

The Charger



The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

Feb. 2022

vol. # 46 # 6

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow Roundtable Members:

The January 12th meeting featured the Dick Crews Annual Debate. We had four Roundtable members participate, each making the case as to why his chosen subject should be considered the general officer least deserving of the discipline he received during the war. After the presentations concluded, each debater fielded pointed questions from the audience for five minutes, followed by a spirited round robin between the debaters as to why the other participants' subjects were more deserving of their fates. Judge William F.B. Vodrey, as he has over the last several years, performed his moderator duties admirably. Ultimately, the membership voted Gene Claridge's argument in favor of Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren, USA, the winner. Judge Vodrey, in keeping with longstanding Roundtable tradition, awarded Gene multiple fabulous prizes.

Our next meeting will be held in-person and via Zoom on February 9, 2022, with a social hour commencing at 6:00 PM. Our speakers, Lynn and Julianne Herman, will begin their presentation at 7:00 PM. They will be presenting "War in the West: Battle of Glorietta Pass." The Hermans have presented programs to Civil War roundtables throughout the Midwest. This lecture addresses an action far to the west of the Mississippi River in a theatre of operations that does not get the attention it should.

If you haven't yet made your reservations, please do so without delay! I look forward to seeing you at our February 9th meeting.

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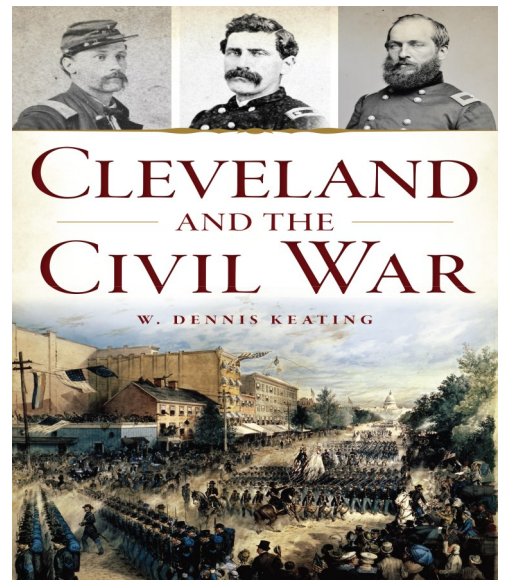
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CCWRT member publishes new book.

Cleveland and the Civil War

by W. Dennis Keating, The History Press (\$21.99)

On February 21, the History Press will publish *Cleveland and the Civil War* by W. Dennis Keating. Several members of the Roundtable were kind enough to review drafts of the book. It covers both the pre- and post-war periods as well as the wartime. The rise of Cleveland as a commercial and then an industrial city is described. Among major events are: the 1858-1859 Oberlin-Wellington rescue of an escaped slave and their trial in Cleveland; the 1861 visit to Cleveland by President-elect Lincoln and his return on April 28, 1865 enroute to his burial in Springfield after his assassination; the inauguration of postal delivery that then spread throughout the country; the 1866 and 1870 invasions of Canada by Fenians, many of whom were Irish Civil War veterans from Cleveland; and the post-war national encampments in Cleveland by the Grand Army of the Republic. The military history profiles units that had significant connections to Cleveland : the Cleveland Grays, the Hibernian Guards, 8 infantry regiments, the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, and the 1st Ohio Light Artillery (and the 5th U.S. Colored Troops). Support on the home front by the Soldiers' Aid Society is covered. Among the notable individuals profiled are: James Garfield, Rutherford B. Hayes, William McKinley (all future U.S. Presidents), John D. Rockefeller, Clara Barton, Rebecca Rouse, Levi Schofield, and Thomas Francis Galwey of the Hibernian Guards and the 8th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Key Civil War sites include Public Square, the Lakeview and Woodland Cemeteries, Camp Cleveland, and monuments including the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.



