



The Cleveland Civil War Round-Table  
P.O. Box 18900, Cleveland, Ohio 44118

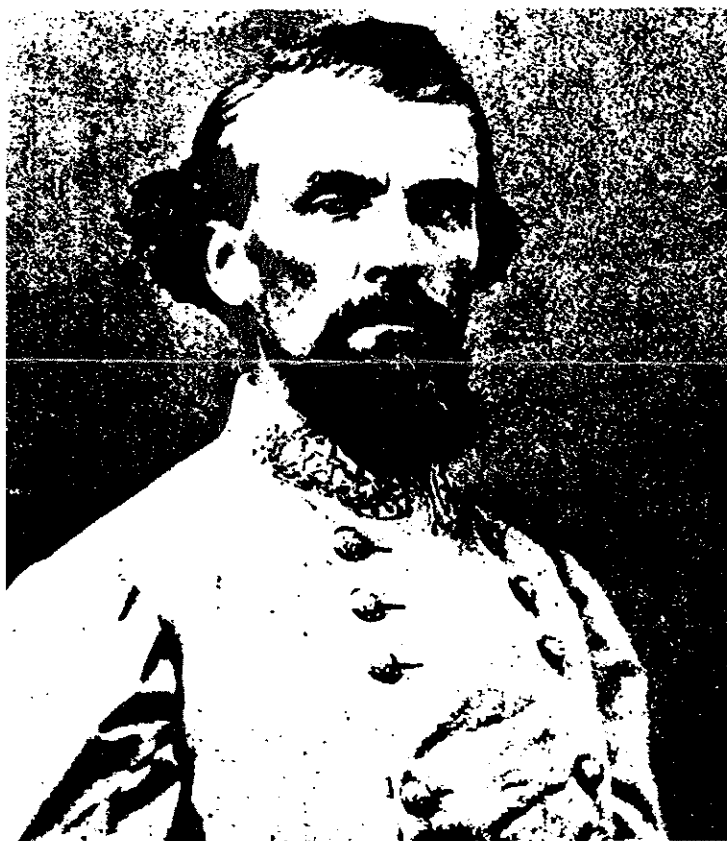
# THE CHARGER

Vol. 19#4

356th Meeting

December, 1997

## *Tonight's Topic*



## **Nathan Bedford Forrest** (1821 - 1877)

The famous Civil war author Shelby Foote said the American Civil War produced two geniuses: Abraham Lincoln, and Nathan Bedford Forrest.

## *Tonight's Speaker*

## **Bob Boyda**

Bob Boyda has been an officer of the Cleveland CWRT for two years. In civilian life Bob is a chemical engineer.

Bob has always had a fascination with the man General William T. Sherman called, "that devil Forrest."

---

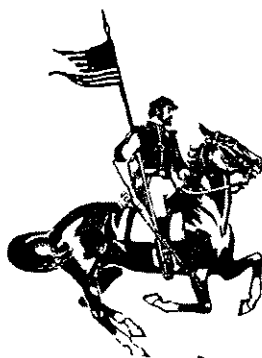
**Date: December 10, 1997**

**Place: The Hermit Club**

**Time: Drinks 6 PM  
Dinner 7 PM**

**Reservations: Please call  
JAC Business Communications  
at 861-5588.**

# THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE 1957-1997



*President:* **John Moore**  
*Vice President:* **Dick Crews**  
*Secretary:* **Bob Boyda**  
*Treasurer:* **Peter Holman**

Editor of the **THE CHARGER**  
Dick Crews  
3673 Traver Rd.  
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122  
(216) 752-9961 (800) 800-8310

Published by **JAC Communications**  
Hanna Bldg, Cleveland, Ohio  
(216) 861-5588  
John & Anne Caputo

The Cleveland Civil War Round-Table meets normally on the second Wednesday of each month from September through May. The Round-Table also sponsors a Fall field trip each year to a selected Civil War site.

