

BRUNSWICK CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

MEETING – November 6, 2012

THE GREAT BEEFSTEAK RAID AT THE SEIGE OF PETERSBURG SEPT.3-17, 1864

Speaker: HORACE MEWBORN

Ah, Horace, such a delightful chase you led that enhanced your FBI skills. Who doesn't like a good adventure "tenderized" by little known facts & "barbequed" into our knowledge banks. What a vision Margaret Donnan must have experienced as about 3000 well grazed cattle tramped by her home at Sycamore Church. Even more, she and her near- starving family were given one worn out cow. Can she milk a story from this?

Horace searched extensively but in vain for the Confederate "certified experts" in cattle rustling. We must be satisfied that only time and Sgt. George Shadburne know the true identity of these "Certified Texas Horse Thieves!" This "Iron Scout," Sgt. George D. Shadburne, hearing that the Confederate Soldiers had no food, persevered and gave Maj. General Wade Hampton's 3000 men the opportunity to go on a 100 mile raid which allowed 2468 cows to "secede" from the Union.

We are asked to envision a very unwilling farmer, Edmund Ruffin, inundated by about 3000 hungry cattle (guarded by a scant 120 soldiers) have a sudden "mood swing" (pun intended). Those bovines suddenly "depledged" their Northern brands and moved South with Gen. Hampton. They clomped across a hastily reconstructed bridge almost under the nose of U.S. Grant. These "instant" cowboys rounded up 2468 cattle, 11 wagons and 304 Union prisoners. Quadrupeds as well as bipeds were behind Confederate lines by Sept. 17

Alas, Horace reminds us, there is no grain for Soldiers or cattle. Soon, we must assume that more "midnite requisitions" must occur and the Confederate Soldier was hungry once more. Ya just had to be there to find out who later became a famous San Francisco Lawyer.

He closes with a sign of respect for the Confederates from Lincoln. He quotes: "It was the slickest piece of cattle stealing I have ever heard of." Horace, come back. Please share with us another adventure. We are hungry.

Submitted by Dan Fink