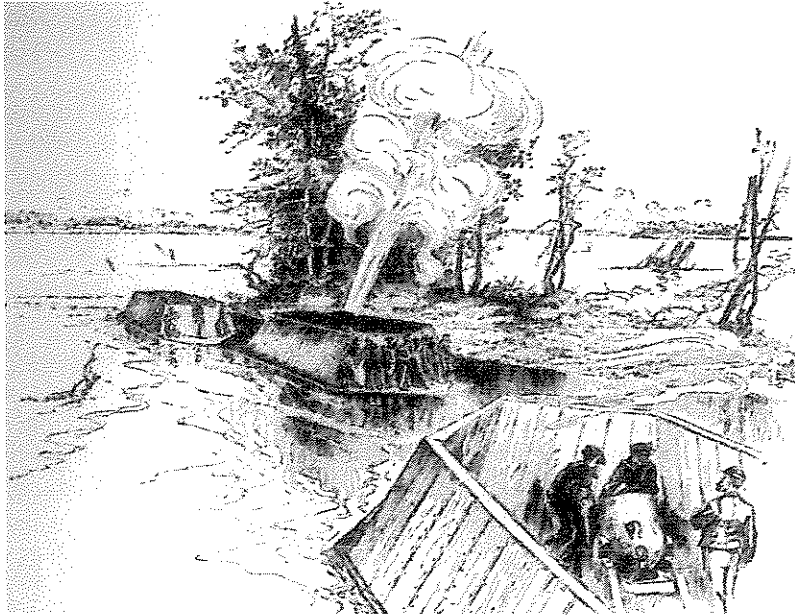


THE CHARGER

November, 2000

382 Meeting

Vol.22 #3



THE STRUGGLE FOR ISLAND #10

Commodore Andrew Hull Foote took 11 new mortar boats to attack Island #10 near Madrid, Missouri. The boats measured 60 feet by 25 feet with 7-foot-high bulwarks. After the crews loaded the monster 13-inch mortars with shells that were 12 inches in diameter and weighed 215 pounds, assisted by derricks erected on shore, the men stepped outside the bulwarks to an outer deck and took up firing positions with mouths open, hands over ears, and knees flexed, to compensate for concussion.

The shelling would continue night and day for weeks. The crews grew so weary that they were soon able to sleep through the noise or read and play checkers in their leisure time without being disturbed. A popular pastime was to watch the mortar shells in flight, particularly at night when the burning fuses could be seen spinning through the darkness. "It is really a beautiful sight to see them at night," a sailor wrote, "appearing like large burning meteors, as you watch their semicircular course through the heaven."

Tonight's speaker:

Brian Kowell

Brian Kowell is a long time member and past president of the Cleveland CWRT. Brian is best known as editor of **THE CHARGER** for eight years.

His topic the Battle for Island #10 is a little known but important battle for control of the Mississippi River. The battle also produced a winning general who would be sent East to lead the Army of the Potomac, John Pope.

Date: Wednesday,
November 8, 2000

Place: The Cleveland
Playhouse Club
8501 Carnegie Ave.

Time: Drinks 6 PM
Dinner 7 PM

Reservations: Please Call
JAC Communications
(216) 861-5588
give your meal choice: chicken or lasagna

About the

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

The 127 men and women of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable reflect the ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of Greater Cleveland. Members range in age from 17 to 94 years old. The common bond is the belief that the American Civil War was the *defining* event in United States history.

Dinner meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. The Roundtable meets at a private club of the Cleveland Playhouse 8501 Carnegie Ave. near the Cleveland Clinic.

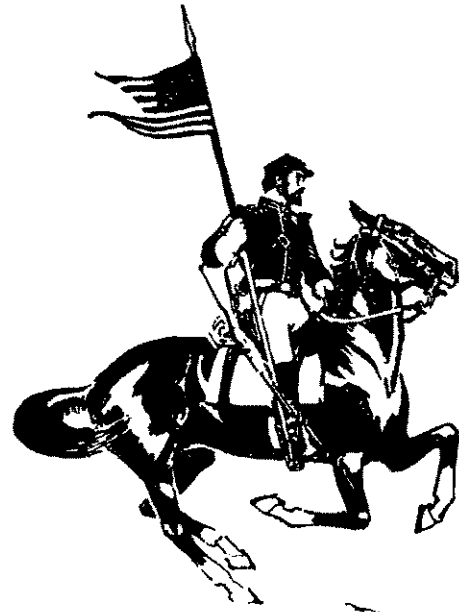
Dinner is \$20.00. Club dues are \$40.00 per year.

