

THE CHARGER

September, 2003

407 Meeting

Vol. 25 #1

Tonight's Program:



Fredericksburg

Lee vs. Burnside



Fredericksburg, Virginia was a strategically important town on the Rappahannock River. The Federal Army of the Potomac, 115,000-strong, advanced to Fredericksburg, arriving on November 17. There were only a few thousand Confederates on hand to challenge them.

However, Union commander Ambrose Burnside's campaign was delayed for over three weeks to build pontoon bridges. Meanwhile, Confederate commander Robert E. Lee took advantage of the stalled Federal drive to entrench his Army of Northern Virginia, 78,000-strong, on the high ground behind Fredericksburg.

With the arrival of the pontoons, Burnside crossed the river on December 11, 1862. Two days later Burnside launched a two-pronged attack to drive Lee's forces from an imposing set of hills just outside Fredericksburg.

The main assault struck south of the city. Misunderstandings and bungled leadership on the part Burnside resulted in heavy losses. Burnside launched his second attack from Fredericksburg against the Confederate left on Marye's Heights. Wave after wave of Federal attackers were mown down by Confederate troops firing from an unassailable position in a sunken road protected by a stone wall. Over the course of the afternoon, no fewer than fourteen successive Federal brigades charged the wall of Confederate fire. Not a single Federal soldier reached Longstreet's line.

On December 15, Burnside ordered his beaten army back across the Rappahannock River. The Union had lost 13,000 soldiers in a battle in which the dreadful carnage was matched only by its futility.

Tonight's Speaker:

Frank O'Reilly

Francis Augustin O'Reilly (Frank) is historian at the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park.

Frank, a frequent roundtable speaker, will discuss a battle, the battle at Fredericksburg, which is considered a complete confederate victory for Robert E. Lee.

Frank O'Reilly however says not so fast, in his book "**The Battle of Fredericksburg**," he surprisingly points out that the Union came close to winning the battle.

**Date: Wednesday,
September 10, 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: Flat Iron Steak
or Salmon**

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 SEPTEMBER, 2003

Welcome to the 2003-2004 season of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table. I am very excited about the slate of this year's speakers. I think there will be something for everyone from this season's distinguished presenters.

I am especially pleased to welcome this year's inaugural speaker, Mr. Frank O'Reilly. Mr. O'Reilly is an historian at the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park and any one who has had the pleasure of participating in one of his tours down in Virginia knows that we can expect an interesting and informative evening.

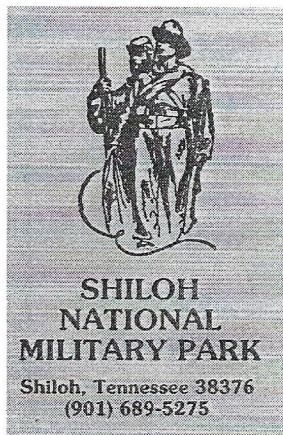
I would like to take a moment to thank George George, William Vodrey, and Dick Crews for their invaluable assistance in getting ready for this year's Roundtable season. Their suggestions, ideas and good counsel have been greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would very much like to hear from anyone in the organization who has comments, ideas, criticisms or concerns. Please feel free to e-mail, phone, or simply grab me at a meeting. It is your Round Table and I would like to hear from you.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

I remain, with great respect,
your obt. servt.

Warren L. McClelland, Jr.



Shiloh

Shiloh, September 25 - 28, 2003

We still have space. If you would like to sign up contact:

