The Charger

The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. May 2022 *vol. # 46 # 9*

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I hope everyone enjoyed the Bob O'Connor's presentation on Sarah Slater, a shadowy figure whose possible involvement in the Lincoln assassination conspiracy has been a controversial topic for years. I found the question and answer session after his talk particularly interesting, as Bob has been involved in determining the authenticity of a photograph that appears to show a deceased President Lincoln on his deathbed the morning after John Wilkes Booth shot him.

The Roundtable's next meeting will be held on May 11th. Our speaker, and the final one for the current Roundtable year, will be Professor Bruce Tucker. Professor Tucker will assume the persona of Admiral David G. Farragut, the victor of New Orleans and Mobile Bay. Professor Tucker, in a period appropriate full Navy uniform, will address the Battle of Mobile Bay. Members will recall that the capture of Mobile, Alabama, by a Union fleet commanded by Admiral Farragut in August, 1864, not only closed the last Confederate port on the Gulf of Mexico available to blockade runners, but also provided a much needed Federal victory boosting President Lincoln's chances for re-election in November, 1864.

Professor Tucker's presentation will be done by Zoom. If you haven't yet made your reservations by sending an email to ccwrtreserve@gmail.com, please do so without delay. Please specify your meal choice! You can choose between salmon, pasta primavera, or vegetarian. Dessert will feature a vanilla birthday cake with chocolate frosting celebrating the Roundtable's 66th anniversary. The staff at the Holiday Inn will serve the cake once cut by two specially selected Roundtable members.

I look forward to seeing you all at our May 11th meeting!

Mark Porter, President

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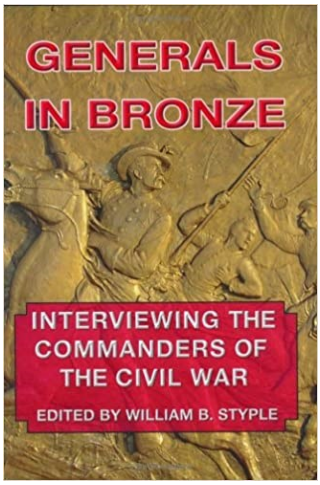
Generals in Bronze

By James Kelly
Edited By William B. Styple
Reviewed by Paul Siedel



Sometimes it's difficult to realize just how much the Civil War and its issues have carried over into present day life. Artillery shells are sometimes found on beaches; bones are found in farmer's fields; and once in a while a diary is found in some long forgotten attic in some long forgotten house that sheds new light on the conflict and those who took part in it. One such case is that of William B. Styple, who while at the New-York Historical Society in 2003, came upon twenty-seven boxes of interviews, notes, letters, sketches, photos and countless drafts of the memoirs of sculptor James E. Kelly. After reading through each one, he edited them and compiled the book "Generals in Bronze" the memoirs of James E. Kelly.

Kelly was born of immigrant parents in Brooklyn N.Y. In 1855. Although his family moved several times throughout New York City, he became at an early age fascinated by drawing and illustrating. His diaries describe what it was like in school the day Lincoln was assassinated. His parents were Lincoln supporters and hung black crepe throughout the house. After some family discussion it was decided he would enroll in The Academy of Design in New York City. Later he learned the art of wood engraving at the firm of Meeder & Chubb. Kelly did so well at this that Meeder recommended he apply for a job at Harper Brothers Publishing House to work under Mr. Charles Parsons, Head of the Art Department. Here he met several distinguished figures who came through the Art Dept. His good looks and winning personality soon endeared him to other staff members including Winslow Homer who took young Kelly under his wing and refined his art of illustration. After working at Harpers, Kelly went on to work at Scribner's, and it was while working at Scribner's that he became friendly with William Alexander who arranged a meeting with General Philip Sheridan, Kelly's boyhood idol. The general had agreed to sit for his portrait, and James Kelly was the one chosen to paint him. As Styple puts it in his book, "James E. Kelly finally met his boyhood idol General Phil Sheridan on June 15, 1878 at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City. From then on, Sheridan and Kelly, both being of Irish descent were on the closest terms of cordiality and friendship." Kelly describes Sheridan thus, "Sheridan is a short thick-necked, broad shouldered erect little man with a red-bronzed face and black eyes, over hooded lids, they were the eyes of a genius." Kelly painted the portrait called "Sheridan's Ride" which depicted Sheridan on his horse Rienzi at the Battle of Cedar Creek. He listened to Alexander and Sheridan describe what they remembered of Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Sheridan adds the fact that he evidently didn't see much, as he said he was asleep under a tree having spent four days in the saddle prior to that. All the while Kelly was taking notes and illustrating what he was hearing and seeing. Kelly records his meetings over the years with Sheridan this way:
GEN. SHERIDAN
FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL
May 3, 1879

