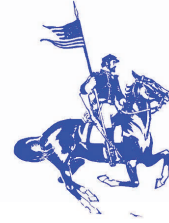


THE CHARGER



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Message from the President

For most of the troops during the Civil War, Spring meant the beginning of the next campaign and leaving their winter camps. For our Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, Spring means the end of *our* “campaign season” as we break for the summer.

This year Spring, for me, means ending four years as an officer of our excellent organization. It all went by so fast. As I said in my first article last September, I am honored to have been your President for the 2016-2017 year. As this last year approached, I thought I would not be able to write anything for *The Charger*, would not be able to speak with ease at the meetings and would never be able to put together a trip that would interest anyone – but the rest would be easy! I found that I thoroughly enjoyed every moment.

I say this because I’ve been in conversations with people who feel that taking on a position of responsibility, whether it be in this organization or another, would be beyond their capabilities, or felt they didn’t have the experience or education necessary to do the job well. Say “yes” the next time you are asked to fill a position. You may surprise yourself.

In closing, I’d like to thank those officers I’ve worked with over the last four years. I’ve learned something from every one of them. And a special thanks to this year’s officers, Hans Kuenzie, Dan Ursu and Ellen Connally, for their valued support and friendship. Also thanks to the editors of *The Charger* for all their hard work.

Have a wonderful summer.

Find some battlefields.

Brush up on Hampton Roads.

See you in September.

Jean

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Railroads in the Civil War

By Dennis Keating

The American Civil War saw many innovations in military warfare. One of the most significant was the use and strategic importance of railroads in moving troops and supplies to the armies. In 1860, the United States had 200 railroads and 30,000 miles of rail, with 21,000 in the North. In the under industrialized South, the Confederacy had one-third of the freight cars, one-fifth of the locomotives, one eighth of rail production, one tenth of the telegraph stations, and one twenty fourth of locomotive production.



Two of the earliest examples of the importance of the railroads occurred in the East. When President Lincoln called for volunteers to come to Washington City to defend the capital, Massachusetts troops came on trains and were attacked enroute by a mob in Baltimore, whose Mayor attempted to cut off rail access to Washington City. Lincoln quickly acted to protect the railroads through Maryland to the capital. Shortly after the Confederate assault on Fort Sumter, Confederates captured the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry. Then, Thomas Jackson managed to transfer some of the much needed railroad equipment to the Shenandoah Valley.

The North moved quickly to take control of the railroads for military use. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton had been president of the Illinois Central Railroad. On January 31, 1862, the U.S. Congress passed legislation authorizing Lincoln as Commander in Chief "to take possession of any and all railroad and telegraph lines in the United States". Stanton then established the United States Military Railroads to control the private railroads in the North. Daniel Craig McCallum was appointed Superintendent. However, two other men played key roles. Thomas Scott, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was appointed Assistant Secretary of War to organize the militarized

Railroad system. Herman Haupt, a railroad construction engineer, was appointed Chief Railroad Engineer. Haupt worked with George McClellan, formerly chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad, on his 1862 Peninsula campaign. Viewing one of Haupt's bridge constructions, an amazed President Lincoln observed: "There is nothing in it but beanpoles and cornstalks". Haupt served only briefly before departing in a dispute with Stanton but he made a great contribution in that time.

In contrast, the South had a system with different gauges and few resources to maintain the railroads. It had only one plant to repair rails from Union raids (such as Sherman's famous "bowties" wrecked in his Atlanta campaign). It didn't take over the trains until 1865 in the waning months of the war.

Both sides engaged in regular raids aimed at destroying railroads supplying the armies. To counter this, before embarking on the Atlanta campaign Sherman trained ten thousand troops in railroad repair.

Railroads played a key role in some of the most important events of the war, beginning with the Southern victory at First Bull Run. Protecting their railhead at Manassas, Virginia, P.G.T. Beauregard's outnumbered force faced an attack by Irwin McDowell. Joseph Johnston's army in the Shenandoah Valley arrived by rail in time to help defeat McDowell's advance and establish Jackson as "Stonewall". At Second Bull Run in 1862, Jackson would capture Manassas and destroy John Pope's supply base there. That same summer in the West Braxton Bragg's 31,000 man army was moved by rail from Mississippi to defend the rail center of Chattanooga against the advance of Don Carlos Buell. Due to the Union capture of Corinth following the battle of Shiloh, they had to take a circuitous route of 776 miles. Protection of his supply line through the Western and Atlantic Railway from Chattanooga to Atlanta was a primary concern of Joseph Johnston in his defense against William Tecumseh Sherman's invasion in 1864.

