THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

THE CHARGER

March, 2002 | 395 Meeting | Vol. 23 #7

Tonight's topic:

MARY TODD LINCOLN

Mary Ann Todd was born on December 13, 1818, in Lexington, Kentucky. Mary was one of 7 children born to Robert S. Todd and his wife, Eliza Parker Todd. The Todds were a prominent family in Lexington. Mary's mother passed away in 1825, and her father remarried the following year. She excelled in school. She appeared in school plays and learned to speak French fluently. Mary was ambitious, scholarly, and an excellent conversationalist.

In 1839 Mary moved to Springfield, Illinois, to live at the home of her older sister, Elizabeth Edwards. Mary, who stood about 5-2, was active and popular in Springfield's society, and she dated people like Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln won her heart, and the two were married in 1842. Abraham gave her a wedding ring engraved with the words "Love is Eternal."

Mary Todd Lincoln
wedding picture

Over the next 11 years the couple had 4 children. They were Robert (1843-1926), Edward ("Eddie") 1846-1850, William ("Willie") 1850-1862, .and Thomas ("Tad") 1853-1871. Sadly, Robert was the only child of the Lincolns to live to adulthood. Mary was known as a very loving and caring mother.

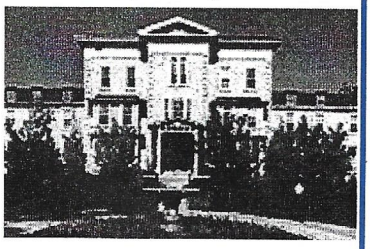
In 1844 the Lincolns bought a home in Springfield at the corner of Eighth and Jackson. Abraham had become a successful attorney and politician. In 1846 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Mary and the children lived with him in Washington for part of his term. Abraham did not run for reelection so the family returned to Springfield in 1849.

Abraham received the Republican nomination for President in 1860 and was elected over 3 other candidates in November. In February, 1861, the Lincolns left Springfield headed for Washington, D.C. Abraham was inaugurated as the 16th President on March 4, 1861.

Mary Lincoln, Insane?

"We, the undersigned jurors in the case of Mary Todd Lincoln, having heard the evidence in the case, are satisfied that said Mary Todd Lincoln is insane, and is a fit person to be sent to a state hospital for the insane..."
(jury verdict after 10 minutes of deliberation, May 19, 1875).

Bellevue Place was Mary's asylum. It is located 40 miles west of Chicago. Mary's quarters were on the second floor. Mary Todd Lincoln spent four months in the asylum.



Date: Wednesday, March 13, 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: Lamb or Trout

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

Founded 1957

Phone Numbers:
Dinner reservations: (216) 861-5588
Membership info: (800) 800-8310
THE CHARGER: (800) 800-8310
Dick Crews -editor

The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is open to anyone with an interest in the American Civil War. The 130 members of the Roundtable, who's age varies from 12 to 90 years old, share a common belief that the American Civil War was the **defining** event in United States history.

The Roundtable normally meets on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, at a private club of the Cleveland Playhouse, 8501 Carnegie, next to the Cleveland Clinic.

Yearly Dues: $40.00 Dinner: $20.00

March 13, 2002

An Evening *With* Mary Todd Lincoln

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
March 2002

As February 2002 passed us by along with Abraham Lincoln's birthday (he would be 193 this year!), we look with anticipation to our evening with Mary Lincoln.

To get you in the mood to know more about this intriguing historical figure, I reviewed Nofi's The Civil War Notebook 1993) and discovered that Mrs. Lincoln's closest confidant and her main comfort upon the death of President Lincoln was Mrs. Elizabeth Keckley a black seamstress who was once employed by Mrs. Davis.

For those of you who did not make it to our February meeting, over 100 people enjoyed a multi-media presentation by Senator Glenn McConnell the chair of the Hunley Commission. Those who care to learn more about the Hunley can look into their website wwwhunley.org. For those of you interested in membership in the Friends of the Hunley, dues are $35 for an individual, $60 for two, or $75 for a family of four. Membership includes several volumes a year of its publication, The Blue Light, and access to the latest on-line information on the excavation process as well as a variety of gift products from their gift shop.

Remember, members are invited to submit written articles and timely Civil War information to The Charger by contacting Dick Crews at 1.800.800.8310 or by e-mail rcrews5369@aol.com.

