

Since 1957

THE CHARGER

January, 2002

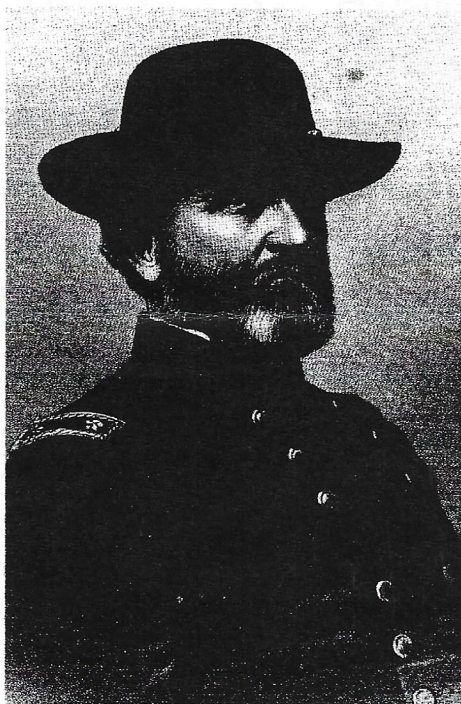
393 Meeting

Vol.23 #5

Tonight's Topic:

George Henry Thomas

Union General (1816-1870)



The Virginia-born Thomas studied law briefly before obtaining an appointment to West Point, where he was graduated with W. T. Sherman and R. S. Ewell in the class of 1840. Commissioned into the artillery, he joined his unit in Florida and took part in the campaign against the Seminole Indians there. He later served in several garrisons in the South.

Thomas saw extensive action during the Mexican War, earning brevets for gallantry at Monterey and Buena Vista. He returned to Florida after the war, taught gunnery and cavalry tactics for three years at West Point and did garrison duty in California and Arizona. He later served in Texas with the 2nd Cavalry, whose officers' roll included many soon-to-be-famous names, A. S. Johnston, Robert F. Lee and Fitzhugh Lee among them. Wounded in an Indian skirmish, he was on convalescent leave when the Civil War began.

Though a Virginian, Thomas remained loyal to the Union. His two sisters who remained in Petersburg, Virginia were so angry, with his decision, they swore to never talk to him again. They kept their word.

Tonight's Speaker:

Dan Zeiser

Dan Zeiser was President of the Cleveland CWRT in 1997. He also led the field trip to Antietam in 1996.

Dan is an attorney who specializes in arbitration. He is a transplant from Cincinnati. He went to Case Western Reserve Law School met his bride and has since spent all his time in Cleveland. Dan worked for years for Key Bank then going out on his own four years ago.

Dan has always been a big fan of George Thomas, even going to the point of having Shelby Foote and Ed Bearss comment on General George Thomas.

Date: Wednesday,
January 9, 2002

Place: The Cleveland
Playhouse Club
8501 Carnegie Ave.

Time: Drinks 6 PM
Dinner 7 PM

Reservations: Please Call
JAC Communications
(216) 861-5588

Meal choice: chicken or pork chops

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2001/2002 SCHEDULE**

*Note this is a
Friday*

October 10, 2001



Lincoln

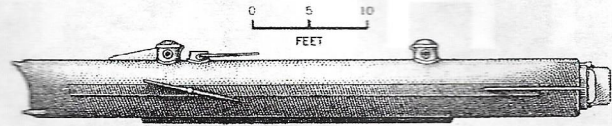
The Great Emancipator: Did he dream of a lily white America?

Gabor Boritt

Robert C. Fluhrer Professor
of Civil War Studies
Gettysburg College

February 15, 2002

World's first submarine



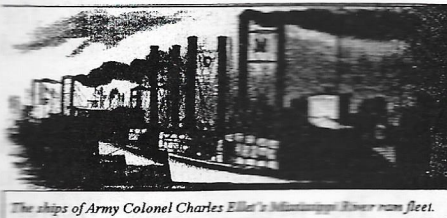
H.L. Hunley

South Carolina State Senator

Glenn McConnell

Chairman, Hunley Commission

November 14, 2001



The ships of Army Colonel Charles Ellet's Mississippi River ram fleet.