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Prior to that, Bragg achieved the South's greatest victory in the West in September, 1863 at the battle of Chickamauga. Key to that victory was the arrival from the army of Northern Virginia of James Longstreet's Corps, arriving as the battle raged and leading to its breakthrough and rout of much of William Rosecrans' army. Due to Ambrose Burnside's capture of Knoxville,

Longstreet's 13,000 troops had to travel 950 miles via ten different railroads rather than directly from Richmond to the battlefield. As the Army of the Cumberland was besieged in Chattanooga, the Union responded with its own epic reinforcement by rail. Joe Hooker and two Corps of 22,000 troops from the Army of the Potomac traveled 1200 miles to reinforce the army, now commanded by Grant and Thomas. Hooker and his men would capture Lookout Mountain in the "Battle Above the Clouds" in the Union victory at Missionary Ridge routing Bragg's army.

In Grant's 1864-1865 Overland campaign ending in the siege of Petersburg, the key goal to capture the Confederacy's capital of Richmond was to deny Lee's army its supply routes via four railroads. Cavalry raids and flanking operations failed to succeed until Phil Sheridan's victory at Five Forks on March 29, 1865, which gave Grant's army control of the Southside Railroad, Lee's last remaining supply route, forcing him to abandon the defense of Richmond. This led Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet to flee South on the railroad and Lee attempted to join Johnston in North Carolina relying on remaining railroad lines. His retreat and surrender ended at Appomattox Court House as Sheridan disrupted Lee's attempted flight. Following the surrender of his army and that of Johnston to Sherman in North Carolina, many veterans of both sides would return home on the railroads.

Clearly, as these examples and others show, the railroads played a key role in many decisive events of the Civil War. With its end, the last train operated by the United States Military Railroad carried the body of assassinated Abraham Lincoln to Springfield, Illinois, retracing his railroad journey to the capital in 1861. Millions lined that route to pay their respects.

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May 10 in the Civil War

by Dennis Keating

1864 Emory Upton's assault at Spotsylvania Court House

Mortal wounding of William Quantrill in Kentucky

1865 Capture of Jefferson Davis near Irwinville, Georgia



A Visit to Alabama's Arlington Plantation and the Lost Village of Elyton

One doesn't usually think of Birmingham, Alabama as a place that would contain any Civil War sites of significance. That is, of course, until they hear the story of Arlington Plantation and the lost village of Elyton. Arlington Plantation is easily accessible, being right off Interstate 59 & 20 just southeast of downtown Birmingham. The village of Elyton was incorporated in 1821 and soon became the county seat of Jefferson County, Alabama. In 1822 Mr. Stephen Hall came to Elyton and purchased property there and built a fine home overlooking the little village. The estate prospered as a cotton plantation until 1840 when Stephen Hall died and his son took possession of the property. He soon however was forced into bankruptcy and the estate was purchased by Judge William S. Mudd. Judge Mudd owned and worked the property from then until the end of the Civil War. In March 1865 James Wilson's U.S. Cavalry left Huntsville, Alabama with the objective of destroying Alabama's iron and steel making capacity. The raiders 13,500 strong moved south from Huntsville and entered Elyton on March 30, 1865. Wilson set up headquarters at the Arlington House, the Mudds having fled shortly before his arrival. Wilson described Elyton as "a poor insignificant Southern village, surrounded by old field farms, most of which could have been bought for \$5 an acre." From here he dispatched detachments to destroy Confederate factories, munition stores and the military school at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. After leaving Elyton, Wilson moved south and after doing battle with Nathan Bedford Forrest at Ebenezer Church, Alabama, on April 1, 1865, he completely destroyed the industries in Selma. He then went on to capture Montgomery the former capitol of the Confederacy and then on to Columbus, Ga where he defeated Gen. Tyler. From there Wilson proceeded east and took control of Macon, Ga. where he received Jefferson Davis after his capture on May 10, 1865.

Shortly after the War a group of citizens in Jefferson County, Alabama realized the importance of the several rail lines the Confederacy had constructed to ship out iron ore and other raw materials. These rail lines came together just east of the village of Elyton and the spot where they intersected later became the City of Birmingham. From its founding in 1871 the city boomed as a rail hub and an iron and steel capitol. By the 1880s it had earned its nickname "The Magic City", and the "Pittsburgh of the South". As Birmingham grew it eventually overwhelmed the little village of Elyton and the old Arlington Plantation. Today Elyton is a neighborhood of Birmingham and the acres of Arlington are beautiful neighborhoods filled with flowering dogwood and redbud trees. The house however remains and is owned by the City. It is open to visitors daily and is well worth the visit for any Civil War Buff willing to go off the beaten path.

