

# THE CHARGER

September 2010

470th Meeting

Vol. 32, #1

*Tonight's Program:*

## Abraham Lincoln's Effect On Constitutional Interpretation

Abraham Lincoln's mind was a swirl of associations. Among the few books in his childhood home were *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Aesop's Fables*, and the Bible, and Lincoln must have read and reread each until they were a very part of him. In addition, as a boy Lincoln listened to the jokes and stories that his father and frontier travelers exchanged, and he would recite these the next day for the other children of the neighborhood. Lincoln was raised on allegory, fables, parables, and funny stories - everything reminded him of something else, and the connections that he drew grew deeper and more profound. Throughout his life, Lincoln sought to understand and to express the relation between the imperfect society he lived in and the transcendent truths he believed in.

Not only did Lincoln have a remarkable ability to draw connections, but he possessed other formidable intellectual skills. As a trial lawyer Lincoln learned to identify and concentrate all of his energy on the "nub" of the case - he would concede any point that was inessential but contend every point that was vital to win the case. As a man he memorized long passages from Shakespeare, which taught him cadence and wordplay, and late in life he mastered Euclid, which taught him rigorous logic. Finally, he was possessed of remarkable self control and sense of purpose - he took nothing personally and he left nothing to chance. All of these characteristics are apparent within Lincoln's most famous speeches, letters, and remarks.

Furthermore, this article focuses on one particular purpose that Lincoln had for quoting the Bible. It examines how Lincoln used the language of the Bible to express what he regarded as the fundamental political and social beliefs that Americans stand for; the constitutional principles that retired Supreme Court Justice David Souter has called the "pantheon of values."

The above paragraphs are taken from Prof. Huhn's article. Prof. Huhn encourages the audience to read and select passages from Lincoln's speeches that members would like him to discuss. Hard copies will be available at the meeting.

*Tonight's Speaker:*

## Wilson R. Huhn

Wilson R. Huhn is a C. Blake McDowell, Jr., Professor and a Constitutional Law Research Fellow at The University of Akron School of Law. He currently teaches courses in constitutional law, advanced constitutional law, jurisprudence, and commercial paper. He received his B.A. at Yale University and J.D., cum laude, at Cornell University, where he was a member of the Cornell Law Review. Prior to joining the Akron Law faculty in 1984, Professor Huhn served as law clerk for the late Judge Leo A. Jackson in the 8th District Court of Appeals and as an associate at Squire, Sanders and Dempsey. Prof. Huhn volunteers his time on community boards and serves as a coach for special needs athletic teams.

*Date:* **Wednesday,  
September 8, 2010**

*Place:* **Judson Manor  
1890 E. 107th Street  
Cleveland, Ohio**

*Time:* **Drinks 6 PM  
Dinner 6:45 PM**

*Reservations:* **Please Call  
Dan Zeiser (440) 449-9311  
or email ccwrt1956@yahoo.com  
By 9 pm Sunday before meeting**

*Meal choice:* **Entree, salad, vegetable and dessert.**

**CLEVELAND  
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1957 Kenneth Grant

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
**SEPTEMBER 2010**

Greetings,

I am honored and pleased to be the first female president of this distinguished organization. The members of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable are the best! I could not have attained this position or put this year's program together without the help of many members, past and present. I thank you!

Our 2010-2011 campaign is starting strong on September 8 with Akron University Law Professor Wilson Huhn speaking on Abraham Lincoln's effect on constitutional interpretation. Mr. Huhn will use Lincoln's speeches to show how recent Supreme Court decisions reflect Lincoln's concepts of liberty and equality. The audience is encouraged to select and read passages from the speeches they would like him to discuss.

From September 23-26, our mechanized field trip battalion will roll into Virginia where we will setup camp in Winchester, which changed hands 72 times during the war (including 13 times in one day). It was the major northern rail hub of the Shenandoah Valley and within close striking distance of Washington City and the Amory at Harpers Ferry. On Friday morning, September 24, Harpers Ferry will be in our crosshairs. John King, a U.S. Army veteran who has been with the National Park Service for 30 years, will talk to us about the Armory and give us a live-fire demonstration. Interestingly, the NPS requires him to wear a period uniform when he fires the muskets. That afternoon, we will reconnoiter in Winchester at the Stonewall Jackson museum with Professor Jonathan Noyales, author and editor of several books and articles on the Civil War, and chief historian of the Kernstown battlefield.

We will tour the battle of Front Royal/Cedarville and visit Rose Hill where the heaviest fighting of 1st Kernstown took place. We will see Fosdick's Field/Bowers Hill, where the heaviest fighting at First Winchester occurred. It is a seldom visited site and not open to the public on a regular basis. Lunch on Saturday will be in Middletown at the historic Wayside restaurant. Prof. Noyales will talk about historical memory and postwar reconciliation as we tour the Stonewall Confederate Cemetery.

Meeting topics for the rest of the year will focus on Ohio generals and women who supported their men, like Lucretia Garfield. She and her husband, General J.A. Garfield will read their Civil War letters to us in December.