*Dues are \$35.00 per year.*

Membership information: call Dick Crews  
(216) 752-9961 or (800) 800-8310

## Past Cleveland C.W.R.T. Presidents

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

## Calendar of Events

December 10, 1997

### Nathan Bedford Forrest

BOB BOYDA

JANUARY 14, 1998

### The Great Debate

"THE THREE MAJOR CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR"

February 11, 1998

### Lincoln

ROBERT E. BATTISTI

MARCH 11, 1998

### John Buford

BOB BAUCHER

APRIL 8, 1998

### The Last Naval Duel

WILLIAM F. B. VODREY

MAY 13, 1998

### Fort Sumter

DAVID R. RUTH



**Gattysburg**

**Reservations are a must ! Call (216) 861- 5588.**

# LINCOLN AND THE SOUTH

by Alvin Randall Enlow<sup>1</sup>

Lincoln was born in the South. His parents, lowly though they were, had one supreme distinction - they were both born in Virginia! What more could one ask? The pattern of the Lincoln migrations—those of the Lincoln family down the decades— was a part of the historic stream of settlement that included George Rogers Clark and other notable Southerners who helped to build the West. The background was English and in the earlier generations the American background was Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, but as the generations moved closer to Lincoln the ancestral setting was the Old Dominion.

If it meant something to have an ancestor in the Plymouth colony, Lincoln could claim that honor, though he cared little for such tombstone distinction. As for Virginia ancestry, perhaps the combination of a Virginia great-grandfather, a Virginia grandfather and a Virginia-born father would serve fairly well, and Lincoln had all of those if he cared to use them. "Virginia John" Lincoln was his great-grandfather; Abraham Lincoln of Virginia and Kentucky was his grand-father; Thomas Lincoln, born in Virginia, was his father.

Had the Lincoln clan been assembled in the year 1860, though they did not go by clans or think in those terms, the majority of them would have come from Southern homes and the place of rendezvous night well have been in Kentucky.



Ties to Kentucky held strong and sure. One never fully throws off the feeling he has for the state of his birth. So it was with Lincoln. His speech in mature life has been identified as the Kentucky idiom. His partner, William H. Herndon, referred to him as "a Kentucky gentleman." In the bitter days to come he was to be called a "Kentucky mule," but as least the Kentucky connection was not forgotten.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Alvin Randall Enlow has been a Cleveland CWRT member since 1975*

The relation of Lincoln to Kentucky—which is a Southern state - is a solid and substantial fact. Kentucky had sentimental memories for him. He did not himself remember the farm of the Sinking Spring near Hodgen's mill where he was born; but he did have vivid memories of that other Kentucky home to which the Lincolns moved when Abraham was two years old—"on Knob Creek, on the road from Bardstown, Kentucky, to Nashville, Tennessee, at a point three or three and a half miles south or southwest of Atherton's Ferry, on the Rolling Fork." This region of early Kentucky was Abraham Lincoln's little world in boyhood years. The adventures and wonders, the primitive labors of a growing lad were associated with this creekside cabin home. This "Knobby" and "Knotty" locality, as Dennis Hanks called it, was indelibly impressed on Lincoln's memory. Dependent on the spring for water that had to be laboriously carried, and upon a distant mill for grinding the family grist, the Lincolns lived close to nature; fish and game supplied much of their food. The family was poor; the woods and creek about them were givers of life itself. It was here that Lincoln had his earliest primitive schooling. It was natural that when he thought of Kentucky he did not think merely of something on the map; he thought of his parents, of Knob Creek, of the Rolling Fork, of boyhood escapades, of hunting and fishing, of dropping seeds into the ground—things that were elemental.

But Lincoln left Kentucky at the age of seven and never after that was his home in a Southern state. What of those later years, which were nearly his whole life? The answer is that as a boy and growing youth in the woods of southern Indiana, as a young man in New Salem, Illinois, and as a mature man in the fuller years, Lincoln was still immersed in Southern influences. The dispersion of Southern human types, mores, and thought patterns, throughout the West and Northwest was a notable thing; Lincoln was precisely a part of that transit of culture by which Southern characteristics took hold in Northern states.

