

# THE CHARGER

May, 2002

397 Meeting

Vol. 23 #9

*Tonight's topic:*

## CAPITAL NAVY

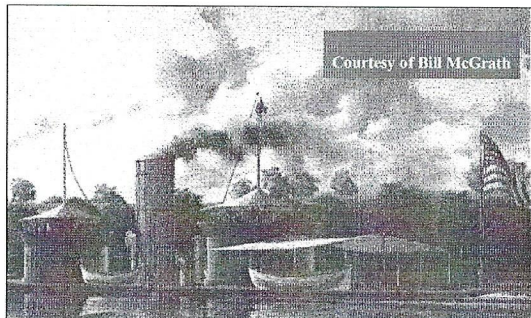
### THE MEN, SHIPS AND OPERATIONS OF THE JAMES RIVER SQUADRON

In late 1864 and early 1865, the Union Army base at City Point, Virginia, on the James River, supplying Ulysses S. Grant's army surrounding Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia, was in terms of tonnage, the largest sea port in the world.

In December, 1864, the Confederate Navy decided to destroy the Union base at City Point. Down the James River came the greatest ironclad force ever assemble by the confederates. In the lead was the ironclad **Virginia II**, **Fredericksburg**, and **Richmond** escorted by a gun boat and torpedo flotilla.

Below Drewry's Bluff the confederate squadron came under the fire of Union batteries at Trents Reach. The Union ships called in to stop the confederates were lead by the twin turret monitor **Onandaga**. The **Onandaga** inflicted minor damage on the rebel ships and for some reason fled in panic.

General Grant was furious. The **Onandaga** Captain was sacked and Admiral Porter was brought in from Hampton Roads to command. He also brought with him additional Union war ships.



*Twin Turret Monitor  
Onandaga*

The Confederate Navy never threatened City Point again.

*Tonight's speaker:*

## John M. Coski

John Coski is the Chief Historian and Librarian at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia.

John is coming to talk to us about the James River Squadron who's job was to protect the confederate capital of Richmond from the Union Navy.

The Union Navy thought that after the CSS Virginia (Merrimac) was scuttled they could sail up the James River to Richmond, as they had done at New Orleans.

However, the Union Navy never could get past the confederate batteries at Drewry's Bluff, 15 miles south of Richmond.

*Date:* Wednesday  
May 8, 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:* Pork Chops or Lasagna



# CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

*President:* Bill McGrath - (216) 491-9314  
*Vice President:* Maynard Bauer - (440) 838-8939  
*Secretary:* Warren McClelland - (216) 751-8564  
*Treasurer:* Lou Braman - (216) 752-9956  
*Historian:* Dale Thomas - (440) 779-6454

## Trustees:

Bob Boyda  
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Glenna Kimble  
Mel Maurer  
Ty Sommershield  
William F.B. Vodrey

## Phone Numbers:

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

Website: **SEARCH** Cleveland Civil War Roundtable  
email: rcrows5369@aol.com

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 membership varies from 12 to 90 years old, share a 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

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!

Lee Burneson Middle School in Westlake is again having a Civil War Encampment on Wednesday, May 15, 2002, 6PM to 9:30PM. We need volunteers to explain parts of the Civil War to these 8th graders. They need four or five volunteers from our roundtable to staff the Encampment.

If you can help, call Mel Maurer 1988 Sperry Forge Trail Westlake, OH 44145, (440) 808-1249.  
Email: melmaurer@juno.com.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MAY, 2002

Here we are, our last meeting of the year. And what a year it has been—the Hunley, the Lincolns, the Navies of the Army, the Marines, Vicksburg, George Thomas, however we missed our yearly debate because the attacks of September 11, forced us to change the schedule.

Our final speaker of the year, John Coski, Historian and Library Director of the Museum of the Confederacy, is going to cover the Confederate Navy guarding Richmond. We look forward to seeing you all.

We mustn't forget the loss this year of two faithful members of our Round Table: Matt Slattery and Glenna Kimble. They will not soon be forgotten.