Membership information can be obtained from
Dick Crews, daytime phone (800) 800-8310.

2000/2001 Dues: Cleveland CWRT
c/o Bill Doty
30460 Adams Lane
Westlake, Ohio 44145

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Presidents

2000 Bob Boyda	1978 Richard McCrae
1999 Dick Crews	1977 James Chapman
1998 John Moore	1976 Milton Holmes
1997 Dan Zeiser	1975 Thomas Gretter
1996 John Sutula	1974 Nolan Heidelbaugh
1995 Norton London	1973 Arthur Jordan
1994 Robert E. Battisti	1972 Bernard Drews
1993 Kevin Callahan	1971 Kenneth Callahan
1992 Bob Baucher	1970 Frank Schuhle
1991 Joe Tirpak	1969 Donald Heckaman
1990 Ken Callahan Jr.	1968 Frank Moran
1989 Neil Glaser	1967 William Schlesinger
1988 Martin Graham	1966 Donald Hamill
1987 George Vourlojianis	1965 Lester L. Swift
1986 Tim Beatty	1964 Guy DiCarlo, Jr.
1985 Brian Kowell	1963 Paul Guenther
1984 Neil Evans	1962 Edward Downer
1983 William Victory	1961 Charles Clarke
1982 John Harkness	1960 Howard Preston
1981 Thomas Geschke	1959 John Cullen, Jr
1980 Charles Spiegle	1958 George Farr, Jr.
1979 William Bates	1957 Kenneth Grant



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
PO BOX 18900 CLEVELAND, OH 44118

(800)800-8310

Email: RCrews5369@aol.com

Web site: <http://members.aol.com/RCrews5369>

President: William Vodrey
Vice President: Bill McGrath
Secretary: Lou Braman
Treasurer: Bill Doty

Executive Committee:

Manard Bauer
Bob Boyda
Dick Crews
Ty Somersfield
Dale Thomas
Dan Zeiser

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2000/2001 SCHEDULE**

September 13, 2000



The Novelist
as Historian

Shelby Foote

October 11, 2000



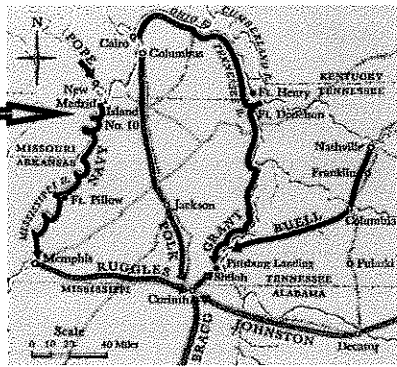
African-American
Troops in the
Civil War

Noah Andre Trudeau

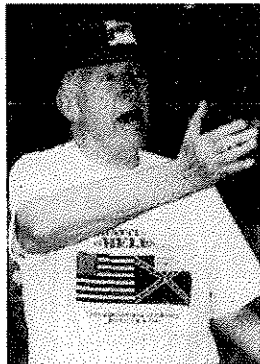
November 8, 2000

Island No.
10

**Brian
Kowell**



December 6, 2000



The Battle of Shiloh

Ed Bearss

January 10, 2001

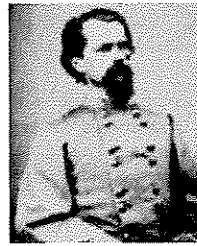
The Great Debate:
The absolutely worst general of the War

Moderator: Dick Crews



(Some good candidates from a long list of prospects)

February 14, 2001

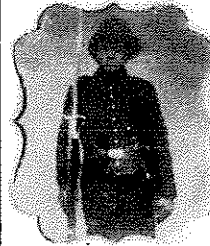


Gen. John B. Gordon

Warrior & Survivor

Bob Boyda

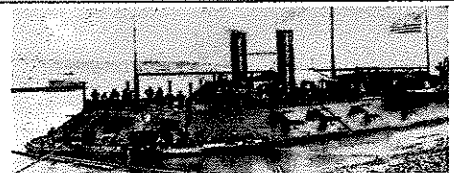
March 14, 2001



The Life
of the Common Soldier

**The 51st Ohio Volunteer
Infantry, Co. B**

April 11, 2001



“Infernal Machines”
and the sinking of the USS Cairo

Bill McGrath

May 9, 2001



An Evening
with General
William T. Sherman

E. Chris Evans

Membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable: Call (800) 800-8310

Visit our web site <http://members.aol.com/rcrews5369>.