**(The above is from "Lincoln and the South," from lectures given in 1945 at Louisiana State University by James C. Randall – my favorite uncle and my fondly remembered fishing, swimming and canoeing companion of my boyhood years.)**

*Alvin Randall Enlow*

# THE STORY OF THE OFFICIAL RECORDS

by Sid Sidlo<sup>1</sup>

The three compilations of The Official Records of the War of the Rebellion - the 127 volume OR-Armies, the one (large) volume OR-Atlas and the thirty-volume OR- Navies, all including both Union and Confederate documents - are indispensable to students of the Civil War. In spite of their limitations, most scholars regard them as the only full, accessible, and unbiased documentation of the war.

How did the Official Records come to be collected and published? In a very handy little book called *A User's Guide to the Official Records of the American Civil War* (paperback, \$12; also available on the CD-ROM of OR- Armies), Alan and Barbara Aimone of West Point not only provide a succinct guide to understanding and using the records, but tell us their fascinating history, only a part of which I'll relate here.

Compilation of the records was first proposed by Major General Henry Halleck in 1863. A law to collect Union Army records was signed by Lincoln on 20 May 1864. After the fall of Richmond, Halleck ordered Confederate papers to be gathered and sorted, although many were destroyed when the city was set on fire. Yet that still left 500 "boxes, hogsheads, and barrels" of Confederate papers that reached the War Department by August.

Scholars owe much to Halleck. Even during the war, he prevented destruction of many captured Rebel records. Later he spent some of his own personal fortune to see that they were properly preserved and published.

Work began immediately after passage of the 1864 law, but delays led Congress in 1866 to pass a law calling for effective organization of the work and development of a long-range plan and cost estimates. Then for a few years the project came to a halt for lack of leadership and the government's focus on reconstruction.

It is not a slight on Halleck or other early collectors to note that the records were originally intended for memoir-writing officers, not professional historians. The historical profession was then in its infancy.



Major General Henry W. Halleck  
(1815 - 1872)

---

<sup>1</sup>Sid Sidlo is the editor of the North Carolina CWRT's "The Ramrod" and a long time friend of the Cleveland CWRT.

Lobbying by Union and Confederate veterans' organizations restarted the project after it stalled. In 1874 Congress appropriated funds to pay for publication of the Army records. By 1877 thirty-seven preliminary volumes of Union records and ten of Confederate had been generated. But all material was ordered chronologically, not by campaigns or battles.

In 1877, seeing that results to date were unwieldy and unsatisfactory, the War Department appointed a full-time curator, Lt. Col. Robert N. Scott, who had been aide-de-camp to Halleck during and after the war. The very capable Scott was familiar with military bureaucracy and the "records management" practices of many of their offices.

Early on, Scott made two important editorial decisions. First, he specified that the records would be organized topically - all reports of a campaign or battle, Union reports followed by Confederate, were to be placed together for a connected account; in the same volume, related correspondence in chronological order would follow the reports. This was a critical decision for historical research.

---

### *No After the Fact corrections were allowed.*

---

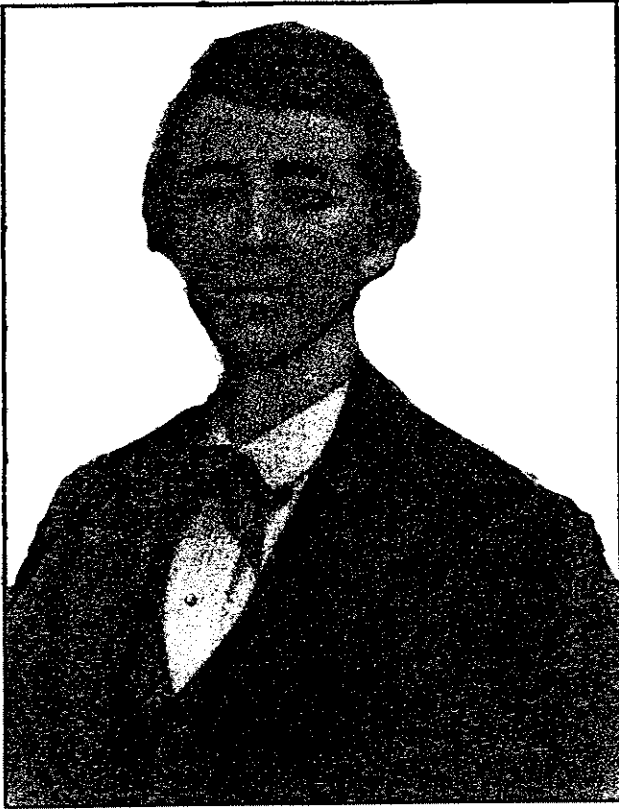
Second, Scott established criteria for selecting meaningful documents. Not only must the document be official and significant, but it must have been generated during the war, and no more than a few weeks or month's after the events it covered. He realized that human memory is unreliable even after a short time.

