

THE CHARGER

November, 2003

409 Meeting

Vol. 25 #3

Tonight's Program:

New York Draft Riots

Nowhere was opposition to the draft more vocal than in New York, where Lincoln was despised by the hard-line members of the Democratic party, who were openly critical of the administration's policies. The working-class Irish in New York City were particularly resentful of the draft policies that allowed the wealthy to buy their way out the draft, and they were hostile toward blacks, some of whom had recently been used to replace striking Irish longshoremen.



On Monday morning, July 13, 1863, the draft office at 3rd Ave. and 46th Street was resuming the drawing of names of draftees from the lottery wheel when a mob of men armed with clubs arrived and burned the place down. The burning of the draft office was the beginning of a four-day spree of looting, burning, and murder that singled out the city's black population as the scapegoat for the country's ills. All in all, the mob caused more than \$1.5 million of damage.

The number killed or wounded during the riot is unknown, but estimates range from two dozen to nearly 100. Eventually, Lincoln deployed combat troops from the Federal Army of the Potomac to restore order; they remained encamped around the city for several weeks.

Tonight's Speaker:

William Vodrey

William Vodrey is a past president of Cleveland Roundtable and an a frequent Ohio Civil War speaker.

William presentation tonight will be on the largest urban riot in American history, the New York draft riots.

Union troops leaving the Gettysburg battlefield were ordered to New York City to restore order.

**Date: Wednesday,
November 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: Roasted Chicken
or Pistachio Meat Loaf**

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

President: **Warren McClelland** (216) 751-4477

Vice President: **Mel Maurer** (440) 808-1249

Secretary: **Evelyn Hayes** (216) 381-3878

Treasurer: **Dave Carrino** (440) 843-9088

Historian: **Dale Thomas** (440) 779-6454

Trustees:

Maynard Bauer

Bill McGrath

Kathleen Platt

Lou Braman

Terry Koozer

George George

website: clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com

email: a-bell@adelphia.net

The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is open to anyone with an interest in the American Civil War. The 133 members of the Roundtable, who's membership varies from 14 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.

Dues: \$40.00 per year

c/o David Carrino

4470 Coral Gables Dr.

Parma, OH 44134

Check: Cleveland CWRT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE NOVEMBER, 2003

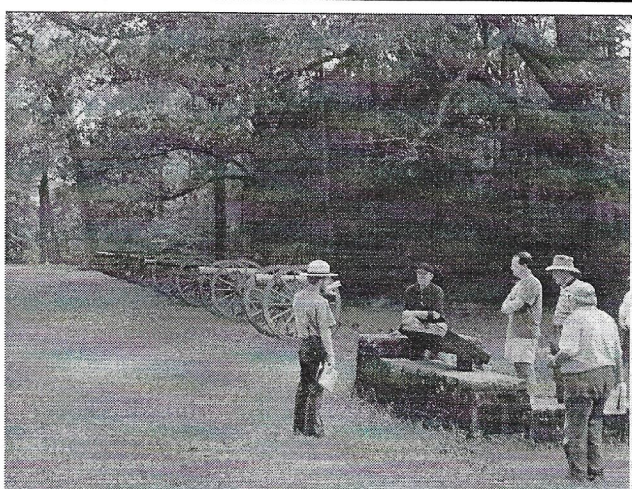
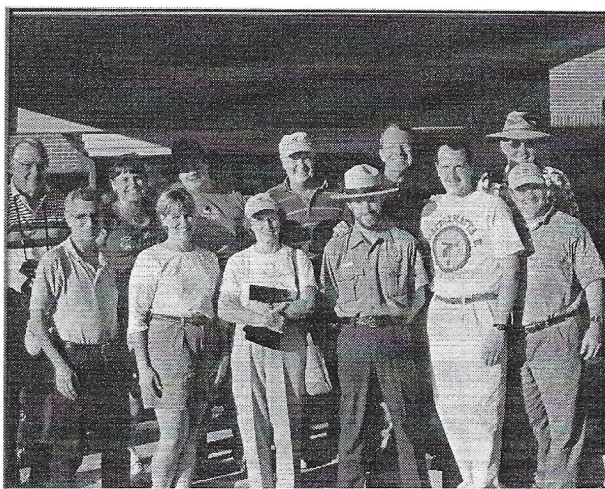
Our October meeting featured an excellent presentation, complete with slides, on the Cleveland Grays, by past round table president George Vourlojianis. It was an enjoyable evening of local history from a knowledgeable source. Dr. Vourlojianis also mentioned that he would be willing to conduct a tour of the Armory for members some Saturday. If you are interested, please see me at the meeting.

