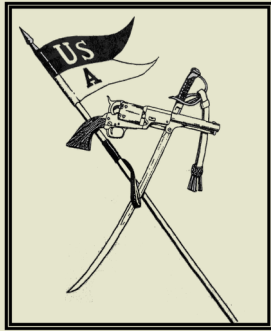


FORT TEJON  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# Fort Tejon Historical Association

## ADJUTANT'S JOURNAL

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **May 7** -- Frontier Army Days / Dragoons Living History Parent/Teacher Training At Fort Tejon
- **May 15** -- Off Site Event: Topanga Banjo Fiddle and Folk Festival
- **June 4/5** -- FTHA Annual Civil War Reenactment Invitational At Fort Tejon
- **June 25<sup>th</sup>** -- Off Site Event: Drum Barracks Civil War Technology Fair
- **September 3-4** -- Off Site Event: Huntington Beach Civil War Days
- **October 1-2** -- Off Site Event: Battle of Dominguez Hill Reenactment

### Other Events - TBD

For Latest Updates  
Please Visit Our Web Site At  
<http://FortTejonCa.org>

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dearest FTHA Members and friends,

I remain yours,

Karina Dunbar  
FTHA President And Chairman

### WEB SITE

As events are starting to open up again, We've updated the FTHA events page.

[FortTejonCa.org/events.html](http://FortTejonCa.org/events.html)

Per FTHA tradition, this page contains both Fort Tejon events as well as other Southern California events which may be interesting to fans of living history. If you are aware of any we might have missed that might be a good addition to the page, please let us know at [info@forttejonca.org](mailto:info@forttejonca.org).

**2021 / 2022 MEMBERSHIP**

Thank you to everyone who has been a supporter of Fort Tejon. We rely on our membership to help maintain a strong voice in protecting and conserving the fort. Please note that we have lowered the dues rate:

\$20 - individual membership  
\$30 - family membership

You can join at the following link : <http://FortTejonCa.org/join.html>

We want to thank all that have joined! We really appreciate your support!

**SUPPORT FTHA BY SHOPPING!**

**You can now use your Amazon shopping to support FTHA!** All you need to do is visit the web site <https://smile.amazon.com> and choose **Fort Tejon Historical Association** as your Amazon Smile charity. That's it! The FTHA will receive 0.5% of your eligible purchases. This money will go to helping pay for wardrobe, and supplies for events at the fort.

**FTHA AT DRUM BARRACKS CIVIL WAR MUSEM**

Matt Schnittker attended the Civil War Technology Fair at Drum Barracks Civil War Museum with his Magic Lantern. Here's a few photos of the event. For more information on Drum Barracks, please visit their web site: <https://www.drumbarracks.org/index.php/en/>





### FTHA AT DANA ADOBE



A few FTHA folks were able to attend the Heritage day at the Dana adobe and Cultural center in Nipomo Ca. on August 6<sup>th</sup>. It was a fun event with many local participants, vendors, and a great Taqueria! May brought his Tintype booth and caught some photos of the local attendees and reenactors.



A few reenactors including John Billinger and Kevin Dunbar from the FTHA.  
**Tintype by Matt Schnittker**



Garrett and Jenna Dana. Garrett is a direct descendant of Captain William Dana.  
**Tintype by Matt Schnittker**

The event was a lot of fun and many of us look forward to attending again next year. For more information the Dana Adobe, please visit their web site at:

<https://www.danaadobe.org/>

Chuck Olynyk created a YouTube video of the event as well which can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbilURclPkU>



**FORT TEJON CIVIL WAR EVENT – JUNE 2022**

Fort Tejon hosted the annual FTHA Civil War Event on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 2022. The event was well attended and provided much needed funds for the FTHA so that we can continue to sponsor and fund events at the fort. Please enjoy some photos taken by Nick Ellis.



All photos by Nick Ellis.



FORT TEJON CIVIL WAR EVENT – JUNE 2022



All photos by Nick Ellis.



FORT TEJON CIVIL WAR EVENT – JUNE 2022



All photos by Nick Ellis.