While there were some disputes over what was and was not significant, the most controversial policy was over the issue of wartime production. Scott believed rightly that unaltered documents revealed leaders' knowledge and understanding of the situation at the time of action, and so best served veterans and historians who could then understand the bases for wartime decisions, whether the data was correct or not. All of this meant that there were to be NO after-the- fact corrections or alterations to the original documents. Many officer veterans had tried to supplement records with post-war "corrections" retrospection. Scott and later editors did, however, permit annotations, such as notes about individuals vindicated by postwar commissions. They also allowed correction of misspellings and bad grammar.

From the beginning Scott employed both Confederate and Union former officers to promote impartiality and balance in selection and editing. The job was daunting, to say the least. The papers to be compiled were "counted not by documents or boxes, but by tons, roomfuls, or the contents of building." Every document included in the Official Records was authenticated as much as possible; this required time-consuming research and correspondence by a staff that averaged six officers and sixty-nine clerks. Never has there been serious questioning of the authenticity of the vast majority of material collected and published.

In Scott the government had clearly found the man for the job. Both qualified and completely dedicated to the task, he left his mark on others to follow. He supervised completion of the first 18 volumes (the first volume was distributed in July of 1881) and did significant work on the next 18. When Scott died in 1887, a succession of other editors continued the task until the last of the 128 volumes, the *General Index*, was published in 1901. The project had taken thirty-seven years and cost three million dollars, a bargain by today's standards. In 1903, after eleven thousand sets of the army records had been published and distributed, the printing plates were destroyed by law, modern editions are facsimile reproduction.

*Sid Sidlo*



*William C. Quantrill*  
1837-1865

# QUANTRILL

*by Matt Slattery<sup>1</sup>*

Perhaps the most desperate and depressing action in the Civil War took place along the Missouri-Kansas boundary. The chief (and most notorious) villain in this was William C. Quantrill, though he neither started nor finished it. It began when Kansas applied for statehood and slave-holding Missourians violently attempted to add it to their faction,

leading to murderous retaliation by John Brown in 1856. When the Civil War started both sides fielded large, equipped armies and the South won the battle of Wilson's Creek in August, 1861, but the North won at Pea Ridge in March, 1862. Thereafter it was guerilla warfare.

William Quantrill was born in Dover, Ohio in 1837. He displayed his character early torturing cats and kidnapping a young girl. In 1857 his despairing mother sent him off with A friends who planned to settle in Kansas. He did not change his ways and was driven into Missouri by his enraged fellows after he attempted to murder his kindly sponsor.

In 1862 slave-holding Missouri Bushwhackers raided into Kansas killing, looting, and burning. Reprisals by Jayhawkers into the richer and more populous Missouri were equally vicious. Quantrill became the leader of one of the more successful Bushwhacker units which was fanatically attracted to vengeance on Lawrence, Kansas, a town of about 2,000 and the center of anti-slavery activity. The Kansans were aware of this, had a Union army guard and were on the alert; but following Gettysburg and Vicksburg they let down thinking the war was over.

Quantrill led a mounted body of 300 on the town which was unwarned of their advance. In four terrible hours on August 21, 1863 they stormed in, blocking the ferry and thus the help of the Union troops across the river. They ruthlessly shot down every male they could corner, often in front of their wives and children--200 were killed. All buildings on the main

---

<sup>1</sup>*Matt Slattery has been retired since 1974 and a member of the Cleveland CWRT since 1984.*

street including the four story Eldridge House were torched as well as many of the residences which were first looted.