Dan Zeiser

5877 Williamsburg Dr.

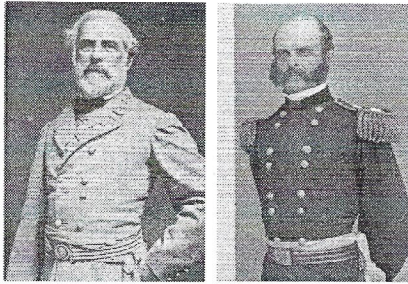
Highland Hts., OH 44143

Work: (440) 449-9311 Home (440) 449-1391

email: danzeiser@aol.com

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

September 10, 2003



Lee vs. Burnside

**Fredericks-
burg**

**Frank
O'Reilly**

October 8, 2003

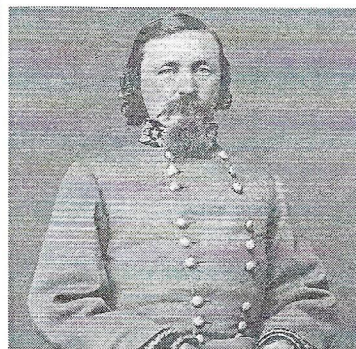


Grays
on
Public Square
1839

Painting by Joseph Parker
Courtesy of the Western Reserve
Historical Society

**The Cleveland Grays
George Vourlojianis**

November 12, 2003



**George E.
Pickett**

**Lesley
Gordon**

December 10, 2003



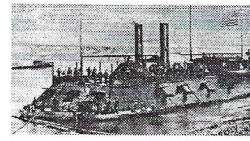
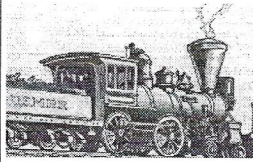
Clara Barton

**Carol
Starre-Kmiecik**

January 14, 2004

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

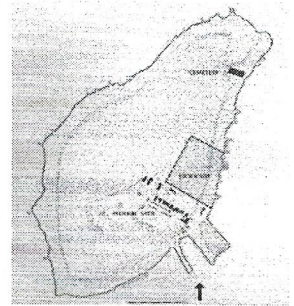
Moderator: Dick Crews



February 11, 2004

Johnson's Island

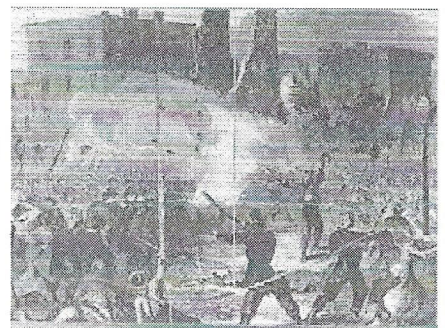
David Bush



March 10, 2004

**New York
Draft Riots**

**William
Vodrey**



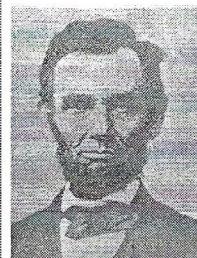
April 14, 2004

**George B.
McClellan**

Thomas Rowland



May 12, 2004



**Lincoln
and His Generals**

Norty London

Charleston 1861: The *Other* Star-Spangled Banner

by William F.B. Vodrey

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On April 14, 1861, after an extensive bombardment, the outnumbered and outgunned Union garrison of Ft. Sumter surrendered to the Confederate forces in and around Charleston harbor. U.S. Army Maj. Robert Anderson insisted, as a condition of his troops' surrender, that they be permitted to fire a 100-gun salute to the huge United States flag that had so defiantly flown over the fort during the battle. Confederate Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard agreed to the demand of Anderson, his former West Point artillery instructor. The Union guns began firing the salute, but on the 47th round, Union Army Private Daniel Hough was killed in the accidental explosion of a pile of cartridges; five others were wounded. Hough was the first casualty of the Civil War. The salute was promptly reduced to 50 rounds. Maj. Anderson and his troops then boarded a steamship and sailed north, with the flag, into history.

Anderson was a Kentuckian like Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, and remained loyal to the United States. He wrote, "Our Southern brethren have done grievously wrong; they have rebelled and attacked their father's house and their loyal brothers. They must be punished and brought back, but this necessity breaks my heart."

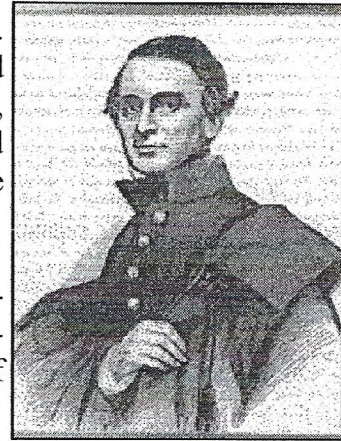
Anderson toured the North with the 33-star garrison flag, and men young and old flocked to the colors, eager to fight for "Lincoln and liberty." The Ft. Sumter flag was an extraordinarily popular and powerful symbol of the Union, and some historians trace the beginning of our country's long admiration - if not veneration - of the American flag to the early patriotic fervor of the Civil War. Anderson brought the flag to New York City for an April 20, 1861 patriotic rally, where it was flown from an equestrian statue of George Washington. More than 100,000 people thronged Manhattan's Union Square in what was, by some accounts, the largest public gathering in the country up to that time.

The flag was taken from town to town, city to city throughout the North, where it was frequently "auctioned" to raise funds for the war effort. Any patriotic citizen who won the flag at auction was expected to immediately donate it back to the nation, and it would promptly be taken to the next rally to repeat its fundraising magic.

