

# The Charger

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

PO BX 444

VERMILION OH 44089

DECEMBER 1984

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 9

238th Meeting

DATE: December 11th

PLACE: Gray's Armory, 1234 Bolivar Street  
in Downtown Cleveland.  
Parking lot next door  
will have a security guard.

SPEAKER: Dr. William Mahoney

SUBJECT: Turner Ashby: Knight of the Confederacy.

TIME: Cocktails 6:00 P.M., Dinner 7:00 P.M.

COST: \$11.50 All you care to eat buffet.

RESERVATIONS AN ABSOLUTE MUST. Call George Vourlojianis  
at 291- 1423 or 381-1538, or Gray's Armory 621-5938



### CHRISTMAS, 1861

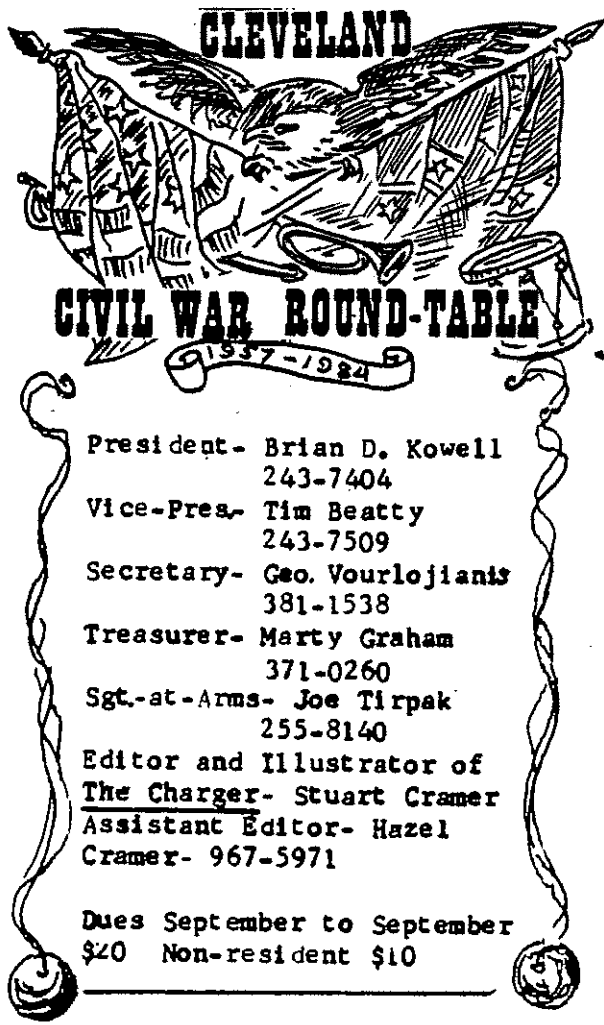
My men were winter-quartered in the dense pine thickets on the rough hills that border the Occoquan about twenty miles southwest of Washington. Christmas came, and was to be made as joyous as our surroundings would permit by a genuine Southern eggnog with our friends. The country was scoured far and near for eggs, which were exceedingly scarce. Of

sugar we still had at that time a reasonable supply; but our small store of eggs and other ingredients could not be increased in all the country round about.

Mrs. Gordon superintended the preparation of this favorite Christmas beverage, and at last the delicious potion was ready. All stood anxiously with camp cups in hand.

The servant started toward the company with full and foaming bowl, holding it before him with almost painful care. He had taken but a few steps when he stubbed his toe and stumbled. The scattered fragments of crockery and the aroma of the wasted nectar marked the melancholy wreck of our Christmas cheer.

Gen. John B. Gordon, in his Reminiscences of the Civil War



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Dues September to September  
\$20 Non-resident \$10

## Turner Ashby

Our speaker this month is fellow member Bill Mahoney. This is an encore performance for Dr. Mahoney. He gave a talk on Turner Ashby on January 9th, 1968, and since then has become one of the country's authorities on that subject.