By Paul Siedel

THIS MONTH

THE ANDREWS RAID

On the morning of April 12, 1862, a group of 20 men from three Ohio regiments, led by a civilian spy, James Andrews, hijacked a locomotive, the *General*, at Big Shanty, Ga, intending to run it north toward Chattanooga, tearing up track, burning bridges and disrupting the Western and Atlantic rail line, paralyzing the Confederate supply line for hundreds of miles. They were immediately pursued by conductor William Fuller, at first on foot and later by rail. The story of the chase, which has come to be known as The Great Locomotive Chase, and the raiders, recipients of the first Medals of Honor, is the topic of this month's presentation.

Our speaker, **James H. Ogden** has been the historian at the Chickamauga Battlefield since 1988, the only one the park has ever had. He is a graduate of Frostburg State College in Maryland. "History, he says, "shows us where we came from, it tells us who we are and, if we listen, it gives us ideas about where we should go."



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Hickenlooper's Ohio Artillery Anchors the Hornet's Nest at Shiloh

by Daniel J. Ursu

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Hickenlooper's Ohio Artillery Anchors the Hornet's Nest at Shiloh by Daniel J. Ursu

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Not only did the abolitionist John Brown, the “Meteor of the Civil War” as proffered by poet Walt Whitman, live part of his life in the northeastern Ohio Village of Hudson, but did another military leader of the Civil War actually hail from Hudson - that being Andrew Hickenlooper, Captain of the 5th Independent Battery Ohio Light Artillery.

At the time of the war's outbreak, Hickenlooper was working in Cincinnati, Ohio. The battery was recruited in southwestern Ohio and organized by Hickenlooper at St. Louis, Missouri in August, 1861. Over time, the battery was attached to Brigadier General Prentiss's 6th division which was part of then Major General U.S. Grant's Union Army of the Tennessee at the Battle of Shiloh, on April 6th & 7th, 1862.

It was Hickenlooper's battery along with another from Minnesota, that anchored the center of the Union line at what became known as the “Hornet's Nest”. Positioned on a small knoll with good lines of site especially considering the heavily wooded terrain of most of the battlefield, effective fire from his battery arguably saved the line and perhaps the battle, from an even worse disaster that befell the Union on the first of two days of horrendous fighting.

There were many Ohio born soldiers in General Grant's army at the battle of Shiloh. Indeed, Grant was joined late in the evening of the first day by Major General John Carlos Buell's “Union Army of the Ohio” which included numerous Ohio infantry regiments. At Shiloh, Ohio Artillery batteries on the field were Battery G, 1st Ohio Light Artillery (OLA), 3rd OLA, 5th OLA, 8th OLA, 13th OLA and 14th OLA. Hickenlooper's 5th OLA battery consisted of two smooth bore and four rifled 6 pound cannons. By the time they took position on the Hornet's Nest line by midday of the first day of the battle, this was down to four guns, two of which were placed slightly in front a nearby Iowa regiment.

As the confederates attempted to capitalize on their stunning successes of the morning, their advance by the afternoon on the sunken road that made the Hornet's Nest position so effective as a rallying point was in full swing. Hickenlooper's battery was superbly positioned at a salient in the line joining the divisions of Wallace and Hurlburt. Throughout the assault on the Hornet's nest, multiple accounts, including his own, describe the effectiveness of the 5th Ohio artillery in helping to repulse the Confederate onrush. Hickenlooper wrote afterwards: “Soon the shells gave warning, and the skirmish fire grew stronger and deeper. Then came long triple lines of bristling steel whose sternface bearers, protected and yet impeded by the heavy undergrowth, came pressing on, until our cannon's loud acceptance of their challenge and the infantry's crashing volleys caused the assailants to hesitate, break in confusion and hastily retire”. Adroitly mixing shell, canister and double canister, Hickenlooper's battery laid down a debilitating fire on the advancing rebels disrupting their valiant charges time after time on the Hornet's Nest.

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Hickenlooper cont.

But by about 4:30 or 530 PM other positions on the end of either flank of the Union line were giving way and a general rout similar to that of the morning ensued. Divisional commander Prentiss, wanting to at least save his artillery from the chaotic scene, ordered Hickenlooper's guns to the rear. Controversially, Prentiss ended up surrendering the majority of his remaining troops as the flanks had folded on either side. But for Hickenlooper's Ohio artillery contribution to holding back the butternut gray confederate tide, the Hornet's Nest position might have begun to collapse earlier depriving General Grant the time that he needed to piece together a final defensive line at Dill Branch creek to ultimately halt the Confederates prior to dusk.

In a famous nighttime exchange between two other prominent Ohioans, then Brigadier General William T. Sherman and Grant, Sherman mused "Well Grant, we've had the devil's own day, haven't we?" Grant replied "Yes" puffing on his glowing cigar in the darkness "Lick 'em tomorrow, though". With Buell's fresh troops finally on hand that was exactly the result.

