



South Bay Civil War Roundtable Meeting Minutes September 30, 2025

Meeting Location: Jack's Restaurant & Bar 1502 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95129 located in the Westgate Center Shopping Mall and via ZOOM

Special Activities & Events:
None

Officer Reports

President

SBCWRT Picnic Review

- Date/Time: Saturday date in September from 1pm-4pm well received
- Location: Tonya McQuade residence was an excellent setting; many thanks to Tonya and husband, Mike, for preparing the food and making their home available
- Food/Refreshments: Food and drink selections were well received
- Topics: The agenda for the evening was just right with the Picnic starting the event, then an abbreviated Business Agenda
- Costs: \$114.06
- Decision to Hold Again: All in attendance voted to hold event again

Vice President

No Report

Treasurer

- Wells Fargo Checking Account Balance as of 9-30-25: \$2,409.98, a decline of \$54.87 from the prior month

Secretary

- Civil War Quiz: What Do You Know About President Lincoln's
- Cabinet Secretaries?
- Meeting Attendance: Total: 9 (8 in-person; 1 via ZOOM)

This Month in Civil War History: September

1861: Lexington, Missouri falls to Confederate forces under Sterling Price.

1862: Following the US victory at Antietam, President Lincoln introduces the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which announced Lincoln's intention to declare all enslaved people free on January 1, 1863, if those places remained in rebellion at that time.

1863: The Siege of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Confederate forces under Braxton Bragg surround the occupied city. General Ulysses S. Grant is assigned to command the troops there and begins immediate plans to relieve the besieged US Army

1864: Third Battle of Winchester, Virginia. US forces under General Philip Sheridan attacked the Confederate army under Jubal Early near the city of Winchester and drove them southward, up the Shenandoah Valley

Person of the Month: Charles G. Gould, MoH - First Man Over the Works

The Breakthrough at Petersburg

- 292-day siege of Petersburg, from June 1864 to April 1865
- April 1 the Southside Railroad had been cut off — one of the last lifelines for Lee's retreat and resupply
- April 2 Union artillery unleashes a bombardment of the Confederate lines
- Grant orders a general assault
- Leading the Assault is the 6th Corp
- Leading the 6th Corp is the Vermont Brigade under Brigadier General Lewis Addison Grant
- Leading the Vermont Brigade is the 5th Vermont Volunteers
- And leading the 5th Vt is Capt. Charles G. Gould

Medal of Honor Citation

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Captain (Infantry) Charles Gilbert Gould, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 2 April 1865, while serving with Company H, 5th Vermont Infantry, in action at Petersburg, Virginia. Among the first to mount the enemy's works in the assault, Captain Gould received a serious bayonet wound in the face, was struck several times with clubbed muskets, but bravely stood his ground, and with his sword killed the man who bayoneted him.

Road to the MoH

- In 1890 former commander of the Vermont Brigade, General Lewis Addison Grant is Assistant Secretary of War
- Lewis Grant is lobbying for his own MoH as brainchild of the attack and nominates Gould, likely in part, to advance his own nomination but also, he recognizes Gould's bravery

Controversy

- Gould's comrades were pleased to see the honor bestowed
- But Gould was unhappy with the wording "Among the first", always claiming to be the first
- Gould wrote to a Vermont senator in 1904 that his award citation was "incorrect, or at least not strictly accurate. It begins 'Among the first.' I have always understood, and never heard it questioned, that I was the first to enter the enemy's works at Petersburg."
- Gould's request is investigated but as others were also claiming to be first, the MoH citation was not changed
- He died at the age of 71, on December 5, 1916

Historian

None

Other Topics

None

September Presentation

Speaker: Jim Rhetta

Topic: "Would England have Recognized the South?"

October Presentation

Speaker: Mark Costin

Topic: "Campaigns against the Apache and Navaho during the Civil War"

November Presentation

Speaker: Davide Hsueh

Topic: "Requiem for Innocence: Destruction of Nature and Animals in the Civil War"