Dr. Mahoney points out that much of the reason for Stonewall Jackson's success in his famous Valley Campaign was due to the secrecy surrounding his army's movements, and much of this secrecy was due to Turner Ashby and his cavalry.

Dr. Mahoney is a member of both the Cleveland and Western Reserve CWRTables. He is frequently among the ranks of Bud Robertson's campaigning on Virginia field trips.

Dr. Mahoney graduated from Case-Western Reserve and Medical Schl.; is presently Chief of Staff at Southwest Hospital and is in private practise in Olmstead Falls.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Convening at The Hermit Club, 37 members and guests were treated to one of the finest dinners we've had and an excellent talk by Professor Frank L. Byrne from Kent State University.

Professor Byrne's subject was "Colonel Marcus Spiegel: An Immigrant Defender of the 'Good Old Flag'". His major source of information was Col. Spiegel's letters to his wife, which Prof. Byrne is publishing in a book to be released after January 1st.

According to the speaker, Spiegel, a German Jew, settled with his family in Holmes Cty., Ohio, and after the Bull Run debacle, he left his moderately successful business and became a Captain in the 67th O.V.I.. Spiegel participated in the Eastern theatre at Kernstown and on the Peninsula at Malvern Hill.

After Malvern Hill Spiegel went home on recruiting furlough and was elected Colonel of the 120th O.V.I., which became a part of McClernand's 13th Corps. This corps was "borrowed" by General Grant and Sherman and ordered down the Mississippi where it saw action at Chickasaw Bayou - luckily keeping on the fringes of that wasted effort. Spiegel's regiment then participated in Grant's campaign to capture Vicksburg in whose battles Spiegel distinguished himself.

After the fall of Vicksburg, Grant's Army was split up and the 120th was sent to Baton Rouge. In early May, 1864, Spiegel's 700 men embarked on the unarmed transport City Bell and sent up the Red River to re-enforce General Banks' beleaguered army at Alexandria. On May 4th, near David's Ferry, the ship was fired on by masked rebel batteries.

Spiegel, in the pilot house, received a fatal wound in the intestines and died the next day. One third of the 120th Ohio was captured, the rest going overboard and making their escape. The City Bell was sunk.

Prof. Byrne said if Spiegel had lived he probably would have received his "star" before the war ended. Byrne's presentation was highlighted with humor and insight.

Brian Kowell



Please Make Reservation  
**381-1538**

# FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

Horan, James D. Timothy O'Sullivan: America's Forgotten Photographer, Bonanza Books, 1956.

"Photo by Brady." This is the legend on those incredible Civil War photographs. It means that Brady was a smart businessman pursuing an epoch-making idea - to photograph the War. What it does not mean is that Brady himself took all the pictures. Considering the primitive state of photography at the time, the wide range of subjects, and his poor eyesight, he had to have help. One of his principal assistants was Timothy O'Sullivan, a shy, skinny Irish kid from Staten Island, where Brady lived, and who taught O'Sullivan the rudiments of the art.

Early on in the War, O'Sullivan worked in the field with Alexander Gardner, Brady's principal rival. Here he polished his skill and trained his eye, the eye that saw and fixed forever the terrible reality of combat on the field of Gettysburg. By this time he was working for Brady and under his direction O'Sullivan followed the Army of the Potomac until the end, finally taking those poignant pictures at the McLean house after the surrender.



Those of us on the 1973 field trip will remember stopping at Massaponax Church in Virginia and seeing the grove of trees in the churchyard where Grant held a council of war using pews from the church. Here O'Sullivan wrestled his awkward camera and equipment into the church steeple and took that series of three great pictures, pictures so moving you can almost feel the tension, hear the horses, smell the dust, the sweat, the anxiety. Spotsylvania, remember, was two days past and the North Anna fracas only three days after the council so dramatically recorded by O'Sullivan. These pictures clearly attest to O'Sullivan's extraordinary photographer's eye.