Where do I find information on up coming Roundtable meetings?


Where is the phone number for dinner reservations?

WHERE? = The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable web page

<http://members.aol.com/RCrews5369>

Good grief, how can I remember that? If you forget the web address, you go to web search engines. Search: **Civil War**. Among the sites listed is the Civil War Center of LSU (Lousiana State University). They list all the roundtables in the United States. Find and click on Cleveland Roundtable.

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable


Since 1857

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

Home Page	The 123 members of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable represent the ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of greater Cleveland. The membership varies in age from 17 to 94 years old.
2000/2001 schedule	
2000 Field trip	The common bond is the belief that the American Civil War was the <i>defining</i> event in United States history.

[Click here X to contact us](#)

As we have for 43 years, the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through May.

Drinks at 6 PM.. Dinner at 7 PM. A dinner speaker will cover a wide range of topics from the battles; to the personalities; to the polittics; of America's bloodiest war, the Civil War. Yearly dues are \$40.00

We meet at the private restaurant of the Cleveland Playhouse, 8501 Carnegie, next to the Cleveland Clinic.

Dinner is \$20.00
Dinner reservations are a must--(216) 861-5588

Make sure you have the sound turned on to hear the opening gun fight.

JAMES MCPHERSON SPEAKS ON LINCOLN

By William F.B. Vodrey

"No one deserves more credit than Abraham Lincoln, as commander-in-chief, for the victory of the United States" in the Civil War, said James M. McPherson. The Princeton University history professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning author spoke at the Western Reserve Historical Society on April 29, 2000. His topic was "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief."



McPherson on believes that, despite the explosion of scholarship and writing on Lincoln in recent decades, many have lost sight of the outstanding military skills and leadership of the 16th President. Only five percent of the text of Mark E. Neely Jr.'s recent edition of the Abraham Lincoln Encyclopedia is devoted to military matters; at a recent Gettysburg conference on Lincoln, none of the dozens of sessions focused on Lincoln as commander-in-chief. Instead, recent studies of Lincoln have focused on politics, economics, and slavery.

But McPherson said that virtually all of Lincoln's distinction arose from war: the Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, both inaugural addresses, even his assassination and virtual martyrdom - all stemmed from his role as a wartime leader. Lincoln himself recognized this, writing to a friend, "On the progress of our arms, all else chiefly depends." Had there been no Civil War at all, McPherson said, Lincoln might be "lost in obscurity with William Henry Harrison and Franklin Pierce." Had Lincoln actually lost the war, he would have been regarded as a failure, probably the worst in the history of the presidency.

No one could have predicted Lincoln's success as a military leader. Jefferson Davis, after all, was a graduate of West Point, had served with distinction in the Mexican War, and had been a U.S. senator and a very capable and innovative secretary of war. Lincoln had been elected a captain of Illinois volunteers during the Black Hawk War (an election triumph which gave him more pleasure than any other, he later said), but admitted that he'd killed more mosquitoes than Indians. He had less than a year of formal education, and served a single, unremarkable term in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Early in the Civil War, knowing his own limitations, President Lincoln deferred to Gens. Buell and Halleck in the west, and Scott and McClellan in the east, but soon came to see that he had to do more. Early U.S. military policy reflected the widespread belief that there was a silent majority of Unionists in the South, and that a limited war would soon bring back the errant Southern states. But after the early battles, it became clear that this was wishful thinking. Lincoln underwent a "cram course in military strategy but didn't have the tunnel vision of most West Point graduates," McPherson said. Foremost among these was Gen. George B. McClellan, about whom McPherson had little good to say. Lincoln had to constantly urge McClellan to attack, particularly during the Seven Days campaign before the gates of Richmond, and later for a month after the half-victory at Antietam. Lincoln found McClellan, as he put it, "an auger too dull to take hold."

