

THE CHARGER

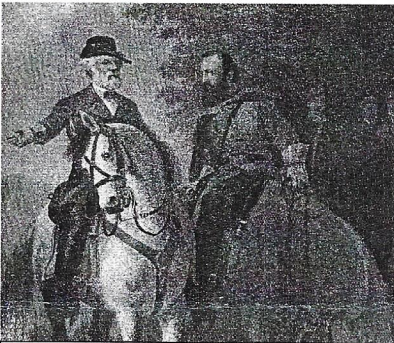
March, 2003

404 Meeting

Vol. 24 #7

Tonight's Topic:

Lee at Chancellorsville



The famous but mythical picture of Lee and Jackson at Chancellorsville. The "Lost Cause" is based on this picture.

On April 27, 1863, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker led the Army of the Potomac on a campaign to turn the Confederate left flank by crossing the Rappahannock and Rapid an Rivers above Fredericksburg. The Federals then concentrated near Chancellorsville, Virginia.

In the meantime, Confederate General Robert E. Lee marched the Army of Northern Virginia to confront Hooker. Hooker ordered his army to suspend the advance and to concentrate at Chancellorsville. Pressed closely by Lee's advance, Hooker adopted a defensive posture, thus giving Lee the initiative. On the morning of May 2, Lt. Gen. T.J. Jackson directed his corps on a march against the Federal left flank, which was reported to be "hanging in the air." Fighting was sporadic on other portions of the field throughout the day, as Jackson's column reached its jump-off point. At 5:20 pm, Jackson's line surged forward in an overwhelming attack that crushed the Union XI Corps. Federal troops rallied, resisted the advance, and counterattacked. On May 3, the Confederates attacked with both wings of the army and massed their artillery at Hazel Grove. This finally broke the Federal line at Chancellorsville. On the night of May 5-6, Hooker recrossed to the north bank of the Rappahannock. This battle was considered by many historians to be Robert E. Lee's greatest victory.

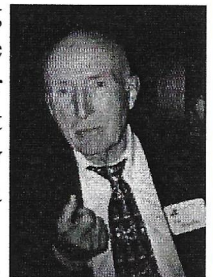
Tonight's Speaker

Ed Bearss

Ed Bearss keeps on giving his enormous knowledge and love of the Civil War to those who share that love with him. It is hardly hype to say that Ed is a legend in his own time.

After a distinguished career in the National Park Service, leaving it as the Chief Historian emeritus, he has given himself and his prodigious energy untiringly to telling the story of the American Civil War.

This will be Ed Bearss 12th time talking to the Cleveland Roundtable since 1962.



*Ed Bearss
Cleveland CWRT 2000*

**Date: Wednesday,
March 12, 2003**

**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: Pork Chops
or Cheese Lasagna**

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

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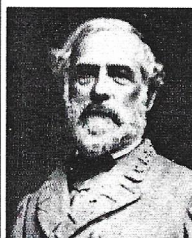
Website: www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com
 email: a-bell@msn.com

CHARGER editor—Dick Crews (800) 800-8310

Roundtable Secretary Mel Mauer is putting together a up-to-date roundtable roster and needs your help. At the march meeting we will have sheets at each table to check that your name and address is correct plus we need phone numbers and especially email addresses. If you are not attending the March meeting please drop Mel a note with your information.

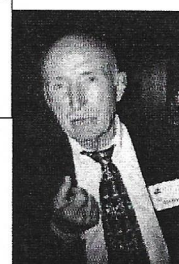
Mel Maurer
 1988 Sperry's Forge Trail
 Westlake, OH 44145
 email: melmaurer@aol.com

March 12, 2003



*Ed Bearss
 "Mister Civil War"
 discusses*

Robert E. Lee
 At
Chancellorsville



April 9, 2003

Gen. Johnston Pettigrew's Journal

The story of North Carolina General Johnston Pettigrew. He led the confederate left in Pickett's Charge and died in the retreat from Gettysburg.



