



SOUTH BAY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

South Bay Civil War Roundtable Meeting Minutes June 29, 2021

Meeting Location: Online via ZOOM Meeting Application

Special Activities & Events:

Fort Point Tour

- Saturday August 28
- Noon: Meet at Holder's Country Inn; park in back parking lot after Restaurant's approval
- Noon-1pm: Carpool to Ft Point in San Francisco
- 1pm-4pm: Tour Ft Point
- 4pm-5pm: Carpool back to Holder's
- 5pm-7pm: Dinner and SBCWRT meeting at Holder's

Officer Reports

President

- Return to In-person Roundtable Meetings
 - Starting Tuesday July 27, in-person monthly meetings will resume
 - Holder's Country Inn: 998 De Anza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129
 - 6:00pm-7:00pm: Gathering and Dinner; 7:00pm-9:00pm Business Meeting
 - Use of Holder's Large Screen for Presentations
 - Dining Requirement for Use of Meeting Room: \$200/Minimum - Members dining at Holder's should order from the Meeting Room and not in the Customer Dining Room
 - Tom Roza will send out email advisories to the membership on the resumption of in-person meetings at Holder's
- Book Review
 - Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign - by Thomas J. Ryan

- How the Critical Role of Intelligence Impacted the Outcome of Lee's Invasion of the North, June-July 1863
- Book Purchase Offer
 - SBCWRT will consider purchasing book if a presentation to the Club is made on it

Vice President

No Report

Treasurer

- Bank Account: \$2,885 (No new expenses or income)
- Jim Rhetta will provide bill for monthly ZOOM fees
- New member Lou Freund donated 40 books for Book Raffle

Secretary

- May meeting minutes posted on SBCWRT web site
- Civil War Quiz: What Do You Know About the Gettysburg Address?
- Book Raffle: Suspended
- Meeting Attendance: Total: 15

Preservation

No Report

Historian

Vacant

This Day in the Civil War: June 27

1861: Federal generals meet with Lincoln's Cabinet to plan actions against the Confederates. Genl Irwin McDowell outlines plan to attack Confederates at Manassas, VA, and Genl Scott proposes expedition down the Mississippi River. Consensus is that Confederate forces in Virginia must be dealt with first. Skirmishing in Virginia at Bowman's Place on the Cheat River.

1862: Battle of Savages Station fought in Virginia. Confederate pursuit of the retreating McClellan is so disorganized as to be futile. The Federals are forced to leave 2500 sick and wounded at Savages Station. Elsewhere in Virginia, Federal reconnaissance from Ft Royal to Luray.

1864: Jefferson Davis tells Gov Brown of Georgia that he has sent all the reinforcements he can to Genl Joe Johnston. Skirmishes at Duffield's Station, WVA, Lafayette, TN, Davis Bend, MS and Meffleton Lode, AR.

1865: The CSS Shenandoah's last operation concludes with having taken 17 US whaling ships in the Bering Sea.

Place of the Month: The New Orleans Mint

Background

- The New Orleans Mint was established in 1836 as one of several branch mints of the US Mint in Philadelphia, to remedy the shortage of coins in the growing South and West.
- New Orleans was selected as a branch mint site due to the city's location as a leading commercial center, and nearby gold deposits recently discovered in Alabama. By the 1850's, New Orleans was second only to San Francisco as the largest producer of US coins.
- The New Orleans Mint building was designed to be quite sturdy; to this day, it is the oldest US mint building still in existence. However, such a large sturdy building built on the soft soil of New Orleans was subject to structural problems. In 1854, the US government hired Pierre Gustav Toutant Beauregard, a West Point trained engineer and Louisiana native to reinforce the building

Civil War

- During the Civil War, the Confederate government struck coins at the Mint until the bullion ran out at the end of May, 1861. The building then quartered Confederate troops until a year later, when New Orleans was captured by USN Adm Farragut, following the Battle of Fts Jackson and St Phillip.
- Genl Benjamin Butler then enforced military occupation. He was notorious as "Spoons" Butler, for confiscating silver tableware from the New Orleans citizenry. Did he do this to keep the silver from being secretly sent away to be turned into Confederate currency? Just a thought.
- When the US flag was raised atop the Mint roof, the building became a symbol of the hated Yankee occupation. One William Mumford ascended the roof, tore down the flag and ripped it to shreds. Butler had Mumford executed by hanging him from a pole projecting horizontally from the Mint rooftop. Upon hearing of this, Jefferson Davis ordered that if Butler were ever taken prisoner, to execute him immediately.

Post-Civil War

- The Mint resumed producing coins in 1879. By the time the Mint ceased operations in 1909, it had produced over 427 million gold and silver coins of every US denomination. New Orleans Mint coins are identified by an "O" mark on the reverse face.
- The New Orleans Mint struck 962,000 Confederate half dollars, including some "speared olive bud" half dollars with a line running across the reverse side, due to a cracked die used to strike the coin. Only

4 of these exist today, making this coin one of the rarest prized by numismatists (serious coin collectors).

- Since 1909, the former Mint building has served as an assay office (which determines the purity of precious metal samples), a US Coast Guard storehouse, and during the Cold War, a fallout shelter. Since 1981 the building has become a LA State Museum, on the National Register of Historic Places.

Other Topics

None

June Presentation

Speaker: Mark Costin

Topic: 1864 General Sterling Price Raid

July Presentation

Speaker: Alan Sissenwein

Topic: The Worst Generals of the Civil War - Part 4

August Presentation

Speaker: Abby Eller

Topic: King Cotton