The reprisal was even more terrible if less dramatic. The Federal commander was Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing Jr., Lancaster, Ohio native and brother-in-law of William Tecumseh Sherman. His answer was to take away the base for Quantrill's raiders and the like. He issued what Confederates ever after cursed as the notorious Order No. 11, which gave the 20,000 inhabitants of the four bordering Missouri counties fifteen days to evacuate. In 1864 this was ruthlessly carried out and scarcely a single town or farmhouse was not burned.

After the Lawrence raid, Quantrill had taken his group to Texas where they fell out among themselves. They continued their barbarous behavior and he was arrested but escaped. He put his gang into Union uniforms and they resumed their depredations in Kentucky where they were hunted down and Quantrill mortally wounded in July, 1865.

*Matt Slattery*

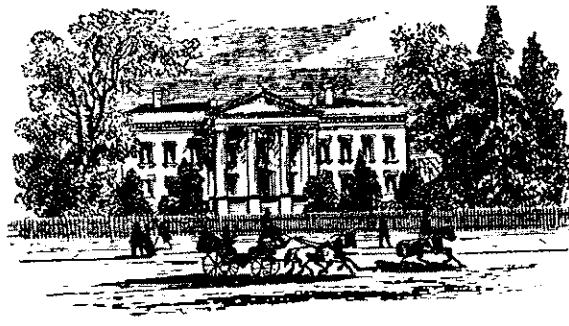
---

## TRAINING FOR LIFE

One hot, sweltering summer day in 1831, three young boys in Philadelphia played "The Battle of New Orleans" for the hundredth time. The youngest of the three was somewhat of a tag-along, and did not add much to the game except in the role of English prisoner. The two older boys constantly squabbled over who would get the play the role of Andrew Jackson. As these boys played at war, the test of their military prowess was only a game. Some thirty years later they would be tested for real on the battlefield. They would no longer have to argue over who was to play the general, for they all became generals. One also became a prisoner in real life, but he was not the youngest, who had always been forced to do so in the game, and they did indeed fight against one another when war was no longer child's play. The three boys who had played together as such bosom buddies so many years before were none other than George G. Meade, George B. McClellan, and John C. Pemberton.







The White House

# Lincoln Tests The Spencer Rifle

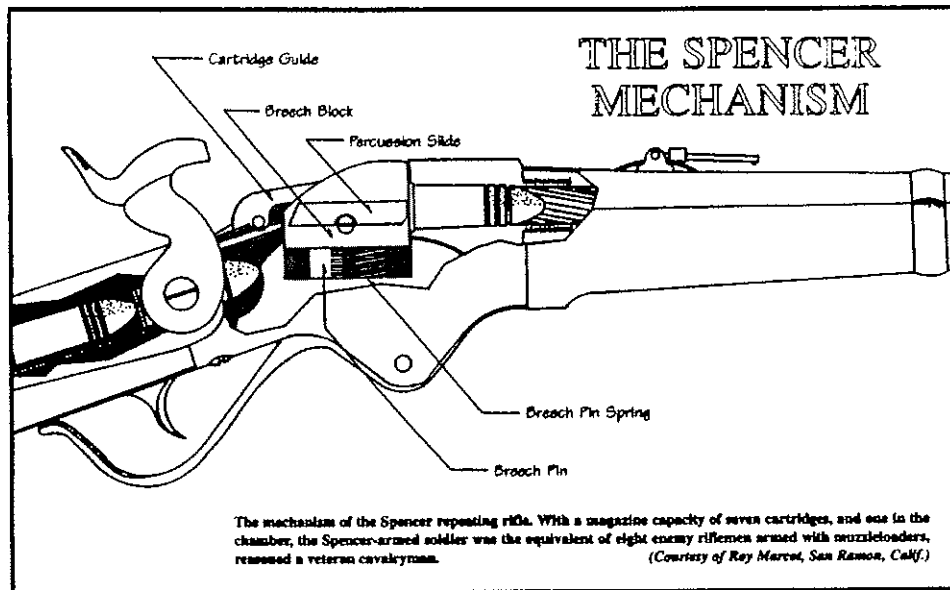
by Dick Crews\*

*It seems inconceivable that a man carrying a rifle could show up at the White House to see the President. Today the Secret Service would wrestle the man to the ground and take him away. Then the President and the gun salesman would go out back of the White House near a uncompleted Washington Monument and start shooting. Today just think of all the tourists you would hit.*