This month's speaker also a past president, William Vodrey, works as hard as anyone I am aware of on behalf of the round table, and has been of invaluable assistance to me this year.

Just a reminder: if you have not yet paid this year's dues, please do so. Also, please make your dinner reservations with JAC by Monday.

I hope to see many of you Wednesday evening.
I remain, with great respect,
your obt. servt.

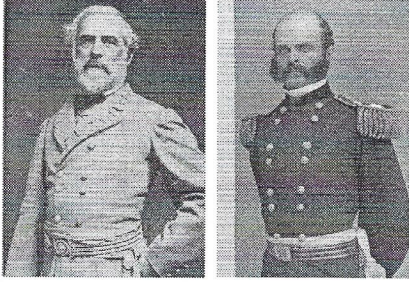
Warren L. McClelland, Jr.



Pictures from the Cleveland CWRT field trip to Shiloh, September 25, 2003

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2003/2004 SCHEDULE**

September 10, 2003

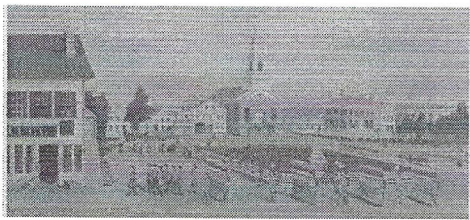


Lee vs. Burnside

**Fredericks-
burg**

**Frank
O'Reilly**

October 8, 2003



Grays
on
Public Square
1839

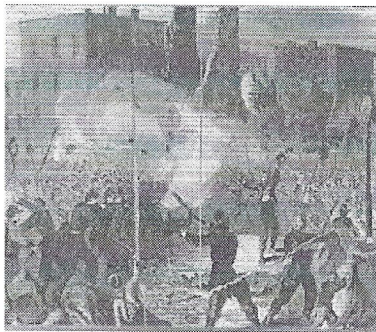
Painting by Joseph Parker
Courtesy of the Western Reserve
Historical Society

**The Cleveland Grays
George Vourlojianis**

November 12, 2003

**New York
Draft Riots**

**William
Vodrey**



December 10, 2003



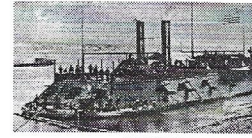
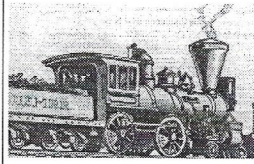
Clara Barton

**Carol
Starre-Kmiecik**

January 14, 2004

**The Great Debate: *What equipment or innovation
had the most effect on the Civil War?***

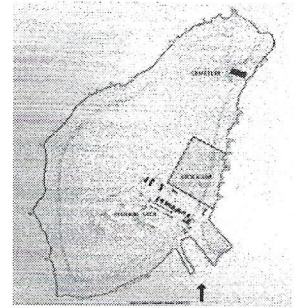
Moderator: Dick Crews



February 11, 2004

Johnson's Island

David Bush



March 10, 2004

**Irish
in the
Army of Northern Virginia**

Kelly O'Grady



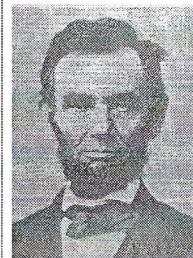
April 14, 2004

**George B.
McClellan**

Thomas Rowland



May 12, 2004



**Lincoln
and His Generals**

Norty London

**For membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable: Call (800) 800-8310 or visit our web site.
<http://clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>**

The Congressional Medal of Honor

A Brief History

By Dan Zeiser

The Congressional Medal of Honor is the highest award bestowed upon military personnel. Almost three thousand five hundred have been awarded in the more than one hundred forty years of its existence. The medal has undergone a number of changes and, at times, has been awarded, taken away, and given again. It has had a rather remarkable history. What follows is a brief outline of its life.

In March of 1847, Congress authorized a certificate of merit to be presented by the president when a private soldier distinguished himself in the service. An increase in pay of two dollars (\$2) per month went along with the certificate. This was the precursor to the Medal of Honor.