Dan Bauer

May 14, 2003 "Guest Night"



During the Civil War, Canada was a British Colony

**Canada
 and the
 American
 Civil War**

Mark Vinet

President's Message - March, 2003

Our next meeting with Ed Bearss should be our largest of the year. Be sure to get your reservation in early so that you won't be disappointed. Ed's topic will be Chancellorsville. The Blue and Gray Education Society has scheduled Mr. Bearss for a sixteen programs at Essential Civil War Stops. He will be at Fredericksburg/Chancellorsville on May 4-7, 2003. If you are interested contact the Blue and Gray Education Society at 1-888-741-2437. Their web site is <www.blue-and-gray-education.org>.

Betty and I decided to enliven a dull Saturday a few weeks ago by a trip to Fremont, Ohio to visit the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center. Only a couple hours west of Cleveland south off the Turnpike, the former President's home is well worth a day trip. The Center includes his postwar home, a 33 room mansion and a 52,640 sq. ft. museum. The museum includes an above average gift shop with several books on the Civil War and Hayes available.

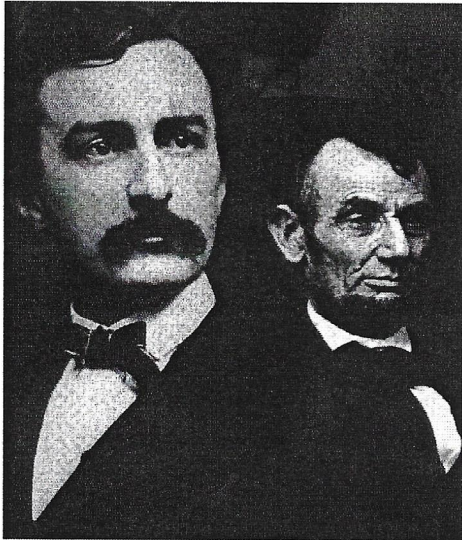
President Hayes participation in the Civil War was not a brief guest appearance as he served from June of 1861 through the end of the war. In fact he was elected to Congress near the end of the war but refused to campaign for the position or resign to accept his new position until December of 1865. Hayes served much of the war in West Virginia and not getting into the main show until his army group was involved in the South Mountain Campaign where he is seriously injured. Later he plays an active role in Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. He served most of the war as a colonel and was often quoted as saying "I would rather be remembered as one of the good colonels than one of the poor generals". Actually he ends the war commanding a division in the Valley and held the rank of Brigadier General. I can highly recommend *Hayes of the 23rd* by T Harry Williams as a biography of Hayes war years.

Maynard

Lincoln's Assassination..

The Confederate conspiracy

By John Fazio



It wasn't long, of course, after John Wilkes Booth assassination of Abraham Lincoln before numerous theories of a grand conspiracy evolved, i.e. a conspiracy grander than Booth and his little band of cut-throats, mental retards and cowards. With one exception, they are all, in my judgment, crack-pot and hare-brained, including: Andrew Johnson had a hand in it; international bankers organized it; the Roman Catholic Church was secretly behind it; Edwin Stanton was the mastermind; it was engineered by (pick one) :domestic bankers, financiers and businessmen; Copperheads; certain Radical Republicans; the B'nai B'rith; the Knights of the

Golden Circle; Major Henry R. Rathbone; John F. Parker; Mary Todd Lincoln. The exception is that the assassination was part of a Confederate plot. Before getting to the evidence for this, let's talk about motive. What could Confederate leaders and the Confederate Secret Service— fire-eaters all—hope to gain by Lincoln's, Johnson's and Seward's deaths, and perhaps Grant's. I submit, several things:

1. Revenge for ringing the curtain of history down on their peculiar institution and for crushing their dreams of independence, made particularly galling by Lincoln's tour as a conquering hero (at least to the freed blacks) of their devastated capital on April 4th, a tour during which Lincoln was alleged to have sat at the desk of Jefferson Davis and even to have put his feet upon the desk. It is relevant , too, that after April 9--the day of Lee's surrender, a live Lincoln no longer had any bargaining power as a hostage. It was a case of murder or nothing.

