

# THE CHARGER



## The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

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October 2023

Vol. 48, No. 3

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**SPEAKER:** Dr.  
Curt Fields as  
Ulysses Grant

**LOCATION:** The  
Holiday Inn  
Independence at 6001  
Rockside Road,  
Independence, Ohio  
44131, off US  
Interstate 77

**TIME:** Social Hour  
at 6:00 PM and

Presentation at 7:00 PM

For reservations email:

[ccwrtreserve@gmail.com](mailto:ccwrtreserve@gmail.com). To ensure a dinner is reserved for you, the reservation must be made by Tuesday, October 3, 2023

Website:

<http://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>

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MEETING – October 11, 2023

PROGRAM – “Third Night with General Grant: Vicksburg” (Last program in series “Three Nights with General Grant,” in cooperation with Quincy Gilmore CWRT, October 9, and Northeast Ohio CWRT, October 10).

## *President's Message*

### **Fellow Roundtable Members:**

We had a successful field trip to Manassas National Battlefield Park on September 21-24, 2023. Thirty-seven members and guests ended up joining us on the field trip as we walked the ground where the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battles of Bull Run were fought, as well as the delaying action of Richard Ewell at the Battle of Kettle Run at the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park. We saw the aftermath of the carnage at the Ben Lomond Historic Site which was a house that was used as a Confederate hospital during and after the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of Bull Run and is currently set up to portray that field hospital. We observed the writings of Union soldiers preserved on the walls of the Ben Lomond house from 1862 when the Union army occupied the site. Similar markings were left on the walls of Liberia House at the Liberia House Historic Site that we toured. Liberia House was used as General P.G.T. Beauregard's headquarters after the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of Bull Run and Confederate President Jefferson Davis met there with General Beauregard after the battle. The house was occupied by Union forces in 1862 and was the headquarters of Major General Irvin McDowell. President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton visited McDowell at the house in 1862, making Liberia House the only private residence that was visited by the presidents of both sides during the war.

Our guides were excellent. Jim Burgess, a Ranger from Manassas National Battlefield Park, was our guide for the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of Bull Run. Jim has been with the

National Park Service for 44 years and at Manassas for 41 years. Needless to say, his knowledge on the subject matter was impressive. Kevin Pawlak, with Prince William County Historic Preservation Division, was our guide for the Battle of Kettle Run and the Ben Lomond Site. Kevin is part of Emerging Civil War, is a licensed battlefield guide for Antietam, and an author of a couple books on the Civil War. His knowledge was again very impressive, and his presentation skills were outstanding. Lastly, we had National Park Ranger Anthony Trusso walk us through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull Run. Anthony was a younger man with only seven years of experience with the National Park Service as compared to Jim Burgess' 44 years, but he also had a great command of the subject matter and great presentation skills. I would like to note that Kevin and Anthony guided us through the battlefields on Saturday in the rain as the effects of a tropical storm hit Manassas. I would also like to note that our field trip participants donned their rain gear and popped their umbrellas and charged across the battlefields with no complaints that I heard, and I thank them for that.

In the evenings we had group dinners near our hotel where we regaled about the activities of the day and got to know each other a little better. These meals were followed by the regular group of bourbon drinkers who gathered in the hotel lobby to talk some more. On Saturday evening the group even got to watch the Ohio State Buckeyes pull off a last second victory over Notre Dame as we sat in the lobby enjoying our drinks.

I provided a recommended reading list for the field trip which included two books that I would again like to recommend to the group. Both books were written by John J. Hennessy who served as a historian at Manassas National Battlefield Park. The first is *The First Battle of Manassas: An End to Innocence, July 18-21, 1861*, and the second is *Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas*. Visiting the battlefields after reading these two books made the experience even better.



*CCWRT 2023 Field Trip Participants on the Stone Bridge at Manassas National Battlefield Park*

I think the field trip that the Roundtable does each year is one of my favorite benefits of membership. I highly recommend that you consider joining us on a field trip in the future. We are already starting to plan next year's field trip to Gettysburg on September 19-22, 2024. Save the dates on your calendar.

This month's speaker is Dr. Curt Fields who is a Living Historian that portrays General Ulysses S. Grant. He has portrayed Grant's life as a general and president in 22 states. These presentations include the 150th and 160th commemorations of Fort Donelson, Shiloh,

and Vicksburg, as well as the 150th commemoration of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. He is scheduled to appear for the 160th commemoration for this historical event as well.

General Grant will appear at three local Civil War Roundtables on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>. We designed this event to have each presentation follow one of his campaigns in chronological order with the idea that members could attend all three. He will finish on the 11<sup>th</sup> at our Roundtable with Vicksburg. I hope Dan Ursu's history briefs on the Vicksburg Campaign from our archives served as a refresher for you of the campaign.

Dr. Fields does a fantastic job portraying General Grant and I think we are in for an enjoyable evening. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Thanks,

Bob Pence

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## *The Editor's Desk*



Ah, the classics! In anticipation of our visit with General Grant this month, I thought it might be interesting to highlight some of the writings on Grant that influenced my thinking about the man. As a teenager, I

was, sadly, too much influenced by the myth of the “lost cause.” Many popular historians sixty years ago portrayed Ulysses S. Grant as a hard drinker (if not a drunk) and a hard fighter. I often thought of him as a boxer—a Rocky type—who took hard blows from his opponent and came back with even stronger blows. As the “lost cause” writers insisted, Grant won in the end simply because he refused to quit and wore down his opponent by sheer weight of numbers. Robert E. Lee was the tactical genius, Grant merely a heavy slugger. HOW WRONG I WAS!

The transformation in my thinking began when I read two books by Bruce Catton: *Grant Moves South* and *Grant Takes Command*. In Catton’s work I began to see that Grant could be a fine tactician as well as a fighter. He won not simply by blindly reacting to his opponents’ blows, but he also planned and executed well-placed blows of his own. He knocked Albert Sidney Johnston off balance at Forts Henry and Donelson, and he kept Pemberton and Joseph Johnston dazed by his actions in Mississippi. In 1864 he executed a grand strategic plan that kept the Confederate armies in both the Western and Eastern theaters on the defensive. Yes, there were some misplaced punches and ungainly throws, but overall, he pushed continually forward to ultimate victory.