When the war ended O'Sullivan still wanted to take pictures. He probably had no desire to follow Brady and Gardner into the photo salon business. All he wanted to do was take pictures and happily for all of us he got a job doing just that. He joined a government expedition to survey a part of the exciting West. He also became the official photographer of a second survey expedition, this one in parts of Arizona and Nevada. From O'Sullivan's subtle hand came pictures of the Grand Canyon, the woods, lakes, falls, deserts and curiosities of this little known part of the country, the reality of which was not revealed in the mist of myths and the embellished stories of dazzled travelers and soldiers that had filtered back East. O'Sullivan's pictures, pictures of the highest artistic order, did not give the lie to the West; they changed the myth by showing the amazing reality and perhaps increased the ardor of restless Americans to see for themselves.

Between these survey jobs O'Sullivan was with an expedition surveying that narrow isthmus in Colombia separating the two great oceans. Here, however, the jungle was too dense to take any significant pictures, and it is easy to imagine O'Sullivan's frustration not to be able to stand with Cortez' ghost "upon a peak in Darien" and front the blue Pacific. What pictures he might have taken!

O'Sullivan's war pictures put him solidly in the pantheon of combat photographers, and his startling pictures of the unbelievable West make him one of America's great photographers. It is ironical that he is also one of America's forgotten photographers.



# SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

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General Henry Jackson Hunt, Meade's Chief of Artillery, went off on an inspection tour and very nearly lost his life in a manner far from heroic. He came within a horn's length of being trampled to death by a herd of milch cows.

Hunt had tethered his horse to a tree and clambered up the craggy side of Devil's Den, during the Battle of Gettysburg. On the crest of this forbidding hill he arrived just as one of his batteries had fired a salvo across the valley at a line of Confederate infantry appearing at the edge of the woods. Retaliation from rebel guns was swift and emphatic. A hurricane of shells broke over Devil's Den. The position was too valuable to abandon, but to hold it infantry support was imperative. Hunt started back to see what he could do about it.

He slipped and slithered down the slope and stopped dead in his tracks. He looked across to where his horse was tied as overhead the shells were bursting like popcorn in a popper. Trapped between him and his horse was a milling, fear-crazed herd of cattle. Somehow, he must get through this seething, bellowing maelstrom of clashing horns, rolling eyes, and slavering muzzles. And somehow he did make it, but no man that day came nearer death and lived to tell about it.

From The Shaping of a Battle: Gettysburg, by J.S.Montgomery.  
Thanks to Fred Gill.

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## LOVE THE SMELL OF THEM ROSES!

We've received some welcome letters of encouragement from members who like the Charger. Also nice words from other CWRT Newsletters, like this one from the South Florida CWRT - and note the importance given "Thanks to the obvious contributions of a number of members".....Thanks, H. & S. C..

Thanks to the obvious contributions of a number of members, the CLEVELAND CWRT circulates one of the best bulletins we receive, The CHARGER. Prominent in each issue is an excellent book review, Scenes I'd Like To Have Seen, Civil War Smiles, quizzes and many short items of unusual interest.

# Mr. Coolidge's War



*Sandino had 1000 horsemen in the Nueva Segovia mountains. His stronghold was mile high El Chipote; his ensign a red flag with black and white skull & cross machetes.*

Our present problems in Nicaragua, while stemming from a different reason (Soviet domination of Central America) have a familiar ring of times past when U.S. interests dictated that we be either for or against the existing Nicaraguan government or the revolutionists trying to overthrow it.

Up to the time of Calvin Coolidge's presidency, for almost a century the United States had considered Nicaragua strategic to the national interest: it offered the best alternative route for a trans-Isthmus canal - a route that was still a matter of consideration in the event that political upheaval, or need for a larger canal should make an alternative to the Panama necessary. Of no consequence today.

