



South Bay Civil War Roundtable Meeting Minutes September 29, 2026

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:

SELDOM HEARD HISTORY of the CIVIL WAR ERA

- 4th Central Coast Conference
- April 30-May 2, 2027 - Monterey, California
- Website URL: <https://www.montereyhistory.org/event/4th-central-coast-conference-seldom-heard-history-of-the-civil-war-era/>

Officer Reports

President

- Welcomed members and guest presenter to the meeting

Vice President

No Report

Treasurer

No Report

Secretary

- Civil War Quiz: ***NOTE: Postponed until October Meeting:*** What Do You Know About the Types of Weapon Used During the Civil War?
Meeting Attendance: Total: 14 (13 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 Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia. The US Army of the Cumberland under General William Rosecrans is defeated and nearly routed by the Confederate Army of Tennessee commanded by General Braxton Bragg. Rosecrans' army retreats to the supply base at Chattanooga, Tennessee.

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: Donehogawa, Keeper of the Western Door of the Long House of the Iroquois - Native American General - Early Life – Fighting Prejudice:

- Born in 1828 at Indian Falls named Hasanoanda
- Age 10, worked at army post; teased for poor command of English
- Anglicized name to Ely Samuel Parker determined to read & write English
- Studied law for 3 years; whites only males could enter bar in New York
- Entered Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute studying civil engineering
- Spent years before the Civil War supervising construction of levees and buildings for the government
- Worked as an interpreter for Seneca chiefs in their negotiations with US

Start of Civil War Service:

- Parker tried to raise regiment of Iroquois volunteers for the Union; turned down by New York Governor
- Union government turned down offer to serve
- He U.S. Grant; was commissioned a captain; appointed chief engineer of the 7th division during the siege of Vicksburg

Later Civil War – Grant's Secretary

- Parker became Grant's adjutant during the Chattanooga campaign
- Transferred with Grant as adjutant of the U.S. Army headquarters and served Grant through the Overland Campaign and the Siege of Petersburg
- At Petersburg, Parker; appointed military secretary to Grant wrote much of Grant's correspondence
- Present at Appomattox, helped draft surrender documents, which are in his handwriting

Post-Civil War Army Service

- Commissioned an officer in 2nd United States Cavalry
- Again became the military secretary to Grant

- Parker member of Southern Treaty Commission, renegotiated treaties with tribes who had sided with the Confederacy
- Resigned from the army; Grant appointed him as the 16th Commissioner of Indian Affairs

Commissioner of Indian Affairs

- Grant appointed him as the 16th Commissioner of Indian Affairs
- Finding massive corruption, did clean sweep of the department; made many enemies
- Established system appointing agents recommended by religious bodies
- Known as “Quaker Policy” or “Peace Policy” for Indians
- Hosted Red Cloud other western Indian chiefs attempting to clarify terms of the Treaty of Fort Laramie

Downfall as Commissioner

- Enemies in Congress delayed appropriations for supplies for Indians
- Reports arrives about starving Native Americans
- Responded by purchasing supplies on credit without bids and doing urgent shipping at higher rates; was accused of corruption
- Although Parker was cleared of any significant wrongdoing by the House Committee on Appropriations, his position was stripped of much of its power and he resigned in 1871

Later Life

- After leaving government service, invested in the stock market
- At first, did well; Panic of 1873, lost the fortune he had accumulated
- Lived last years in poverty, dying in Fairfield, CN, on August 31, 1895
- On November 14, 2025, Parker was posthumously admitted to the bar of the State of New York

Historian

No report

Other Topics

None

September Presentation

Dennis Doyle on “Irish Americans during the Civil War”

October Presentation

Ron Vaughan on “Jo Shelby’s Exodus”

November Presentation

Kristin Patterson on “Brigadier General Lucius Fairchild”