In college and graduate school, I discovered that British military historians had usually given Grant a higher rating than most Americans. I read John Keegan’s *The Mask of Command* and found more than sixty pages on Grant’s command ability that completely transformed my thinking. In a chapter titled “Grant and Unheroic Leadership,” Keegan unapologetically calls Grant the “greatest general of the American

Civil War.” This was an opinion I never heard before—”Stonewall” Jackson, Robert E. Lee, or Nathan Bedford Forrest, maybe, but never Grant. After reading Keegan’s book, I could never look at Grant the same way again. I then found that Keegan was following a line of British military historians going back at least as far as Major General J.F.C. Fuller. In his Preface to his book, *Grant & Lee: A Study in Personality and Generalship*, in 1932, Fuller wrote, “Until a few years ago I accepted the conventional point of view that Grant was a butcher and Lee one of the greatest generals this world has ever seen.” He then proceeded in this classic military history to explain why Grant was surely the better commander. A further example of the British appreciation for Grant’s military talent is General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall’s *Grant as Military Commander*. To some extent all these views had an impact on Bruce Catton. His analysis of Grant’s overall command ability can be found in *U.S. Grant and the American Military Tradition*.

Of course, each of us must form our own opinion of U.S. Grant and his contribution to the Union’s successful conclusion to the war. There is little doubt that Grant’s military reputation among American historians has experienced a revision. A great example of this is Ron Chernow’s *Grant* or H.W. Brands’ *The Man Who Saved the Union: Ulysses Grant in War and Peace*. So far as classics go, however, one should not neglect to read General Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant*. Porter first met Grant when he was a young ordnance captain and General Grant was visiting General George Thomas at his headquarters. Porter later joined Grant’s staff in Virginia and had the opportunity to closely observe his boss.



Finally, one should not neglect to read Grant's *Personal Memoirs*, written while he was suffering from throat cancer and published shortly after his death in 1885. His struggle to complete the book was, indeed, his last and greatest battle, and its publication saved his family from poverty. Like any memoir, the book has its flaws, but it has been recognized as one of the best military memoirs ever written by a

commander. In addition, his work is a true classic in American literature as well. Grant has a bold and concise writing style which makes his book particularly appropriate for a modern reader. I read the memoir in graduate school, and I have referred to it many times since.

—Kent Fonner



### TOUR OF BUFFINGTON ISLAND BATTLEFIELD SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2023

This year marks the 160th anniversary of the Battle of Buffington Island, the largest armed clash in Ohio during the Civil War. The Cleveland CWRT's Committee on Local Field Trips has arranged for a guided tour of the battlefield on **Sat. Nov. 4 from 10am to 5pm**. The tour will take us on important private lands of the battlefield that are usually inaccessible. Although the tour is free, donations are welcomed by the Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation to support its mission.

Space on the tour is limited, so first come, first served for **RSVPs no later than noon on Fri. Oct. 13**, please.

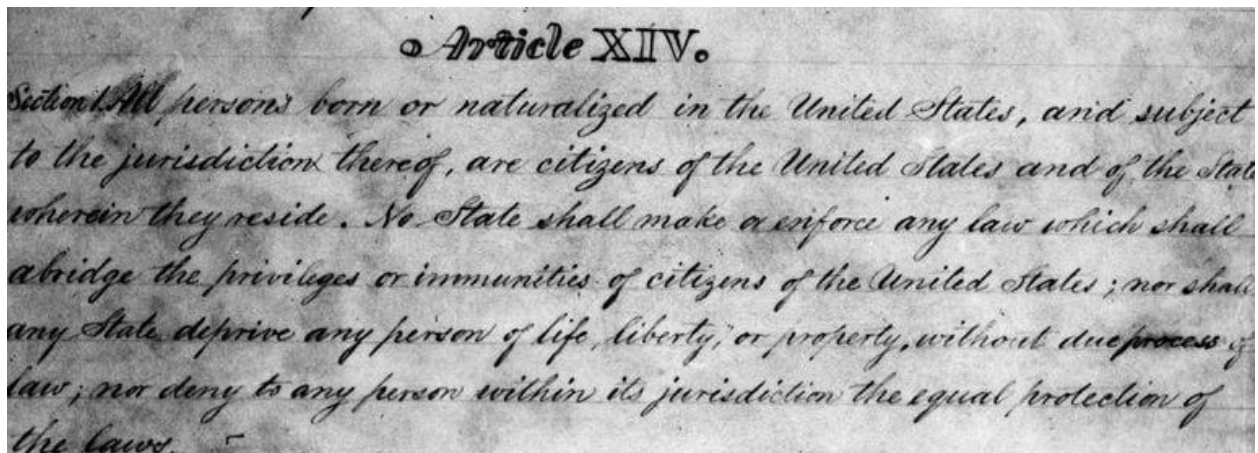
Buffington Island Battlefield Memorial Park is almost 3 1/2 hours' drive from the East Side of Cleveland, so plan your trip accordingly.

For more on the battle:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Buffington\\_Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Buffington_Island)  
<https://www.ohiohistory.org/visit/browse-historical-sites/buffington-island-battlefield-memorial-park/>

If interested, please reply directly to William Vodrey at [wfbvodrey@aol.com](mailto:wfbvodrey@aol.com).

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## ***Ohio and the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment***

By Dennis Keating

In advance of the 2024 presidential election, Section 3 of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment barring insurrectionists from holding federal office in the future (barring amnesty) has received growing attention from those seeking to invoke it to keep the disgraced former president Trump from seeking re-election.

This post-Civil War Constitutional amendment and Ohio have a fascinating history. The father of Section 1, most known for its declaration of “the equal protection of the laws” designed to protect the rights of the emancipated slaves, was authored by Ohio U.S. Senator John Bingham. Bingham was an abolitionist who was one of the prosecutors of Lincoln’s assassins and who made the closing argument for the attempted impeachment of President Andrew Johnson.

In its early history as a state, Ohio passed several anti-Black laws, including prohibiting Blacks from voting. However, in the pre-Civil War era, Ohio gained prominence in the fight against slavery with the publication of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and the Underground Railroad (through Cleveland and Oberlin among other sites) which allowed many escaped slaves to gain freedom. During the Civil War, Ohio contributed more troops to the Union except for New York and Pennsylvania. Union army heroes Grant, Sherman and Sheridan were all Ohio born.

Among the Radical Republicans advocating for protection for the freed slaves was Ohio’s other U.S. Senator Ben Wade (who would have become President if Andrew Johnson had been impeached). Former Ohio governor, U.S. Senator, Secretary of the Treasury, and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was Salmon Chase, who was also a prominent Ohio political abolitionist and a mentor of Bingham.

In December 1865, the Congress authorized the 15-member (including Bingham) Joint Committee on Reconstruction in the South to investigate conditions there. This led to Congress

passing the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and then on June 13, 1866, the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Later, in the wake of Southern white resistance to Reconstruction and the emergence of the KKK violence against former slaves, the Congress denied the re-entry to Congress by the former Confederate states unless their governments ratified the Fourteenth Amendment.