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The Sibley Tent
by Dennis Keating

Henry H. Sibley, commander of the Confederate forces at the battle of Glorietta Pass, was best known for his invention of the Sibley Tent, used in the Civil War until 1862. Sibley invented the tent in the 1850s.

"It was a cone-shaped structure 18 feet in diameter and 12 feet high, supported by a single pole in the center that rested on a tripod...The Sibley tent looked very much like Native American tepee used by the tribes on the plains."

It had a hole that allowed for a stovepipe to provide heat and ventilation. It allowed for up to 12 men to sleep in it.

They were phased out of service because: "They were expensive and due to their size, were difficult to transport, requiring lots of wagons and horses. They were replaced by smaller lightweight tents."

Reference: <https://ironbrigader.com/2011/10/25/sibley-tent-civil-war/>



A Footnote in Civil War History

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There are eighteen outdoor Civil War statues spread out throughout much of central and northwest Washington, D.C. There are eleven statutes to Union generals, two of Union admirals and one (which was recently removed) to Confederate General Albert Pike, who was depicted as a Mason and not as a general. The others are a G.A.R. Memorial, Peace Monument, Emancipation Memorial and the newest African American Civil War Memorial.



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Besides the statuary, there are a number of historical plaques to the Civil War at various sites. One of the strangest sites is located on the grounds of the Washington Naval Yard. The plaque there reads:

“Within this Wall is Deposited the Leg of Col. Ulric Dahlgren U.S.V. Wounded July 6th 1863 While skirmishing in the Streets of Hagerstown with the Rebels after the Battle of Gettysburg”

This plaque is on the wall next to the exit of NAVSEA (Naval Sea Systems Command) Building 28 – a parking garage. It is the original placed there by Admiral John Dahlgren, father of Ulric. Above this plaque is a modern one (1998) with more description and two pictures – one of the building that previously occupied this space and one of the young colonel with both of his legs.

But the plaque lies. The leg is not there. No one knows with certainty what happened to Ulric’s leg.

In 1863, Captain Ulric Dahlgren was twenty years old. He was given a small command of 10 men by Cavalry Commander Major General Alfred Pleasonton to harass General Robert E. Lee’s lines of communication during the Gettysburg campaign. On July 4th Dahlgren found himself astride Lee’s line of retreat to the Potomac River after Lee’s defeat. His command was increased to 100 men from troopers in Brigadier General Wesley Merritt’s command. By the morning of July 6th, Dahlgren joined Brigadier General H. Judson Kilpatrick’s Third Cavalry Division advancing to intercept the Confederates at Hagerstown.

Hagerstown was held by the cavalry brigades of Generals Beverly H. Robertson and John R. Chambliss of General J.E.B. Stuart’s Cavalry. They had barricaded some of the streets and posted riflemen in church steeples and cupolas on the approach of the Yankee cavalry. Captain Dahlgren was one of the first to enter the town from the south and led his men in a head-long dash down Potomac Street crashing into the 9th Virginia Cavalry. A melee ensued. Pushing the Confederate troopers back beyond Zion Reformed Church, Dahlgren was in the middle of the road when shots were fired from the flank by Confederates behind the tombstones in the church’s graveyard. The captain was wounded in the foot as he turned to rally his men. Captain Frank A. Bond of the 1st Maryland Cavalry is often credited with firing the shot that wounded Dahlgren.

The cross-fire too intense, Dahlgren led his men out of town. He thought the wound was nothing more than a glancing ball and didn’t realize his heavy boot and foot had been pierced. Reporting to Kilpatrick, he realized he was bleeding. Becoming faint he dismounted to lay on the ground where he passed out from shock. He was lifted into an ambulance and taken to Boonsboro where surgeons removed bone shards from his foot.

On July 9, a train conveyed Dahlgren to Washington D.C. where he was taken to his father’s house, and his Aunt Patty ministered his wound. Admiral Dahlgren was absent commanding the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Being a close friend of the Admiral, President Lincoln visited Ulric’s bedside as did Secretary of War Stanton. Before leaving, Stanton handed Aunt Patty a commission promoting him to colonel to be given Ulric when he was feeling better.