2. Revenge for the Dahlgren Raid on Richmond, which had been approved by Lincoln, and in which Colonel Ulrich Dahlgren, who had been hand-picked for the raid by Lincoln and who was killed in the raid, was found to have on his person a document that, assuming it was not a Confederate forgery, appeared to authorize the murder of Davis and his Cabinet.

3. The removal of Federal leadership (including Grant, if his original plans to accompany the President and Mrs. Lincoln had not changed) would create chaos in the government and, by extension, in the military (especially as regards coordination between Grant and Sherman), a condition that offered at least a possibility of salvaging Southern fortunes, certainly more than was otherwise offered if the leadership remained in place.

4. Lincoln's reputation for kindness and compassion were well known. (Lee said later that he had surrendered to Lincoln's kindness as much as to Grant's cannons.) His policy of "malice toward none.. .charity for all" had already been announced publicly. But the last things that Southern fire-eaters wanted were Northern charity and a reconciliation of belligerents. As long as they weren't tried for treason—and they knew they would not be—they wanted harsh treatment, because only then would the South remain unassimilated, unrecognized and sectarian. Then they could at least hope for another opportunity to create a separate nation. They did not want Northern leadership that would bind up the nations wounds; they wanted leadership that would tear them open and rub salt in them. And that's what they got. They didn't want a just and lasting peace "among ourselves"; they wanted to continue the struggle and at least have a hope of success at some future date. Short-sighted and stupid? Of course, but wasn't the entire Confederate effort short-sighted and stupid, and led by men who, after all is said and done, must be regarded as short-sighted and stupid insofar as they thought they could prevail in a contest in which their enemy was overwhelmingly superior in manpower, materiel and resources, a contest whose outcome Winston Churchill felt "was almost inevitable."

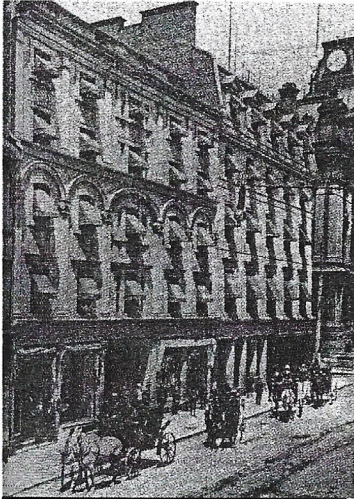


Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin was head of the State Department's secret service. The War Department also had its own secret service. All personnel and money for both were personally approved by micromanager President Jefferson Davis.

The evidence of Booth's involvement with the Confederate Secret Service is also overwhelming. A smoking gun tying his activities to the assassination itself is lacking (i.e. a document or even verbal testimony indicating that Booth was expressly ordered to kill Lincoln), but the circumstantial evidence for it is very strong. We know, for example, that Booth was a Confederate secret agent and that he was in constant contact with other Confederate secret agents in Montreal and in major Northern cities. We can surmise that Booth did not go to discuss theater.

Booth's sister also mentioned him meeting with strangers in Philadelphia. Booth, was

also a regular at the Surratt Boarding House in Washington and the Surratt Tavern outside the City, both described often and widely as a “nest of spies.” He was known to be close to John Surratt, another known secret agent and courier, who fled the country after the assassination, and who, according to Anna Surratt (his sister), thought Booth was crazy. A secret code was found among Booth’s effects after



St. Lawrence Hall, Montreal
Home of Confederate agents
in Canada

he was killed. Sam Arnold wrote to Booth after March 27 disassociating himself from Booth and advising him to desist from his plan to abduct Lincoln for the present and to “go and see how it will be taken in Richmond.”