Ohio on January 4, 1867, became the seventh state to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. But, on January 15, 1868, the Democratically controlled Ohio General Assembly rescinded its ratification declaring that it was “contrary to the best interests of the white race”. Former Ohio Democratic Congressman Clement Vallandigham, a prominent believer in White supremacy and opponent of the war, had been arrested and convicted of treason in 1863 during the Civil War (and that same year after being exiled by President Lincoln was a failed Ohio gubernatorial candidate). In the 1867 Ohio election, a proposed amendment to the state Constitution to allow all African-American men to vote had been defeated.

In 2002, University of Cincinnati College of Law Professor Gabriel “Jack” Chin asked students to research whether racial segregation laws still existed. Their research included the 1868 repeal by Ohio of its ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. In a February 2003 report, Professor Chin, seven of his law students and lecturer (and Cincinnati City Council member and future Mayor) John Cranley urged Ohio legislators to again ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. On February 25, 2003, the Ohio Senate unanimously voted to re-ratify the Fourteenth Amendment as did the Ohio House on March 1, 2003, by a vote of 94-1.

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Clement Vallandigham. Ohio Civil War: <https://www.ohiocivilwarcentral.com/clement-vallandigham/>

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***CSS Shenandoah***  
***and a Treaty Offensive and Defensive with the Whales***

By Al Fonner

The New Bedford whaler, *Abigail*, cruised the Okhotsk Sea, threading her way through the occasional ice flow, in search of whales. It was May 21, 1865, and *Abigail*, under command of the veteran whalerman Capt. Nye, had had little to no luck thus far in their hunt. At around 3 o'clock, a lookout reported sails on the other side of the ice flow that separated the two ships. Capt. Nye, it is certain, cast a wary eye at the strange ship as it came around the North point of the ice. The vessel, having rounded the ice, raised the Russian ensign. Capt. Nye surely breathed a sigh of relief since it was not uncommon to encounter a Russian ship in these cold regions between Siberia and the Kamchatka Peninsula. Capt. Nye ordered the Stars and Stripes raised to show that *Abigail* was an American whaler.

Once *Abigail* had run up the Stars and Stripes, and much to Capt. Nye's dismay I am certain, the other ship lowered its Russian ensign and hoisted the Confederate flag. It then fired a blank shot from its 12-pounder, which compelled Capt. Nye to bring *Abigail* to. An officer dispatched from the other ship informed Capt. Nye that *Abigail* was now a prize of the Confederate cruiser *CSS Shenandoah*. The officer further informed Capt. Nye that he must proceed to the *Shenandoah* to produce *Abigail's* papers. Cornelius Hunt, Master's Mate aboard *Shenandoah*, reported part of this exchange as follows:



The skipper looked at him for a moment, scratched his head, laid in a fresh chew of tobacco, and then remarked coolly, “Well, I s’pose I’m taken! But who on earth would have thought of seeing one of your Southern privateers up here in the Ochotsk[sic] Sea. I have heard of some of the pranks you fellows have been playing, but I supposed *I* was out of your reach.”

“Why, the fact of the business is, Captain,” replied the officer facetiously, “we have entered into a treaty offensive and defensive with the whales and are up here by special agreement to disperse their mortal enemies.”

*Abigail*’s crew of approximately thirty was transferred as prisoners to *Shenandoah*. Additionally, twenty-five barrels of whiskey were removed from *Abigail*, “to be used in case of sickness.” Then, she was set alight and left to her watery grave. *Abigail* was not the first prize taken by the *Shenandoah* during her 12-plus month rampage, nor would she be *Shenandoah*’s last.

Before there was a *Shenandoah*, a state-of-the-art clipper ship, *Sea King*, was launched in England on August 17, 1863. *Sea King* was two hundred twenty feet long, and thirty-five feet at the beam. Her frame and masts were of iron with teak planking. She was capable of up to 16 knots under sail, with an auxiliary steam engine to provide alternate propulsion. Hunt described *Sea King* as a “long, rakish vessel of seven hundred- and ninety-tons register, with an auxiliary engine of two and twenty nominal horsepower, with which she was capable of steaming ten knots an hour.” *Sea King* made her maiden voyage to New Zealand carrying British troops where, Hunt tells us, “... she proved herself one of the fastest sailers afloat, her log showing at times over three hundred and twenty miles in twenty-four hours. Such a vessel ... was not likely to escape the notice of the Confederate agents in England.”

Confederate agents did notice, and they purchased *Sea King* in October 1864. She left London ostensibly for Bombay, India, but rendezvoused on October 8 at the Island of Madeira with the steamer *Laurel*. Personnel that would form the nucleus of *Shenandoah*’s crew and stores necessary for twelve months at sea were transferred from *Laurel*. *Sea King*, according to Cornelius Hunt, came with two 12-pounders, “... such as are usually mounted upon an East Indiaman of her size....”<sup>5</sup> Four 8-inch smooth-bore cannon and two 32-pound rifled Whitworth guns were added to *Sea King*’s existing armament.

*CSS Shenandoah* was commissioned of Lt. James I. Waddell of North was a graduate of Annapolis and had resigning from the United States he had accumulated twenty years of *Shenandoah* would capture thirty-naval ship to circumnavigate the command to furl her flag.



on October 19 under the command Carolina. Waddell [pictured here] served in the Mexican War. Before Navy to join the Confederate Navy, naval service. Under Waddell, eight ships, be the only Confederate globe, and the last Confederate

*Shenandoah* departed Madeira on Commander Bulloch, Confederate dated October 5, 1864, that read: “Sir: You are about to proceed upon a cruise in the far-distant Pacific, into the seas and among the islands frequented by the great American whaling fleet, a

source of abundant wealth to our enemies and a nursery for their seamen. It is hoped that you may be able to greatly damage and disperse that fleet, even if you do not succeed in utterly destroying it.”

*Shenandoah*’s complement initially numbered only twenty-three officers and nineteen crewmen, less than half her normal manning of over one hundred. Before departing, Waddell had conferred with his officers and decided to augment their crew with whomever could be lured from prize ships to join *Shenandoah*. As a result, *Shenandoah* would have to rely primarily on steam for propulsion since there were too few sailors to effectively manage the rigging and sails.