William F. B. Vodrey is a Cleveland Magistrate and past President of the Cleveland CWRT.

In time, the Confederacy faltered and Union victory became certain. After Charleston fell and the war drew to a close, there was a grand celebration in the former "cradle of secession." On April 14, 1865, Union officers and dignitaries gathered at Ft. Sumter. A band played, several nearby Navy warships fired salutes, and there were hymns and prayers.

Then, exactly four years to the day after he'd lowered the flag in surrender, Gen. Robert Anderson raised it in triumph over the fort's battered and shot-torn walls. The flag was transformed into a symbol of a restored and victorious United States.



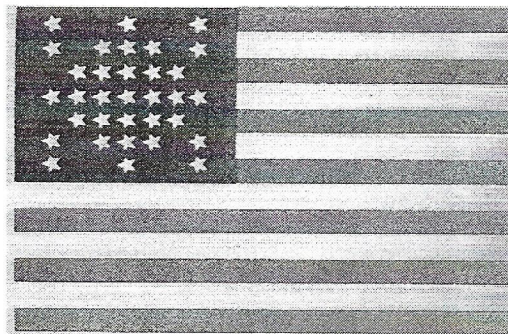
Major Robert Anderson

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was the principal orator at the celebration, and gave a long speech, as was the custom of the day. He said, "On this solemn and joyful day, we again lift to the breeze our fathers' flag, now, again, the banner of the United States, with the fervent prayer that God would crown it with honor, protect it from treason, and send it down to our children.... Terrible in battle, may it be beneficent in peace [and] as long as the sun endures, or the stars, may it wave over a nation neither enslaved nor enslaving.... We lift up our banner, and dedicate it to peace, Union, and liberty, now and forevermore." The crowd responded with great applause.

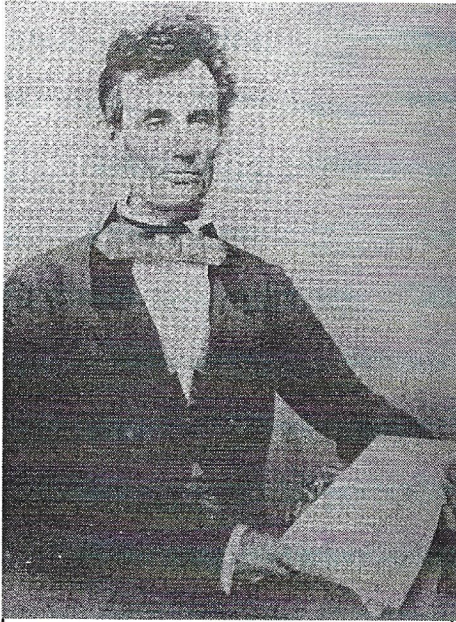
That night, fireworks brightened the skies over Charleston harbor. Almost five hundred miles to the north, President Lincoln went with his wife to Ford's Theatre for the last time.

The original 33-star garrison flag is now on display in the Ft. Sumter museum, a bookend, if you will, to the beginning and end of America's great national tragedy. A replica of the flag flies daily above the fort, along with other historic flags. I have a small replica of the flag, which the Roundtable gave me at the conclusion of my term as president. At my request, Superintendent John Tucker of the Ft. Sumter National Monument arranged for my flag to be flown above the fort on April 14, 2002, the 141st anniversary of the flag's lowering and the 137th anniversary of its re-raising. As Tucker wrote to me, "Through the stories behind [our] flags, we are able to learn and remember significant people and events of the past. This 33-star flag is one of the most historic and memorable symbols of our nation's heritage,"

He's right. Long may it wave.



Ft. Sumter flag pins will be available for purchase at our September meeting, as a fundraiser for the Roundtable.



Abraham Lincoln
1854

The Real Lincoln

by Thomas DiLorenzo

A book review by Christopher R. Fortunato

© 2003

In *The Real Lincoln*, Thomas DiLorenzo reappraises the sixteenth president using old wine from new bottles. For individuals who believe the South had or still have the right to secede (check out www.dixienet.org!), this book will be welcomed. For others, DiLorenzo will look as if he forgot who surrendered to whom at Appomattox.

Throughout the book, DiLorenzo refers to the Civil War as the War Between the States. This is code to indicate his sympathy lies with the South.

DiLorenzo's premise is that Lincoln used the Civil War to expand permanently the executive powers of the United States over the individual states and transform our country into a welfare state and world power.