On December 9, 1861, Iowa Senator James W. Grimes introduced S. No. 82 in the United States Senate, a bill designed to "promote the efficiency of the Navy" by authorizing the production and distribution of "medals of honor." On December 21, the bill was passed, authorizing two hundred such medals to be produced, "which shall be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen and marines as shall distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action and other seamanlike qualities during the present war." President Lincoln signed the bill and the (Navy) Medal of Honor was born.

Two months later, on February 17, 1862, Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson introduced a similar bill, this one to authorize "the President to distribute medals to privates in the Army of the United States who shall distinguish themselves in battle." It is important to note that the medal was conceived only for enlisted men. Officers were not eligible. Over the following months, the wording changed slightly as the bill made its way through Congress. As passed, it read:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause two thousand "medals of honor" to be prepared with suitable emblematic devices, and to direct that the same be presented, in the name of the Congress, to such non-commissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action, and other soldier-like qualities, during the present insurrection (Civil War)."

President Lincoln signed it into law, creating the Army Medal of Honor.

Although the medal had not yet been proposed in Congress, a number of individuals were later given the award for various acts of heroism. The first such act was by Army Assistant Surgeon Bernard J. D. Irwin, who rescued sixty soldiers at Apache Pass, Arizona. Irwin was presented with his medal in 1894. The first action in the Civil War to merit the award was performed by Private Francis Edwin Brownell on May 24, 1861.

The first member of the Navy to earn the award was John Williams aboard the U.S.S. Pawnee on June 16, 1861. Eleven soldiers performed actions at the first Battle of Bull Run in July, 1861 that eventually led them to be recipients of the Medal of Honor. This included Dr. Mary Walker, the only woman ever to receive the award. Rather than grant her request for a commission, President Johnson ordered that she receive the medal in 1865. It was revoked in the purge of 1917, but restored again in 1977. In all, twenty-five soldiers and five sailors would perform Medal of Honor actions in the months from Irwin's first heroic act to the establishment of the Navy Medal in December of 1861.



Navy Secretary Gideon Welles selected the design of the original medal of Honor in 1862.

After the award was established, Corporal John Mackie became the first Marine to earn and receive it for his actions at Drewry's Bluff, Virginia aboard the U.S.S. Galena. In April of 1862, civilian spy James J. Andrews and his raiders began their great locomotive chase behind enemy lines in Georgia. Seven were hanged as spies. Four eventually were awarded the medal, the first to die in their moment of heroism. The first awards to be presented were given to six of the surviving raiders by Edwin Stanton in March of 1863. The Navy presented its first medals on April 3, 1863. On March 3, 1863, the law creating the Army Medal of Honor was amended to allow officers to be eligible. However, the Navy medal continued to be limited to enlisted personnel. It took until 1915 for legislation making Navy officers eligible for the medal.

On May 22, 1863, the highest one day total of awards were earned. This occurred during the siege of Vicksburg, when ninety-six soldiers performed Medal of Honor actions. All told, one hundred twenty medals were earned at Vicksburg. One month later, approximately three hundred of the eight hundred sixty-four members of the 27th Maine agreed to remain to guard Washington, DC after their enlistment had expired. In return, Secretary of War Stanton submitted the entire group of volunteers for Medals of Honor. A typographical error resulted in all eight hundred sixty-four of the

27th Maine's soldiers being awarded Medals of Honor for their extra four days of service. All were revoked in the purge of 1917.

In July of 1863, former slave William Harvey Carney became the first African-American to earn the award during the 54th Massachusetts' assault on Fort Wagner at Charleston, South Carolina. The only man in the Civil War to receive two Medals of Honor was Lt. Thomas Custer for his actions at Deatonville or Sailor's Creek, Virginia in 1865. The last Medal of Honor of the Civil War was earned on April 19, 1865 at Greensboro, North Carolina by Charles Malone Betts.

One thousand five hundred twenty Medals were awarded for Civil War actions. This does not include those awarded to the 27th Maine. Six hundred eighty of those were presented by the end of 1865. From 1866 to 1890, one hundred five more were awarded. However, more Medals of Honor (683) were awarded from 1890 to 1899 for Civil War actions than were awarded during the war itself.