*Shenandoah* sailed South across the Equator to round the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean. Along the way, she took a number of American commerce vessels as prizes, eight in the Atlantic and one in the Indian Ocean. A number of sailors from prize ships volunteered to join *Shenandoah*’s crew, which alleviated to an extent her crew shortage. The remaining were held as prisoners. One of these prizes, *Adalaide* was discovered to be the property of a Mr. Pendergrass of Baltimore, a Southern sympathizer. *Adalaide* was, therefore, spared the fate of the other prizes to a watery grave, although her bulkheads had been demolished before this discovery was made. Her cargo, however, “not being the property of any of our friends,”<sup>7</sup> was ransomed for \$40,000. A second prize, *Kate Prince*, was ransomed for \$40,000 on the condition that she take the rest of *Shenandoah*’s prisoners into port, to which her Captain agreed. Prior to this, other prisoners had either been transferred to a Danish brig headed to Rio Janeiro, or they were landed from *Shenandoah* on the Island of Tristan de Cunha.

While steaming towards the Cape of Good Hope, *Shenandoah*’s crew discovered that two of her propeller bands had broken, which could only be repaired in port. Since the chances of encountering a Union warship were too great at the Cape, Waddell decided to proceed under sail to Melbourne, Australia. On Christmas day, *Shenandoah* was off the Cape of Good Hope, which was, “... the most miserable travesty.... We were boxing about ... at the mercy of old Neptune’s irate temper....”<sup>8</sup> *Shenandoah* reached Melbourne on January 25, 1865, ninety days after leaving Madeira.

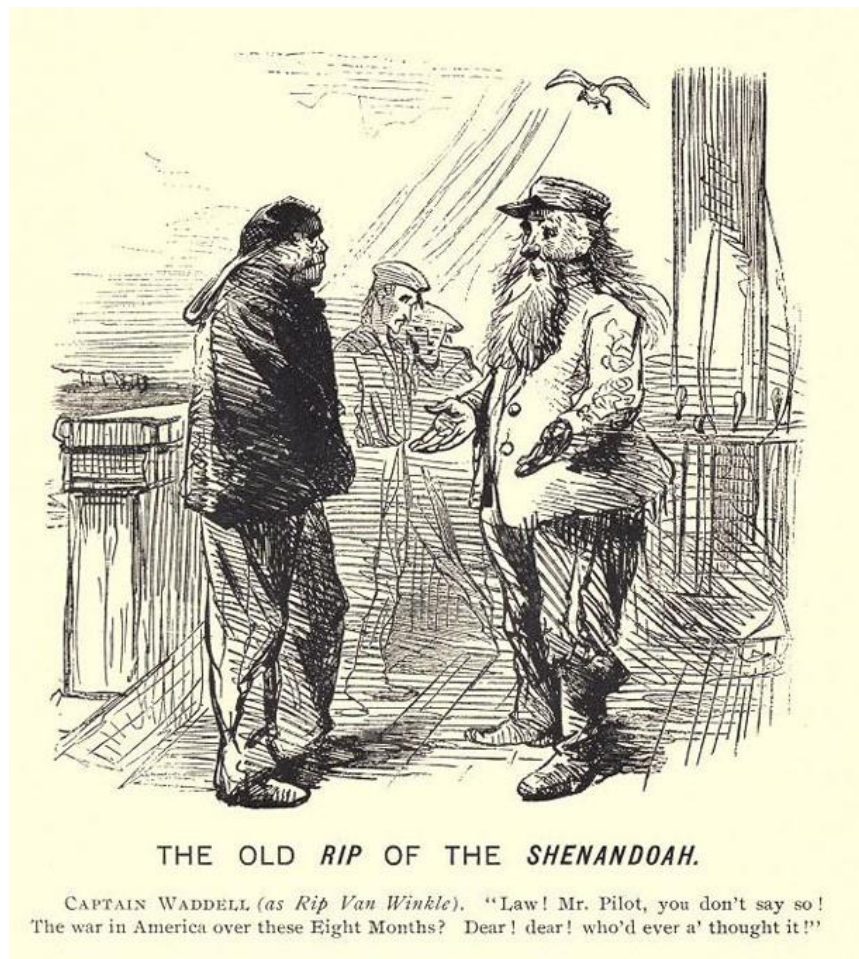
While in Melbourne, which was a neutral port, rumors spread that *Shenandoah* was illegally recruiting men to join her crew. In response, the Royal Governor dispatched a force of armed men to seize *Shenandoah*. Of this, Hunt recorded, “...it is much easier to direct a party of landlubbers to seize an armed vessel than to execute the mandate.”<sup>9</sup> Waddell refused to allow *Shenandoah* to be seized and, after threatening to take the issue up with England, the matter was dropped.

After completing repairs and taking on stores, *Shenandoah* left Melbourne on February 18. Soon after her departure, forty-five stowaways made their presence known. These men were enlisted when outside Australian waters to avoid any illegalities. Although a welcomed addition to her crew, the added numbers were somewhat offset by the loss of nineteen who had deserted while in Melbourne. Still, *Shenandoah*’s crew was nearer her full compliment.

While in the open sea, *Shenandoah* encountered the Hawaiian trading schooner, *Pfiel*, and learned of American whalers at the Ascension Islands, now known as the Caroline Islands. *Shenandoah* immediately set sail for the Ascensions and, on April 1, caught four whalers there.

All four ships were set afire and left to burn. Among the items taken from the four ships were their whaling charts, which provided Waddell with much-needed intelligence on where to find the whaling fleet. The last whaler, *Harvest*, was set alight on April 13, four days after Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox on April 9, of which Shenandoah's crew would have no way of knowing.

Sailing North, first to the Okhotsk Sea, *Shenandoah* ran down the whaler *Abigail*, the encounter of which was described earlier. Finding no other prizes in the Okhotsk Sea, Waddell sailed *Shenandoah* on June 6 to the Bering Straits and the Arctic Ocean. Ice fields were a concern since *Shenandoah* was not designed for sailing through ice, of which Hunt wrote, "But a woman's temper is not more capricious than the movements of the ice in these Northern regions."<sup>10</sup> Fortunately, Thomas Manning, a second mate of *Abigail's*, purported to be a Southern sympathizer, and offered his services as pilot. Between June 22 and June 28, *Shenandoah* captured twenty-four whalers, more than a month after Jefferson Davis was imprisoned on May 19.



*Shenandoah* left the Bering Straits on June 30. On August 2, she learned from the barque *Barracouta*, who was steaming from San Francisco to her home port of Liverpool, of the Civil War's end and that several United States Cruisers and one English Man-of-War were hunting

*Shenandoah*. Believing that a pirate's fate awaited them if captured, Waddell resolved to sail back to Liverpool, England, and surrender to the English authorities.

*Shenandoah* arrived in Liverpool on November 6 where she surrendered to the Royal Navy. The United States took possession of *Shenandoah* in 1866 and later sold her to the Sultan of Zanzibar. She was lost to a Hurricane in 1872. *Shenandoah's* Officers and crew were briefly held by English authorities but later released. None of them faced trial for piracy.