Before and after the war, Hickenlooper was a noted Civil Engineer. After the war, returning to Cincinnati, Hickenlooper was instrumental in the development and use of modern street lighting. Later he served three years as Lieutenant Governor of Ohio. A stone monument of a cannon with stacked ammunition on the Shiloh Battlefield marks and memorializes the position held by Hickenlooper's 5th Ohio Light Artillery on the Hornet's Nest line.

Lastly, if the Hickenlooper name sounds familiar to you for other reasons, it might be that you visited Denver, Colorado and enjoyed a beer at the Wynkoop Brewing Company, a brew pub cofounded in the late 1980's by Hickenlooper's great-grandson, John W. Hickenlooper. Or, perhaps you recognize it from an interest in government as John W. Hickenlooper was then also later elected Mayor of Denver in 2003 and Governor of Colorado in 2010. He is now serving a second gubernatorial term.

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A STROLL THROUGH METAIRIE CEMETERY

By Paul Siedel

The south, in my opinion, has at least three large cemeteries that are well worth walking through if one is a Civil War Buff. A stroll through one of these will go far in satisfying the curiosity of one wishing to visit the final resting places of the men and women that were prominent players in that conflict. There is of course Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, and Oakwood Cemetery in Atlanta, but then there is also Metairie Cemetery in New Orleans. Seldom does a cemetery have such a storied past and one which comes about as a result of our Civil War. In 1838 The Metairie Race Course Company acquired title to the property just outside the city limits of New Orleans and proceeded to build a "first class" racing facility. It soon became the south's leading race track and by 1854 was the talk of the nation's racing circles. The track reached it's zenith in 1854 when it hosted the Great State Post Stakes. Horses from Louisiana, Kentucky, New York, Mississippi and Alabama were listed as entries. Kentucky's entry named "Lexington" won that year and Louisiana's horse "Lecomte" came in second. This all came to an end in 1861 when upon the secession of Louisiana racing was temporarily halted and the track was converted to Camp Walker a training grounds for state troops entering Confederate service. The facility was later moved to Camp Moore near Mississippi and racing was not restored during the War. According to Henri A. Gandolfo in his book "Metairie Cemetery An Historical Memoir" "Things were never to be the same again. The War had drained Louisiana of much of it's wealth and it's young manhood, so by 1872 the Metairie Jockey Club as it became known was ready to sell. So out of the shambles of the "Lost Cause," Metairie Cemetery was born."

Today the Cemetery is the final resting place for many of the south's leading figures. P.G.T. Beauregard, John B. Hood, Richard Taylor, and several other prominent figures rest there. Among the more prominent monuments are those to The Army of Tennessee, The Army of Northern Virginia, and The Washington Artillery. Moreover after the War many of the south's chief figures made their homes in New Orleans, among them Jefferson Davis who's remains were temporarily buried at Metairie until they were removed to Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond.

Although the entrance is relatively hard to find the staff is more than helpful, I was even invited to bike through the Cemetery, and was more than two hours admiring the architecture of the above ground burial vaults. The Cemetery is located on Metairie Road near the Interstate 10 exit on Canal Blvd. Be sure to pick up a who's who list of prominent burials at the office, it will save you some time. Being right in New Orleans Metairie Cemetery is a great site for Civil War Buffs when visiting the Crescent City.

The rest of the story" by David A. Carrino

This history brief was presented at the April 2017 meeting of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. The following longer version of the history brief contains additional information that was not included in the version that was presented at the meeting.

"And now you know the rest of the story." This is the tagline that was used by news broadcaster and commentator, and dispenser of Americana, Paul Harvey to close each of the segments of a radio series that he did. In each segment of that series, which was named *The Rest of the Story*, Paul Harvey related a story about some person or event in which there was some kind of interesting and unexpected anecdote or connection. This series was on the radio for decades, so there certainly was no shortage of subject material. But if Paul Harvey ever needed another subject for his series, he could have used the front-page story of the July 4, 1863 *Harper's Weekly* for a segment of his program *The Rest of the Story*. On July 4, 1863, the day that Vicksburg fell and the day after Pickett's Charge, the front-page story in *Harper's Weekly* was an account of a bold attempt at espionage by two Confederate officers near Franklin, Tennessee. Mel Maurer, past president of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, included an account of this story in part three of a six-part article which Mel wrote about his life in Franklin. Mel's account of this tale of espionage appeared in the September 2001 issue of *The Charger*, and Mel's article is archived on the Roundtable's web site. Neither the *Harper's Weekly* account nor Mel's account includes the intriguing side story that is connected to the episode of attempted espionage that occurred outside of Franklin. This history brief describes the intriguing side story, which contains a tragic romance.