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"In answer to my card I was told to come upstairs. I knocked. A cheery long, "Come in" rang out and the door was opened by the general himself; and grabbing me by the hand with, "How do you do, Kelly?' Swung me around to the center of the room, at the same time saying, 'Let me introduce my brother, Colonel (Michael) Sheridan, Mr. Kelly.' Styple goes on the describe the conversations Kelly had with the General and how he (Kelly) was moving toward sculpting rather than illustrating. The two (Kelly and Sheridan) remained friends over the years. Kelly says in his memoirs "I remember when I would call on General Sheridan and he was feeling particularly cheerful, he would say, " Let's go over to the window, and look at the pretty girls," and then tilt his chair back which would bring his face on an angle with the sky and tell me the latest news about his wife and babies."

"On the morning of the 6th of August 1888, I was lying in bed and my father came in and said, "Jimmy, your friend is dead and my sorrow knew no bounds."

As the years went by Kelly, thanks to Sheridan's friendship and recommendations, became the "go to man" whenever the government needed a bronze statue cast of some notable personage. William T. Sherman, Eli Parker, John Logan, Abner Doubleday, Judson Kilpatrick, Jefferson C. Davis, Winfield Scott Hancock, Daniel Butterfield, Joseph Hooker, Fitz John Porter and many others were all cast in bronze by Kelly, and his conversations with them as they were sitting were all recorded, and his illustrations were labeled as to time and date. His conversation with General Grant while sculpting his likeness is particularly interesting and his description of Grant's funeral is very moving.

Mr. Styple also includes Kelly's thoughts on his works and whether or not they portray the subject's personality. They didn't always. As far as his artwork is concerned James Kelly's painting of "Sheridan's Ride" and "Crowded Hour at San Juan" are on display at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. Many of the bronze statues located at Gettysburg, Monmouth, and other sites are done by Kelly.

On May 25, 1933 headlines in the New York Herald Tribune read: "James Kelly Dies; Sculptor of Monuments." He was 77 years old and is buried in St. Raymonds Cemetery in the Bronx. Styple states that Kelly had planned to publish his memoirs but due to economic hard times and disputes with the publishers, his notes never were published. They were instead packed away and remained at the New York Historical Society until rediscovered by William Styple in 2003. In his later years Mr. Kelly was nearly destitute and repaid his doctors and friends with many of his works. Mr. Styple does a wonderful job of organizing and editing the contents of Kelly's notes into a very readable book.

So the next time we're rummaging around in some long forgotten attic of some long forgotten barn, one may find notes or orders scribbled on the back of a datebook or scrap of paper, that if read carefully, may help to illuminate some of the secretes of our American History.
"Generals in Bronze" can be purchased at Gettysburg Visitors Center where I purchased my copy or I imagine on line from Amazon Books or any other on line book seller. A purchase well worth the money spent.

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Civil War Sculptures by James Kelly on display to the general public:
Soldiers & Sailors' Monument, Troy, N.Y.
Sixth New York Cavalry Monument, Gettysburg, PA.
General Horacio Wright Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery.
General Fitz John Porter Statue, Portsmouth, N.H.
General O. O. Howard Bust, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
Barbara Fritchie Memorial, Fredrick, MD.
McKinley Memorial, Wilmington, DE.

Generals in Bronze, Styple, William B., 2005, Belle Grove Publishing Co. Kearny, N. J. 07032.

Mark Twain Supports the Ladies **© Brian D. Kowell April 2022**

Samuel Langhorne Clemens is better known by his pen name Mark Twain. He was a writer, humorist, entrepreneur, publisher and lecturer. Twain studied the Mississippi River and the operations of the river-boats and eventually became a riverboat pilot. He wrote such well- known titles *The Adventures of Huck-leberry Finn*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calvaeras County*. When the Civil War broke out, he feared that he would be impressed as a Union gunboat pilot. He re-turned to Hannibal, Missouri, his home, and joined the Marion Rangers. His service would lead him to satirically write about his own adventures as a Confederate private during the Civil War titled *The Pri-vate History of a Campaign That Failed*.