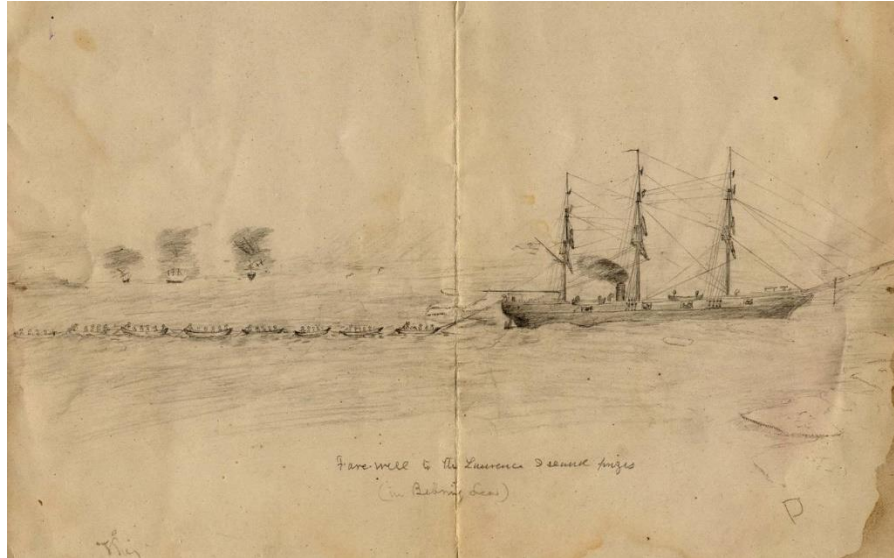
During her twelve-and-a-half months at sea, *Shenandoah* captured thirty-eight Northern ships, mostly whalers. Two-thirds of the total were taken after the cessation of the war. Six of the thirty-eight were ransomed; the remaining prizes were sunk. Total losses to the Northern interests amounted to over \$1.3 million in 1865 dollars, or \$24.5 million today. Over one thousand prisoners were taken, and all were treated humanely while aboard the *Shenandoah* until either put ashore or transferred to another vessel bound for a neutral port. However, the whaling industry was decimated, losing almost half of the whaling fleet during the war, from which it would never fully recover. Having lost their reliable supply of whale oil as an inexpensive lamp fuel and lubricant, the public would turn increasingly to oil products.



*George Gilley, a Native Hawaiian, captained whaling ships in the Arctic Ocean from the mid to late 1800s*

*Shenandoah's* war against the whalers also affected Hawaii, which was still an independent state at the time. Hawaii depended largely on whaling to support its economy. Whalers used Hawaii as a home port. Fewer whaling vessels meant fewer supplies and material purchased locally, fewer whaling crewmen spending their money in the local economy, less profit for businessmen invested in whale oil products and shipping. Additionally, the resultant unemployment was a drain on Hawaii. Thereafter, Hawaii's economy would transition to sugar.





*In this drawing of the CSS Shenandoah in the Bering Sea, sketched by a member of the crew, we see boatloads of whaler crewmen being towed as POWs while their whaling ships burn in the background.*

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Sherman House Museum, Lancaster, Ohio

## ***Lancaster and Fairfield County, Ohio: Shermans and Ewings***

By Dennis Keating

William Tecumseh Sherman was born in Lancaster in Fairfield County, Ohio on February 18, 1820, and his younger brother John was born there on May 10, 1823. They were among the eleven children of Ohio Supreme Court Justice Charles Robert Sherman and his wife Mary Hoyt Sherman. When their father died in 1829, William Tecumseh (“Cump”) was sent to live with the family of Thomas Ewing, Sr. in Lancaster. He was a prominent lawyer and politician. He was a U.S. Senator (1831-1837), U.S. Secretary of the Treasury in the administration of William Henry Harrison (and John Tyler) and the first U.S. Secretary of the Interior in the administration of Zachary Taylor (and Millard Fillmore). Three of his sons would become Union generals in the Civil War and William Tecumseh Sherman would marry his daughter Ellen.



William T. Sherman and his wife, Ellen Ewing Sherman

While much of Southern Ohio (populated by many Southerners) was anti-abolitionist and then anti-Lincoln during the Civil War, nevertheless, more than 3,000 men from Fairfield County served in the Union military during the war. The Lancaster Guards arrived in Columbus as the first Ohioans to answer President Lincoln’s call for volunteers after Ft. Sumter. It became

Company A of the 1<sup>st</sup> OVI. Many from this county served in the 61<sup>st</sup> OVI, as well in these other Ohio infantry regiments – 17<sup>th</sup>, 43<sup>rd</sup>, 46<sup>th</sup>, 58<sup>th</sup>, 88<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup>, 140<sup>th</sup>, and 178<sup>th</sup> – and the 4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 62<sup>nd</sup>, and 123<sup>rd</sup> Ohio Volunteer Cavalry plus the 12<sup>th</sup> U.S. Regulars.

William Tecumseh Sherman would become a hero of the Union and the postwar commander of the Union Army after Ulysses Grant became President. The three Ewing brothers would have significant Civil War military careers.

Hugh served with the forces of George McClellan and William Rosecrans in West Virginia and became commander of the 30<sup>th</sup> OVI. He then fought at the battle of South Mountain and was promoted there to command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the Kanawha Division of the 9th Corps, engaged on its left flank in its attack at Antietam. Moving West, he commanded three Ohio infantry regiments in Grant's Vicksburg campaign. After that, he was promoted by his stepbrother to command of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division of the 15<sup>th</sup> Union Army Corps. His division was among those that assaulted Missionary Ridge on November 25, 1863, and then lifted the siege of Burnside's army in Knoxville. After that, Hugh commanded the District of Louisville, before rejoining Sherman's army in North Carolina at the war's end.

After the war, President Andrew Johnson appointed Hugh as the American Minister to Holland (1866-1870). He then returned to Lancaster and became a farmer there. Hugh was also a novelist.

Thomas Ewing, Jr. was a Cincinnati lawyer who moved to Kansas. He moved to Kansas Territory amidst the often-violent conflict over whether when it became a state it would be a Free State or a Slave State. In addition to practicing law, Tom was also engaged in land speculation. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Tom became that new state's first Chief Justice. In 1862, he became commander of the 11<sup>th</sup> Kansas Infantry. He gained national notoriety after the guerilla William Quantrill's August 21, 1863, raid on Lawrence, Kansas and massacre of hundreds of Unionists. In retaliation, Ewing issued General Order No. 11 for the removal of civilians with Southern sympathies from four Missouri counties adjacent to the Kansas border. The following year, he gained his greatest military success. Against an invading Confederate force that Fall under Sterling Price aiming to attack St. Louis, Ewing's heavily outnumbered force, holding a fort at Pilot Knob, held off Price's army, stopped its advance, and successfully eluded the pursuing Confederates as it retreated.

