

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

October 2011

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It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.

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An original photo of the 3rd California Volunteer Band during Civil War.

California in the Civil War

By Steve Clugston

Now that it is the 150th anniversary of the Civil War: have you ever wondered if the Golden State, famous for the Gold Rush and Spanish Missions possibly had any involvement in a Civil War, 2,000 miles away? Nothing? Well, think again! The fact that truth is sometimes stranger than fiction can paint a more colorful story. Jeff Shara, who wrote "Gods and Generals" and other Civil War novels fictionalized that the Hispanic population in Los Angeles in 1861, at the outbreak of war, was on the verge of rebellion against the Union. In reality, most Latinos in the Southwest were very loyal, as evidenced by their support, (if not their actual enlistments) of federal troops in order to resist the Confederate incursion into New Mexico and Arizona in 1862. The main reason may have been that they felt their Catholicism and traditions, would not be welcome in the Confederacy? Who knows? Therefore: a "Native California Cavalry" Battalion was raised in California for support of the Union which was mostly all Latino! The **1st Battalion of Native California Cavalry** was a little known but active unit in California during the Civil War. Four of the five companies (100 men each) were all California born Mexican Americans. One company, based in San Francisco, (Company B), did have some French Americans in it and were mostly European American. The Native California Cavalry was in Southern California during the war, patrolling the desert trails, even in Arizona. They were sometimes assigned with the 9th U.S. Infantry, (the only regular Army unit in the west during the Civil War). Both regiments fought Indians and kept Confederates out of the Southwest.

Many historians have postulated that it was California gold which funded

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P.O. Box 157
Temecula, CA 92593
951-303-6860
www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org



Calendar Of Events

Monday, October 3 – 6 – 8 pm
Open House at Temecula Valley Genealogical Society annual event to be held at Civic Center Community Room. Meet various groups with history & heritage specialities. Learn about special trips of interest in all areas.

Monday, October 24 –
Monthly meeting at Little Temecula History Center, 6 – 8 p.m. Steve Clugston will present "Temecula's Civil War: The Showalter Affair".

Saturday, November 5 – 10 am
To 4 pm, the 11th Annual Round-up & Open House at the historic Empire Ranch Headquarters in Sonoita, AZ. This years event to be held as part of Arizona's Centennial Celebration of the Cowboy.

Saturday, November 12 –
5 p.m. to 9 p.m. *Mark your Calendars* -- TVHS Annual Meeting & Dinner to celebrate our 10th anniversary. Planned to be at Pechanga's Eagles Nest. Cost \$25. Raffle & silent auction to be available. RSVP information at later date.

Weekend, Nov. 19 & 20 –
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. 150th Civil War Anniversary Event at the Historic Vail Ranch. Re-enactment of the discovery and arrest of the Showalter Secessionist Party in November 1861. Displays, costumed soldiers, camps, & demonstrations.

Membership Activity

New Member

Linda Vargas
Sarah Macedo

Renewals

Marie Louise Thyzel
Irene Hotchkiss
Bonnie Reed

California Civil War

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the Union war effort. This may be ironic since the sinking of a massive California gold shipment in 1857: by the steam ship; "Central American", may have triggered the Panic of 1858 which caused Northern Senators to push for significantly higher tariffs in 1860. These tariffs became too high for Southern states to import necessary cheaper goods from England and France: enticing them to secede from the Union. It also begs the question: how was subsequent California gold during the Civil War protected from falling into Confederate hands?

By 1860, the gold rush came to Southern California, in the Holcomb Valley of the San Bernardino Mountains; and became a hot bed of Secessionist activity! The Mormon settlers of San Bernardino were not too far removed from the memory of recent Federal occupation of Salt Lake City in 1858, and many supported the sentiments of the southern miners in the mountains.

Therefore, **The California Volunteers** were raised to deal with the threat of one-third of the State wanting to secede from the Union as many of the gold miners were from the South. Basically, eight regiments of California Volunteers were raised during the Civil War to replace the regular Army which had been ordered to the east to fight the war. In fact 17,000 Californians served in the federal cause, making California the largest state "per capita" to offer Union volunteers, according to state population!

Here are some of the most famous units:

The "**California Column**" was comprised of the 1st and 5th California Volunteer Infantry, 5 companies of the 1st California Cavalry, 1 company of the 2nd California Cavalry, and Light Battery A of the 3rd U.S. Artillery. (The 3rd Artillery was also William Tecumseh Sherman's old unit when he first came to Monterey, California in 1847). California Volunteers functioned as the "home guard" here in the State of California and were deployed, on occasion, all across the west. The California Column marched out of Camp Latham in present day Culver City to garrison at Camp Wright, which is now known as Oak Grove, on Hwy. 79 on the way to Warner Springs. Colonel James H. Carleton, former commander of Fort Tejon (soon promoted to General Carleton), commanded a brigade of 2,350 soldiers in all and marched from Culver City past Lake Elsinore, through Temecula to the Oak Grove encampment until March of 1862. From there, they marched by Company, (about 100 men at a time, to conserve water) through the Anza-Borrego Desert to Fort Yuma on the Colorado River. Confederates were encountered halfway across Arizona at Stanwix Station and Picacho Pass. They eventually took back Fort Bliss (El Paso Texas). These are the westernmost engagements of the Civil War! The California Volunteer Infantry and California Vol. Cavalry were mustered out of service in August and September of 1864.