The Army's Navy

1861-1865

Roger Bohn

President of Chicago CWRT

March 13, 2002



An Evening With Mary Todd Lincoln

December 12, 2001 "Period Dress"



Marines in the Civil War

Maj. David A. Dawson

April 10, 2002



John C. Pemberton



Ulysses S. Grant

Unvexed to the Sea" The Vicksburg Campaign

Terry Winschel

Park Historian, Vicksburg Military Park

January 9, 2002



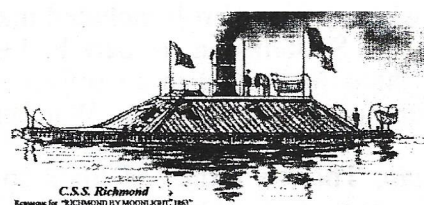
*"The Rock
of Chickamauga"*

George Thomas

Dan Zeiser

Past President Cleveland CWRT

May 8, 2002 "Guest Night"



*C.S.S. Richmond
Revenge for "Richmond by Moonlight," 1862*

Capital Navy

*Confederate Navy
guarding Richmond*

John Coski

Historian and Library Director, Museum of the Confederacy

**Membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable: Call (800) 800-8310 or visit our web site.
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cleveland civil war roundtable

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Cleveland Fights the Civil War

The first Union cannon shot of the war was fired by a Cleveland Battery

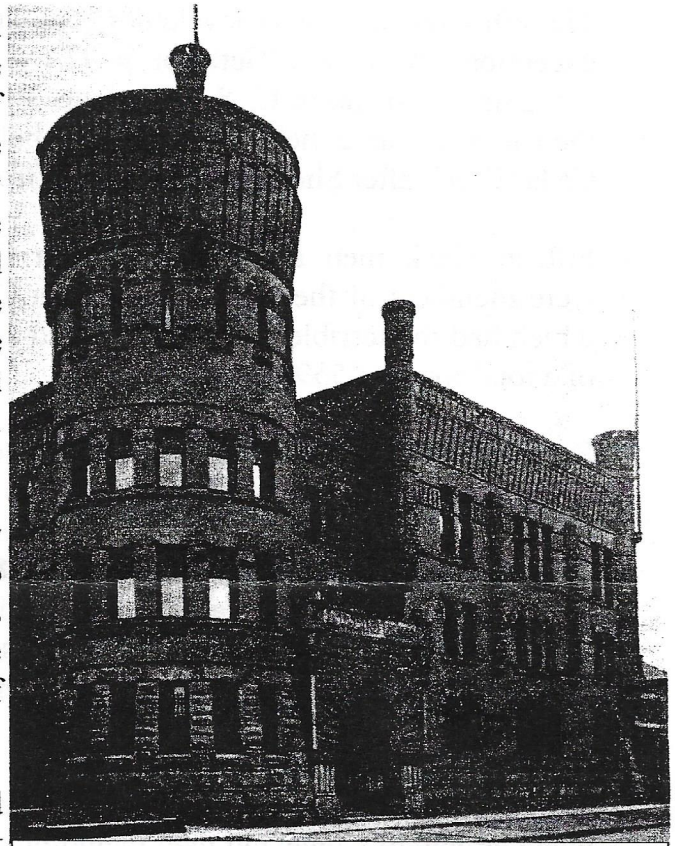
By Dick Crews

Cleveland and Cuyahoga County contributed a large percentage of its man power to the American Civil War. The federal census of 1860 showed Cleveland's population to be 43,838. The total Cuyahoga County population was approximately 50,000. The records on the walls of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Public Square, the official record of the county, contain the names of 10,000 residents of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County who fought in the Civil War.

The Cleveland Grays, which has a history back to 1838, provided some of first troops to answer the call of the governor. The Gray's were on there way within sixty hours of the governor's call. They became Company E of the First Ohio Infantry.

It has already been stated that a Cleveland battery fired the first shot for the Union. That shot was fired by the First Ohio Light Artillery which went to the front on only two days' notice. It was commanded by, Colonel later General, James Barnett. It was at Philippi, West Virginia, that the historic first Union cannon was fired in battle. There was the 9th Independent Battery, of which Edwin Cowles, the founder of the *Leader* (old Cleveland newspaper), was sergeant and afterwards a second lieutenant. The firing was done by the 19th Battery, familiarly known as Shield's Battery, and the 20th. Both of these batteries owed most of their members to Cleveland.

Early in the Civil War area men were mustered into the famous 7th Ohio Regiment. Cleveland and Cuyahoga County furnished the 7th Ohio with eleven field and staff officers and three complete companies. In three years 1800 men served in the 7th. However, only 300 men remained following 3 year enlistment expiration, to bring home the colors.



Gray's Armory

This picture was taken in 1900. Hell, it looks the same today.