Upon returning from Montreal on November 9, 1864, he opened an account with the Washington office of Jay Cooke and Company, Bankers, into which he deposited \$1,500. While in Montreal, he had deposited \$400 in the Ontario Bank and also bought a sixty-three pound bill of exchange for an additional few hundred dollars. This gave him the funds he needed to finance his work and, if need be, to escape abroad or into the Confederate States or within the United States itself. The timing suggests that he had been given the cash, some of it in U.S. gold coin, in

Montreal, where the Confederacy had skilled operatives in place to undermine Federal authority in the United States.

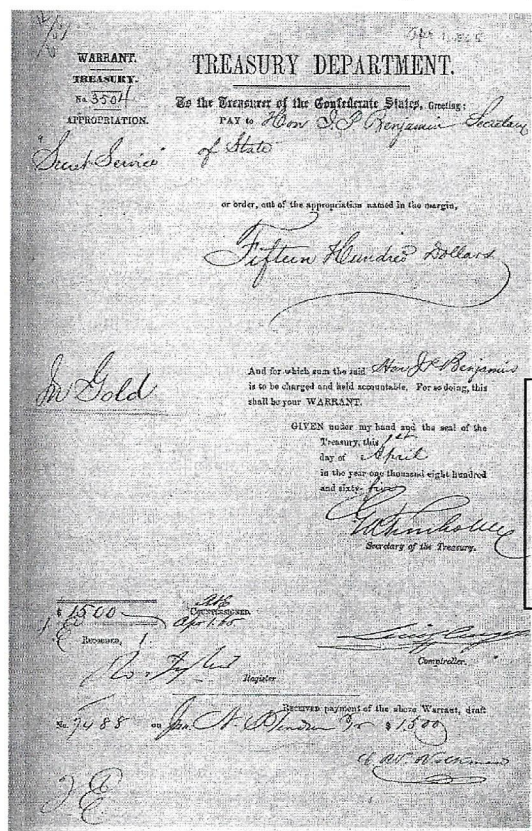
The fact that the conspirators were a bizarre band of misfits doesn’t prove that they weren’t being used by the Confederate Secret Service. The latter would have to make do with what they had. Their plan to blow up the White House had failed when the chief operative--an explosives expert attached to John S. Mosby’s Virginia Cavalry-- was captured. The success or failure of the conspirators’ plan was not paramount.. What was paramount was that their work should not be traceable to the Confederate leadership, those who authorized and financed the operations, i.e. Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin and perhaps others. There must have been and there doubtless were layers of insulation between Davis and Benjamin, and Booth and his misfits, and in the unlikely eventuality that the operations were traced to Davis and Benjamin, the chances were as good as not that evidence such as would be necessary to convict them in court, especially of treason, would be lacking, and that conciliation would more likely follow than retribution, which in fact proved to be the case with virtually all Confederates, from common foot soldiers to Lee and his generals and even to Davis himself (Benjamin left the country for England), except for Henry Wirtz, the hapless commandant of Andersonville, who was hanged. It was thus a win-win situation for the Confederate high command.

1. If Booth et al. are **successful**, and their acts are not traceable to Richmond, then wresting Southern independence from a leaderless and chaotic Federal government remains at least a possibility, and no one in Richmond will be punished.
2. If Booth et al. are **unsuccessful**, and their acts are not traceable to Richmond, then they alone suffer the consequences, whatever consequences there may be, and no one in Richmond will be punished.
3. In the unlikely eventuality that the acts of Booth et al. are traceable to Richmond, the likelihood of successful prosecution for murder or treason is very remote.

*No secret agent would act
without explicit orders!*

As it turned out, their acts were partially successful, partially unsuccessful, and the operations were not traced to Richmond with any degree of certainty that would support a trial, much less a conviction, of the Confederate leadership. The theory that the assassination and the attempted assassinations were a rogue operation does not have the ring of truth to it, though one must acknowledge that it is possible. Secret agents are trained to take and follow orders, not to strike out blindly on their own. An event of such magnitude, that would surely have a profound effect on future developments, North and South, would almost certainly have been a controlled operation, one that followed someone's explicit order.