The 71st Pennsylvania Volunteers (was originally known as: the "**1st California Regiment**", and was formed in 1861 by about 500 "one time residents" of the Golden State. These were probably ex gold miners from the California gold rush who had eventually returned east. It was commanded by Colonel Edward Baker, who had the unusual distinction of also being a U.S. Senator of the new State of Oregon, and a resident of Illinois and California. He was also a close friend of President Abe Lincoln, whom he had known while practicing law in Illinois, and was asked by Lincoln to raise a regiment of Californians. Colonel Baker was killed in action on Oct. 21, 1861 along with one-half of two of his regiments. (He was in command of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th "California Regiments"). These units were later re-designated as the 71st, 72nd, 69th and 106th Pennsylvania Volunteers, respectively for the next 3 years of the war and fought in many major engagements with distinction.

The California 100 (also known as the "Cal 100") was a famous cavalry unit raised in 1862 in San Francisco and mustered in with the 2nd Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry. They were so successful, because of their reputation as hard riding and shooting westerners that it paid off

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Out of the Archives

Evacuation of Secessionists

(As reported in the Sacramento Daily Union, 11 July 1861)

According to a correspondent of the *Alta*, writing from Los Angeles, the following parties recently left for Texas: Alonzo Ridley, George W. Gift, David McKenzie, Thomas Stonehouse, Hugh May, William Skinner, William Bowers, Camran Frazer, William Jones, Dillon Jordan, J. J. Dillard, James D. Darden, Dr. F. Sorrel, and some others – who are accompanied by ex-army officers General A. S. Johnston, Major L. Armistead, Lieutenant R. H. Brewer, A. Shaaff, E. B. Dudley, Riley, Mallory, Hardcastle and Wickliffe. Some of these persons expressed their intention of seeking service in the rebel army. Gift, according to report, will go into the navy. Crittenden, ex-member of the Legislature from El Dorado, who had conditionally offered his services to South Carolina, started with the party, but turned back on reaching Temecula.

Note: Major L. Armistead became Confederate General Armistead of Gettysburg fame (Pickett's Charge).

Special Dinner Planned To Honor Wendell Ott

TVHS is joining the Temecula Valley Museum and the Vail Ranch Restoration Association in co-sponsoring a dinner to honor Wendell Ott on his retirement as museum manager. The dinner will also be a fund raiser for a museum expansion building fund. Local architect Walt Allen will unveil a conceptual plan for the museum expansion. An auction of a few selected items is planned.

The dinner will be held at Carol's Restaurant at Baily Winery on October 7 at 6:30 PM. The cost is \$75 including tax and tip. Tickets are available at Baily Winery. All proceeds will go to the Museum Building Fund.

California Civil War (Continued from Page 2)

in engagements with the enemy, and 400 more Californians were soon enlisted. They became known as the "California Battalion" of the 2nd Mass. Cavalry. When they engaged Jeb Stuart's Cavalry and Mosby's Rangers, Mosby ordered his men to "fight like demons, they are Californians!" These most illustrious of Californian Civil War soldiers were mustered out of service at the end of the war after witnessing the surrender at Appomattox Court House in Virginia in 1865.

Most of the California Volunteers served at a time when America needed them for the thankless task of keeping the unglamorous wagon roads free from harassment over the entire West as most soldiers were called to the major conflict in the East. This short summary of California units does not take into account the thousands of Californians who traveled east on their own and enlisted in major units from other states, both North and South. Taking note of California's additional contribution of gold to fund the Union cause, along with 17,000 men, we can see a generous contribution that the Golden State has made in America's most trying time of conflict.

Sources:

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Kennedy, The Conquest of California in 1861, pub. 1937.

Orton, Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion, pub. 1890.

Bailey, Clash at Ball's Bluff, Forward to Richmond, (Time-Life Civil War series). 1980.

Knill-The Story of California & her Flags, vol. 4. Illustrations by A. Archambault. Bellerophon Books.

(Compiled from the Internet, and Wikipedia)

From San Diego Garrison Duty

U.S. Officer Lewis Armistead Becomes Confederate General

When the Civil War began, Armistead was in command of the small garrison at the new San Diego Depot, which was occupied in 1860. Armistead was friends with Winfield Scott Hancock, serving with him as a quartermaster in Los Angeles, California, before the Civil War. Accounts say that in a farewell party before leaving to join the Confederate army, Armistead told Hancock, "Goodby; you can never know what this has cost me." Armistead departed from California to Texas with the Los Angeles Mounted Rifles, then traveled east and received a commission as a major, but was quickly promoted to colonel of the 57th Virginia Infantry regiment. He served in the western part of Virginia, but soon returned to the east and General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. He fought as a brigade commander at Seven Pines, and under Lee in the Seven Days Battles (where he was chosen to spearhead the bloody, senseless assault on Malvern Hill), and Second Bull Run.