Mark Twain met many celebrities during and after the Civil War. He was a neighbor of Harriett Beecher Stowe and helped publish Ulysses S. Grant's memoirs. Mark Twain also loved the study of science and technology and developed a lasting friendship with Nikola Tesla. Twain himself would eventually own three patents. He filed for and was granted a patent for a clothing accessory when he was thirty-five years old. He also patented a History Trivia game as well as self-pasting scrapbooks.

Twain found wearing suspenders uncomfortable, so he came up with a device he called an "Improvement in Adjustable and Detachable Straps for Garments." What he envisioned was a versatile two-piece strap – perfectly elastic – that fastened with hooks. The hooks were inserted into a series of rows of small holes, chosen depending on how snug (or loose) the wearer wanted their garment. Twain thought this simple, gender-neutral tool could customize the fit of a wearer's vest, shirts, pantaloons, or stay, a corset-like ob-ject, which women wore under dresses.

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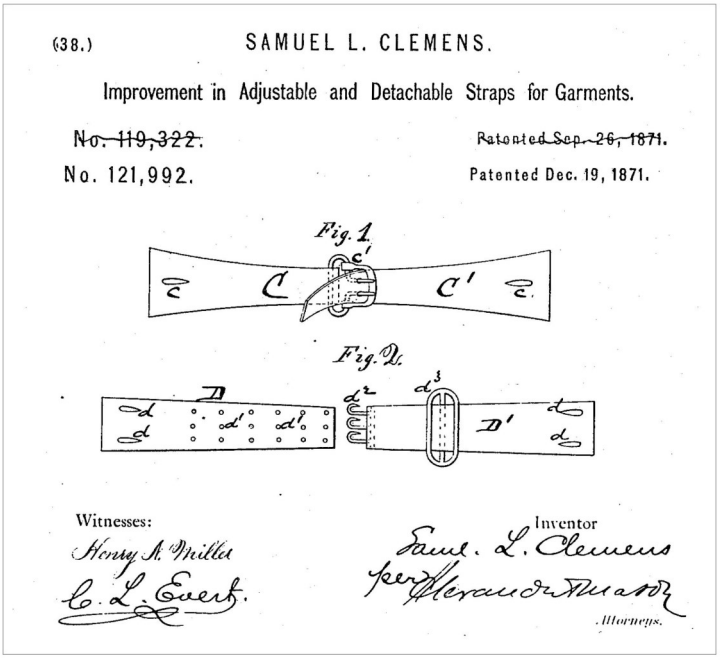
When Twain submitted his patent in September 1871, Henry C. Lockwood was attempting to patent a similar invention he described as an "elastic waist strap." Utilizing a process known as "interference", the U.S. Patent Office had both men compose statements in order to determine which design originated first. Twain responded by writing a characteristic short story, explaining how he had given the idea thought for four or five years before making his prototype that August. The Office accepted his claim to be first, and he was granted patent no. 121,992 on December 19, 1871.

But long-term uses for a product do not always materialize during the inventor's lifetime. Such was the case of Mark Twain's. Thanks to changing fashions – waistcoats with adjustable buckles, dropped waistlines that accommodated belts – his garment straps were not produced for several decades. In 1914, four years after Twain's death and long after his hard-won patent expired, Mary Phelps Jacob patented the first bra from handkerchiefs and ribbon. When she sold her patent to the Warner Brothers Corset Company, they added Twain's straps to the back to keep the garment in place.



(38.) SAMUEL L. CLEMENS.

Improvement in Adjustable and Detachable Straps for Garments.

~~No. 119,322.~~ ~~Patented Sep. 26, 1871.~~

No. 121,992. Patented Dec. 19, 1871.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Witnesses:

Henry A. Willis

C. L. Everett.

Inventor

Saml. L. Clemens

per Alexander Mason

Attorneys.

P.S. Another fun fact for Mike Wells: Twain was a big cat lover and the most cats he ever owned at one time was nineteen. His feline family included Beelzebub, Sour Mash, and Tammany.

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Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington National Cemetery was founded in May 1864. Up until that time, the cemetery at the Old Soldiers Home, three miles north of the White House was the primary cemetery for military burials. By 1864 it had reached its maximum capacity of roughly 8000 soldiers buried there.

