket duty again with Sgt. Wells, but Pvt. Donovan came along instead of Pvt Collins. Donovan is a more level headed fellow but his humor is hard to describe.

Stood by a tree and saw the Butternut boys from a safe distance. Could have bagged a few but the order was to watch for them. Saw them go off in the distance and thought they had enough and de-camped for good. I was wrong as there was gunfire from the direction of our own camp and had to run to help form a skirmish line while the infantry formed itself up. We held them for a short while but had to break to the rear and get our nerve. Fighting



Union Camp near Gibson Ranch

was a pretty hot as the johnnies got a great push and there were a lot of fine Union boys on the ground. A few of us made it to a bridge and checked their advance before being forced off the field. Made it back to camp past the Reb picket line and had a chance to rest for a bit and have some hard-

tack that was our prize from Saturday. Was told that one more push ought to drive the Rebs out. Went out in the rain and found enemy skirmish line and drove them back. The rain let up and our spirits improved. We move to our left and helped out some cavalry boys on that side of the line. There

was a loud noise off to our right and head that the infantry was doing some up close fighting. Our side of the line pushed forward and did drive Johnny back and the Union infantry took the filed once and for all. The battle was won for the day but we did lose some fine soldiers. Glad to make it back to camp but it is little time to rest as it time to move on.

We must keep on pushing Gen. Lee.



Despite steadfastly enforcing the "stop ration" order to the point of calling out the guard, Commissary Sergeant Phil Humpries later relented and allowed Company C the luxury of having a full hardtack ration. Comrades of Company C are again reminded to refrain from poaching foodstuffs or livestock in any manner consistent with later identification.

*Recorded somewhere
Near Gibson Ranch, Virginia*

All photos this page by
Mr. Ken O'Flaherty



Private Curtis "Guido" Monroe at Gibson stated, "They may take the camp if they dare, but touch my morning coffee and we'll see who'll be whistling Dixie!"

WOMEN WHO SAW THE ELEPHANT

By
Sarah Louise Rogers

"Pvt. Lyons Wakeman, Lt. Harry Buford, Pvt. Sam Blalock and Pvt. Bill Thompson." (Blanton, D., Cook, L., p. 132-138) These are all names of soldiers who fought in the Civil War. These names are not well known and if one were to see a photograph of any of these soldiers today one may not look twice or notice anything unusual. But there is something unusual that sets these soldiers apart from others who fought in the Civil War. These soldiers were four of hundreds of women disguised as men fighting for both the Confederacy and the Union. The courage of these women illustrates why Americans should view them as heroes and patriots of the same importance as the men they fought beside. It also serves as evidence that women can be just as vital to the survival of a country as men during times of war.



Malinda Blalock, in a postwar image. She served under the alias of Sam Blalock.

I first became interested in the subject of the role of women during the Civil War after reading the passage regarding this subject in the text book The American Pageant for my history class. It's primary statement regarding women soldiers fighting in the Civil War is the following: "More than four hundred women accompanied husbands and sweethearts into war by posing as male soldiers." (Kennedy, M., Cohen, L., Bailey, T., p. 450) After further research of this subject, I learned these women actually entered into battle (and sometimes spied) due to many different factors including the need to make a living and patriotism.

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Pvt. Lyons Wakeman November 24, 1862: "When I got there I saw some soldiers. They wanted I should enlist and so I did. I got 100 and 52\$ in money. I enlisted for 3 years or as soon as discharged." (Cook-Burgess, L., p. 18) Pvt. Lyons Wakeman's real name was Sarah Rosetta Wakeman (Cook-Burgiss, L., p. 17) In the same letter she goes on to state "All the money I send you I

want you should spend it for the family in clothing or something to eat. Don't save it for me I can get all the money I want." (Cook-Burgess, L., p. 18) Ms. Wakeman's story is an example of the many women who joined the army out of necessity as it appears to have been the highest paying unskilled profession available to men at the time. Enlisting also allowed women to support their families without the shame of the family being exposed for being economically supported by a woman.