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The *Harper's Weekly* account of the espionage attempt was written by Dr. Wilson Hobbs, Senior Surgeon of the 85th Indiana Infantry Regiment, who was present during the espionage episode. According to this account, on the night of June 8, 1863 two men rode into the camp at Fort Granger. Fort Granger, which was east of Franklin, Tennessee and across the Harpeth River, was built to help protect Franklin against Confederate attacks and was under the command of Colonel John Baird. One of the riders was Confederate Colonel William Orton Williams, although he had changed his name to Lawrence William Orton. The other rider was Orton Williams' cousin, Confederate Lieutenant Walter G. Peter. They were dressed as Union officers and were taken to Colonel Baird's headquarters, where they presented themselves as Colonel Lawrence W. Auton and his aide, Major Walter Dunlop. Orton Williams, who did the talking for the pair, showed Baird papers, purportedly their orders from the War Department, which explained that they had been sent from Washington to inspect defenses and troops in the West. One of the papers, which specified that the supposed Union officers were to be allowed to pass through the lines, was purportedly signed by James A. Garfield, chief of staff for William S. Rosecrans, commander of the Army of the Cumberland, of which Baird and his troops at Fort Granger were a part. Orton Williams told Baird that he and his aide had ridden through Murfreesboro, where Rosecrans had his headquarters, and then afterward, while they were on their way to Fort Granger, they had been attacked by Confederate raiders, who captured their servant and took their coats, but that they had managed to elude capture. Because all of their money was in the coats, Orton Williams asked Baird for \$50, and he told Baird that they had to continue to Nashville that night. Baird arranged for the money and let the men go their way.

Another Union officer in the camp, Colonel Carter Van Vleck, was suspicious of the men from the time they rode into camp, and according to one of his letters, he made his suspicions known to Colonel Baird. Van Vleck argued that inspectors would not be sent from the East when "we already have more inspectors of our own than we know what to do with." Van Vleck also asserted that Rosecrans would not have sent the officers unescorted through enemy territory, and he wondered how it was that the officers' servant and coats could have been captured while they, themselves, managed to escape. Van Vleck concluded "the two men who were attracting so much attention...were certainly spies." Perhaps Baird was taken by the bearing and assuredness of the supposed Colonel Auton. According to Wilson Hobbs' *Harper's Weekly* account, Orton Williams "was as fine-looking a man as I have ever seen." Hobbs went on to write about Orton Williams, "I have never known anyone who excelled him as a talker." Perhaps Baird was taken in by these traits, and his judgement was clouded by them.

However, soon after the supposed Union officers rode away, Baird began to have serious misgivings. He sent a party after them, and when the men were brought back, Baird sent a telegram to Rosecrans' headquarters in Murfreesboro to inquire about the men. The reply informed Baird that headquarters knew nothing of the men and stated emphatically that no one with those names existed "in this army, nor in any army." Baird indicated in his subsequent telegram that the men had admitted to being officers in the Confederate army. The telegram that Baird received from Rosecrans' headquarters in reply, which was signed by James Garfield, read, "The two men are no doubt spies. Call a drum-head court-martial to-night, and if they are found to be spies, hang them before morning, without fail." Sometime during the exchange of telegrams, a search of the two men was conducted. Their real names were found in the bands of their hats, which were Confederate hats that had been covered with havelocks. Havelocks are pieces of white cloth that covered a soldier's cap and hung down over the back of the neck. They were intended to protect against sun exposure, but in this instance the havelocks were intended to protect against exposure of the Confederate men's true identities. In addition, the blade of Walter Peter's sword was inscribed with his real name followed by the letters C.S.A. compliance with the order from Rosecrans' headquarters, a drumhead trial was called, and Orton Williams and Walter Peter were found guilty. On the morning of June 9, 1863, the two men were hanged. Senior Surgeon Dr. Wilson Hobbs, who wrote the *Harper's Weekly* account, was assigned to periodically examine the men as they hung and determine if they were dead. According to Hobbs' account, three minutes into the hanging Orton Williams grabbed the rope with both hands and briefly pulled himself up, but slumped back down within a couple of minutes. At 17 minutes a pulse was detected in both men, and at 20 minutes there were no signs of life. At the time of their deaths, Orton Williams was 24 and Walter Peter 21.

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The blade of Orton Williams' sword was likewise inscribed with his real name, and he had on his person \$1,500 in Confederate currency. In compliance with the order from Rosecrans' headquarters, a drumhead trial was called, and Orton Williams and Walter Peter were found guilty. On the morning of June 9, 1863, the two men were hanged. Senior Surgeon Dr. Wilson Hobbs, who wrote the *Harper's Weekly* account, was assigned to periodically examine the men as they hung and determine if they were dead. According to Hobbs' account, three minutes into the hanging Orton Williams grabbed the rope with both hands and briefly pulled himself up, but slumped back down within a couple of minutes. At 17 minutes a pulse was detected in both men, and at 20 minutes there were no signs of life. At the time of their deaths, Orton Williams was 24 and Walter Peter 21.