See you soon,
Bill McGrath

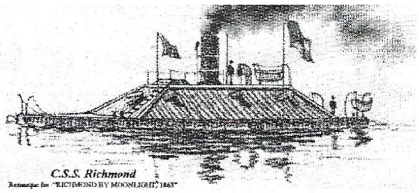
April 10, 2002

John C. Pemberton > < Ulysses S. Grant

"Unvexed to the Sea"
The Vicksburg Campaign

Terry Winschel
Park Historian, Vicksburg Military Park

May 8, 2002 "Guest Night"



Capital Navy
Confederate Navy guarding Richmond

John Coski
Historian and Library Director, Museum of the Confederacy

"God and General Longstreet"

by Thomas Connelly and Barbara Bellows.

Book Review by **Matthew Slattery**

In 1865, the Civil War ended and the North had won. Had the South lost? Their generals had to admit it. Their armies were broken, their cities demolished, their railroads a wreck. Was all this acceptable to the Confederates? They ignored it (as best they could) by not writing about it, not speaking about it. Instead, they trumpeted **The Lost Cause**.

Of 1,000 books written by southerners to the end of the XIX Century, only one — a lone one— dealt with the war factually; that was Douglas Southall Freemen's four volume *Robert E. Lee.* A scattering of others (including Jefferson Davis) were self-serving scripts of the losing generals. What is significant is that all but a handful of books were fiction.

Veterans' organizations and women's adjuncts numbered their members in the hundreds of thousands and they held boisterous meetings. Individually they had no choice but to see around them what their politicians and slave owners had let them into. Those who wrote and spoke of the battles had a single subject — "IF". IF, Longstreet had sent his troops earlier up the hill at Gettysburg, IF, Joe Johnson had taken his stand north of Atlanta, IF, Stonewall Jackson had not galloped ahead of his troops at Chancellorsville. There were a thousand "IF's". But even these were in a distinct minority against the volumes on moonlight and magnolias. It was not the war which had been lost, it was the illusion of a way of life which had never really existed.

And an overwhelming personal drama transpired — the various commanding generals, although respected, were pushed into the background while a single one was brought forward — Robert E. Lee. At first it was respectful but it rapidly swelled to adoration.

They had raised him to sainthood and the surprising thing was that it was not for his achievements on the battlefield but for his personal character, his kindness, his modesty. On the other hand, among the leaders most vilified was General James Longstreet — not for "losing" Gettysburg but because he became a Republican and a close friend of now-President U.S. Grant.

Following World War I, there came a renaissance in southern literature. These were skilled and nationally acknowledged writers but they only made a fuller scale presentation of the Lost Cause, the paradoxes rooted in the southern mind, the perception that they were a counter-culture, an alternate to the American. Aged and gentle ladies of the United Daughters joined with diehard racists and canny politicians to create from imagination a land that never was. By 1960, 7,000,000 copies of *Gone With The Wind* evidenced the national acceptance of the Grand Old South and the plantation mythology.

Since the Second World War, there has been a distinct erosion of the Lost Cause. The influx of industry, television and the interstate highway has broken down the vestiges of regionalization and we have black politicians in state offices and black athletic stars in the southern colleges. But The Lost Cause has not died. There are still the Confederate emblems on automobiles. It is their way of carrying on the fiction, though their owners have never read about the Civil War nor have they any concept of the Confederacy. It does tend to show that the south retains a folk culture heavily endowed with memory and legend and this is the essence of **The Lost Cause.**

Matt Slattery

Matt Slattery wrote this book review shortly before his death in December. Even at 90 years old Matt was still looking at new ideas about his and our favorite hobby, the American Civil War. We will miss him.

Johnson Island

By Dale Thomas

During Career Day at Bay High School in 1990, Professor David R. Bush talked to my students about archaeology. He invited me to observe his excavations that summer on Johnson's Island in Sandusky Bay, Ohio. What most intrigued me were the remains of collapsed escape tunnels that he had found leading from some of the sink (latrine) structures to the stockade walls. The soil of one of these tunnels yielded a gold watch and a gold locket with the remains of a photograph and lock of hair tied with a ribbon. He also discovered a large iron bar and cow bone that were apparently used for digging. (Bush wrote an article in Archaeology magazine in 1999.) Before leaving the island, I went to the prison cemetery where the remains of 235 prisoners are buried. Only 12 Confederates were able to escape from the island but not to the mirage across the bay, Cedar Point Amusement Park.

The Federal Government leased the island in the autumn of 1861 from the owner, Leonard B. Johnson, paying him $500 a year. Situated two and a half miles north of Sandusky and mile south of the nearest mainland, the three hundred acre site was chosen over other Lake Erie islands because of the protected waters of Sandusky Bay. Also the region was served by good railroads, and the island's forest could furnish wood for building and fuel. At a cost of $30,000, the prison would be the first constructed especially for Confederate prisoners. Starting in June of 1862, four months after receiving Confederates of all ranks, Johnson's Island was designated a prison mainly for officers, the elite of Southern society.