It was not as simple as just showing up to in order to be enlisted in the army as Ms. Wakeman's letter implies but it seems was not all that difficult either. "Army recruitment exams during the Civil War were only as good as the surgeon who performed them. A recruit was unlikely to face an exam more rigorous than holding out his hands to demonstrate he had a working trigger finger, or perhaps open his mouth to show that his teeth were strong enough to open a minie ball

cartridge. Sarah Edmonds, alias Pvt. Franklin Thompson, described her army medical exam as "a firm handshake" and an inquiry about "Frank's" occupation." (Cook-Burgiss, L., p. 3) This quote is a reflection of how easy it must have been for a woman to be accepted as a male soldier. It may have also been the reason women thought they would be able to convince others they were male. It seems that no woman would have attempted to assume a male role if they had not thought they had a fighting chance of getting away with it. One could speculate they may have heard what criteria they must meet during an exam from the males in their family who were already preparing for or were in battle.

Women who participated in traditional roles during the Civil War have been documented for quite some time however it appears it was only relatively recently their taking up arms was. "Popular Images of women during the American Civil War include self-sacrificing nurses, romantic spies and brave ladies maintaining hearth and home in the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



WOMEN WHO SAW THE ELEPHANT {CONTINUES}

absence of their men. Men were not the only ones to march off to war. Women bore arms and charged into battle too. Women lived in germ ridden camps, languished in appalling prisons and died miserably, but honorably for their country and cause just as men did." (Blanton D., Cook M. p. 1) This gives one a window into what the conditions must have been like and is another example of the courage these women showed even with the knowledge they might be facing their own demise. The book *They Fought Like Demons* documents over 240 women alone who fought while disguised as men during the Civil War and faced the same dangers of war on a daily basis.

Though many women disguised themselves as men to be admitted into the army, it appears the government was aware of the number of women fighting during war time since the Revolutionary War. "This is made evident by an 1802 act of Congress which attempted to limit women's numbers and to define more rigorously their formal place in the national army. According to the act, the army's Subsistence Department was bound to provide rations to women who may be allowed to any particular corps, but those women may not number more than four per company (usually one hundred soldiers) in the corps. This restriction, it appears, grew out of military conditions during the Revolutionary War, during which George Washington's Continental army veritably teemed with women, and indeed, sustaining Washington's army in the field of garrison would have been next to impossible without them. They were also held subject to military discipline, which meant that they underwent court-martial and endured punishment when convicted of certain offenses." (Leonard, D., p. 101) Given this information, it does not seem implausible but rather inevitable that women also fought during the Civil War almost a hundred years later. The 1802 act provides a reason for the need of these women to disguise themselves as men in order to fight in the Civil War. It is my belief this need was also perpetuated by the perceived role of women held by most persons during the 1800's. The perception that the only acceptable roles for women were that of wife, mother, cook, and sometimes nurse or teacher would have been the dominate view in society in both the north and south. It also reflects the dedication women had to defend their country even though their country clearly did not accept them in the role of defender. If a woman were to be discovered or admit to this role it must have been a shameful event for a family. One can be sure this shame stemmed



Trooper, Frances Clayton

from these women's defiant departure from their traditional role in a society that classified women as weak and most definitely not capable of withstanding the hardships of war.

What it seems was left out of the view society had of women during the Civil War as well as the Revolutionary War is that these women would have had to have been able to survive in the wilderness just as their husbands, fathers and brothers.

They also most likely would have been able to defend themselves and their children against animal or Indian as they were surely left alone on the frontier during certain times of the year out of necessity. Also, it seems they would have been just as invested in the still relatively newly found freedoms of colonial living as the men by their sides. The northern women must have seen a correlation between racial equality and gender equality and that one could lead to another. The southern women, however, seemed to have been working against themselves by fighting against racial equality. It is quite surprising that women whose families had fought for their country's freedom during the Revolutionary War would be willing to participate in a war in which the goal of the southern states was the continuance of enslavement of persons simply because of their race.

The willingness of women to assume a completely different role in order to be afforded the opportunity to fight for equality and yet still be wary of disclosing they were women is an interesting dichotomy. It is my opinion that while it troubled women they were not treated as equals by men and many other women of the time, it did not detract from their desire to fight for a cause they had firsthand knowledge of. These women would have seen firsthand the effect slavery was having on their country whether or not they agreed with it. While families on both sides of the war were aware of the actions of their sisters and daughters it would not have been a source of pride for them as it would have been had a male family member marched off to war. The fear of being discovered in this role did not keep women from corresponding with their families. In fact, it appears the only real proof of some women fighting in the Civil War is the correspondence they wrote under their aliases.

One can be sure that while most Civil War era women probably could not imagine the thought of pretending to be a man, this did not stop them from partici-

CONCLUDES ON NEXT PAGE



THINKING "PRIVATE PURCHASE?"