It is of the 7th regiment that a war historian wrote: "*all in all, considering the number of its battles, its marches, its losses, its conduct in action, it may be safely said that not a single regiment in the United States gained more lasting honor or deserved better of its country than the Seventh Ohio Volunteer Infantry.*"

The 8th Ohio kept up Cleveland's reputation by showing exceptional courage at Gettysburg. The gallant 23rd Ohio, containing two future U. S. Presidents and 250 men from the Cleveland area, helped defeat the rebels at the battle of Cedar Creek after Sheridan famous ride from Winchester.

Fifteen black men also enlisted from Cleveland. They were members of the 5th United States Colored Infantry, which had the terrible loss of 302 killed and wounded out of a total force of 559.

Even after the disaster of the first battle of Bull Run, Cleveland raised a new regiment, the Ohio 41st. The command was given Captain Will Hazen. This regiment was followed by the Ohio 24th, the 37th 58th, 103rd, 107th, and the 42nd which included future President Garfield as a colonel. The 124th was also from the Western Reserve many Clevelanders were with it as officers and privates. Its work at Lookout Mountain as especially noteworthy. The 128th regiment, which guarded confederate prisoners at Johnson's Island.

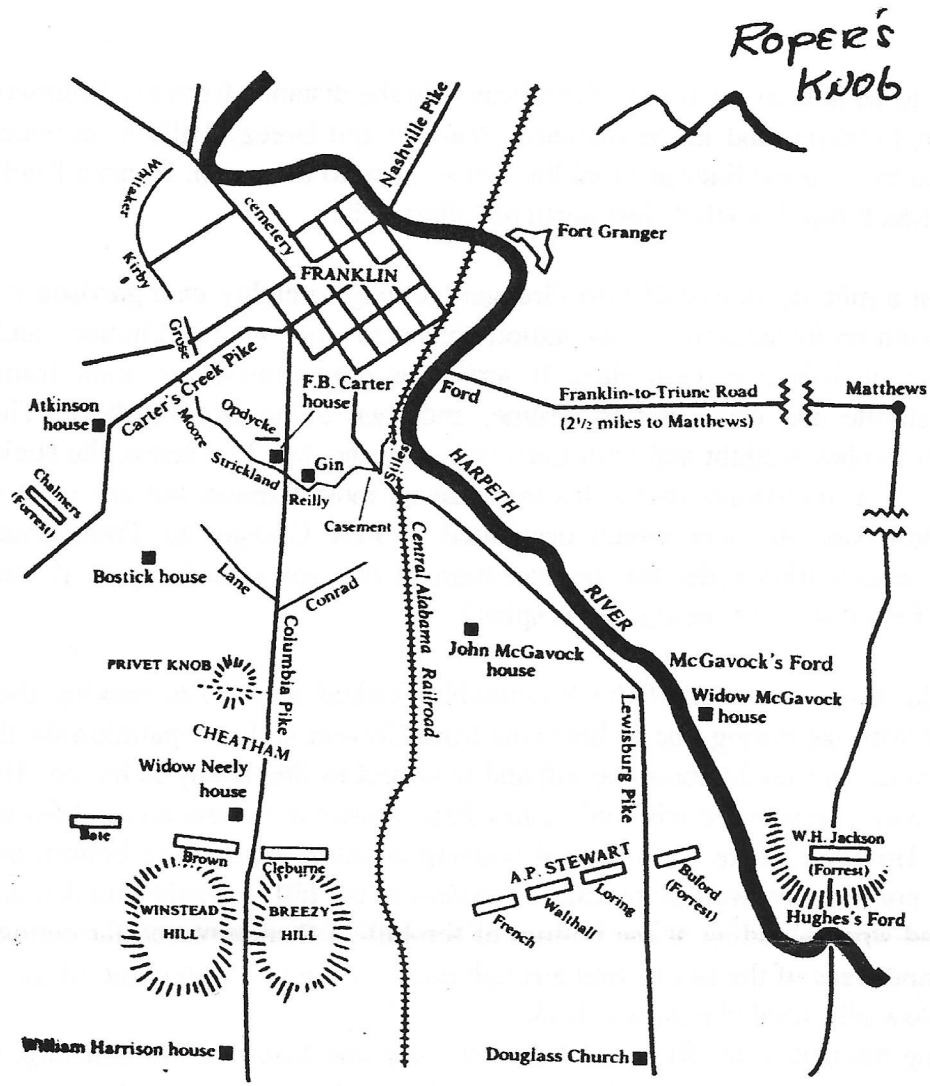
The 115th and the 169th regiments which garrisoned Washington in 1864, were also made largely of Cleveland men including the 177st. Cleveland also contributed largely to the independent companies of sharpshooters which Governor Tod recruited. The 2nd Cavalry, which was made up almost exclusively from Cleveland and the Western Reserve, and was noted for the social prominence of its members, had a most picturesque career. It fought Choctaws in Indian Territory, Quantrell's guerillas in Missouri, and was a large factor in the chase and capture of John Hunt Morgan, the raider. It followed him for twelve hundred miles through three states, marching twenty-four hours a day.