John Fazio



A treasury warrant for gold, signed by Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, was issued to the Confederate Secret service for \$1,500 in Gold on April 1, 1865.

(Special Collections Library, Duke University)

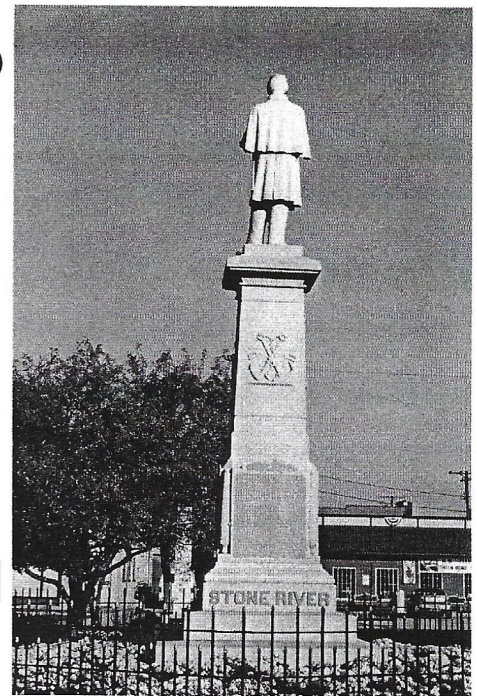
What was this money for?

The confederacy collapsed a few days later.



Northeast Ohio Civil War Monuments

Berea



Bedford

There are two other Civil War monuments in greater Cleveland besides the huge Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Public Square. You might not be familiar with these monuments unless you live in Bedford or Berea.

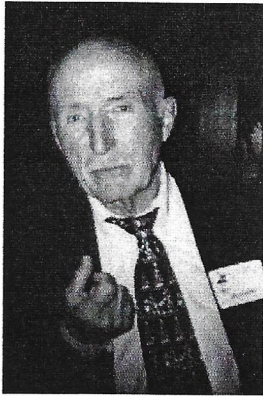
Unfortunately the triangle in Berea has been cut up to provide additional parking. Consequently, the civil war soldier on the monument is barely holding on in this very small pie shaped island. However, the monument is clean and in good shape. The triangle also has a historical marker discussing the history of Berea. The town was founded 150 years ago because of the nearby sand stone quarries.

The old railroad town of Bedford has the jewel of local Civil War Monuments. The monument is dedicated to the 230 men from Bedford who fought in the Civil War. The monument is in a small beautifully landscaped park in front of the Bedford City Hall and Bedford Historical Society. According to the Historical Society the monument was cleaned three years ago and looks it.

The Bedford monuments lists all the men who fought from Bedford and their most important battles, Vicksburg and Stone's River.

The monument is on Broadway Road in downtown Bedford. It is easily reached from Interstate 271 using the Broadway exit. Stop by early Sunday morning, as my wife and I did, and enjoy this little jewel of a park dedicated to the men of Bedford who fought in War.

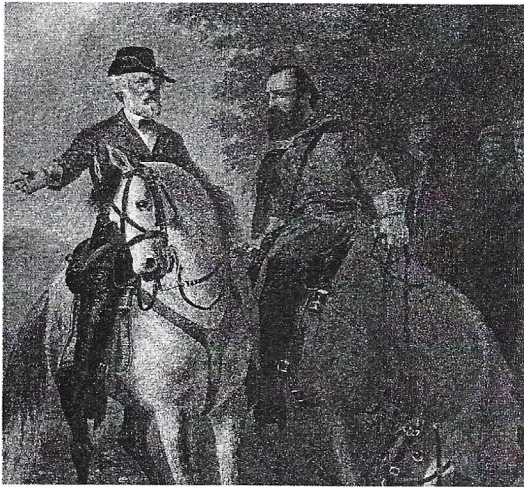
Dick Crews



"MISTER CIVIL WAR"

ED BEARSS

**TALKS ABOUT ROBERT E. LEE
AT CHANCELLORSVILLE**



**WEDNESDAY
MARCH 12, 2003**