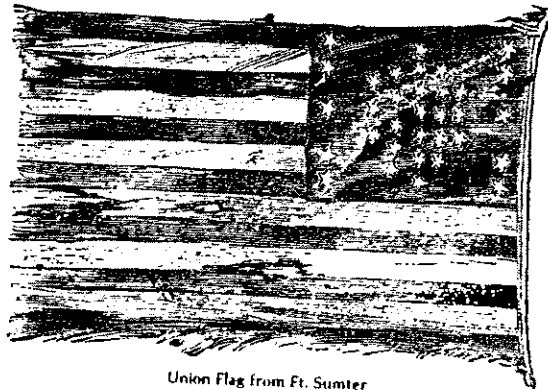
*It seems inconceivable today, but it really happened in August of 1863 when Christopher Spencer went to see President Abraham Lincoln to demonstrate his repeating rifle. The story was described by Christopher Spencer:*

On the 18 of August, 1863, I arrived at the White House with rifle in hand, and was immediately ushered into the executive room. I found the President alone. With brief introduction, I took the rifle from it's case and presented it to him. Looking it over carefully and handling it as one familiar with firearms, he requested me to take it apart to show the "inwardness of the thing." It was soon dissected and laid on the table before him. After a careful examination, and emphatic approval, I was asked if I had any engagement for the following day. When I replied that I was at his command, he requested that I "Come over tomorrow at 2 O'clock, and we will go out and see the thing shoot."

Arriving at the appointed time, I found all in readiness to proceed to the shooting place, which was where now stands the Washington Monument. Mr. Lincoln's first shot was low but the next hit the bull's eye and the other five were close around it. "Now," says he we will let the inventor try it. Being almost in daily practice, I naturally beat the President a little. "Well says he, you are younger than am, have a better eye, and a steadier nerve. The end of the board which the President shot at, was cut off by a Naval Official, and handled to me when we parted the steps of the White House. I kept it until 1883, when, at the request of one of the staff of the Army and Navy Journal, it was sent to Springfield, Ill. to be placed in the collection of war relics.



Despite the public availability beginning in July, 1862 of the soon-to-be-prominent Henry rifle, which was less powerful, smaller caliber, more delicate, and of greater cost, the Spencer would become the War's most effective and prolific repeating rifle. Massachusetts Chief of Ordnance R.A. Pierce acknowledged after the war, "for safety, durability, and simplicity in construction, rapidity of firing and effectiveness, particularly at long range, the Spencer excels any other arm."



Union Flag from Ft. Sumter

*In Memorium*

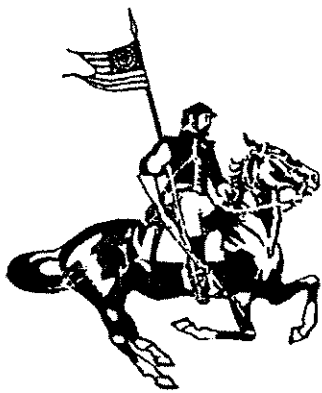
## **John J. Smith**

John J. Smith was a member of The Roundtable for the past few years. He attended practically every meeting since joining and spoke frequently of the high quality standards of our group. In his short time as a member he brought in several educator friends, particularly many school superintendents. John was a retired school superintendent of The Brecksville Schools. He was from Kentucky, so he was fond of telling stories about the Civil War that his mother had passed along to him.

To be a friend of John was to have a loyal friend. He was a role model for many of us who knew him well. He was multi- talented. He was scholarly, a seasoned boater, an excellent fisherman, and a writer. He was as honest as " Honest Abe." His word was his bond.