Surrounded by a fourteen-foot stockade on the southern shore of the island, the compound covered nearly fifteen acres, but with the barracks and the deadline areas, the inmates had the use of only eight acres. Blockhouses were built with light artillery for defense against an uprising of prisoners or any attempt to free them. Two hundred yards from the stockade, barracks for the enlisted men and houses for the officers and their families were constructed. By January of 1864, one thousand Union soldiers were guarding over three thousand Confederates in a prison that originally was supposed to house only one thousand inmates.

A.M. Clark, a Union surgeon, inspected the prison on January 11, 1864. He reported the "quarters are, with but one or two exceptions, filthy... The kitchens are filthy, with all their utensils, and the ground around the outer doors covered with filth and slops frozen to the depth of several inches." Clark blamed the lazy prisoners for the unhealthy conditions.

In addition, a lack of ventilation in crowded, overheated barracks "is attributable the great majority of the cases of disease which occur among the prisoners... Statistics -- the total number of prisoners during the month of December 1863 was 2625. Number of sick reported, 219; deaths, 18."

In September of 1864, CSA Captain John Yates Beall, secret agent and personal friend of J. Wilkes Booth, led a group of eighteen conspirators in a plot to free Confederate officers from Johnson's Island. They boarded the steamboat, Philo Parsons, in Detroit, and in the name of the Confederate States of America, captured it off Kelly's Island, five miles north of Sandusky. The passengers and crew were put ashore at Middle Bass Island, where another vessel, the Island Queen, was also captured and later put to the torch. The plan was to take over the U.S.S. Michigan, an iron side-wheeler gunboat, guarding Johnson's Island, but one of Beall's agents was arrested before he could drug the officers of the ship. Beall fled north across Lake Erie and scuttled the Philo Parson off Sandwich, Canada.

Dr. J. S. Riley, one of the conspirators, wrote in 1901 that he and "fourteen of our crew went to Halifax, and Beall and his chief lieutenant returned to New York, where they were subsequently arrested." When hearing about his good friend, Booth went to see Lincoln and convinced him to pardon Beall if convicted of treason. Stanton and Seward, however, were able to change Lincoln's mind " to let the law do its worst.... Booth rested easy until after the execution at Governor's Island. Then overwhelmed with grief and disappointment, he swore in his wrath that he would take the life of Lincoln if it cost him his own..."

Dale Thomas

Dale Thomas is a retired history teacher and Historian of the Cleveland CWRT.

POLITICAL GRAVEROBBING:

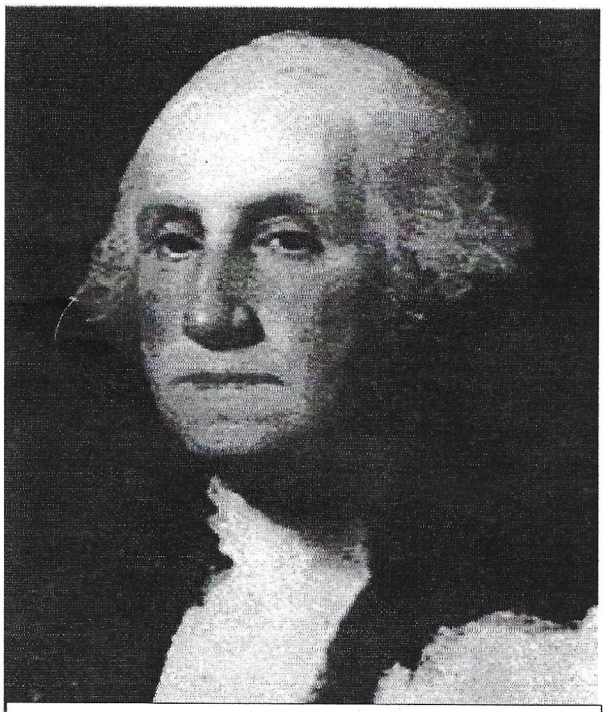
THE CONFEDERACY & GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY WILLIAM F.B. VODREY

It's been said that one of the costs of political greatness is being forced to campaign long after your death. That's certainly true of George Washington, whose name, image and legacy were appropriated by the Confederacy in a breathtaking act of political graverobbing.