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A MOST powerful arm, which can be carried constantly about the person without inconvenience or danger. Length four inches, scarcely more than that of the barrels. It is the most compact, safe and powerful Pocket Revolver ever made; weighs only eight ounces, charged with cartridges, each barrel rifled, gain twist and sighted. Will penetrate one inch of pine at one hundred and fifty yards.

Retail price, Plated, with 100 cartridges, \$10 00
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Wesson's Breech-Loading Rifle.



Length of Barrel, 24 inches; Diameter of Bore, 32-100 of an inch; weight only 6 pounds.

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CAUTION TO DEALERS.

Be sure and get those stamped "Smith & Wesson, Springfield, Mass." on the others genuine. All cartridge revolvers that load at the breech are intrudements. Suits are commenced, and all such intrudements will be prosecuted. Be sure the cartridges have Smith & Wesson's signature on each end of the box 276-5010

WOMEN {CONCLUDES}

pating in their cause by employing other tactics. There were many women who participated in soldier-like activities without assuming the official role of a soldier. Many of these women's activities are documented. "One wartime development that shocked many Americans was the increasing use of violence by women. Southern women were among the most successful saboteurs, and when caught many willingly and haughtily admitted their guilt." (Massey, M., p. 105) While one would concede the intentions and efforts of southern women were misguided they do show bravery matching that of their male counterparts.

Other women wanted to join the army under no false pretenses. Most likely because they wanted to be acknowledged and accepted as female soldiers. This shows that even during the 1800's, women were thinking of themselves as equal to men and wanted the credit they deserved. They had already assisted in the war that freed America from what they viewed as the tyrannical rule of England. They also were surviving colonial life and all of the dangers and hardships that came with it. "Many women, privately and publicly, expressed a strong desire to join the army. In an 1862 letter to the Adjutant General of the Wisconsin National Guard, a Mrs. S. Ann Gordon asked if there was any way she might join the army as a nurse in order to be with her husband, a soldier in the 10th Wisconsin. Although she requested a nurse's position, Gordon clearly believed herself to be soldier material. She told the Adjutant General, "I have accustomed myself from two to 4 miles walk every day and endure it with very slight fatigue. I have not seen any sickness for twenty years, and I think I should make an enduring soldier." (Leonard, D., p. 200) This is further evidence these women knew they could stand with any man. Also, these types of statements show how women were attempting

to prove themselves strong or at least be given the opportunity to do so. There is no doubt they were working just as many hours in the home and in many cases outside the home as men were during this time as it was vital to surviving colonial life.

While women may have played a small role numerically in comparison to the countless male Civil War soldiers, their actions are very significant in the American woman's fight for equality. Though they were not given a platform in which to discuss their military aspirations they created one. Though they were not being listened to when they spoke, it did not stop them from using their voices to further their cause.

The actions of past generations of women in America should serve as an example that one can make an impact on their society and country regardless of their sex, even when one must become another sex to do so.

Sources and for further reading:

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THE ORIGINAL FIELD TRIALS OF THE SHARPS 1859 BREECH-LOADING RIFLE AS CONDUCTED BY THE U.S. MARINES A Recent Article by David M. Sullivan

Report dated: February 6, 1860. Submitted by 1st Lieutenant Israel Greene, USMC.

Sir;

I herewith submit for your consideration the result of the trials made as to the comparative merits of a Sharps improved rifle and the rifled musket now in use in the Marine Corps.

I selected for trial a recruit uninstructed in the manual and the following table is the result of the firing.

Musket: no. of rounds fired at	100 yards 30:	hit 13, missed 17
	200 yards 5:	hit 5, missed 1
	300 yards 15:	hit 3, missed 12
	450 yards 10:	hit 0, missed 10
	Total 60:	hit 20, missed 40
Sharps improved rifle	100 yards 40:	hit 35, missed 5
	200 yards 5:	hit 4, missed 1
	300 yards 15:	hit 9, missed 6
	450 yards 7:	hit 5, missed 2
	Total 67:	hit 53, missed 14

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comparatively, to be stalled in loading his weapon.

On my return from practice, the arms were put away without cleaning for one week. When both were examined, whilst the present service musket needed the attention of the armorer at the armory, and much time to put it in order, the Sharps rifle was easily cleaned by myself at the office.

The Sharps arm is simple in its construction and can be handled by the most inexperienced soldier. The use of the Sharps carbine for the last seven years in the Army has shown its efficiency as a service arm in the field sufficiently to authorize its adoption in that branch of the service and there is no other test but field service which could, in my opinion, warrant the adoption of any arm.