Thomas became a postwar Washington, D.C. lawyer and represented three of the accused Lincoln assassination conspirators – Samuel Arnold, Edmund Spangler, and Dr. Samuel Mudd, all of whom escaped execution. He and his family defended President Andrew Johnson and Thomas lobbied Kansas Congressman Edmund G. Ross, who cast the key vote to save Johnson from impeachment. Tom opposed the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. After returning to Lancaster in 1870, he failed to win the Democratic nomination for governor. In 1876, he was elected as a Democrat to Congress and served two terms. In 1879, he lost a close election for governor of Ohio. He was a trustee of the Ohio Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans' Home and Vice-President of the Cincinnati Law School. He was killed in a traffic accident in New York in 1896.

Charles ("Charlie") Ewing served with his stepbrother, including in the Vicksburg, Atlanta, March to the Sea, and Carolinas campaigns. He was wounded in the May 1863 attack of the

“Forlorn Hope” on the defenses of Vicksburg. After the war, he too became a Washington, D.C. (patent) lawyer. He served as the Catholic Commissioner for Indian Missions.

John Sherman was a lawyer (briefly in Cleveland) and a three term Congressman. Upon Lincoln’s appointment of Senator Salmon Chase as U. S. Secretary of the Treasury, Sherman was appointed to replace him. He served in the Senate until President Hayes made him U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. In 1880, he sought the Republican presidential nomination, supported by James Garfield (who eventually was nominated and elected). Upon Garfield’s election, he returned to the Senate (in Garfield’s seat). He served six terms in the U.S. Senate before becoming Secretary of State in William McKinley’s first term. His best-known legislative achievement was the Anti-Trust Act, enacted in 1890.

Following his retirement in 1884 after making way in 1883 for Phil Sheridan to succeed him as the Commanding General of the U. S. Army, William Tecumseh Sherman spent most of his remaining life in New York City. He died there on February 14, 1891, and a funeral service was held there on February 19. His body was then transported to St. Louis, where he had spent considerable time both while in the military and also as a civilian before the Civil War. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis. There are monuments to Sherman in New York City and Washington, D.C.

The Sherman House Museum in Lancaster, birthplace of the Sherman brothers, is operated by the Fairfield County Heritage Association

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Burning Copper Rolling Mill, Cleveland, Tennessee

## *No Caps, No Guns: The Struggle for Confederate Copper*

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In the dark, the Yankee colonel heard the popping sounds from along his picket line and ordered his troopers to their support. As dawn broke, he was surprised by the booming of rebel cannon followed by a Confederate charge to test his lines. As the Confederates withdrew, the colonel inspected his lines, noticing a large copper rolling mill that anchored his right flank. As the colonel clenched his pipe, he needed to make some decisions before the Confederates tried again.

To shoot a firearm in the Civil War, you needed a percussion cap. Introduced in the early 1820s, this single-use percussion device for muzzleloading firearms enables them to fire reliably in any weather conditions. The cap itself is copper or brass with one closed end. Inside the cap is a small amount of shock-sensitive explosive material such as mercury fulminate, which was discovered in 1800. (Mercury fulminate is made from mercury, nitric acid, and alcohol). The cap is placed on a nipple, which is vented to the firearm's barrel. When the trigger is pulled, a lock-hammer strikes the cap, which creates a spark, igniting the powder in the barrel and discharging the weapon.<sup>i</sup>

Copper, mercury, and nitric acid were essential war materials during the Civil War. As one historian put it, "No caps [equals] no guns."<sup>ii</sup>

Both the North and South had to import mercury throughout the war. This became a problem for the South as the war went on and the Union blockade became more effective. The South's ability to supply nitric acid was limited as well. In one instance, the supply of nitric acid in the South was exhausted. Consequently, three million percussion caps were sent into the field with a substitute mixture of potassium chloride and sulfur, but those proved untrustworthy in damp conditions.<sup>iii</sup>

The Confederate Ordnance Bureau also had its share of bad luck. On December 23, 1861, the Nashville Ordnance Depot was completely destroyed by fire. Was it sabotage or an accident? How or where the fire started is unknown. The result, besides other equipment, was the loss of 2,000,000 percussion caps.<sup>iv</sup>

Another essential element was copper. The Union had extensive copper mines along the south shore of Lake Superior on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the counties of Keweenaw, Houghton, and Ontonagon, as well as Baraga County – collectively called Copper Country. The Confederacy, on the other hand, had few natural deposits of copper. There were small workable mines in southern Virginia in Carroll and Grayson Counties, but by far the largest and most productive were in the southeastern corner of Tennessee in Polk County. The Confederate government was also aware of large deposits of copper in Arizona near the Pinos Altos region. However, General Henry Hopkins Sibley was unable to secure this territory for the Confederacy when Union forces stopped his Army of New Mexico invading Arizona in 1862. The Yankees were not able to secure the copper territory either, as the region was controlled by Native Americans.<sup>v</sup>

Most Confederate copper was obtained from mines in Tennessee. Ducktown is in the center of the Tennessee copper basin near the junction of modern Tennessee State Route 68 and U.S. Route 64, not far from Cleveland, Tennessee. One of the largest copper rolling mills operated in that city. The mill was built in 1861 by German immigrant Julius E. Raht and was the only one of its kind in the entire Confederacy.



Percussion caps were needed for firing Civil War era firearms. Copper, mercury and nitric acid for manufacturing these items were essential.

In 1854, at the age of 28 years, Julius Eckhardt Raht arrived in Ducktown to seek his fortune mining copper. Born in Germany, he attended the University of Bonn and later the University of Berlin, studying chemistry and mineralogy. Immigrating to America during the German Revolution of 1848, he acquired U.S. citizenship in 1853.<sup>vi</sup>

When Raht arrived, the three major companies mining copper were the Union Consolidated Mining Company, the Polk County Mining Company, and the Burra Burra Mining Company. They were all owned by northern investors. He began to work at the Union Consolidated Mining

Company, where he also ran a profitable company store selling supplies to the miners and their families. Raht was described as “spirited, methodical, ambitious, [and] honest . . . no less a stern taskmaster in his own behalf than he was a loyal employee of those in whose interest he served.”<sup>vii</sup>

Raht [pictured here] became Consolidated Mining in 1858 and of later. By 1860, he was chief of companies and smelting works in mill were prospering under Raht’s “No man ever worked harder to and industrial strength . . . and, in rewards of his efforts than did called “Captain” Raht and was one Tennessee.