We now look forward to our September 26 – 29, 2002, CCWRT trip to the Shenandoah Valley arranged for by Maynard Bauer and put on by the Blue & Gray Education Society. As space is limited this trip it will be on a first-come, first-serve basis!

It has been a challenge and a pleasure serving as your president this year. I look forward to continued "comradely" in the CCWRT for many years to come.

*Bill McGrath*

## Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Presidents

2002	Bill McGrath	1979	William Bates
2001	William Vodrey	1978	Richard McCrae
2000	Bob Boyda	1977	James Chapman
1999	Dick Crews	1976	Milton Holmes
1998	John Moore	1975	Thomas Gretter
1997	Dan Zeiser	1974	Nolan Heidelbaugh
1996	John Sutula	1973	Arthur Jordan
1995	Norton London	1972	Bernard Drews
1994	Robert Battisti	1971	Kenneth Callahan
1993	Kevin Callahan	1970	Frank Schuhle
1992	Bob Baucher	1969	Donald Heckaman
1991	Joe Tirpak	1968	Frank Moran
1990	Ken Callahan Jr.	1967	William Schlesinger
1989	Neil Glaser	1966	Donald Hamill
1988	Martin Graham	1965	Lester Swift
1987	George Vourlojianis	1964	Guy DiCarlo, Jr.
1986	Tim Beatty	1963	Paul Guenther
1995	Brian Kowell	1962	Edward Downer
1984	Neil Evans	1961	Charles Clarke
1983	William Victory	1960	Howard Preston
1982	John Harkness	1959	John Cullen, Jr.
1981	Thomas Geschke	1958	George Farr, Jr.
1980	Charles Spiegle	1957	Kenneth Grant



# Lincoln Visits Cleveland

By Dale Thomas

On the way to Washington, three days after his 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday, President-elect Abraham Lincoln stopped over-night in Cleveland for his only visit to the city. (Three days later in Montgomery, Alabama, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated President of the Confederacy.) To feel the immediacy of the times, the story is best told directly from the pages of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* that was then an evening newspaper. These accounts are quoted over a two-day period beginning on Friday evening, February 15, 1861.

“EPITAPH FOR THE LATE AMERICAN REPUBLIC. Here lies a people, who, in attempting to liberate the Negro, lost his or her own freedom. THE PRESIDENT IS COMING. As we go to press the city is astir in anticipation of the arrival of the President elect. Thousands of strangers are in from the country to greet him. He will leave the Pittsburgh train at Euclid depot, and will travel through the ‘Street of Palaces’ to the Public Square... MUD AND MUTINY. We are sorry that mud paves our streets and mutiny dwells in the camp of the Republicans on this occasion. The mud can be endured... but mutiny, which has been the death of the old Whig party, divided the Democratic Party, and now threatens the existence of the dominant party... Peace be with thee, Whigs and Wide Awakes! Let the President leave town and then-- (!)” As the reader has already suspected, the *Plain Dealer* had little sympathy with the Republican Party in those bygone days.

“PREPARING FOR UNCLE ABE. Flags are flying from the many liberty poles about the city.

Numerous buildings are decorated with the

stars and stripes and the streets look quite gay. The mud, however, is awful. The rain last night softened it up and some of the streets through which the procession will pass are a perfect mush. Some forty young Republicans are prepared to form an escort on horseback to Mr. Robert Lincoln, the ‘Prince of rails,’ in case

the clouds are not too threatening.” The weather did not cooperate, but Lincoln’s eldest son still rode with them.

“LINCOLN COME AND GONE. A very flattering reception was given to the President-elect in this city, and we are happy to state by citizens, without respect of party... Euclid Street was alive with teams and people...and during a portion of the afternoon it alternately rained and snowed. Artillery and Dragoon [troops] were drawn up in line... The Grays were stationed to keep the platform and station house clear of the crowd. Mr. Lincoln alighted from the train... A smile illuminated his countenance as he passed through the crowd (a friend insists on calling it a disagreeable smirk) and he bowed stiffly and angularly as he passed along.” In spite of the weather, Lincoln rode with his wife and sons in an open carriage pulled by four white horses.