## REMEMBERING THE PAST – THE TULE RIVER WAR

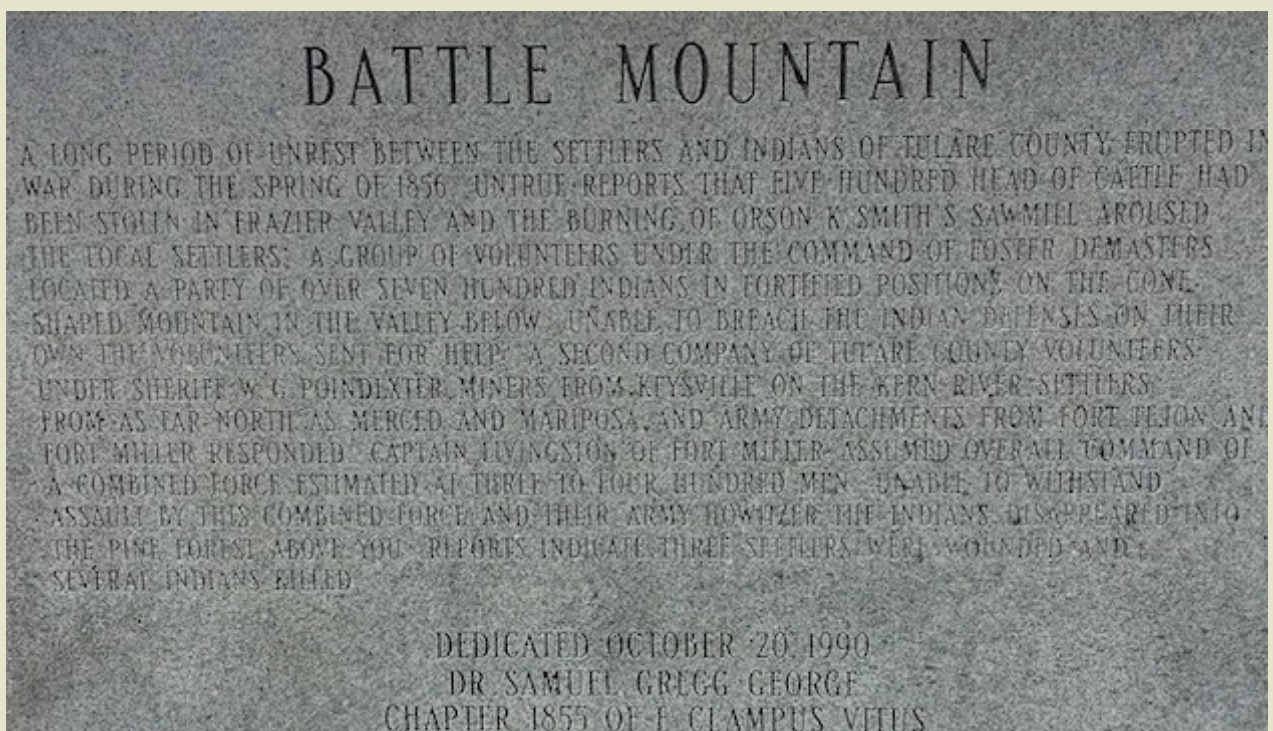
### Private William Thorpe and the Tule River War

With Content from Sean Malis  
and additional content from Wikipedia and E Clampus Vitus

Private William Thorpe, of Company A, was the only soldier of that company to die while the company was at Fort Tejon. He did not die at the Fort. He drowned at Four Creeks, northeast of Fort Tejon, near modern day Visalia.

William Thorpe was from Chester, England. Born in 1832, he was 22 years old when he signed up in New York City for the U.S. Army. He had hazel eyes, brown hair, a dark complexion, stood five feet seven, and one-half inch tall. He listed his civilian trade as painter. It was February 20, 1855, Private Thorpe was assigned to the mounted service and came to California with a large detachment of dragoon recruits commanded by Captain Gardiner. He arrived at Fort Tejon on June 16, 1855, and was assigned to Company A four days later, according to instructions specified in Special Orders No. 31, Department of the Pacific, May 21, 1855.

A long period of unrest between the settlers and Indians of Tulare County erupted in war during the spring of 1856. Untrue reports that five hundred head of cattle had been stolen in Frazier Valley and a fire at Orson K. Smith's sawmill aroused the local settlers. A group of volunteers under the command of Foster DeMasters located a party of over seven hundred Indians in fortified positions on the cone-shaped mountain in the valley below. Unable to breach the Indian defenses on their own, the volunteers sent for help. A second company of Tulare County volunteers under Sheriff W.G. Poindexter, miners from Keyville on the Kern River, settlers from as far north as Merced and Mariposa, and Army detachments from Fort Tejon and Fort Miller responded. Thorpe was with 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Benjamin Allston's detachment of about 40 Dragoons sent into the San Joaquin Valley from Fort Tejon.