In fact so general was strong Civil War spirit in Cleveland that there was not a regiment mustered in the state which did not contain men from the banks of the Cuyahoga.



7th Ohio Monument
Woodland Cemetery

Dick Crews



Behind the Lines

My Life as a Yankee in Franklin, Tennessee Part IV

By Mel Maurer

In the first article in this series, I wrote that our house was in a subdivision that was in the shadow of Roper's Knob - a hill, the top of which, was used as a signal station during the Civil War. Actually although it's the highest hill in the area, although not by much, it's only several hundred feet high so "shadow" was something of an exaggeration. (We did wish we were in the shadow of something during the very hot Tennessee summers.) Roper's Knob was just a half-mile west of our house - it was the first thing I would see when I walked out our front door.

Interestingly when I eventually looked out from the top of this hill, our house was the only one I could see looking east. Viewing anything distant from the top was difficult with tall trees and overgrown shrubbery blocking most views. To the immediate north of the hill is the Legends Golf Course — actually two courses, Brentwood and then Nashville. Another hill, almost as high as this one was next to it to the west.

Mel Maurer is retired and a Trustee of the Cleveland CWRT.

I was happy to be able to see these "Twin Peaks" in the distance from my Brentwood office. Fort Granger, Franklin, and in the distance, Winsted and Breezy Hills from which, Hood's army attacked the Federal lines at Franklin, can be seen to the south. Roper's Knob is on the west side of Mack Hatcher Blvd. Just north of Liberty Pike.

It's also about a mile north east of Fort Granger. A sixty to eighty man garrison manned the signaling station on its summit. This station consisted of a blockhouse and several entrenchments, including cannon sites. It served as communications point from Franklin north to Nashville and east, first to Triune, and then on to Murfreesboro. The soldiers signaled with torches at night and with mirrors during the day. In a sense, the station was an early version of a microwave tower. It's said that its most famous, but not most important, communication was one sent which originated at Fort Granger to Triune/Murfreesboro asking that the execution order for the execution of two spies be changed. It was ignored. (See part III for the story of these hapless spies.)

My son Rick, also a member of the Roundtable, looked forward to making the climb to Roper's Peak with me during one of his visits from Cleveland. In preparation for this event I learned as I much as I could about the hill and how best to find a way to its top. The hill was for the most part undeveloped with only a few large homes in several areas about midway up on one side. However, there were several housing developments at the bottom on its south side which I got to know well in looking for access to the hill. I finally found what I wanted on a dead end street - ending at the bottom of the hill. I then ventured far enough into the overgrowth and trees of the hill to find a rough path - actually a water run off gully heading up the hill. Now all I needed now was Rick.

During his next visit. Rick and I set out early one Saturday fall morning. Parking at the end of the dead end street, we found the gully and began our ascent - easy at first and then more difficult as the "path" got steeper as we neared the top. The gully ended about 50 feet from the summit but it would be the toughest 50 feet of our climb. Not only was it much steeper - almost straight up - but now we would also have to make our way through the thick underbrush and overgrowth. It was like climbing a very bushy building. No doubt the steep part was part of the defense system for the signal station. We made it to the peak but not without various cuts and scratches and rips in our clothes. (Wounded in the line of duty?)

The "peak" was actually on several levels. We could see the remains of the earthen entrenchments although they were not as well defined as those at Fort Granger. Nothing, that we could see remained of the log blockhouse that was once situated on one of its levels. I especially wanted to find a partially buried boulder that someone told me had some of the soldiers' names chiseled in it. Sadly we couldn't find it. (Nor could I find it on another trip to the top the following year with my nephew, Jim Browske, another student of the war.) However once Rick and I got acclimated to our surroundings we could make out where the gun emplacements had been and where the structures once stood - at least we thought we could. The troops stationed there got to the top by what has been described as "a narrow twisting path" up one side of the hill. Its artillery guns had to be "winched up by grappling hooks." I'm glad I only had to pull myself up that incline.