Young Dahlgren was suffering with excruciating pain and after examination by a surgeon he was told the wound had become gangrenous and the leg had to be amputated. On July 21, fifteen days after he was wounded, the lower right leg was removed below the knee.

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Ulric Dahlgren would recover. But what was to be done with his amputated leg? The summer heat discouraged transporting it to the family plot in Philadelphia for burial. The current superintendent of the Washington Naval Yard, an old friend of Admiral Dahlgren, suggested the limb could be sealed in the Dahlgren Gun Foundry building being erected – building 28. The severed limb received a full military funeral, complete with honor guard and casket – a lead and wooden box - and interred in the cornerstone on the west end of the foundry. His father would later have the plaque placed at the spot.

In 1915, Building 28 was demolished and replaced by a metal fabricating shop; but some of the surface elements remained. The cornerstone and the leg were not disturbed. The building was again demolished in 1942, removing the remaining surface elements of the 1863 foundry. The plaque was re-installed at a higher location on a new wall. But mysteriously Ulric Dahlgren's leg had disappeared. Some conjectured that Confederate sympathizers opened the vault and removed the leg; others believed it was removed and buried with Dahlgren's body in Philadelphia after the Civil War. Whatever the case, the leg was unaccounted for. In 1998, the plaque was recovered when Building 28 was again demolished to construct the NAVSEA parking garage. The plaque now rests in approximately the original location marking the southwest corner of Dahlgren's foundry. A modern plaque with the pictures was placed with the original.

It seems that Ulric Dahlgren was to be cursed with missing body parts. Five months after being wounded he rejoined the army with a cork leg and crutches. In February/March 1864 Dahlgren participated in General Kilpatrick's raid on Richmond to free the Union prisoners incarcerated in the Confederate Capitol. The raid was a failure and the contingent that Dahlgren led was ambushed and he was killed on March 2, 1864. A thirteen-year-old boy named William Littlepage found papers on Dahlgren's body that indicated an intention to assassinate Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet and set fire to Richmond. Ulric Dahlgren was soon viewed by the Richmond papers as a war criminal.

Colonel Dahlgren's body was placed in a white, flat-topped coffin with his name stenciled on the top and taken by train to Richmond. His body was put on display at the York River train depot minus one finger that had been cut off to retrieve a ring and his cork leg which was displayed in a Richmond store window. His body was secretly buried at night in Oakwood Cemetery. The grave was leveled so that no one could tell where it was. Only two men – one a freed black man – knew the location and were sworn to secrecy.

Admiral Dahlgren returned to Washington and was desperate to have his son's remains returned so they could be buried in the family plot in Philadelphia. He petitioned President Lincoln who wrote to General Benjamin Butler at Fort Monroe, Virginia, "If you obtain the remains of Col. Dahlgren, please notify me instantly so that I can let his afflicted know." On March 23, the Confederate authorities decided to return Ulric's body. However, when they went to disinter the body, they were shocked to find the grave was empty. The Richmond Examiner declared in its March 23 edition that, "Dahlgren has risen...!"

Elizabeth Van Lew, a forty-six-year-old Richmond spinster known to locals as "Crazy Bet", was a devoted Unionist and operated a spy ring in the Confederate Capitol. One of her men, F.W.E.

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Lohmann, guided by the freed black gravedigger, had already disinterred the body on a cold, dark, rainy night. After verifying that it was Dahlgren's body, they placed it in Martin M. Lipscomb's wagon and took it to nearby farm owned by William S. Rowley. They placed the body in a metallic coffin, put it in Rowley's wagon, covered it beneath young peach trees, and secretly transported it by the Confederate pickets out of the city to the farm of Robert Orrick near Hungary Station. There it was reburied under a freshly planted peach tree to mark the spot. Miss Van Lew sent a coded message to General Butler that the body had been recovered. Word filtered back to the Admiral.