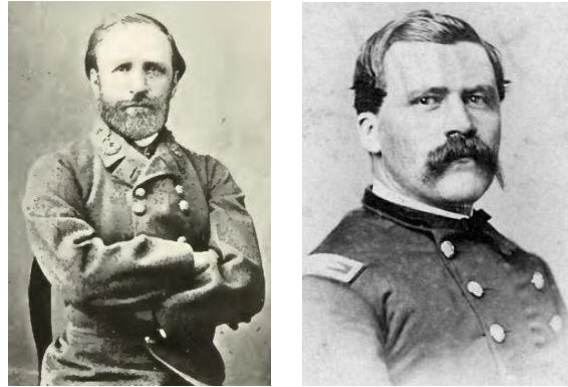
superintendent of Union the other two companies a year operations for all the mining the area. In 1861 the mines and leadership. As one historian noted, make Ducktown a district of moral turn, no man ever reaped greater Julius Eckhardt Raht.”<sup>viii</sup> He was of the richest men in Cleveland,

After the firing on Fort Sumter, Bradley County voted on June 8, 1861, along with the rest of Tennessee on the issue of secession. The total for the county was 507 for and 1,382 against. Despite this, Tennessee left the Union. Recognizing the importance of the mill and mines, the Confederate government seized them under the Sequestration Act of 1861. Raht was no secessionist, and he tried to protect his livelihood and the operation out of loyalty to his northern employers. Despite refusing to swear an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy, his expertise was so valuable that he was kept on to manage the operations.<sup>ix</sup>

As time passed, the mines and mill worked at a reduced capacity as men left to fight in the war. As a result, Confederate authorities looked at Raht through a jaundiced eye. They threatened to draft Raht into the army but let him pay for a substitute. Major (later General) Isaac Munroe St. John was tasked by General Josiah Gorgas, Chief of Ordnance, to secure raw materials for the war effort.

Born in Augusta, Georgia, St. John graduated from Yale University in 1845 and became a lawyer, newspaperman, and railroad civil engineer. The outbreak of the war found him working for the South Carolina Railroad. Enlisting with the South, by October 1861 he was an engineer in General John B. Magruder’s Army of the Peninsula. In April 1862 he was named the chief of the Niter Bureau (later the Niter and Mining Corps). St. John was tasked with improving production and acquisitions throughout the South.<sup>x</sup> As a result, in 1863, St. John took complete control over copper production by selling the rights to wealthy southern investors.<sup>xi</sup>

In November 1863 Major General Ulysses S. Grant was in Chattanooga, Tennessee confronting General Braxton Bragg’s Confederate army positioned on Missionary Ridge. Bragg had sent Lieutenant General James Longstreet to Knoxville to threaten the Union forces under Major General Ambrose Burnside. Cleveland, Tennessee, only 30 miles from Chattanooga, was between the two Confederate armies along the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad. Grant decided to sever this line of communication and supply by sending 1,500 Union cavalrymen under Colonel Eli Long.



Major Isaac Munroe St. John and Colonel Eli Long

Twenty-six-year-old Colonel Long rode out at 3:00 a.m. on November 25 toward Cleveland. His command consisted of men from the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry and the 1st, 3rd, and 10th Ohio Cavalry regiments from his Second Brigade, Second Division, supplemented by the 17th Indiana and 98th Illinois Mounted Infantry regiments from Colonel John T. Wilder's Third Brigade, Second Division.<sup>xii</sup>

Colonel Long was a Kentuckian by birth. He was a fighting colonel who was noted for the pipe clenched between his teeth before any action. During the Civil War he was wounded five times and cited for gallantry five times before retiring from the army in 1867 as a major general.<sup>xiii</sup>

As Major General George Thomas' men stormed up Missionary Ridge, the lead regiment of Long's column, the 1st Ohio Cavalry, drove the 2nd Kentucky Cavalry (CSA) from Cleveland. After securing the town, Colonel Long sent the 3rd Ohio and two companies of mounted infantry to destroy the railroad to Charleston and scout enemy strength in that direction. Meanwhile other Union troopers began destroying the railroad tracks, burning the railcars, and tearing down the telegraph wires. Eighteen-year-old Myra Inman living on North Street, two blocks east of the Bradley County Courthouse, wrote, "A raid of Yankees came in this eve. They took two hogsheads of our corn . . . and are all over in everything else. We go to bed with sad hearts." The 3rd Ohio returned before dusk after skirmishing the enemy in Calhoun. Being apprised of the proximity of the rebels, Long's men bivouacked at the Cleveland Masonic Female Institute for the night.<sup>xiv</sup>

Long's men were awakened by picket firing at 2:00 a.m. While some of Long's men saddled up to form a defensive line, others continued their destruction. Myra Inman wrote, "The Yankees are taking our corn, potatoes, pork salt, and never pay a cent and besides talk very insulting to us . . . [I]t is so hard to see it done and can't help ourselves. They burnt Mr. Raht's wagon and the railroad and some cars . . . Oh, how I wish I had some power."<sup>xv</sup>

As dawn broke, a brigade of Confederate cavalry, approximately 500 strong, under Brigadier General John H. Kelly along with a section (two pieces) of artillery attacked. Although outnumbered, the Confederates had the advantage over the Yankees who lacked any artillery. With his mission of destruction accomplished, Colonel Long concluded that discretion was the better part of valor and decided to withdraw. On the Federal right flank was Raht's rolling mill.



As historian David Powell pointed out, “Initially, the Federals seemed to care little about the rolling mill, which, viewed from a modern perspective, is interesting – copper was a vital war material and Cleveland was just about the South’s sole source for that material. In modern war, that mill would be a critical infrastructure target,”<sup>xvi</sup>

Before initiating his withdrawal, almost as an afterthought, Colonel Long ordered the mill destroyed. His men had found a large arsenal of rockets, torpedoes, and shells which Long ordered to be piled in the mill, then set on fire. Unionist East Tennessean J.S. Hurlburt described the explosion:

“As soon as the flames reached the torpedoes, they exploded in every direction whirling and hissing through the air in the most dangerous and terrific manner conceivable. In the space of half an hour, upwards of sixteen hundred of these nameless, nondescript, rebel inventions burnt themselves loose from the fiery mass, going off with a successive, rattling, crashing noise and thundering cannon-like explosions.”<sup>xvii</sup>

With this distraction, Long started his command out on the Harrison Road toward Chattanooga with the enemy pressing him closely, until he crossed Candy’s Creek to safety. Kelly’s forces pulled up and returned to Cleveland but left almost as quickly as Long did once they received word of Bragg’s defeat and retreat.