Washington was born on Feb. 22, 1732 near Wakefield, Virginia, 270 years ago last month. He was commander in chief of the Continental Army, leading it through eight years of hard war and sometimes holding it together by sheer force of will. He presided over the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and, of course, was the first President of the United States, from 1789 to 1797. He died in peaceful retirement at Mount Vernon on Dec. 14, 1799. More than any other individual, Washington was responsible for securing the independence of the United States, and for establishing a government which would ensure its survival and success. Its capital rightly bears his name.

How amazing, then, and how appalling, that the Confederate States of America would put him on its seal in 1861 and hold him up as an icon of secession. Jefferson Davis was sworn in as Confederate president in 1861 on Washington's birthday. In his inaugural address, Davis said the Confederacy would "perpetuate the principles of our Revolutionary fathers. The day, the memory, and the purpose seem fitly associated.... We are in arms to renew such sacrifices as our fathers made to the holy cause of constitutional liberty." Abraham Lincoln, too, remembered the first president as the storm clouds of war gathered. Upon leaving Springfield, Ill. for the last time on Feb. 11, 1861, the President-elect said, "I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington."



Confederate Hero
George Washington

At first glance, it's not too surprising that the infant Confederacy would seize upon the figure of Washington as a patriotic symbol. He was a Virginian, after all, beloved throughout the country in the early years of the republic. He had owned slaves. He had led an army in rebellion against a remote, tyrannical power. Many Southerners viewed the Civil War as nothing less than a second American Revolution; some said that had Washington been alive in 1861, he would have supported the Confederacy.

But look more closely, and a very different picture emerges.

The Union

Washington was firmly, indeed unshakably, for the Union. On June 8, 1783, just two years after his triumph at Yorktown, Washington sent a message to all of the state governors, urging them to diminish downplay local jealousies in order to give greater strength to the Union. He wrote, "[It] will be part of my duty, and that of every true patriot, to assert without reserve, and to insist...that unless the

states will suffer Congress to exercise [its] prerogatives.., everything must very rapidly tend to anarchy and confusion.... it is indispensable to the happiness of the individual states, that there should be lodged somewhere, a supreme power to regulate and govern the general concerns of the.. .republic, without which the Union cannot be of long duration. That there must be a faithful and pointed compliance on the part of every state, with the ... proposals and demands of Congress, or the most fatal consequences will ensue; that whatever measures have a tendency to dissolve the Union, or contribute to violate or lessen the sovereign authority, ought to be considered as hostile to the liberty and independency of America, and the authors of them treated accordingly... [W]ithout an entire conformity to the spirit of the Union, we cannot exist as an independent power...." In August 1786, with the need for a stronger Federal government even more apparent, Washington wrote to future chief justice John Jay, "I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation without having lodged somewhere a power, which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner, as the authority of the state governments extends over the several states."

When the inhabitants of western Massachusetts took arms against their own elected government in Shays's Rebellion in early 1787, historian Edmund S. Morgan wrote, Washington "was outraged by the very idea of rebellion against a republican government.. .in the years that followed the winning of independence, as the power of Congress continued to wane, his great worry had been that the failure of the states to support the union would 'destroy our national character, and render us as contemptible in the eyes of Europe as we have it in our power to be respectable'.

After the Constitutional Convention adjourned, Washington wrote in November 1787,
"[T]here are characters who prefer disunion, or separate confederacies to the general government which is offered to them. . .but as nothing in my conception is more to be deprecated than disunion, or these separate confederacies, my voice, as far is it will extend, shall be offered in favor of [the Union]." Morgan wrote that once Washington was President, he "identified the national interest so closely and so personally with the new national government that he could scarcely recognize the validity of any kind of dissent.. .[he] had borne the brunt of a war that was needlessly prolonged because of the supineness of the central government. He had watched the nation approach the point of dissolution in the 1780s, a development that threatened everything he had fought for." Washington wrote to the Irish patriot Sir Edward Newenham in 1788 that, under the new Constitution, the United States would be "nearer to perfection than any government hitherto instituted among men." He agreed with Jefferson, who confided to him in 1794, "I can scarcely contemplate a more incalculable evil than the breaking of the union into two or more parts."