When Richmond fell the Admiral retrieved his son's remains. He had a train driven to Hungary Station where the remains were verified and recovered. Placed in a new metallic coffin it was accompanied by a military escort back to Washington, D.C. where it lay in a Washington vault until cooler weather when it could be transported north.

At the end of October 1865, Admiral Dahlgren had the remains taken to City Hall of Washington to lie in state, before taking them to the First Presbyterian Church where the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher conducted a Memorial service. Two generals and six colonels served as pall bearers and the service was attended by President Andrew Johnson and all of his cabinet members. After, the remains were loaded on a special train to Philadelphia where the funeral took place on November 1, 1865. In attendance were Generals George G. Meade, Andrew A. Humphreys and Alexander Webb. The body was escorted by 196 men from the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Philadelphia City Cavalry and the 7th U.S. Infantry to Laurel Hill Cemetery, where it lies today. Ulric Dahlgren could make the claim that he was buried in both Capitols during the Civil War and after the war in one of our nation's first capitols. But is his leg there?

The Admiral wanted Ulric's personal effects returned and enlisted the help of F.W.E. Lohmann. He traced Ulric's ring to Cornelius Martin, formerly of Company H, 9th Virginia Cavalry. When confronted, Martin finally admitted that he took the ring, but gave it to a Dr. Saunders. Lohmann confronted Saunders and after some difficulty caused him to produce the ring.

Dahlgren's cork leg was also recovered. Seems Lieutenant James Pollard of the 9th Virginia Cavalry lost his right leg during the fighting at Nance's Shop, Virginia and tried to use Ulric's prosthetic leg. It was uncomfortable for Pollard as it was too long. It was given to one of Mosby's Rangers, Captain John N. Ballard – himself missing a leg. Hearing he might be arrested for having possession of the prosthesis, Ballard was glad to be rid of it when detectives called on him. By November 1865 the prosthesis was back in Washington. As one wag put it: "Thus the leg served both with the North and South."

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2nd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry

By Dennis Keating

The 2nd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry (OVC) was organized in Cleveland in August-September, 1861. Its ranks were filled with volunteers from Northeast Ohio counties, with 317 from Cleveland. Its wartime experience was incredibly varied, beginning in the West (Kansas, Indian Territory, Arkansas, and Missouri). Later, it moved East to Kentucky, Tennessee and then to the Eastern Theater. Beginning with Grant's 1864 Overland campaign, it served with the Army of the Potomac and also in Phil Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley campaign through Lee's surrender at Appomattox. It also pursued John Hunt Morgan's raiders in Southern Ohio in the summer of 1863. Over the course of the war, it had six Medal of Honors awardees. It had 7 officers and 76 enlisted soldiers killed in combat and 5 officers and 179 men dead from disease.

Beginning in 1862, the regiment was sent West to Missouri and then Kansas, serving with the Army of the Frontier. In May to July, it was in Indian Territory. It fought many skirmishes, including against guerillas led by William Quantrill. From pro-Union native soldiers, it learned the game of LaCrosse. It also learned the Indian war whoop, which it adopted and used when charging into battle. It became known as the 2nd Ohio yell.

1863 found the 2nd OVC in Kentucky and in July it joined in the pursuit of John Hunt Morgan's raiders though the battle of Buffington Island. After the capture of the remaining raiders, it was sent to Eastern Kentucky and then it was attached to the 23rd Corps in Ambrose Burnside's East Tennessee campaign which included the siege of Knoxville.