There are some mysteries associated with the doomed mission of Orton Williams and Walter Peter. No evidence, such as a record of orders, has ever been found that the Confederate government or Confederate military had any part in the attempted espionage. Had this been a mission ordered by Confederate authorities, it is likely that the men would have been provided better disguises or, at the very least, swords that did not have their true identities inscribed on the blades. Because of this and because Orton did almost all of the talking when the two men met with Union officers, it is widely believed that the scheme was solely conceived by Orton Williams, and that he convinced Walter Peter to participate. To this day the objective of their espionage is not known. Why, then, did Orton Williams undertake this risky venture, and what did he want to accomplish? These questions remain unanswered.

But there is more to this story than two young men losing their lives in a daring, perhaps foolhardy attempt at espionage, and it involves Orton Williams. William Orton Williams was born in 1839. His mother was one of three sisters who had the elegant names America, Britannia, and Columbia. Orton's mother, America, died a couple of months before Orton's fourth birthday. When Orton was seven, his father, William George Williams, died at the battle of Monterey in the Mexican-American War. Orton's mother was a niece of George Washington Parke Custis, who was the grandson of Martha Washington and the person who built and lived in Arlington House. George Washington Parke Custis was also the father of Mary Custis Lee, the wife of Robert E. Lee. Even before the death of Mary Custis Lee's parents, the Lee family lived part of the time in Arlington House with Mary's parents, at least when Robert E. Lee's military duties permitted it. After the death of Orton's parents, the orphaned boy was taken in by George Washington Parke Custis, and Orton lived part of his youth in Arlington House. Orton had an older brother, Lawrence, who graduated from West Point in 1852 and served in the Union army during the Civil War. Orton also had an older sister, Martha, who was known in the family by her nickname, Markie, and who was close with the daughters of Robert E. and Mary Custis Lee. Orton and his siblings were second cousins of the Lee children. After the death of Mary Custis Lee's father in 1857, she inherited Arlington, and Orton and his siblings spent a good deal of time there, in particular Markie, who stayed there so much that she often shared a bedroom with Mary Lee, the Lee's eldest daughter.



During their youth, Orton developed a close relationship with Agnes Lee, the third oldest of the Lee daughters, who was two years younger than Orton. Eventually this relationship evolved into a romance. Agnes and Orton frequently took long horseback rides together, and Markie reminisced years later that "it was always—where are Agnes & Orton?" Markie recalled Agnes' appearance after Agnes and Orton returned from one long ride. According to Markie, Agnes had "a glowing face & streaming hair" and that Orton looked at Agnes with "admiring glances." Orton had long wanted to pursue a military career. Orton's older brother had already graduated from West Point, but Orton never gained admission there. With a recommendation from Robert E. Lee, Orton finally secured a commission as a second lieutenant in the army in the spring of 1861. When the Civil War broke out, Orton was on the staff of

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Winfield Scott in Washington, which made Orton privy to much military information. In early May 1861, by which time Robert E. Lee had already resigned from the U.S. Army and was in Richmond, Orton went to Arlington to inform Lee's wife that the Union army would soon cross the Potomac River and seize Arlington. This gave the Lees time to pack their belongings, which included some items that were once owned by George and Martha Washington, and move these belongings away. The Lee family soon followed, and as Orton had foretold, the Union army seized Arlington. In the meantime, Orton declared his intent to fight for the Confederacy, whereupon Winfield Scott ordered him imprisoned at Governors Island in New York City, because it was feared that Orton knew sensitive information that might be of help to the rebellion. After several weeks in prison, Orton was released when it was felt that any information he had was no longer of use.

After spending some time in the eastern theater, Orton was sent west. He fought with distinction at Shiloh, but his Confederate military career was beginning to unravel. His strict discipline was not well received by his men, who considered him arrogant and condescending. In the most serious incident, Orton killed an enlisted man who resisted one of Orton's orders. Although Orton was not prosecuted for this, he reputedly brazenly commented about the incident and about the man whom he killed, "For his ignorance, I pitied him; for his insolence, I forgave him; for his insubordination, I slew him." Shortly after this incident Orton was transferred to Braxton Bragg's staff, and some have speculated that he changed his name to conceal his identity as the perpetrator of this killing.