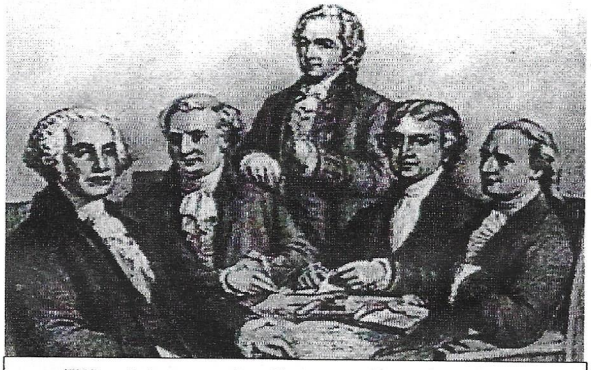
A painting of Washington's inauguration as President

As President, Washington was true to his principles. He used military force to put down the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794, demanding that Federal law be obeyed. The dissolution of the union, he wrote at the time, would be "the most dreadful of all calamities." He warned, "If the laws are to be trampled upon with impunity, and a minority (a small one too) is to dictate to the majority, there is an end put, at one stroke, to republican government." The

military's first duty, the President told the gathering Federal Army, is "to combat and subdue all who may be found in arms in opposition to the national will and authority." After the rebellion was almost bloodlessly suppressed, he wrote to Edmund Pendleton, "I hope, and believe, that the spirit of anarchy in the western counties of [Pennsylvania], to quell which the force of the Union was called for, is entirely subdued. . .the spirit with which the militia turned out, in support of the Constitution, and the laws of our country.. . does them immortal honor. [R]epublicanism is not the phantom of a deluded imagination: on the contrary .. . under no form of government, will laws be better supported, liberty and property better secured, nor happiness be more effectually dispensed to mankind." He also wrote in May 1797 to William Heath that Americans should be "indignant at every attempt [of those who] should presume to sow the seeds of distrust or disunion among ourselves."

Washington would have denounced the suggestion of many Confederate leaders that the Union was merely a temporary, convenient alliance between the states. He was never in any doubt that the Union was intended to be permanent, despite the Constitution's silence on the point. In 1783, Washington wrote that the first thing "essential to the well being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States as an independent power [is] an *indissoluble* Union of the states under one Federal head." After the Whiskey Rebellion, he wrote of his satisfaction that "my fellow citizens understand the true principles of government and liberty [and appreciate] their *inseparable* union" (both emphases added).

In his Farewell Address of September 1796, Washington wrote, "To the efficacy *and permanency* of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. . .[the Federal government] has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty...the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government" (emphasis added).



Washington's Cabinet: **(left to right)**
Washington, Henry Knox, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Edmund Randolph

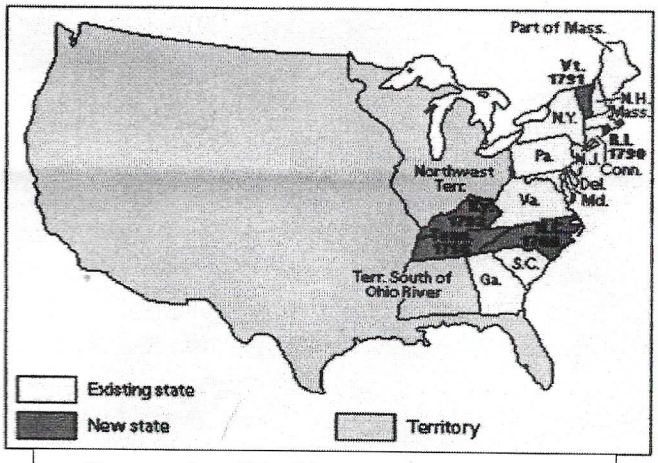
States' Rights

George Washington was also no zealot for states' rights; far from it. In 1777, during the Revolution, he drew criticism from some members of the Continental Congress for permitting New Jersey citizens who had been forced to swear allegiance to the British Crown to expunge this by swearing allegiance not to their state, but to the United States. After the Revolution he saw, under the weak Articles of Confederation which then guided the relationship between the states, the dangers of states' preeminence over the Federal government - as when New York, with impunity, negotiated a private treaty with the Indians to its own advantage.

In a July 1783 letter to Rev. William Gordon, Washington wrote, "It now rests with [Congress], by the line of conduct they mean to adopt, to make this country great, happy, and respectable; or to sink it into littleness;