Rick and I took a borrowed metal detector with us to the top. I had not heard the term "Relic-hunting" before my move to Franklin. It, of course, refers to looking for buried Civil war memorabilia -minie balls are the most commonly found items. These days at least in places where you can still hunt with permission. Most of these areas, various fields and back yards etc. have been picked over many times over the years. A local friend told me of the days when, after a heavy rain, one could walk around some places in Franklin and pick up newly exposed minie balls, unspent shells and other small historic items. Another local story told of how Hank Williams and his entourage showed up at Fort Granger one day with metal detectors. They spread out and searched the entire fort. I did not learn what, if anything, they found. It's now illegal to use metal detectors at the fort and other public and privately owned historic sites.

My favorite relic-hunting story was told to me by a good friend who grew up in Franklin — Tom Lawrence, "The Voice of Williamson County" on his radio station, WAKM. Tom has a long time friend who as a boy asked for and received Tom's father's permission, to relic hunt in his backyard which was very near one of the federal lines during the Battle of Franklin. Tom said his friend at first heard no sounds as he walked the yard but then the metal detector began to scream. Digging at that point they first found a number of surgical saws —and then a large number of bones. The remains of amputated limbs. Apparently this was a burial site for a field hospital — it had to be the find of a lifetime for Tom's friend, who now heads his own employment firm and is still very much involved in Civil War history. The saws were recovered and the bones reburied.

Another acquaintance, Richard Hatcher, who I mentioned as a local historian, in Part II of this series and some friends of his once had a small business guiding relic hunters to places where Richard would guarantee them that something could be found.

Rick and I had no such guarantees and made no finds on Roper's Knob but we did have some success at another site. I had taken a tour of local historic sites as part of Hatcher's class on the "Civil War in Williamson County." These sites included well-known and little known places where there were during the war various camps, skirmishes, earthen forts (small to very large) and homes that had a role in Civil War history. Rick and I, along with our borrowed metal detector, set out one day determined to dig up something historic at one or more of these sites. We found our "gold" at what was once a Federal campsite about 10 miles east of Franklin. Except for a corner of this two to three-

acre property which held a small church and its parking lot, the area was open and between plantings. (The turning of the earth for planting often turns up buried relics.) After an hour or so of looking, we found an aged horseshoe and several pieces of shrapnel. We can't be 100% sure the horseshoe dates back to the Federal encampment but it looks just like those we've seen at memorabilia shows as does the shrapnel. In any event we considered these items to be great finds.

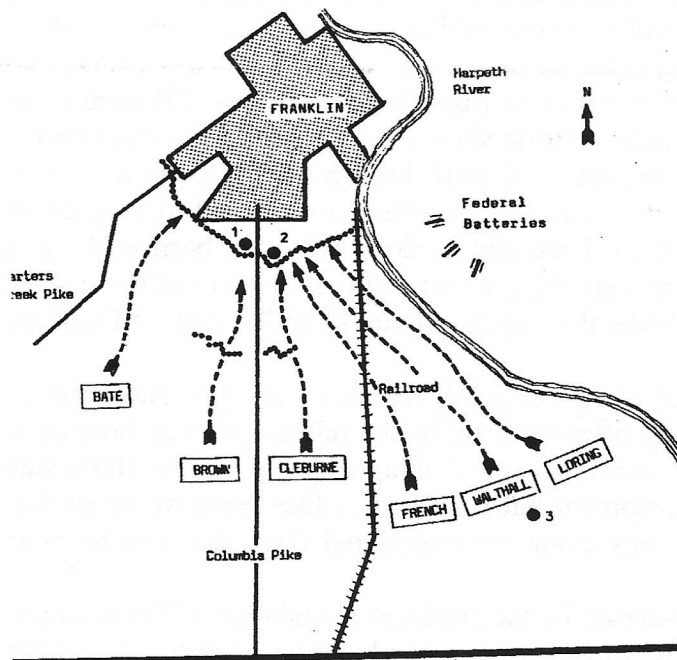
Roper's Knob, I'm pleased to report was purchased by the Heritage Foundation of Franklin and Williamson County in 1995. The purchase was made with a combination of state and private funds— the state money purchased the 22 acres on top of the hill and the foundation purchased the 50 acres surrounding the peak. Since 1995, with the help of many volunteers, the trail (I'm not sure this is the "trail" I used for my climbs.) has been significantly improved. So much so that the "Save the Franklin Battlefield" (STFB) organization now conducts tours of the hill and its peak. I'm looking forward to taking the improved trail to the top — maybe the improvements even improved access to the views from the top.