In the Battle of Gettysburg, Armistead's brigade arrived the evening of July 2, 1863. Armistead was mortally wounded the next day while leading his brigade towards the center of the Union line in Pickett's Charge.

He would eventually be taken to a Union field hospital at the George Spangler Farm where he died two days later. Dr. Daniel Brinton, the chief surgeon at the Union hospital there, had expected Armistead to survive because he characterized the two bullet wounds as not of a "serious character." He wrote that the death "was not from his wounds directly, but from secondary fever and prostration."

Lewis Addison Armistead
(February 18, 1817 – July 5, 1863)

Temecula to Celebrate Its Civil War Event

In November of this year there will be another 150th anniversary celebration of a piece of Temecula's history. This time it will coincide with the anniversary of Temecula's Civil War event known as "The Showalter Affair". The Vail Ranch Restoration Association will be the sponsor and host for this two-day celebration, to be held at the Historic Vail Ranch Headquarters property and the Little Temecula History Center. Mark your calendars for November 19 & 20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In addition to historic Civil War camps complete with costumed soldiers, there will be costumed civilians, displays, demonstrations, a sutler and a re-enactment of the discovery and arrest of the Showalter Secessionist Party as it happened in 1861. The event coordinator is Steve Clugston who can be reached at 951-235-3608 or steveclugston@yahoo.com.

(Editors Note: A story written by Duane Preimsberger about this Civil War event was featured in the June 2010 TVHS Newsletter).

TVGS Is Hosting Annual Open House

As a part of the Temecula Valley community, you are invited to join the Temecula Valley Genealogical Society's annual Open House October 3rd from 6 pm to 8pm. It will be held in the new Temecula Convention Center at 41000 Main Street, Old Town.

The emphasis this year will be a celebration of the 150 year anniversary of the Civil War. There will be volunteers representing various states and countries, VaRRA, Temecula Historical Society, DAR, etc. to help people locate their ancestors. There will also be information on annual group trips to the Salt Lake City Mormon Library.

President's Message

This past week TVHS Treasurer Bill Harker celebrated his 95th birthday. Bill is not only a dear and cherished friend but a very special "old guy" who loves history and has accomplished much and given much in serving our community. Bill said that when he first came to Temecula as a visitor he noted how friendly everyone was.

After moving his family here he became very much involved in contributing to his adopted community. Bill does things his own way, as noted by his earrings and ponytail and the big white teddy bear that lives on his porch. He loves adventure, and enjoys old Westerns and their music, and wears a cowboy hat; but has never been partial to getting on a horse. A little town in Arizona where donkeys wander the streets holds fond memories; he loves to reminisce about family camping and RV trips and bemoans the current price of gas as it has put a damper on his automobile excursions.

Bill is more computer savvy than I am, and keeps up on Facebook. He has been a mayor of a city, and a rancher in the country. A grilled cheese sandwich at the Swing Inn will make his day. Bill worked at Hughes Aircraft at the same time as my dad (they were born the same year), remembers staying at the Welty Hotel as a tyke, and is an accomplished editor and a writer with extensive knowledge about local history. Bill has been married 33 years - twice - to the loves of his life and has raised 11 children, talk about accomplishments...*and he ain't done yet!* His dad lived to be 102. So, may the genes be with you Bill and Happy Birthday!

Bonnie Martland

Elders Extraordinaire

Two Area Seniors Celebrate September 2011 Birthdays

Two extraordinary area seniors celebrated birthdays in September. Pechanga's eldest tribal member Nida Ashman Thompson celebrated her 100th year on September 29, 2011. Nida is the daughter of a well known local tribal leader, Tony Ashman who also lived past his 100th birthday. She was raised near the Great Oak Tree. After attending the one room schoolhouse in Temecula, and completing high school at Elsinore Union High, she earned a Bachelor's at UCLA and later a Master's in Education from USC. Nida returned to the area of her roots to teach and eventually became a school principal in Perris.

Our own Bill Harker also has special Senior Citizen status having celebrated his 95th birthday on September 23rd. Bill's early adventures included coming to Temecula with his Dad in the 1920's to participate in a cattle drive, and staying overnight in the Welty Hotel. Also in his youth he got his first airplane ride in an open cockpit plane piloted by none other than Eddie Rickenbacker. This experience triggered a lifelong fascination with airplanes and flying, culminated a few years ago when he got to fly under a bridge in an ultra-light plane up in Idaho. There isn't much that Bill hasn't done during his many years, including doing a tandem sky dive and parachute landing for his 90th birthday.

The Temecula Valley Historical Society is proud to acknowledge both Nida and Bill for their life's work, and wish them both a hearty Happy Birthday.