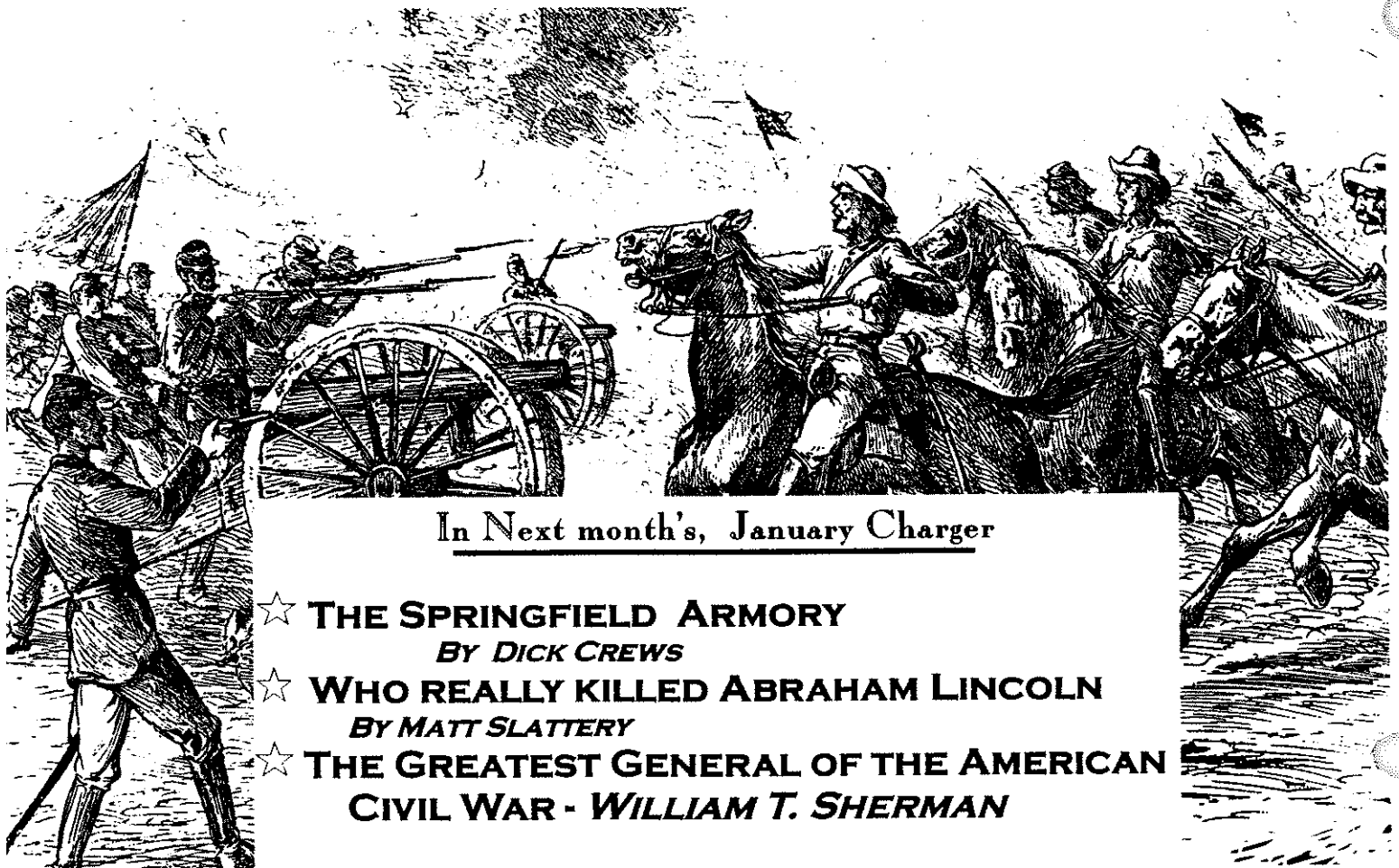
The members of The Civil War Roundtable want the Smith family to know that John was respected by all and that we will miss him.

*Robert E. Battisti*



**THE CLEVELAND  
CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE  
P.O. BOX 18900  
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118**

John W. Moore  
6967 Gates Road  
Gates Mills, OH 44040



In Next month's, January Charger

- ★ **THE SPRINGFIELD ARMORY**  
*BY DICK CREWS*
- ★ **WHO REALLY KILLED ABRAHAM LINCOLN**  
*BY MATT SLATTERY*
- ★ **THE GREATEST GENERAL OF THE AMERICAN  
CIVIL WAR - WILLIAM T. SHERMAN**