The parade started at the railroad station where today East 55<sup>th</sup> Street crosses Euclid Avenue. Wagons carried workmen from local industries, "one of which bore a portrait of the President, and another this inscription, 'We forge bonds for the Union.' As the procession moved down Euclid Street, the throng was immense." Along the way, Lincoln stopped his carriage and climbed out to hear music performed by a brass band, and then, carried by her father, a little girl "presented Mr. Lincoln with a handsome bouquet for which he rewarded her with a kiss...

When the procession arrived at the Weddell House both Bank and Superior streets were densely thronged with people." Lincoln, along with his family and entourage, spent the night in the Weddell House, the best hotel in Cleveland. Among those going to Washington, John Milton Hay, Lincoln's assistant private secretary, later married a Clevelander and spent some time in the city before becoming Ambassador to Great Britain and then Secretary of State under William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt.

Coming up from his wholesale business in the Flats, John D. Rockefeller probably stood in the rain like the others to hear Lincoln address the crowd. The Rockefeller Building, constructed by the Oil Tycoon in 1903, stands at the corner of Superior Avenue and West 6<sup>th</sup> Street where Lincoln spoke from a balcony in 1861. A plaque marks the historic spot of Lincoln's speech, ignored by most pedestrians on their way to work or a football game.

"Fellow-citizens of Cleveland and Ohio," Lincoln said, looking down at the crowd. "We have come here upon a very inclement afternoon. We have marched for two miles through the rain and mud. Your large numbers testify that you are in earnest about something. Do I desire that you should think this extreme earnestness is about me? I should be exceedingly sorry to see such devotion, if that were the case. But I know it is paid to something worth more than any one man, or any thousand, or ten thousand men—devotion to the Constitution; to the Union and the Laws; to the perpetual liberty of the people of

this country... There is one feature that gives me great pleasure; and that is to learn that this reception is given, not alone by those with whom I chance to agree, politically, but by all parties... If Judge Douglas had been elected President of the United States, and had this evening been passing through your city, the Republicans ought, in the same manner, to have come out to receive him. If we don't make common cause and save the good old ship, nobody will pilot hereafter."

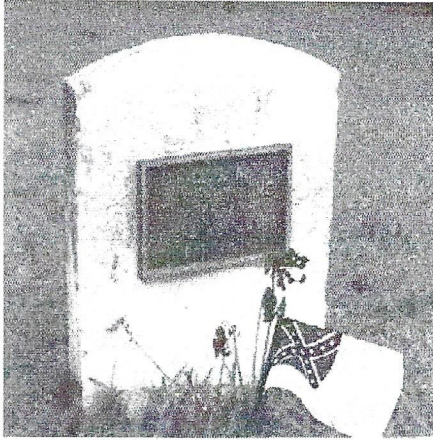
Lincoln finished his brief speech and then mingled with well-wishers. "The workmen at the Newburgh Rolling Mill presented Mr. Lincoln with a T rail of their manufacture, which was courteously received." Stepping forward, Mr. McIlrath turned around and "backed up to Lincoln's back, and reaching over patted the President elect on the head, saying 'I am taller than the President.'"

Besides reporting on the celebrations, the *Plain Dealer* made note of other occurrences at the corner of Bank and Superior. "PICKPOCKETS. The ardent and admiring devotees of 'Old Abe' gave him more attention than they did their pockets last night..." Among those who were robbed was "E. F. Gaylord, gold watch (\$125) and cash (\$50)... We will report the rest when they come in. No Democrats in the above list."

"THE DEPARTURE. Saturday was as fine a day as could be desired for the trip of the Presidential party to Buffalo and formed a delightful contrast to the previous day... There was a very large crowd at the depot when the train started, to whom Mr. Lincoln waived an adieu from the rear platform." A band played "Hail Columbia" amidst shouts of "Goodbye Uncle Abe" and "God bless you." When the train pulled out of the station, like an omen of things to come, "Wm. Hazen had his hand shot off whilst firing a salute."

*Dale Thomas*

## THE WIDOW



Do you remember now  
How that day was so grand?  
Do you remember how  
We all cheered the band?

Do you remember now  
How our pride grew?  
Do you remember how  
The new flag flew?