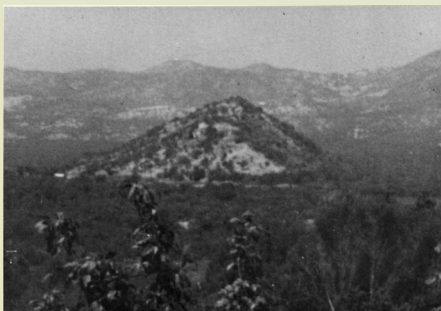
The Battle Mountain monument erected by E Clampus Vitus

### REMEMBERING THE PAST – THE TULE RIVER WAR

After all had reached camp, a consultation was held and it was agreed to divide the command into four divisions and attack the Indians at daybreak the following morning. Parties were sent out to view the country so that the several divisions might be guided to their respective positions without confusion. The Indians Unexpectedly made a vigorous attack on the party, precipitating the engagement. Armed with only bows and a few pistols, they were repelled by Livingston whose men fired on the indians and forced a retreat on what is today known as “Battle Mountain” above the Tule River. The Indians disappeared into the pine forest. Reports indicated three settlers were wounded and about one hundred Indians killed. The howitzers were never fired.

The “war” was over, the Dragoons escorted the self-appointed “Indian Peace Commissioner” and self-proclaimed “General” Edward F. Beale. As the fort Tejon Dragoons headed home, Private Thorpe went to cross a stream. Unfortunately, the crossing was unsuccessful and he drowned while riding his horse across. The year-end report indicates that it was June 5, 1856 and that he was buried “near the camp near the crossing” at Four Creeks. Before Private Thorpe’s pay records could be settled, the government wanted an accounting for: 1 pistol, percussion, 1 horse blanket, 1 curry comb and brush, 1 set of spurs and straps, 1 valise, 1 sabre knot and 1 set of shoulder straps (Metallic Scales.)

In retrospect, George Stewart wrote "Thus ended the Tule river war of 1856; a war that might have been prevented had there been an honest desire on the part of the white settlers to do so, and one that brought little glory to those who participated therein. The responsibility cannot now be fixed where it properly belongs. Possibly the Indians were to blame. Certainly the whites were not blameless, and it is too seldom, indeed, that they have been in the many struggles with the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent.



A view of Battle Mountain and Rock Barricades from Battle Mountain near Porterville Ca.

Images from the Tulare County Library

<https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A176022>

<https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A176023>

<https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A176024>

#### References/Bibliography:

Private Thorpe Drowns – by Sean Malis

The Tule River War – Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tule\\_River\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tule_River_War)

History Of Tulare And Kings Counties (1913) -

<https://archive.org/details/historyoftularek00mene/page/20/mode/1up>

Tulare County Library - <https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/search/Battle%20Mountain?type=dismax>



**FORT TEJON****HISTORICAL****ASSOCIATION**

**FTHA**  
**P.O. Box 1424**  
**SIMI VALLEY, CA 93062**

**ADJUTANT'S JOURNAL****INFO@FORTTEJONCA.ORG****EDITOR'S NOTE**

Kind Readers,

It's summer and Living History events are happening again. I very much enjoyed attending the Heritage Day at Dana Adobe as well as the Civil War Technology Fair at Drum Barracks Civil War museum. A major event is coming up in Huntington Beach with their Civil War Reenactment and I hope to see many of you there as well.

Although we are still working out events at Fort Tejon, we hope to be in full swing soon now that COVID restrictions are rolling back.

I hope you enjoyed this edition of the Adjutant's Journal. Getting content for the AJ is both a time consuming, and rewarding experience and please let me know if there is anything you'd like to add.

Also note that we've updated our FTHA logo to a full color version! All FTHA members should be seeing this version on their membership cards.

Kind regards,

Matt Schnittker  
[mschnitt@FortTejonCa.org](mailto:mschnitt@FortTejonCa.org)