Between 1912 and 1925, U.S. Marines were landed several times to restore order after political disturbances. Besides the strategic interest there were the concessions made to North American companies for the exploitation of Nicaragua's bananas, mahogany and gold. Belligerents were always blowing up mines and burning plantations.

"Mr. Coolidge's War," as it was called, came about with our intervention in 1927-28, when our marines were confronted by an elusive partisan leader who pioneered techniques of large-scale guerrilla warfare with which we became all too familiar in Southeast Asia at a later date. Many lessons had been learned and then forgotten by the U.S. military in coping with determined bands of partisans operating in rough country, among people friendly to the quarry but hostile to the hunters. Forgotten were the irregular forces of Mosby, for instance, in the Civil War; Aquinaldo, with his Moro 'insurrectos' in the southern Philippines after the Spanish American War, to say nothing of Pancho Villa in Mexico.

Mr. Coolidge's nemesis was Augusto Sandino, and in the two-year war it took to subdue him, our army and marines formulated doctrines that would guide the future campaigns against the Japanese in World War II and against the Viet Cong in South Vietnam. We tried out such novelties as dive-bombing, aerial support of ground forces, search and destroy missions and counter-ambush. That was fifty-six years ago.

It is interesting today that the U.S. government is against a Sandanisto regime backed by the communists, and back in Coolidge's time we were against a Latin -American leader with a similar name who was dedicated to fighting "the capitalists."

Augusto, like Fidel, was a master of propaganda, who turned events to his advantage and served to attract the attention of communistic and other radical elements in Central America, Mexico, and even the United States. Sandino became an underdog hero abroad.

Part of the little guerrilla's appeal was his sense of humor. Whenever he "requisitioned" supplies for his forces from merchants, plantations

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or mining companies on which he frequently descended, he would leave a nicely printed certificate: "The Honorable Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States of North America will pay the bearer \$\_\_\_\_." Or, he would sign a communication to his enemies (he fought not only the U.S. but Nicaraguan factions as well) "Your obedient servant, who wishes to put you in a handsome tomb with flowers." There is no evidence that "Silent Cal" enjoyed this humor.

Eventually the U.S. Army and Marines prevailed, Sandino was assassinated by agents of a compromise government in 1929, and an uneasy peace settled over the mountain jungles. There were occasional violent flare-ups; a theme that runs through Nicaragua's political history with the wearying persistence of a Greek tragedy.

The rebellious spirit of Augusto Sandino, who defied the Yankee Colossus, makes hay for the ever increasingly bold Soviets, even today shipping arms into Nicaragua, posing the very real threat of turning that country into another Cuba.

## Civil War Smiles by STU CRAMER



"That's why they call him a quartermaster - he gives you only a quarter of what you need."

### POOR OLD POPE AGAIN

"Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents and leave our own to take care of themselves. Let us look before us, and not behind. Success and glory are in the advance, disaster and shame lurk in the rear."

These were among the words of Maj.Gen. John Pope's address "To the Officers and soldiers of the Army of Virginia" which he issued on July 14, 1862. Well, he followed his own advice by not looking behind and leaving his line of retreat to take care of itself, and about six weeks later Stonewall Jackson landed squarely on his rear, in which disaster and shame did lurk for him.

Thanks to CWRT of District of Columbia Newsletter

# OLD TIPPECANOE DID IT

Bill Chamberlin sent in a long and interesting article that appeared in the Cleveland Plain Dealer about the rambunctious presidential campaigns of the past.

General Wm. H. Harrison was the first presidential candidate to make a campaign speech in his own behalf. This break in tradition was highly criticized, but it established a precedent that "unlocked some of the loudest mouths since the Reformation." One Nicholas Biddle, the Philadelphia banker backing "Old Tippecanoe," called the shots: "The more you talk the less you should say." He admonished Harrison to rely on his past (i.e. his questionable victory over a band of redskins in 1812) and not to mention the future, his principles or creed - say nothing, promise nothing.