Secretary of War Edwin Stanton directed a new site to be found. Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs suggested Arlington, Robert E. Lee's wife's ancestral home as the site of the new cemetery. Meigs chose the site to penalize Lee for his treason.

The first two burials at Arlington took place on May 13, 1864. The first was Private William Christman of the 67th Pennsylvania Infantry. Christman was just twenty years old. He had been a farm hand before the war and enlisted on March 25. 1864. He never saw combat. On May 1 he was diagnosed with measles and died on May 11 at Lincoln General Hospital in Washington. It is not surprising that the first man to be buried at Arlington died of sickness. Soldiers were two times more likely to die from illness than battlefield wounds during the Civil War. The second burial was Private William McKinney who also died of illness. He was a member of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry and only seventeen years old.

On Saturday, May 14, 1864, Private William Blatt was the third soldier buried at Arlington. Blatt had been mortally wounded at the Battle of Spotsylvania during Upton's attack. He was shot in the head. While wounded five days before Blatt at the Battle of the Wilderness, Private William Reeves of the 76th New York Volunteer Infantry was the fourth soldier buried at Arlington. Reeves was shot through the jaw and later died on May 13 at Stanton General Hospital in Washington. Blatt was the first battlefield casualty to be interred and Reeves the second. All four soldier's graves are in Section 27 of Arlington National Cemetery.

Source: *A Fire in the Wilderness: The First Battle between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee*. John Reeves. New York & London. Pegasus Books. 2021. Pp 196-203

Submitted by Brian Kowell

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Ohio in Texas

By Dennis Keating

At its peak, the Union placed around 50,000 troops in Texas. They were mostly stationed on the Rio Grande border to guard against a Mexico then ruled by imperial French troops. This is one of the best known events in Texas during and after the Civil War. After the surrender of the major Confederate armies of Lee and Johnston, the last battle of the Civil War was fought on May 12-13 at Palmito Ranch in southeast Texas.

After that, federal troops arrived to restore order in the wake of the collapse of the Confederacy and its government in Texas. On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston with almost 2,000 federal troops to begin the Reconstruction occupation of Texas, which lasted for a decade. Granger famously issued a proclamation on "Juneteenth" announcing the emancipation of slaves in the United States, freeing about a quarter million slaves in Texas.

The federal occupation troops in Texas before being mustered out of service included these nine Ohio regiments: 13th, 15th, 41st, 48th, 51st, 64th, 83rd, 114th, and 125th. Six of them fought at Shiloh belonging to the Army of the Ohio and then at the battle of Perrysville, Kentucky in 1862. These regiments fought in the Western theater. That includes the battles of the campaigns for Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and Atlanta and the defeat of Hood's 1864 invasion of Tennessee at Franklin and Nashville. At Franklin, Emerson Opdycke's "Tigers" of the 125th repulsed the desperate Confederate assault to capture and destroy Schofield's Army of the Ohio. Of these nine Ohio regiments, only the 41st included a significant number of soldiers from Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

Anxious to return home, these Ohio veterans were not all pleased to be sent to Texas. Members of the 15th petitioned not to be sent to occupation duty in San Antonio. After relenting under pressure in August, 1865, they served there until they mustered out of service on November 21, 1865 and were discharged on December 27, 1865 in Columbus.

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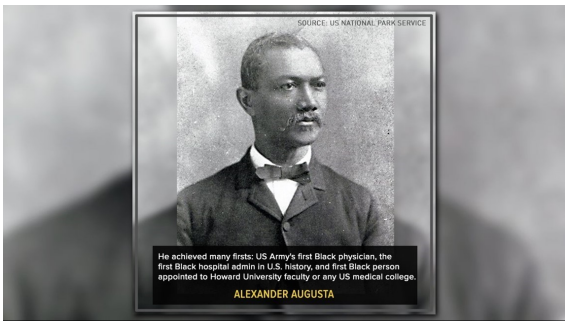
The Highest Ranking Black Officer in the Civil War

© Brian D. Kowell March 21, 2022



Although regiments of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) were staffed mostly by white officers, 120 African-Americans who were commissioned in the Union army during the Civil War. The highest ranking of those Black officers was Alexander Thomas Augusta who left the U.S. Army in 1866 with the rank of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.

Alexander was born into a free Black family in Norfolk, Virginia on March 8, 1825. He learned to read, a skill that was both unusual and illegal in Virginia at that time. The Augustas moved to Baltimore, Maryland while Alexander was still of school age. He continued to study and worked as a barber to help support the family.