Following the Battle of Little Big Horn, a large number of men were submitted for Medals of Honor. A review board of officers was assembled to review the requests. The number was pared down to twenty-four men and a new standard was applied to granting the medal. To be awarded a medal, "the conduct which deserves such recognition should not be the simple discharge of duty, but such acts beyond this that if omitted or refused to be done, should not justly subject the person to censure as a shortcoming or failure." This was the first of a number of changes. During the 1890s, when more than seven hundred Civil War soldiers applied for Medals of Honor, President McKinley directed the Army to establish new policies regarding applications and awards. On June 26, 1897, new regulations were published. The Medal of Honor could only be awarded for "gallantry and intrepidity" above and beyond that of fellow soldiers. An application had to be made by someone other than the individual who performed the deed that was the reason for the application. The application had to be supported by the sworn testimony of at least one eyewitness to the heroic deed. Finally, a one year time limit, beginning on June 26, 1897, was set for submissions for medals. This solved the problem of Civil War soldiers applying for medals some thirty years or more after their service.

There were cosmetic changes as well. The design of the medal was changed in 1904 and Congress required all medal recipients to return their originals for replacement. However, due to the reluctance of honorees to return the originals, in 1907 Congress authorized the new medals to be sent out without returning the older versions. Both medals, though, could not be worn at the same time. In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt issued an Executive Order providing that, when practicable, the soldier would be ordered to Washington, D.C. to be presented the award with "formal and impressive" ceremony by the President or his designee. On campaign, the presentation would be made by the division commander or higher.

On June 3, 1916, a review board of retired generals was created to investigate past awards. Lt. General Nelson Miles, a Medal of Honor recipient from the Civil War, was appointed to lead the board. It convened in October of that year. Every award of the Army Medal of Honor since the Civil War was reviewed. On February 5, 1917, the board issued its findings, striking the names of nine hundred eleven recipients from the honor roll. The names included all eight hundred sixty-four members of the 27th Maine, twenty-nine members of Lincoln's funeral guard, and six civilians who were ruled ineligible because of their civilian status. One of these was Dr. Mary Walker, whose medal was returned in 1977.

The last Medals of Honor awarded for Civil War action were presented on April 17, 1917. This ended the controversial and divisive scramble by Civil War veterans for the award. It also paved the way for new legislation protecting the integrity of the medal. These protections began in 1918, which defined the future of the award. It eliminated the Certificate of Merit, the precursor to the Medal of Honor, and established lesser awards – the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the Silver Star. The difference between the levels of awards was defined. To win a Medal of Honor, a recipient had to "in action involving actual conflict with an enemy, distinguish himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty." Recommendations for Medals of Honor had to be made within two years of the act of heroism and the presentation was to be made within three years. Additionally, no one could receive more than one Medal of Honor. Until this law, there had been nineteen double awards. In 1963, Congress amended the law to allow for awards for "action against an enemy of the United States...while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or...while serving with friendly forces in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a bel-

ligerent party.” This allowed for Medals of Honor to be awarded to Korean and Viet Nam War veterans.

World War II was the setting for several Medal of Honor firsts. On Guadalcanal, Douglas Munro became the first and only member of the U.S. Coast Guard to receive the medal. It was awarded posthumously. Private Joseph P. Martinez became the first Hispanic-American to receive the award for his actions in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. Detroit Lion football star Captain Maurice “Footsie” Britt earned the medal in Italy in 1943. Having already won the DSC and the Silver Star, he became the first soldier to earn all of the military’s top honors in a single war. And let us not forget Audie Leon Murphy, who earned the Medal of Honor in January of 1945 in France, becoming the most decorated soldier of World War II. Finally, the 442nd Infantry Regiment, composed mainly of Japanese-Americans, became the most decorated combat unit of its size in U.S. history. On April 5, 1945, PFC Sadao S. Munemori earned the Medal of Honor, the only Japanese-American of the war to do so. His Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously and is on display at the Smithsonian.

The United States Air Force was created on July 26, 1947. The first flier of the now separate Air Force to earn the Medal of Honor did so on August 5, 1950. As was not uncommon, it was awarded posthumously. In 1956, legislation authorized the Air Force to have a distinctive design for its own Medal of Honor separate from the Army or Navy.

In its history, three thousand four hundred fifty-nine Medals of Honor have been awarded. The awards were for three thousand four hundred fifty-four separate acts of heroism. These acts were performed by three thousand four hundred forty individuals. Nine unknown soldiers are included in this number. As of January, 2003, there were one hundred thirty-nine living recipients of our nation’s highest award.

Army Medal of Honor





Wednesday
November 12,
2003

New York Draft Riots