In October, General Sherman will present his views on Shiloh. In November and December, we will "Remember the ladies" as Abigail famously admonished her husband John Adams. Mary Elizabeth Bowser, who worked at the Confederate White House, will tell us how she was one of the most productive Union spies during the war. The nefarious Confederate spy, Belle Boyd, will tell us about her adventures spying for Generals Beauregard and Jackson. We will listen to Lucretia and General J.A. Garfield's Civil War letters as they read them to us at our December meeting.

January is our great debate. The question: Would foreign intervention have won the war for the South? Could France or Great Britain have turned the tide for the Confederacy? Why didn't they help?

Our own William Vodrey will speak about "Lincoln's Commando," William Cushing in February. March will feature NPS ranger Scott Longren from the Garfield Museum. He will talk about General Garfield campaign to drive the Confederates out of Eastern Kentucky. April is tax time. Donal Korb, formerly of the IRS, will talk about the income tax during the Civil War.

John F. Marszalek, Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History and Executive Director and Managing Editor of the Ulysses S. Grant Association at Mississippi State University, will talk to us about U.S. Grant and his ongoing work on Grant's papers in our final meeting in May.

We are going to have a great year. I hope you can join us!

Respectfully,  
Lisa Kempfer

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE  
2010/2011 SCHEDULE**

September 8, 2010

***Abraham Lincoln's Effect on  
Constitutional  
Interpretation***



**Wilson Huhn**

October 13, 2010

***William Tecumseh  
Sherman***

**Frank  
Bullock**



November 10, 2010



Dr. Mary Walker

***Civil War Female  
Spies***

December 8, 2010

***General James A. and  
Lucretia Garfield  
Reading their Civil War  
Letters***

January 12 2011

**The Dick Crews Annual  
Debate**

*Would foreign intervention have won  
the war for the South?*

**Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey**

February 9, 2011

***Lincoln's  
Commando:  
William Cushing***

**William Vodrey**



March 9, 2011



***Garfield's battles in  
Eastern Kentucky***

**Scott Longren**

April 13, 2011

***The Fight for Money:  
The Income Tax Laws  
Of the Civil War***

**Donald Korb**

May 11, 2011



***Ulysses Grant***

**John Marszalek**

**For membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, please visit our web site:  
<http://clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>**

# Grierson's Raid

by Dennis Keating

After again watching the 1959 film "The Horse Soldiers", I decided to revisit Grierson's Raid. The movie starred John Wayne (as a stand in for Col. Benjamin Grierson) and William Holden as the surgeon assigned to his brigade for the raid. John Ford directed. Unfortunately, the film veered considerably from the actual raid. It was based on the 1956 novel of the same name by Harold Sinclair. The film included conflicts between Wayne and Holden over the latter's medical practices, a love-hate relationship between Wayne (a self-described railroad builder) and a southern belle and plantation owner, a fictional battle at the Newton Station railhead, and another fictional battle based on a caricature of that of New Market, Virginia (May 15, 1864) involving young VMI cadets.\* Presumably, these were included for audience appeal. The movie did contain at least some of the actual elements of the incredible Grierson raid.

Ben Grierson antebellum was actually a failed business owner and music teacher. He was born to Scot-Irish immigrants near Pittsburgh. His family then moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where he met his future wife, Alice, with whom he had seven children. Grierson and his family moved to Jacksonville, Illinois, where his friendship with the state's wartime governor led to his being appointed colonel of the volunteer 6<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry. Ironically, Grierson had been afraid of horses after a near fatal accident while he was eight years old. In 1862, he was promoted to a cavalry brigade commander attached to the XVI Corps of the Army of the Tennessee.

As Ulysses Grant planned his final attempt to capture Vicksburg, the Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi River, he needed a diversion to deflect attention to his risky crossing of the river below the city. He and William Tecumseh Sherman chose Grierson to lead a raid into the heart of Mississippi to destroy the key railhead at Newton Station that supplied John Pemberton's army defending Vicksburg. Grierson led three regiments, his own and the 7<sup>th</sup> Illinois and 2<sup>nd</sup> Iowa comprising 1,700 troopers and a horse battery. In sixteen days (April 17-May 2, 1863), Grierson's force marched 600 miles, disabled parts of two key railroads, captured and paroled around 600 Confederates, and destroyed many war supplies. Grierson lost only 3 killed, 7 wounded, and 16 captured during this epic raid. Despite being pursued on all fronts by thousands of Confederates, what makes this story truly amazing is that Grierson outwitted and outrode his pursuers to emerge in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to the surprise of its occupying Federal garrison. Grierson's ragged, weary force rode into the city, trailed by hundreds of fleeing slaves, to be greeted by the cheers of the residents and serenaded by music played by Union army bands.