Lincoln was an active, hands-on commander-in-chief, visiting the Army of the Potomac eleven times during the war, spending over 42 days in the field. Although self-taught and prone to mistakes early on, Lincoln in time became "a better strategist than any of his generals," McPherson said. Lincoln intuitively understood Clausewitz's maxim that war is the continuation of politics by other means. He shared power with his generals and, to a lesser degree, with Congress, but still remained firmly in charge. He ignored Secretary of State William H. Seward's early power grab, embodied in Seward's April 1861 letter proposing that the Secretary act as a quasi-prime minister to guide the Union's war effort, and was careful to preserve presidential prerogatives in fighting the war.

President Lincoln rescinded Gen. John C. Fremont's western emancipation order in late 1861 to keep wavering border states in the Union; he did the same with Gen. David Hunter's emancipation order in early 1862 in the southern Atlantic coastal regions. However, Lincoln left himself the option of issuing an emancipation order, as he did when, after Antietam, the political time was right. The Emancipation Proclamation hinged on his war powers, and struck a serious blow against slavery under the aegis of military necessity. Slavery was "the heart of the rebellion," Lincoln wrote, and a major bulwark of the Confederate government. He meant to see it mortally wounded, and in time ended, to win the war. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant later described the Emancipation Proclamation as "the heaviest blow yet given the Confederacy," a view with which McPherson agrees.



When Lincoln brought Grant east in early 1864, he at last had found a general who not only shared his views, but would vigorously implement them as battlefield policy. "Grant is my man, and I am □Â his, for the rest of the war," Lincoln told a friend. To Grant's critics, he said simply, "I can't spare this man - he fights." McPherson said one of Lincoln's greatest contributions to the Northern victory was in simply standing by Grant when many wanted him fired. At one time or another, many thought Grant was either "a drunk, a fool, or a butcher," McPherson said, but "in time virtually the whole country came to share Lincoln's opinion of Grant."

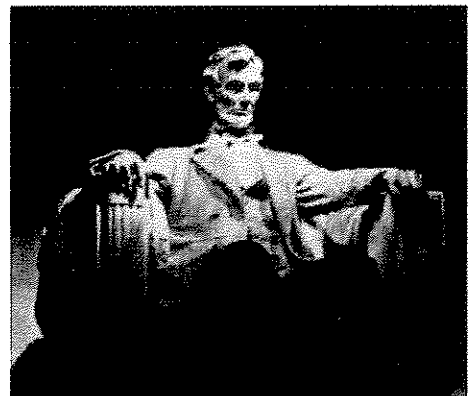
By June 1862, the Union held over 50,000 square miles of Confederate territory, but was no closer to victory than it had been a year before. McPherson said that Lincoln came to understand that, in modern military terms, the Confederacy had the advantage of concentration in space (defending a perimeter, with shorter, internal lines of communication and resupply), so that the U. S. would have to exploit its advantage of concentration in time (drawing on its superior resources to attack simultaneously in several places). He eventually decided that the goal must be to destroy the Southern economy, morale, and political will, with Confederate armies the primary target, and not to simply seize land. "Lincoln grasped that truth sooner than most of his generals," McPherson said.

In response to an audience question afterward, McPherson said Gen. George G. Meade didn't do enough in the aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg to win a decisive victory over Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia, satisfying himself with forcing Lee and his army from the North. Meade could have thrown the virtually-unbloodied Sixth Corps against Lee's battered army, McPherson said. He said he understood Meade's hesitancy, the general having only been in command of the Army of the Potomac for a few days at the time he cautiously guided it to victory over Lee. "But Grant or Sheridan, in Meade's position, would have done more," McPherson said, and thereby possibly shortened the war by months or years. (Shelby Foote, it should be noted, disagreed with McPherson on this point when he spoke from the same podium on Sept. 13, 2000).

With victory in sight by late 1864, Lincoln planned to "bind up the nation's wounds" and bring the seceding states back into the Union as quickly and smoothly as possible. In his second Inaugural Address, Lincoln described the "mighty scourge of war" and saw God's justice for the nation's wrongs, primarily the suffering caused by centuries of slavery.