worse perhaps, into anarchy and confusion; for certain I am, that unless adequate powers are given to Congress for the general purposes of the Federal Union that we shall soon moulder into dust and become contemptible in the eyes of Europe, if we are not made the sport of their politicks . . . .We are known by no other character among nations than as the United States; Massachusetts or Virginia is no better defined, nor any more thought of by foreign powers than the County of Worcester in Massachusetts. . .or Glouster County in Virginia.. . yet these counties, with as much propriety might oppose themselves to the laws of the state in [which] they are, as an individual state can oppose itself to the Federal Government, by which it is, or ought to be bound. [When counties] come in contact with the general interests of the state, when superior considerations preponderate in favor of the whole, their voices should be heard no more; so it should be with individual states when compared to the Union. . . .I think the blood and treasure which has been spent [in building the nation] has been lavished to little purpose, unless we can be better cemented; and that is not to be effected while so little attention is paid to the recommendations of the sovereign power." Washington concluded, "[W]hen the band of Union gets once broken, every thing ruinous to our future prospects is to be apprehended; the best that can come of it, in my humble opinion, is that we shall sink into obscurity, unless our civil broils should keep us in remembrance and fill the page of history with the direful consequences of them."

After the Revolution and to the end of his days, in fact, Washington was concerned that disunion would make America the plaything of European powers. Given the diplomatic flirtations of Great Britain and France with the Confederacy, this was no less than prescient. Washington wrote in 1783, "[T]he United States came into existence as a nation, and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own . . .it is in their choice, and depends upon their conduct, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation . . . [it would be an] ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one state against another to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes." He insisted, "It is only in our united character. . . that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, and our credit supported among foreign nations." in words particularly relevant after the events of September 11, 2001, Washington wrote, "There is a rank due to the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war."



States when Washington was President

George Washington did not share the view of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson and other Southerners that he was a citizen of his state first, and of the United States second. It was Henry "Light-horse Harry" Lee, Robert E. Lee's own father, who most famously eulogized Washington as "A citizen, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." This was part of a memorial resolution which Lee introduced not in the Virginia legislature, but in the U.S. House of Representatives. Virginia was not Washington's "country." He wrote in 1796, "Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country

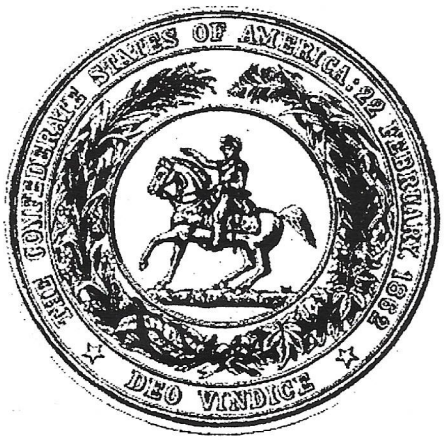
has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations." Washington's last will and testament began with what historian Richard Norton Smith called "an unmistakable political statement:" Washington described himself as "a citizen of the United States, and lately President of the same." Smith observed, "Not [as] 'a citizen of Virginia,' not as a Southerner or a Tidewater aristocrat, but as an American, Washington chose to round out his life with the creed to which he had devoted himself for forty years." To Washington, patriotism meant "giving every possible support and. cement to the union."

Slavery

Washington was no enthusiast of slavery. Historian Roger Bruns noted, "As he grew older, he became increasingly aware that it was immoral and unjust. Long before the Revolution, Washington had taken the unusual position of refusing to sell any of his slaves or to allow slave families to be separated. During the Revolution, he took the even more unusual step of campaigning for the desegregation of the free blacks serving in the New England militias." He was known as a benign slaveholder (although to 21st-century eyes, that's virtually an oxymoron) and, alone among the major Framers, freed his slaves upon his death. Washington's will directed that, prior to their emancipation, Mount Vernon slaves "be taught to read and write, and brought up to some useful occupation" even though, at the time, Virginia law prohibited teaching slaves to read and write. Washington supported the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which prohibited the spread of slavery into the Ohio territory.

After the Revolution, Washington told an English friend, "I clearly foresee that nothing but the rooting out of slavery can perpetuate the existence of our union by consolidating it in a common bond of principle." He said soberly that if the South were ever to try to divide the nation over the issue of slavery, he would "move and be of the northern" part.

The Great Seal of the Confederacy



Deo Vindice
"God Will Vindicate"

"Deo Vindice" was the motto which appeared below the mounted figure of Washington on the Great Seal of the Confederacy: "God vindicates." However, the undoubted lesson of the battlefield, and of our subsequent growth as a nation, is clear: God did not vindicate the Confederacy. Washington could not have supported the Confederacy: his principles were timeless, his commitment to the Union was absolute, and he would never have been swayed by the secessionist hysteria of the early 1860s.

No one worked harder or did more than George Washington to see that the United States would become—and— remain one nation, indivisible. Would that he had lived to rebuke those who used his name and image to justify tearing that nation in two.

William F. B. Vodrey, a past President of the Roundtable, is a magistrate of Cleveland Municipal Court.