Do you remember now  
How the victories were tolled?  
Do you remember how  
Your warrior fought so bold?

Do you wonder now  
Was the cause really so grand?  
Do you wonder how  
It could destroy our land?

Do you wonder now  
Will there be a tomorrow?  
Do you wonder how  
You will bear the sorrow?

Forget now your pain  
Look not for a reason.  
Hold to love again  
Find hope to believe in.

**Emily Larson**

Emily Larson is the 2002, Cleveland Civil War Roundtable essay contest winner. Emily is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student in Mr. Dubil's Class at Lee Burneson Middle School in Westlake. Emily, her family, and teacher will be our guests at our May 8, 2002 meeting. Outstanding poem, Emily



# SHENANDOAH VALLEY, VIRGINIA



LAND OF: STONEWALL JACKSON

PHILIP SHERIDAN

JUBAL EARLY

GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER

JOHN B. GORDON

DAVID HUNTER

GRUMBLE JONES

FRANZ SIGEL

JOHN C. FREMONT

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, TO SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2002

The 2002 Cleveland Civil War Roundtable field trip will be to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. During the war the Shenandoah was so important it was simply known as "The Valley."

The tour will be lead by well known Civil War author Jeffery Wert ~~and~~ one of our Charleston, South Carolina guides from last year, Dana MacBean. Wert and MacBean will hold a meeting Thursday night to preview our tour of the Valley.

Jeffery Wert wrote the definitive book on the deceive Valley Battle of Cedar Creek. Mr. Wert spoke to us in Cleveland six years ago on his book on George Armstrong Custer. Custer made much of his Civil War reputation in the Shenandoah Valley.

The tour will use a 47 seat charter bus leaving each morning from our hotel in Winchester, Virginia. The bus will head down the Valley to a dozen battlefields. A box lunch will be provided.

Reservations and questions: Call Maynard Bauer (440) 835-3081

### SPRING RAFFLE

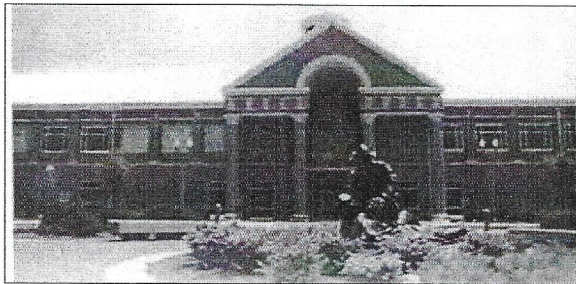
The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is raffling off a numbered, limited-edition print signed by the artist, Keith Rocco, depicting the Union breakthrough in the First Battle of Kernstown, Va., March 23, 1862. The print is entitled "We have got them started. Come on! Come on!" It's framed, with an image 24" wide by 16" high. It was originally commissioned by the Civil War Preservation Trust, and was given to us in thanks for our contribution last year for battlefield preservation at Trevilian Station.

Raffle tickets are \$1 apiece, or six for \$5, and the drawing will be at our meeting on May 8. You need not be present to win.



## SHOULDER ARMS - ON TO HARRISBURG!

Join us as we visit the big, new, much-praised National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pa. on Saturday, May 11. We'll be caravanning, leaving at 6am so that we can have a full day there before returning that evening. The NCWM has many important Civil War artifacts and interactive displays, spread across a dozen galleries and 27,000 square feet of exhibition space. Since it opened on Lincoln's Birthday last year, it's attracted over 45,000 visitors from 26 states and six foreign countries. The Museum's website is at [www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org](http://www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org).



The Museum is open from 10am-5pm on weekends, and is on the eastern edge of Harrisburg in Reservoir Park, Pa., about 200 miles east of Pittsburgh. Take the Pa. Turnpike to Exit 19, and follow Route 283 North to Interstate 83 North. At Exit 30, go about 2.5 miles west on Route 22/Walnut Street, staying on Walnut Street when it splits from Route 22. Turn left at the Parkside Cafe into Reservoir Park. The Museum and parking are at the top of the hill. Admission is \$7/adults, \$6/seniors, and \$5/children.