In 1864, the 2nd OVC joined the 9th Corps of the Army of the Potomac. It would serve at many of the major battles of Grant's Overland campaign: the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna, Cold Harbor, and Haw's Shop. In June, it participated in Wilson's raid on the Southside and Danville railroads and the battle of Ream's Station. On June 1, Captain Henry Chester remembered:

"[I]n one of the charges, we captured a rebel lieutenant who asked 'To whom do I have the honor of surrendering?' '2nd Ohio' was the reply. Great Heavens! I fought that Regiment in the Indian Territory, in Arkansas, in Kentucky, in Tennessee and now they have got me in Virginia."

Then, it joined Phil Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah, serving in the cavalry division led by George Armstrong Custer. It was in all of the major engagements of the campaign and many skirmishes with Confederate cavalry.

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In 1865, it was with Sheridan as he finished the defeat of Jubal Early's Valley forces enroute to rejoining Grant's forces before Petersburg and Richmond. On April 1, it was at Five Forks, which forced Lee's abandonment of his defense of the two cities. It then pursued Lee's retreating army to Appomattox. At the last major battle of the campaign on April 6 at Sailor's Creek, five of its soldiers won the Medal of Honor by capturing the flags of Confederate regiments.

The experience of the 2nd OVC can be followed through two volunteers from Oberlin: Luman Harris Tenney (wartime diary) and Henry Chester (postwar memoir). Tenney lost his brother at Five Forks. Chester was wounded, including at Sailor's Creek:

"Suddenly a man steps from behind a tree, takes deliberate aim and fires; Captain Chester falls from his horse to the ground and the man throws down his musket and pleads for quarter... The coward is permitted to live and may repent his dastardly deed. On his knees, Captain Tenney, a comrade of Chester's at Oberlin College, gathers the fallen man in his arms, while others dress his wound, and are overjoyed to find that the ball has struck his forehead and glanced and not killed one of the bravest and worthiest men that ever sought the cannon's mouth."

On May 23, 1865, the 2nd OVC was in the cavalry vanguard of the Army of the Potomac in the Grand Review of the Armies in Washington City, led by its flamboyant commander Custer.

Among its memorable events was the raid in a snowstorm in Columbus on March 5, 1863 from Camp Chase when it attacked the pro-Peace Democrat paper *Crisis*. Its anti-war criticism angered its soldiers so that they entered its office and ransacked it. They warned arriving police not to interfere. No soldier was ever disciplined or charged. This was described by William J. Smith of Company M in his diary.

References

Henry W. Chester. *Recollections of the War of Rebellion: A story of the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, 1861-1865*. Edited by Alberta R. Adamson. Wheaton, IL: Wheaton History Center, 1996.

Karyn Norwood. *Profile of an Oberlin Soldier: Henry Whipple Chester, 2nd Ohio Cavalry*. Oberlin Heritage Center Blog, June 29, 2011:

"[Chester] enlisted at the age of twenty-one in the fall of 1861 in the 2nd Ohio Cavalry as a private. For the next four years, Chester fought in thirty-eight battles and skirmishes and travelled over 22,000 miles through thirteen states and territories... His recollections display a lively and humorous personality and a war-experience that was at times harrowing, humorous, lively, and bitter-sweet."

Frances Delia Andrews Tenney. *War Diary of Luman Harris Tenney, 1861-1865*. Cleveland, OH: Evangelical Publication House, 1914. Reprinted by Wentworth Press, 2016.

William J. Smith. *Just a Little Bit of the Civil War as Seen by W.J. Smith, Company M, 2nd O.V. Cavalry*. Robert W. Hatton, Ed. Ohio History. Ohio Historical Society, 1975 and Little Miami Publishing Company, 2009.

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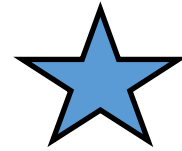
Meeting Feb. 9th, 2022

Program: "War in the West: Battle of Glorietta Pass."

Speakers: Lynn and Julianne Herman

Location: The Holiday Inn Independence at Rockside Road just off I-77

Time: Social Hour 6pm. Presentation 7pm



The talk will be both in-person and streamed live so that many Civil War enthusiasts can enjoy our program.

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