STFB recently purchased 3.2 acres of what it calls “core battleground” in Franklin. The property known today as Hyssop Hill is on the extreme east end of the trench lines. It was the ground that General W.W. Loring’s Division marched over early in the battle as its men first climbed the railroad embankment, and then got tangled up in the osage orange abatis just in front of the Federal lines. During the war this property held the home of the overseer of Carnton Plantation (Part II).

Another important acquisition was made in the last few years by a Franklin historic group. It bought the property on which stood Carter’s Cotton Gin — the scene of very heavy fighting. The fight to save (from commercial development) and then buy historic ground in Williamson County is an ongoing one. One significant piece of land across from the Harrison House, south of Franklin, where Hood held his last staff meeting, now looks like it will be used for a new elementary school despite the best efforts of the historical preservation groups in the county. Another effort has so far failed to save battlefield ground just a few blocks south of the Carter House which is slated to be a shopping center. This property was most recently home to the well-named “The Battleground Academy” a private school which moved its campus to a site. Some information on these struggles along with other Franklin information can be found at www.franklinstfb.org. Any help we can give them with money or supporting pleas for preservation. (STFG PO Box 851 Franklin, TN 37065-0851)

I'll take you (ya'll) to some historic ground in Williamson County in Part V.

Mel Maurer



November 30, 1864

Dotted lines - Union positions.
 1 - The Carter House, which still stands and is open to the public.
 2 - The cotton gin, which no longer exists.
 3 - The McGavock House (Carnton), whose blood-stained floors may still be seen.

Brigades in attacking divisions:
 Bate - Jackson, Smith
 Brown - Carter, Gist, Gordon, Strahl
 Cleburne - Gowan, Granbury, Polk
 French - Cockrell, Sears
 Loring - Adams, Featherstone, Scott
 Walthall - Quarles, Reynolds, Shelley

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy 2002 Cleveland Civil War Round Table Members!

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and are looking forward to our Round Table meetings for the rest of this year.

As many of you already know, our oldest member, Matt Slattery, died at the end of December. As the services were private and there was no notation as to where a donation might be made, I opted to send a sympathy card on behalf of the Round Table. Perhaps we could consider making our Civil War donation in his name this year. We can discuss this at our meeting.

I received several holiday cards for the group, one of them being from Tom Hlepis wishing us a happy holiday season.

I am still waiting to hear from Senator McDonnell's office regarding his rescheduled talk for February 2002.

I know we are all looking forward to Dan Zeiser's presentation "The Rock of Chickamauga"--George Thomas.

See you all soon!

Bill McGrath

Matthew Slattery

Accountant, wrote book about Mexican Revolution

PARMA HEIGHTS — Matthew Slattery retired in 1975 from an accounting career that spanned more than 40 years, and he began fulfilling a lifelong ambition of writing, especially a book of historical note.

He took a college course in Spanish and traveled throughout Mexico and the United States researching the military exploits of Pancho Villa's right-hand man, Felipe Angeles. The result was a book, "Felipe Angeles and the Mexican Revolution."

The book drew favorable attention from historians.

Slattery, 90, died Wednesday in his Parma Heights home.

He began his career in accounting and management in 1934. During World War II, he was head of material cost ac-

counting in the B-29 programs at the General Motors Corp. plant in Cleveland.



In 1950, he joined the Ohio Hospital Association, writing an accounting manual and instituting its uniform application in Ohio hospitals. He subsequently became controller of hospitals in Cincinnati and Washington, D.C., and retired from Southwest General Hospital in 1975.

He was born in Cleveland, graduated from Lakewood High School and attended Ohio University and the University of Cincinnati. He was a lifelong tennis player and, after retiring, be-

came a tennis instructor for Parma Heights.

A daughter, Clare Votava of Avon, said her father also developed a statistical system to measure the productivity of a basketball team. The University of Cincinnati and Cleveland State University teams used the system.

He was a longtime member of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable.

Besides Votava, survivors include sons, Thomas of Bay Village and Paul of McLean, Va.; another daughter, Maureen Goodyear of Parma Heights; a stepson, John McCausland of Columbus; a stepdaughter, Sue Swetlick of Mansfield; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren; a sister; and a brother.

His wife, Grace, died in 1993. Services are private.

Arrangements are being handled by the Zabor Funeral Home, 5680 Pearl Rd., Parma Heights.



The Rock of Chickamauga

Union General

George Thomas

**Wednesday,
January 9, 2002**