The objection that has been heretofore made to the gun, of escapement of gas at the breech, waste of powder by the cut off, difficulty of inserting the cartridge without bursting it, paper left behind in the chamber, have all been obviated. I feel authorized, in view of all the facts connected with the case of this arm in service, to most respectfully recommend its adoption in the Marine Corps, believing as I do that such action of Government will increase the efficiency of that force now more than double its present power.

Respectfully,
Israel Greene
1st Lieut. U.S. Marines

Col. John Harris
Commandant
Marine Corps!

Whether Greene's report went beyond Colonel Harris' desk is problematic. A careful search of... {existing records} ...has revealed no correspondence on the subject.

What is known is that the New Model 1859 Sharps breech-loading rifle was not adopted as the service arm of the United States Marine Corps, and none were received from the Army Ordnance Department for issue during the Civil War.



Cure for Burns, Scalds, & c.

— Mix soot and clean lard into a thick paste, spread thick on a rag and apply to the injured part, and immediate relief will be felt. Leave on the plaster until well. This remedy is always at hand, and is the best known for the cure of extensive burns.

From the Hagerstown and Country Almanack, 1862

The Eagle Eye

THE NEWSLETTER OF WEST
COAST BERDAN
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ACWA, RACW, and NCWC

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Palo Alto, CA 94303

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Vice President NCWA
Brevet Private / Recruiting Officer
Ted Stahr 650 325-8556
Email: teds@jps.net

2006 CAMPAIGN {CONTINUED}

Las Vegas, Nevada
OCT. 28 & 28

A New Event
Details to follow—Watch this space!

Moorpark
NOVEMBER 4 & 5

Southern California
non-club affiliated event

Duncans Mills
**NOVEMBER
18, 19, & 20
TACTICAL**

CHAS / NCWA Non-Public Event

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

LIEUT. ROGERS { CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE }

have in the past. Shifts will be determined once we set up camp as usual. First Sergeant Hanson will be in charge of the guard duty roster so prepare you bribes early.

Two weeks prior to the event, I will be emailing to establish our numbers. Please respond promptly. Space is very limited at Duncan's and the Brigade Staff need to get an accurate count early to start working on a feasible camp layout.

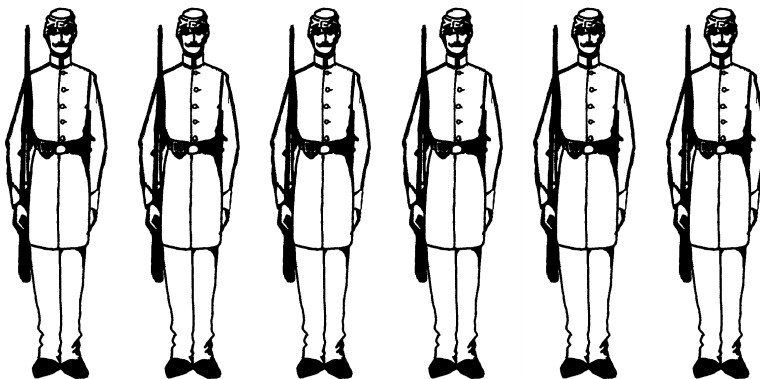
Something to talk about; Would we like to try something a little different at Ardenwood this year? I am suggesting that we attend Ardenwood this year as a company badly in need of re-supply. I don't mean we go hardcore, scrap the tents, wear wool issue shirts and such. What I have in mind is just to dress in a more worn and/or ragged appearance for the one event. Slouch hats, mixed green and blue, with and without leggings, etc. Since we will not have the Memorial Day service to appear in, this might be an opportunity to expand our impressions just a bit. Let's talk it over at Duncan's. Those that cannot make it, please email you thoughts.

Respectfully,
1st Lt., Dave Rogers

Please consider submitting an article today. If you find something of interest on the web, personal experiences, old newspaper articles, obscure books or the like. Let us know about it.

**If you have friends or family that have taken photos of our recent events, please share them with us.
*Many thanks to our contributors this month.***

CALL OUT THE GUARD!



Company C once again serves its guard duty the weekend of Duncan's Mills
For a VISUAL GUIDE TO SENTRY DUTY FOR THE ENLISTED MAN
Please visit our company website at <http://ncwaberdans.home.comcast.net>

Quiz Question answer: General George Meade