To prove his thesis, DiLorenzo trots out all the old Lincoln bromides, citing both Old Abe's papers and respected historians who study this period. He cites Lincoln's letter that he did not start the Civil War to end slavery, but to save the Union. DiLorenzo claims Lincoln destroyed by adopting Henry Clay's economic policy of providing public expenditure for economic development and infrastructure, all of which he says violate the Constitution's limited powers.

DiLorenzo provides no evidence proving that Lincoln's goal was to transform the Federal government into a powerful central structure. In fact, history suggests the opposite. After Reconstruction, the Federal government reverted to a system of limited powers electing men like U.S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes and James Garfield. DiLorenzo fails to remember many presidents from this era vetoed Congressional legislation, claiming a lack of express constitutional power for Congress to enact such laws.

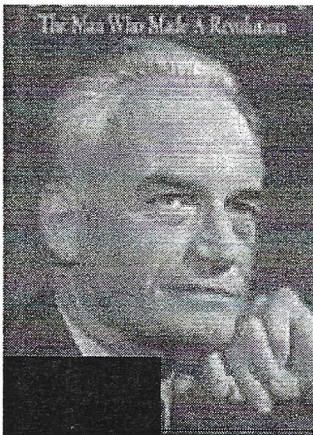
During the seventy years between the Civil War and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first term, the only arguably activist presidential administrations were William McKinley's interventionist foreign policy, Theodore Roosevelt's Square Deal for business reform and land conservation, and Woodrow Wilson's inglorious stewardship of World War I and the Versailles Treaty. Other than these administrations, the country elected caretaker leadership leading us back to "normalcy" with men like William Howard Taft, Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

DiLorenzo is an economist, not an historian. Much of his writings seem to have a libertarian perspective. He argues that the real reason for secession was the Federal government's crippling tariff policy against the South. In fact, DiLorenzo posits secession is an available option in 2003. He advances no new theory for secession in 1861, though he insists that some states reserved the right to opt out of the Federal union when they voted to ratify the Constitution. This assertion ignores James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution" who wrote during the New York ratifying convention in July 1788 that the Constitution "requires an adoption *in total and forever*. (Emphasis in original.)

DiLorenzo stretches his argument to the breaking point when he uses John Quincy Adams's post-presidential speech, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Constitution in 1839, as a validation of secession. But "Old Man Eloquent" speech rejected secession, holding that the only remedy available was to call a new convention, dissolve the Constitution, and rewrite a new compact.

The Real Lincoln also charges that Lincoln could have ended slavery peacefully and let the South leave without incident. DiLorenzo admits the South fired on the Union at Fort Sumter, but he says they were provoked. The book deplores slavery because it was inefficient, not because it was immoral.

DiLorenzo believes that if you cite Lincoln's abuses as President, his allegedly unconstitutional economic theories, racism and failure to emancipate blacks in captured areas, and denial of habeas corpus, then you must necessarily agree with his premise that Lincoln intended to create a superstate. Even if Lincoln is guilty on all those points, how does DiLorenzo prove Honest Abe carried out these policies to create an imperial presidency and world power? He fails to do so.

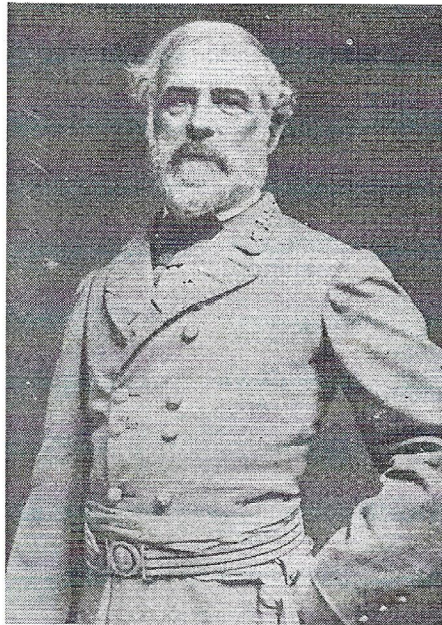


Barry Goldwater
A Pinko?

The Real Lincoln was a selection of the Conservative Book Club, but would clearly be at the far right of its reading list. Any conservative agreeing with Professor DiLorenzo would probably have a portrait of Barry Goldwater in his home with a label underneath saying: "PINKO!"

Chris Fortunato

Fredricksburg



Wednesday
September 10, 2008

Lee vs. Burnside