How did Grierson achieve this amazing feat, which indeed diverted Pemberton's attention from Grant's unopposed landing at Bruinsburg on day fourteen of the raid? He used deception and speed (averaging over 30 miles daily) to elude his pursuers. He first sent a couple hundred unfit troopers (called the "Quinine Brigade") back to his starting point at LaGrange, Tennessee (near Memphis) on the fourth day, misleading Confederate cavalry into thinking the raid was short lived. The next day, he also sent the 2<sup>nd</sup> Iowa back to further convince the Confederates that his force was returning to its base. The Iowans successfully fought their way back North. Left with only 900 men, Grierson then headed toward his main objective. With his "Butternut Guerillas" (his scouts disguised as Confederates) in the lead, Grierson's troops lived off the land of necessity after a few days. They "exchanged" their tired mounts for fresh Southern horses. Riding through rain, swamps, and dismayed Mississippians, Grierson's men had faith in

their commander's ability not only to achieve his objective, but also to somehow find an escape route. Grierson reached Newton Station on day eight and disabled the railhead and destroyed two arriving trains. He then decided that it would be impossible to retrace his route. Instead, he hoped to reach Grant's army at Grand Gulf. When this proved impossible, he instead headed to Baton Rouge, trying to avoid fighting his pursuers. Burning bridges behind him, Grierson crossed three rivers and successfully eluded forces sent from Vicksburg and Port Hudson to block his escape, once a befuddled Pemberton finally realized that Grierson was headed to Louisiana rather than returning to Tennessee.

Perhaps the most dramatic of many episodes during this ride occurred when the missing Company B of the 7<sup>th</sup> Illinois rejoined the raiding party just before it finished crossing the Pearl River on the ferry on day eleven. It had been detached on day six to attack the Mobile and Ohio railroad at Macon. While it failed in this effort when it ran into a large fortified Confederate force at this railhead, it did convince Confederates that Grierson was headed east, when he was actually headed west and then southwest. Grierson's men captured a Confederate courier just as he was about to warn the ferry keeper of Grierson's approach. At Wall's bridge at the crossing of the Tickfaw River on day fifteen, Grierson suffered the loss of the commander of a battalion in the 7<sup>th</sup> who made a reckless charge across the bridge. This also resulted in the severe wounding of the leader of the Butternut Guerillas, who had to be left behind (but who survived captivity). Grierson's last close call came at the crossing of the Amite River bridge, when officers of his pursuers from Port Hudson stopped to participate in a cotillion ball in their honor, thereby reaching the destroyed bridge just two hours after Grierson's departure.

Grierson's raid not only accomplished Grant's purpose for launching it, but it demoralized Mississippi's citizens, given the futility of the pursuit, combined with Joseph Johnston's failure to relieve Pemberton and the surrenders of Vicksburg and Port Hudson and their defenders that summer. Grierson's command participated in the capture of Port Hudson and he was promoted to brigadier general. He was temporarily disabled when injured by a horse that had been given to him by a New Orleans citizen committee. He went on to distinguish himself as a western cavalry commander, including his encounters with the renowned Nathan Bedford Forrest and another raid through Mississippi in December, 1864-January, 1865, ending at Vicksburg. After the war, Grierson became the commander in 1866 of the Tenth Cavalry, one of two black cavalry regiments that became known as the "Buffalo Soldiers." He led the regiment on the southwest frontier until 1888. Grierson was featured in the 1997 Turner Network Television's documentary on the Buffalo Soldiers. He retired as a brigadier general in 1890 and completed his Civil War memoirs in 1892. Grierson died in 1911.

\*The battle is featured in the Summer 2010 issue of the Civil War Preservation Trust's [Hallowed Ground](#) magazine.

#### References

- Dee Brown. 1962. *Grierson's Raid: A Cavalry Adventure of the Civil War*. University of Illinois Press.
- Bruce J. Dinges and Shirley A. Lecke, eds. 2008. *A Just and Righteous Cause: Benjamin H. Grierson's Civil War Memoir*. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Tom Lalicki. 2004. *Grierson's Raid: A Daring Cavalry Strike Through the Heart of the Confederacy*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Harold Sinclair. 1956. *The Horse Soldiers*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Dennis Keating is immediate past president of the Roundtable and professor at Cleveland State University's Maxine Goodman Levine College of Urban Affairs. He is program director of the Master's in Urban Studies.

## **NEXT MONTH**

***WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN***

**PORTRAYED BY FRANK BULLOCK**

## **SEPTEMBER CIVIL WAR EVENTS IN OHIO**

September 1-30: Mentor, Ohio: The James A. Garfield NHS presents a special exhibit, a Diorama of the Battle of Chickamauga.

September 4 and 11: Oberlin, Freedom's Friends History Walk. This tour showcases Oberlin's role in abolition and the Underground Railroad.

September 11 and 12: Pioneer Days at historic Lyme Village. The village comes alive with reenactors covering the 19th century, including the Civil War.

September 10-12: Ft. Recovery, "Civil War at the Fort." Living history, reenactments, live artillery demonstration, night fire, and military ball, among other events.

September 18: Toledo, Civil War encampment.  
Gallipolis, 147th Annual Emancipation Celebration

September 19: Toledo, Civil War encampment  
Gallipolis, 147th Annual Emancipation Celebration  
Mentor, Commemoration of President Garfield's death