Ed Bearss: A legend in his own time.

Our incoming president Maynard Bauer has scheduled Ed Bearss as our speaker on March 12, 2003. Ed Bearss has talked to our Roundtable 12 times since 1962. What will Ed be doing in the meantime? See the following article from **"Old Baldy Civil War Roundtable of Philadelphia."**

BEARSS WATCH

The schedule of the seemingly-inexhaustible Edwin Cole Bearss would kill a lesser man. Here is just some of what the former Chief Historian of the National Park Service, who is one of the country's foremost Civil War preservationists as well as surely the nation's premier battlefield guide, is up to during the rest of this year:

23 February Dranesville, Balls Bluff, and Monocacy with the Smithsonian Associates

24 February Fort Monroe and the Civil War Siege of Yorktown with the Smithsonian Associates

3—9 March History America tour of the Civil War and the War of 1812 in Vicksburg and the Gulf Coast

10 March Stuart's Ride Around McClellan with the Smithsonian Associates

19 March Guest speaker at the Baltimore CWRT

20—24 March Smithsonian Study Tour of the Vicksburg Campaign, Vicksburg, Mississippi

25—29 March Shiloh with the Blue and Gray Education Society

4—7 April "Jackson's Final Hours"; a Confederate Historical Institute tour

8—14 April National Geographic Expedition in the footsteps of Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and the Twentieth Maine, from Fredericksburg to Appomattox

17—21 April "Revolutionary War: Boston to Concord", a Smithsonian Study Tour in Massachusetts

28 April On the Trail of John Wilkes Booth with the Smithsonian Associates

1—5 May 'War in the Trans-Mississippi" with the Chicago Civil War Round Table

18—19 May Five Forks to Appomattox Courthouse with the Smithsonian Associates

20—23 May The Shenandoah Valley with the Blue and Gray Education Society

25—31 May History America tour of the Black Hawk War and the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862

1—2 June Williamsburg, Seven Pines, and Seven Days Battles with the Smithsonian Associates

7—12 June Smithsonian Study Tour of the Civil War in New Mexico

14—20 June Smithsonian Study Tour: "Storming of the Gateway"; battles of Stones River, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge, and the Tullahoma Campaign

21—23 June With the Blue and Gray Education Society: the Peninsular Campaign & Seven Days Battles

6 July On the Trail of John Wilkes Booth

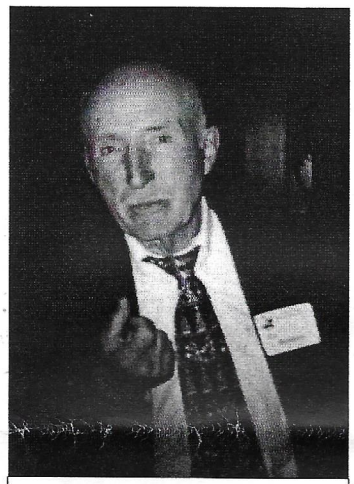
7 July Cedar Creek, Clark Mountain, and the Culpeper Museum with the Smithsonian Associates

10—15 July "Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley"; a Smithsonian Study Tour of Jackson's campaigns in 1862 and Sheridan's campaign versus Early in 1864

17—23 July "Road to Gettysburg"; a National Geographic Expedition of Lee's Invasion Campaigns to Antietam and Gettysburg

25—27 July Antietam with Ted Alexander at the Chambersburg Seminar

28 July The Second Battle of Manassas with the Smithsonian Associates



Ed Bearss, Cleveland CWRT December 6, 2000

31 July through 5 August Smithsonian Study Tour at the Battle of the Little Bighorn

7—11 August Quebec City: A Military History with the Smithsonian Associates

17—26 August "Nez Perce War"; History America

10—16 September "Road to Gettysburg"; a National Geographic Expedition of Lee's Invasion Campaigns to Antietam and Gettysburg

20—27 September Six one-day tours of Washington, D.C., billed by History America as "the Best of Bearss"

3—6 October The 28th Annual National Congress of CWRTs at the Chickamauga/ Chattanooga NMP

10—12 October With the Blue and Gray Education Society for the Battles of South Mountain and Antietam

17—25 October History America tour of the Atlanta Campaign and Sherman's March to the Sea

27 October The Battle for South Mountain with the Smithsonian Associates

2 & 3 November The Battle of Antietam with the Smithsonian Associates

4—7 November The Battle of Perryville and the Confederate Flood Tide in the West with the Blue and Gray Education Society

13—17 November Smithsonian Study Tour of the Battle of Gettysburg

24 November Stuart's Chambersburg Raid with the Smithsonian Associates

30 November—1 December Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign with the Smithsonian Associates

2-9 December History America cruise on the Delta Queen from New Orleans to Galveston

14 December The Battle of Fredericksburg with the Smithsonian Associates

15 December The Civil War Stafford & Spotsylvania Counties with the Smithsonian group

Editors note: When does this guy sleep?