Alexander was a bright young man and wanted to study medicine. He applied to the University of Pennsylvania to realize his dream but was not accepted. The University cited the reason for this rejection as "inadequate preparation". A faculty member sympathetic to his quest, offered to mentor him privately, which Augusta accepted.

Alexander fell in love and married Mary O. Burgoin in Baltimore on January 12, 1847. Various source describe Mary as of Native American descent. After a brief trip to California, Alexander enrolled in 1850 at Trinity College in Toronto, Canada to study medicine. Six years later he earned his degree and joined the staff of the Toronto City Hospital.

When the Civil War broke out in the United States in 1861, Alexander and Mary returned to Baltimore. Alex took a job as a pharmacist at a local drug store, but he had higher ambitions. He wrote to President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton to offer his services as an army physician. Once again he was rejected. There were flimsy excuses offered: having been in Canada, he was perhaps a British subject and therefore in violation of that nation's Neutrality Act? Perhaps his Canadian medical license should not be recognized in the United States? He thought it was because of his color.

Not to be denied, he travelled to Washington to plead his case. He was referred to the Army Medical Board and invited to take the medical exam. He passed and on April 14, 1863, Dr. Augusta was commissioned the rank of major and surgeon in the 7th CSCT, making him the highest ranking Black officer in the United States army. His pay was $10 a month, less than that of a white private. He wrote to Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson who was influential in getting his pay raised to the appropriate level for a commissioned officer.

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The question now was where to place Dr. Augusta. A Black doctor treating white soldiers was as unacceptable as a Black officer commanding white soldiers. He was assigned as chief surgeon of the Freedman's Hospital at Camp Baker outside of Washington. Despite his higher rank, the hostility of some white doctors and soldiers, made life difficult for the Major. Many white civilians resented him wearing an officer's uniform and he was mobbed in Baltimore while walking the streets. The same thing happened on the streets of Washington. Despite these obstacles, Dr. Augusta performed his duties well at the hospital, and remained a strong advocate for his race.

When he was asked to testify in a court case in the capital, he was late for the hearing because the street railway driver refused to let him board. There had been cases of other Blacks in Washington denied admittance and forcefully expelled from the streetcars. When he finally made it to the hearing, Dr. Augusta let the court know way he was late and vented his feelings of discrimination. Due to his rank and prestige, his case was referred to Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana. Dana took up the cause. He collected the relevant documents, obtained a sworn statement from Dr. Augusta, and forwarded them to Senator Charles Sumner. Sumner, in turn, introduced anti-discrimination amendments regarding Washington street railway companies. Sumner read Dr. Augusta's complaint into the Congressional Globe and called for an investigation. The Congressional committee at first resisted proposing the new legislation, but in March 1865 Congress passed a law prohibiting the exclusion of persons from streetcars in the capital on account of their color.

After the war, Dr. Alexander Augusta was put in charge of the Lincoln Hospital in Savannah, Georgia until 1866, when he decided to leave the army. Although brevetted a Lieutenant Colonel, the promotion to lieutenant colonel was not confirmed. Once again Augusta's advancement was rejected, this time by the military. He returned to Washington where he started his own private practice. In 1868 he became the first Black to be appointed to the faculty of Howard University. Despite being denied recognition as a physician by the American Medical Association, he encouraged young Black medical students to persevere. He remained a strong advocate for equal rights until his death in Washington on December 21, 1890. He was the first Black officer buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Sources:

Heather M. Butts, Alexander Thomas Augusta – Physician, Teacher, Human Rights Activist. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 97, January 2005. Pp 106-109.

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www.archives.gov/education/lesson/blacks-civil-war.

www.blackpost.org/african-american-history/augusta-alexander-t-1825-1890.

www.american battlefieldtrust.com *The Color of Bravery*

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Meeting May. 11, 2022
Speaker: Professor Bruce Tucker
Program: Professor Tucker, in a period appropriate full Navy uniform, will address the Battle of Mobile Bay.
Location: The Holiday Inn Independence at Rockside Road just off I-99

Time: Social Hour 6 pm. Presentation 9pm

The talk will be both in-person and streamed live so that many Civil War enthusiasts can enjoy our program.
For reservations go to: ccwrtreserve@gmail.com or call, 440-449-9311