McPherson said that, for the terrible war and the brief peace over which Abraham Lincoln presided, he remains deserving of his reputation as **one of the greatest leaders the nation has ever had.**

By **WILLIAM F.B. VODREY**



Lincoln vs. Kennedy

- > Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.
- > John F Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.
- > Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860.
- > John F. Kennedy was elected President in 1960.
- > The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.
- > Both were particularly concerned with civil rights.
- > Both wives lost their children while living in the White House.
- > Both Presidents were shot on a Friday.
- > Both Presidents were shot in the head.
- > Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.
- > Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.
- > Both were assassinated by Southerners.
- > Both were succeeded by Southerners named Johnson.
- > Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.
- > Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.
- > John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.
- > Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.
- > Both assassins were known by their three names.
- > Both names are composed of fifteen letters.
- > Lincoln was shot at the theater named 'Ford.'
- > Kennedy was shot in a car called 'Lincoln.'
- > Booth ran from the theater and was caught in a warehouse.
- > Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a theater.
- > Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.
- > And here's the kicker. A week before Lincoln was shot, he was in Monroe, Maryland. A week before Kennedy was shot, he was with
- > Marilyn Monroe.



THE ROCK OF CHICKAMAUGA

BY MATT SLATTERY



George H. Thomas

In the winning of battles no other commander in the Civil War, north or south, equaled the slow moving, keen minded Virginian, George H Thomas. In January, 1862 he won the first battle in the west at Mill Springs. In December, 1864 he won the last battle in the western theatre at Nashville-- the only battle of the war in which the defeated army was totally broken up, never to again assemble. In the three year interval he served under (and as the right hand man) to General Buell at Perrysburg, General Rosecrans at Stones River, General Grant at Chattanooga, General Sherman on the Atlanta campaign-- all Union victories in which Thomas played a major role.

Only once in the war did he suffer defeat, but his courageous and skillful action in it earned him a sobriquet for the rest of his career and in the history books -- *The Rock of Chickamauga*. In October, 1863 the Union army was strung out in a north to south five mile line on the west side of Chickamauga Creek, opposed by a slightly larger army under Gen. Braxton Bragg. Seeking to find a weakness the Confederates attacked through the heavy undergrowth all the first day without success. Thomas' divisions held the left (northernmost) wing which was the critical position as, if it should crack, the entire Union army would be cut off from its base in Chattanooga. He was opposed by divisions under Gen. (and bishop) Leonidas Polk. Thomas' men did not crack.

On the second day the bloody carnage was resumed. The positions remained unchanged until around noon when the inexplicable and disastrous order came to Gen. Wood from Rosecrans to pull his division out of line. Longstreet's men poured through this gap, the blue divisions on either side crumpled and in short order the entire right (southern) wing was in disorganized retreat, fleeing along with Rosecrans and his staff for Chattanooga.

Sixty percent of the army was out of action. Thomas saw what had happened and what must be done. He ordered his divisions to fall back a short distance to higher ground. He faced two of them south and reordered his artillery. He called up Gen. Granger's reserve corps and absorbed through the lines numbers of broken regiments from the ongoing catastrophe. The entire Confederate army tried for the rest of the day to break up this patched up force and failed. When night came the Union troops quietly withdrew and marched in good order back to Chattanooga. Gen. Grant in overall command in the west ordered Thomas to take over from the discredited Rosecrans. In another month Thomas' divisions would charge up Missionary Ridge and change the character of the war in the west.

What was there in this man to make him so successful, to make his soldiers so respect him, to compel his commanding generals to so rely on him. We cannot in this brief piece spell this out as it should be. (And it is lamentable that with the surfeit of Civil War books published in recent years the latest biography of Thomas dates to the 1960's) A few brief anecdotes must suffice. Thomas was methodical and he was always prepared for battle. Perrysville was fought during a severe drought. Water was scarce as the armies came together on the night before the battle. Thomas marched his men six miles to where men and horses had adequate water, aroused them at 3 AM to get back to the battlefield. His men were able to perform that day as no others in either army.

On the first day of the battle of Stones River the Confederates crumpled the Union line and put it in a precarious position. At the evening staff meeting various generals consulted on how they might detach and retreat. Thomas opinion was sought. "This army don't retreat" he rumbled. Then what can be done? "Tomorrow the rebels will bit our left flank. Right now move every piece of 'artillery to the left" It was done, the next day's attack broken up, and Bragg was forced to retreat.

At Nashville Thomas flatly refused to attack Hood until the horses promised for his cavalry were on hand. His delay so infuriated General Grant that he sent one of his corps commanders west to relieve Thomas. But the horses arrived and by the time Grant's man got to Nashville the battle was on and the southerners suffered the most overwhelming defeat of the war.

Matt Slattery



A picture of Thomas when he was teaching artillery tactics at West Point. The Superintendent was Robert E. Lee.