West Point

in the Civil war

By Dick Crews

The United States Military Academy at West Point, New York was a very confusing place at the beginning of the American Civil War.

In January of 1861 cadets were leaving West Point, to return home, as their home states withdrew from the Union. The Commandant at the time was none other than, the later to be the famous confederate general, P. G.T. Beauregard.

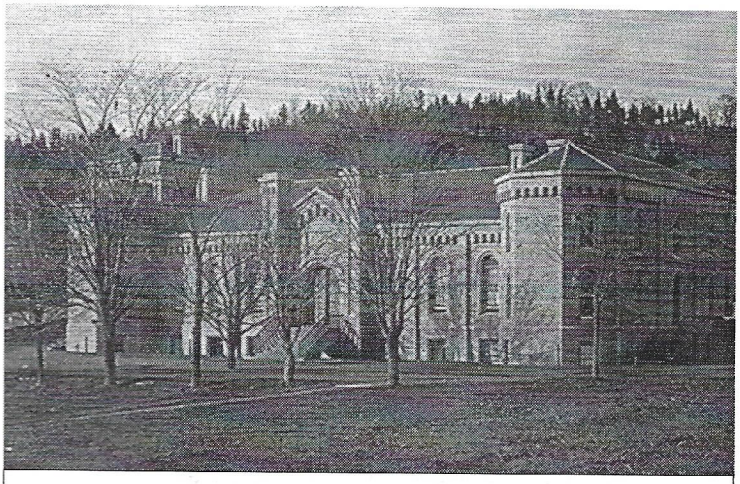
The War department was in a panic because at this critical time, when they needed a thousand new officers, West Point officer cadets were leaving in droves to return home to the South.

The War Department under all this pressure decided to ask Beauregard to step down as Commandant, although he insisted that he would stay loyal while his home state of Louisiana was still in the Union. The War Department anticipated correctly as Louisiana left the Union two weeks later. The Department also asked that the graduating classes for 1861 and 1862 be graduated in the summer of 1861. This is how George Armstrong Custer graduated a year early.

Congress was furious that West Point, paid for by the Federal government, was supplying the military leadership for the states in rebellion. In fact opponents of West Point forced Congress to vote on closing the military academy in 1863. Union successes led by West Point graduates like Ulysses S. Grant against the failures of civilian commanders like John C. Fremont, Benjamin Butler, and Franz Siegel; persuaded Congress to leave West Point open.

The Military Academy also suffered once the war started in earnest as many instructors left to join the army. This may have hurt West Point but was critical to the Union Army as most of the senior military West Point staff joined the Union cause.

977 West Point graduates in classes from 1833 to 1861 were alive when the Civil War began. Of these men, 259 graduates, 26% joined the confederacy. 638 graduates, 65 % fought for the Union. (8 did not fight for either side). 39 who came to West Point from a southern state fought for the Union. 32 men who came from a northern state fought for the confederacy.



United States Military Academy
West Point, New York (1861)

The quality of the Military Academy suffered during the war. The drop out/failure rate reached almost 50% of the cadets. This happened for several reasons: First, many of the long time instructors were away in the Army. Second, good students left early to receive high commissions in the militia's of their home state. Third, the New York City draft riots being only 60 miles away affected West Point. Not only were cadets sent to New York City to help quell the riots, but there was a strong concern that it could spread up the Hudson River to West Point itself.

And finally, it was hard to get students to concentrate on their studies while huge military battles like Gettysburg and Vicksburg were going on.

95 graduates of West Point were killed in the Civil War, 141 were wounded. The largest number of casualties came from the class of 1854, almost half the class were killed or wounded. The most famous class was 1846. From that Class came George McClellan, "Stonewall" Jackson, A.P. Hill, Cadmus Wilcox, George Stoneman, and last in the class, George Pickett.

Most West Point graduates who served in the Civil War did not reach the status of a Lee, Jackson, Grant, or Sherman, nevertheless they did clearly point out the military value of West Point training.

Dick Crews is a past President of the Cleveland CWRT and editor of THE CHARGER

An Evening

With

Mary Todd Lincoln

Wednesday March 13, 2002