At Christmastime in 1862 Orton was able to visit the Lee family, who were staying with relatives in Virginia. According to an account by one of those relatives, Orton was "handsome and charming," and he brought gifts for Agnes, "a pair of ladies' riding gauntlets and a riding whip," gifts that evoked the long horseback rides that Agnes and Orton had gone on before the Civil War. During Orton's visit, he and Agnes resumed their practice of taking long horseback rides together. At one point during Orton's visit, he and Agnes were secluded in the parlor, and everyone expected a proposal to take place. But Orton "came out, bade the family goodbye, and rode away alone." Less than six months later, Orton Williams was dead at the end of a rope.

It is not known if Orton proposed to Agnes, but in all likelihood he at least made his intentions known to her. It is also not known why Agnes spurned Orton, but it most likely was due to a couple of factors. On October 20, 1862, two months before Orton's Christmas visit and during the time between the battles of Antietam and Fredericksburg, while Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was recovering from the former battle, Agnes' older sister, Annie, died at the age of 23 of typhoid fever. Because of their similarity in age, Annie and Agnes had a very close relationship, and by the time of Orton's visit Agnes most likely had not recovered from the loss of her sister. In addition, the Civil War had hardened Orton Williams, as evidenced by his killing of the enlisted man and his callous comment about the incident. There is evidence that Orton had turned to drinking, and as a result he had changed markedly from the dashing young man who captivated Agnes prior to the war. But even though Agnes' affection for Orton had waned, she was still deeply troubled by his death. According to a relative, after Orton's execution Agnes was changed forever. This relative wrote, "The terrible death of Orton Williams was a shock to Agnes from which she never recovered." Agnes was a very introspective and contemplative person, and it is not surprising that, no matter how her feelings toward Orton had changed, she was deeply impacted by the death of someone toward whom she had felt so much affection, in particular because of the circumstances of that death.

On October 15, 1873, eight years after the Civil War and 11 years after her secluded Christmastime meeting with Orton, Agnes Lee died at the age of 32. Agnes suffered from neuralgia her whole life, and when she died, her mother had to see another of her daughters precede her in death. According to an account written by Agnes' younger sister, Mildred, when Agnes was on her deathbed, she asked that her Bible be given to Orton's sister, Markie. When Agnes made this request, she gave evidence that even on her deathbed she was thinking of Orton, because

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because Agnes said of that Bible, "You know Orton gave it to me." Just before Agnes died, she called for her older brother, Custis, and said to him, "You must not forget me when I am gone," to which Custis reassured his dying sister, "Aggie, none of us will do that."

None of Robert E. Lee's four daughters ever married. One factor which likely played a role in this was Lee's possessiveness of his daughters. A Lee biographer wrote, "Neither Lee nor his daughters were aware of how possessive he was, or of how much they acquiesced in that possessiveness." Lee's daughter Annie died in 1862 at age 23, and there is no evidence that she ever had any serious suitors. Sadly, this may have been at least partly due to her physical appearance. Annie had a conspicuous reddish birthmark on her face, and one of her eyes was disfigured by a childhood accident, which caused her to lose sight in that eye. Mary, the eldest of the Lee daughters and the second oldest of the seven Lee children, lived to age 83 without ever marrying or ever showing any interest in marrying. Mary was outspoken and fiercely independent, not only by the standards of her time, but even, to some degree, by today's standards. For example, she spent most of her post-Civil War life far away from her family on lengthy travels in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. Mary's independent nature may have been the reason that she never married. Mildred, the youngest of the Lee children, lived to age 59 and died suddenly and unexpectedly in New Orleans. Although there is evidence that some men showed interest in her, there is no evidence that there was ever a serious relationship. After Robert E. Lee's death, Mildred wrote of her father, "To me he seems a Hero—& all other men small in comparison." It may be that living in the imposing shadow of her legendary father was the reason that Mildred never married. Of the four Lee daughters, only Agnes came close to being married, and Agnes' suitor, Orton Williams, who concocted a mysterious and ill-fated espionage scheme that cost him his life at Fort Granger, came closer than any man to being the son-in-law of Robert E. Lee. "And now you know the rest of the story."



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The Annual Field Trip

The 1862 Peninsula Campaign tour of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table will take place on September 21-24, 2017. John Quarstein, who serves as Director of the USS *Monitor* Center, will serve as our guide.

Members are responsible for their own transportation to Newport News, Virginia on Thursday, September 21. You are encouraged to make hotel reservations for the weekend (3 nights) at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Newport News (phone [757-249-0001](tel:757-249-0001)), where a block of rooms has been reserved for our group at reduced rates. Rooms with a single King bed are \$89 per night, and rooms with two Queen beds are \$94 per night. To receive the benefit of these rates, please mention that you are a member of the CCWRT when making your reservation. The Hampton Inn & Suites will serve as our base during our tour of the area. Our visit will in fact begin in a meeting room at the Hampton Inn and Suites on September 21 at 7:30 p.m., when John will provide us with an overview of our planned events.