BETTMAN ARCHIVE

**William Henry Harrison**  
**His 1840 campaign speech**  
**started it all.**

After this successful campaign, for generations to come, exhausted presidential candidates would rampage about the country "bloviating" to the masses, as Warren G. Harding expressed "the expelling of the breath into the faces of the unwashed."

In the days before Americans were bathed in around-the-clock sports, music and television, politics, like revival religion, was the major entertainment in the lives of isolated farm families who made up more than half of the population. Audiences would roar, weep and riot over their favorites and throw things at their foes.

The Harrison campaign also marked the beginning of large scale distribution of political campaign souvenirs. One could buy a Harrison and Tyler tie, a pongee handkerchief with an American flag and Harrison's face on it, or a can of Tippecanoe Shaving Soap. The party handed out miniature log cabin whiskey bottles to travelers and boatmen on the Erie Canal. The most famous of these popular products was manufactured by the E.C. Booz Distillery of Philadelphia, which is how that word found its way into our language.



While we are still treated to the spectacle of candidates crisscrossing the land with their speechifying, there is no longer that spontaneous carnival atmosphere that once prevailed. Those enthusiastic crowds now-a-days everyone knows are engineered, with cheer leaders and applause cards.

As Nicholas Von Hoffman, the author of the P.D. article concluded, "Taking part in the modern campaign consists of little more than deciding not to switch on the movie channel when the candidate comes on to tell you again what he has told you before."

It must have been a lot more fun in the days of Harrison, Abe Lincoln, Blaine, and William Jennings Bryan before the advertising and media industries made campaigning Big Business. Now they even close the liquor stores on election day!



# OLLARODRIDA

When the Confederacy came into being at Montgomery, Alabama, and Jefferson Davis was elected Provisional President, there were actually more slave states in the Union than out of it. Still unwilling to break their ties with the U.S.A. were Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas and Virginia. The election of Abraham Lincoln changed this, and the secession movement went from the talking and agitating stage and brought the people face to face with reality.

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In 1862 there were 40,000 Irish immigrant arrivals in the U.S., whereas in 1863 there were 110,000. There was evidence that the Irish were being recruited for the Union Army. A detective hired by the Confederate government discovered beyond question that the British Foreign Enlistment Act was being violated, but it seemed that nothing could be done about it.

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"Our Union is built not to perish. Its bonds were not formed by peaceable agreements in conventions, but were forged in the white heat of battles, in a war fought out to the bitter end, and for eternity."

E. Porter Alexander, Lee's Artillery General in his  
Military Memoirs of a Confederate, 1907.

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General Richard Taylor, son of a President of the United States and brother-in-law of the President of the Confederate States of America, was one of the bright young men of his day. After a brilliant career through all four years of the War, he returned home to New Orleans penniless. He had two horses, and that was all. One of the horses he gave to a liveryman to pay his bill, the other he sold to pay the passage of his wife and children from Red River to the city. His plantation "Fashion" had been despoiled and confiscated.

He was a frequent visitor to Washington on behalf of Southern rights in the bitter days of Reconstruction. He spent many years in Europe conducting business for various American companies and was lionized in England as an intimate of the Prince of Wales. He became a friend of Marshall MacMahon of France, and Bismarck and Von Moltke in Germany. He died at the age of 53 after writing Destruction and Reconstruction, an authoritative treatment of that period.

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Letter to us from a Randall W. Connell, member of Sons of the Confederate Veterans: "Here in Alvin, Texas, we have two cemeteries where Union and Confederate soldiers are buried. One of them is Joseph Rufus Bell, of Company E, Ohio Light Artillery. There are no dates of birth or death on his grave marker. I am currently doing a study and research on the Union soldiers buried here in Alvin. Do you have anything on Bell or on the operations of the Ohio Light Artillery during the Civil War? I would appreciate very much any information you might send me." Randall Connell, 1601 W. South #25, Alvin, Texas 77511. Can you pass anything along?