Colonel Eli Long’s Brigade successfully destroyed twelve miles of railroad track, burned several railroad cars, and captured 233 prisoners, 85 wagons, and eleven ambulances on their raid to Cleveland with the loss of two killed, fourteen wounded and twelve missing. And he destroyed “the large copper rolling mill. The only one of its kind in the Confederacy.” The Federals would soon return to Ducktown when General Sherman marched to General Burnside’s relief at Knoxville. The rolling mill was not rebuilt, and mining ceased in Ducktown for the rest of the war. It was never again accessible to the Confederates.<sup>xviii</sup>

Having no investment to protect, Julius Raht left Cleveland and traveled to Cincinnati. The loss of the Ducktown copper mines and rolling mill had far-reaching effects on the Confederate Ordnance Bureau. Lieutenant Colonel Richard Morton’s report from that Bureau stated that fully ninety percent of the South’s copper production had been lost. William LeRoy Broun, head of the Confederate arsenal in Richmond admitted the magnitude of the disaster at Ducktown, “The casting of bronze field guns was immediately suspended, and all available copper was carefully hoarded for the manufacture of caps. It soon became apparent that the supply would be exhausted, and the armies rendered useless, unless other sources of supply could be obtained.” Purchasing agents swept the South for anything made of copper. “Secretly . . . an officer was dispatched . . . to purchase or impound all the copper stills found available, and ship the same, cut into strips, to the Richmond Arsenal,” wrote Broun, “and thus were all the caps issued from the arsenal and used by the armies . . . during the last twelve months of the war manufactured from the copper stills of North Carolina.”<sup>xix</sup>

Julius Raht returned to Ducktown in 1866. He reopened copper production, personally financing much of the necessary repairs, and rebuilt his fortune. His re-opened mines produced more than one million pounds of copper in his first full year of production, despite not having any railroad connection to Ducktown. In 1878 the mines temporarily closed due to falling copper prices and the lack of this rail connection. Raht was sued by the shareholders of the United Consolidated Mining Company, who believed his great wealth was created from their loss. Raht won the suit when it was proven that he had made his fortune through his commissary business and shrewd personal investing.<sup>xx</sup>

By 1890 the mines were re-opened when rail access finally came to Ducktown. Julius Raht, however, would not live to see it, dying of a heart attack in August 1879. By 1900, the harvesting of forests for the smelters had combined with the sulfurous smoke to denude 32,000 acres, creating a virtual moonscape. It became the largest man-made biological desert in the country, and the smoke from the smelters caused acid rain. This massive environmental disaster left the landscape barren for more than a century and brought about the first study on the long-term effects of acid rain.<sup>xxi</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Coates, Earl J. & Dean S. Thomas, *An Introduction to Civil War Small Arms*, Gettysburg, Pa., Thomas Publications, 1990. The chemical formula for fulminate of mercury is  $\text{Hg}(\text{CNO})_2$ . It is made from mercury, nitric acid, and alcohol and is extremely explosive and shock-sensitive. The percussion cap was developed by Reverend John Forsyth of Aberdeenshire, Scotland in 1805.

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<sup>iii</sup> Surdam, David G. "The Union Navy's Blockade Reconsidered," *Naval War College Review*, 51 No. 4, (Autumn 1998) p. 85. Vandiver, Frank E., *Ploughshares into Swords: Josiah Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance*, College Station, Texas, Texas A&M University, 1952. Pp. 106-107. Mallet, J.W., "Work of the Ordnance Bureau, 1861-1865", *Southern Historical Society Papers*, ed. Reverend J. William Jones, Vol. 37 (January-December) 1909.

<sup>iv</sup> Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords*. P. 82.

<sup>v</sup> Donnelly, "Confederate Copper," pp. 335-370

<sup>vi</sup> Barclay, R.E., *Ducktown Back in Raht's Time*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 1946. Pp.186-187.

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<sup>vii</sup> Barclay, *Ducktown Back in Raht's Time*, p. 190-191.

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<sup>xi</sup> Powell, David, "East Tennessee and Confederate Copper," *Emerging Civil War Blog*, July 18, 2017. Barclay, *Ducktown*, pp. 87-96.

<sup>xii</sup> *The War of the Rebellion. A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume 31, Series I, Part 3*, p. 291. Washington D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1901. Long received his orders from Major General George Thomas on 24 November 1863. Long's full report also in Curry, W.L., *Four Years in the Saddle: History of the First Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*. Reprint, Jonesboro, Georgia, Freedom Hill Press, Inc., 1984. Pp. 150-155.

<sup>xiii</sup> Eicher, John H. and David J. Eicher, *Civil War High Commands*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001. P. 352. Warner, Ezra J., *Generals in Blue: Lives of Union Commanders*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1992. Pp. 283-284. Belcher, Dennis W., *The Cavalry of the Army of the Cumberland*, Jefferson, N.C., McFarland & Co. Inc. Publishers, 2016. P.74.

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<sup>xv</sup> [www.northeasttennesseecivilwar.com](http://www.northeasttennesseecivilwar.com). Inman Diary. Entry for Nov. 26, 1863.

<sup>xvi</sup> Crofts, *Third Ohio Cavalry*, p. 122. Belcher, *Cavalry of the Army of the Cumberland*, p. 180. Powell, "East Tennessee Copper, ECW. Rea, John, "Four Weeks with Long's Cavalry in East Tennessee," in *Glimpses of the Nation's Struggle*, ed. J.C. Donahower, Silas Towler, David Kingsbury, St. Paul, Review Publishing, Co., 1908. Pp. 22-23. John Herbert Kelly, a native Alabamian, was twenty-three-years old and had been promoted to general on November 16, 1863. He was called the "Boy General of the Confederacy." He was entrusted with command of a division in General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry corps.

<sup>xvii</sup> Powell, "East Tennessee Copper," ECW.

<sup>xviii</sup> Curry, *First Ohio Cavalry*, Long's official report, p. 151.

<sup>xix</sup> Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords*, p. 201-2fn. Powell, ECW.

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<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid. [www.appalachianhistory.net/2017/08/acid-rain-devastates-tennessees-copper.html](http://www.appalachianhistory.net/2017/08/acid-rain-devastates-tennessees-copper.html).

### *Ulysses S. Grant, the Artist*



In addition to his skills as a horseman at West Point, Cadet Grant was also a talented artist. During Grant's time at West Point, classes in drawing were taught by famed American artist, Robert Walter Weir. Drawing classes at West Point were held for two hours each weekday afternoon. These are two examples of Grant's drawings from his West Point days that have survived.

*FINIS!*