Throughout our travels on September 22-23, transportation will be provided by a bus chartered exclusively for our tour.

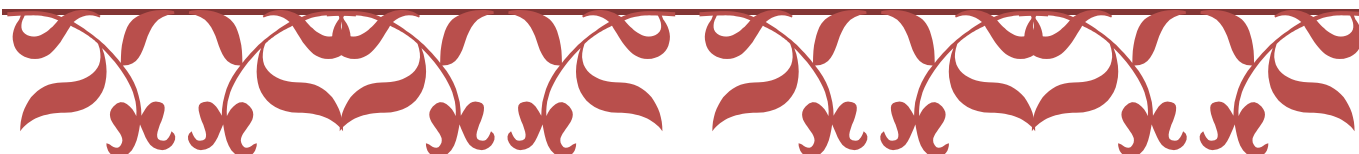
On Friday, September 22, our first stop will be Fort Monroe, the largest stone fort ever built in the US, which sits at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, where we will receive a two hour guided tour. From there, we will tour the site of the Battle of Big Bethel, which occurred on June 10, 1861, less than two months after the surrender of Ft. Sumter and is considered to be the first land battle of the Civil War. We will then proceed to The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, where we will have lunch and receive a tour of the Monitor Center, where a full size replica and the actual turret of the *Monitor* is on display. We will then visit the overlook of the site of the epic battle of the ironclads, the *Monitor* and the *Merri-mack*. Our tour for the day will conclude at Young's Mill before we return to our hotel.

On Saturday, September 23, we will visit Warwick Court House, the site of the Battle of Lee's Mill and the site of the Battle of Dam No. 1. After lunch at Newport News Park, we will then tour Lee Hall Mansion, Gloucester Point, Redoubt Park and the site of the Battle of Williamsburg before returning to our hotel to prepare for a festive dinner.

Please mark your calendars and make your plans now join us for this interesting field trip. There is no better experience than touring the sites where history happened with the camaraderie of your fellow Roundtable members!"

By publishing these details in The Charger, I am hoping to generate some interest in this field trip.

Thank you,
Hans



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THE GROVE AMPHITHEATRE

PRESENTS

**THURSDAY JULY 13, 2017
7:30 PM**



DECAPITATING THE UNION

Jefferson Davis, Judah
Benjamin and the Plot to
Assassinate Lincoln

All Grove events are FREE and open to the public.

Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and picnic baskets and enjoy the music and this dramatic presentation in a beautiful outdoor setting. Handicap accessible. The Grove is a non-smoking facility.

Questions? Call 440-471-1070 or send an email to TheGrove@mayfieldvilage.com

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THE GROVE AMPHITHEATRE

DECAPITATING THE UNION: JEFFERSON DAVIS, JUDAH BENJAMIN

AND THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE LINCOLN

By

JOHN C. FAZIO

More than a hundred books have been written about Lincoln's assassination, yet one of the few certainties surrounding his death is the fact that little about it is certain. Author John C. Fazio has attempted to improve the record by correcting major and minor errors in the histories, reconciling differences of opinion, offering explanations for unknowns and evaluating theories. Drawing on hundreds of sources, he covers the prelude to the war, Booth's accomplices and their roles in the conspiracy, the kidnapping ruse that concealed the attempted decapitation of the United States government, Booth's escape, the death of the president, the pursuit of the fugitives, the death of Booth and the trial and sentencing of his coconspirators. The simple conspiracy theory is rejected by the author in favor of the theory that Booth worked with the complicity of the highest levels of the Confederate government and its Secret Service Bureau, whose twofold purpose was retribution and snatching Southern independence from a toothless and chaotic Federal government.

In this PowerPoint presentation, John draws heavily on his book to link Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Secretary of State Judah Benjamin to the assassination of Lincoln and the attempted assassinations of numerous other Federal officeholders on the night of April 14, 1865.

John is a retired lawyer with a keen interest in history, especially the Civil War. He is a member of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable and has been its president. He frequently speaks on the war before Roundtables and other groups, has written and published numerous articles on the war and teaches Civil War History at Chautauqua Institution in New York State. He is also a member of the Lincoln Forum, the Western Reserve Historical Society, the Cleveland Grays and the Surratt Society.

Our evening will begin with selections of Civil War music from locally acclaimed musicians Kris and Jeff Kiko-Cozy, followed by John's presentation, in which he will make use of the large outdoor screen.

All Grove events are FREE and open to the public.

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JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT MEETING



May 10, 2017

Program: The Andrew's Raid by James F. Ogden

Drinks @ 6pm, Dinner @ 6:30 Judson Manor

East 107th St & Chester

BECAUSE YOU ASKED.....

In response to several requests, beginning in December, our meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m.
Please mark your calendars accordingly.

Jean



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