If you'd like to go, please call William Vodrey at (216) 664-3643 so that he knows how many to expect.

## Nominations for Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Officers & Trustees for 6/1/02 to 5/31/03

The nominating committee recommendations for next year's officers & trustees are as follows:

President: **Maynard Bauer**

Vice President: **Warren McClelland**

Secretary: **Mel Maurer**

Treasurer: **Maureen Goodyear**

Historian: **Dale Thomas**

Trustees: **Bill McGrath\***

**William Vodrey\***

**Marilyn DeBaltzo**

**Ty Sommershield**

**Kirk Hinman**

**Jean Solyan**

### Nominating Committee

Kirk Hinman

Joyce McGrath

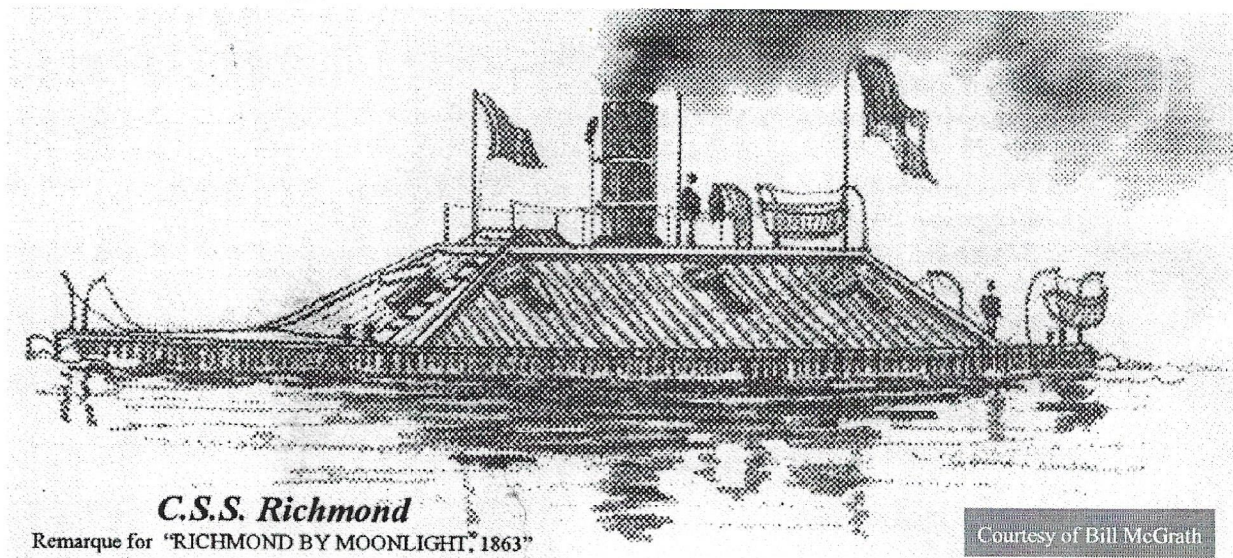
Dick Crews

\*The Constitution of the Roundtable of Cleveland requires two trustees be the last two immediate past presidents.

**Chautauqua, New York only 2 1/2 hours from Cleveland will offer these Civil War programs this summer.**

Week Nine: The Civil War: Crossroads for a Nation 2002 > Chautauqua Institution				
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
AUGUST	August	August	August	August
<b>18</b>  10:45 - Service of Worship & Sermon. William J. Fowler, Civil War lecturer; senior pastor, Church Street United Methodist Church, Knoxville	<b>19</b>  9:15 - William J. Fowler  10:45 - Jay Winik, historian, author, <i>April 1865: The Month That Saved America</i>	<b>20</b>  9:15 - William J. Fowler  10:45 - James McPherson, professor of history, Princeton University	<b>21</b>  9:15 - William J. Fowler  10:45 - Eric Foner, professor of history, Columbia University	<b>22</b>  9:15 - William J. Fowler  10:45 - Roger Wilkins, author; former U.S. assistant attorney general

**"GUEST NIGHT" WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2002**



## **CAPITAL NAVY**

**CONFEDERATE NAVY GUARDING RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**