

# THE CHARGER

February, 1999

367 Meeting

Vol.20 #6

## Tonight's Program:

## REELECTING LINCOLN

### THE BATTLE FOR THE 1864 PRESIDENCY

Reelecting Lincoln: The battle for the 1864 Presidency tells the dramatic story of perhaps the most critical election campaign in American History. Taking place in the midst of the Civil War, this election would determine the very future of the nation. Would the country be unified or permanently divided? Would slavery continue?

It was no longer the same country it had been when Lincoln was elected president nearly three years before. It was no longer what it was in 1860, when he had been nominated and had told Donn Piatt, the Ohio newspaperman and Republican politician, that "I must run the machine as I find it." The machine he had found then no longer resembled the one he was running now.

None of this meant, however, that the clouds had fully lifted. The rebellion still lived stubbornly on; it still had sting. The Confederacy had partially rebounded from the back-to-back summer-time disasters at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. The rebels had since halted one Union drive on Charleston in South Carolina and thwarted another at Sabine Pass in Texas. They had routed the Union army at Chickamauga in Tennessee and driven it back on Chattanooga.

**So the stage was set for the presidential election of**

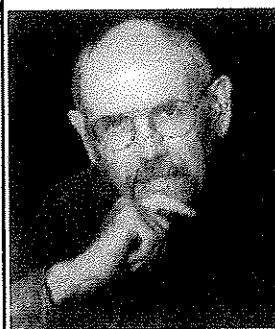
**1864**



George B. McClellan  
1864  
He looks taller sitting down.

## Tonight's Speaker:

## John "Jack" Waugh



John C. Waugh is a newspaper journalist turned historical reporter turned historical journalist. He was a staff correspondent and bureau chief for *The Christian Science Monitor* for many years.

His previous book, *The Class of 1846*, won the New York Civil War Roundtable's Fletcher Pratt Literary Award for the best nonfiction on the Civil War Published in 1994.

**Date: February 17, 1999**

**Place: The Hermit Club**

**Time: Drinks 6 PM**

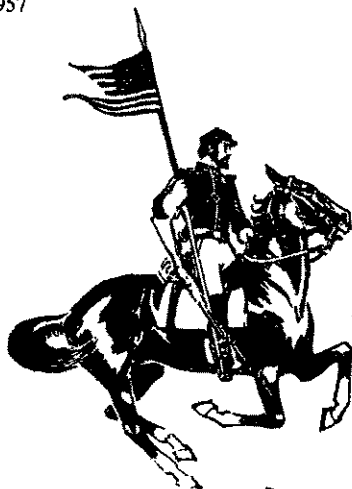
**Dinner 7 PM**

**Reservations: Please Call**

**JAC Communications  
at (216) 861-5588**

**February Meeting changed to Wednesday, February 17, 1999**

Founded 1957



THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE  
PO BOX 1800 CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118

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*About the*

## **Cleveland Civil War Roundtable**

The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is open to all who have an interest in the American Civil War and its time period in American history.

Dinner meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. The Roundtable meets at the *Hermit Club*. The *Hermit Club* is a historic private club in the Playhouse Square area of downtown Cleveland. Dinner is \$20.00. Club dues are \$35.00 per year.

Visit our new web site:

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

February 17, 1999 (Note the date change)



## **Abraham Lincoln**

*Reelection of 1864*

**JOHN C. WAUGH**

March 10, 1999



## **William T. Sherman**

*The Most Hated man in the South*

**SCOTT MAYBAUM**

April 7, 1999 (Note this is the 1st Wednesday)



## **John Hunt Morgan**

*The confederate who almost  
attached Cleveland*

**LESTER V. HORWITZ**

May 12 1999



## **Rosy O'Neal Greenhow**

*Confederate Spy*

**DIANNE KAUFFMAN**

**GREATER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST  
WINNER PRESENTED AT THE MAY MEETING**

# **Fall Field Trip ON TO RICHMOND**

**Richmond, Virginia  
September 23-26, 1999**

**Note date change of the February meeting to Wednesday, February 17, 1999**

# SOUTH WINS BATTLE AT CAMP HILL, GAINS INDEPENDENCE

By William Vodrey

Longtime readers of this column know that I enjoy Civil War alternative history, or “what if,” books. At their best these books challenge our perceptions of the war in intriguing ways, but remain historically plausible. They show us how things might have gone, for want of this nail or that bullet. At their best, such books give us a good plot, solid characterization and a few nifty twists on history, as we know it.

Since (as you may have heard) the Union defeated the Confederacy, a common tactic for Civil War alternative history writers is to turn the tables and let the Confederacy win. Harry Turtledove did just that in his intriguing *\*The Guns of the South\** (Ballantine Books, N.Y. 1992). Once you got over your initial suspension of disbelief, Turtledove had a good story to tell. Now Turtledove has caught lightning in a bottle for a second time in a fine new book, *\*How Few Remain: A Novel of the Second War Between the States\** (Del Rey/Ballantine Books, N.Y. 1997). The two books are quite different in concept and style, and *\*How Few Remain\** is by no means a sequel.

The book begins on Sept. 10, 1862, outside Frederick, Md. A Confederate courier manages *\*not\** to lose Gen. Robert E. Lee's Special Order 191, wrapped around three cigars; Gen. George McClellan thus remains ignorant of Lee's plans just before the Battle of Antietam. The Army of the Potomac is badly beaten there, and Lee pushes further north, decisively defeating McClellan in the Battle of Camp Hill, Pa., on the Susquehanna River, on Oct. 1. The book then jumps forward to early 1881. The Confederacy has had its independence for almost twenty years, helped not least by a generation of Democratic presidents in Washington who have benefited from the Northern public's longtime revulsion with the Republican Party for losing the Civil War.



But at last the Republicans have won back the White House, and a new administration led by James G. Blaine of Maine (in our history, a presidential also-ran in 1876, 1880, 1884 and 1892) decides to finally stand up to the Confederacy. When the Confederacy purchases the Mexican provinces of Sonora and Chihuahua from the cash-needy Emperor Maximilian, extending the C.S.A.'s western border all the way to the Pacific Ocean, President Blaine decides to draw a line in the sand. In due time, as you might expect, war breaks out again, twenty years after Ft. Sumter.

All sorts of familiar names crop up throughout the book. Samuel Clemens is a cynical newspaper editor in San Francisco who clashes with Col. William T. Sherman, commander of U. S. troops in the city. George Armstrong Custer is still alive, having apparently missed his appointment with destiny at the Little BigHorn in 1876, and is just as dashing and headstrong as ever (be warned, though: Turtledove is no admirer of Custer). Gen. William Rosecrans is the overall Union commander, having come out of the Civil War in late 1862 with his reputation intact. The young Theodore Roosevelt, a rancher in the Montana Territory, raises a regiment of volunteers (an obvious precursor to the Rough Riders) to defend the Union's northern border when Britain and France enter the war on the side of the Confederacy. James Longstreet is President of the Confederacy, and Stonewall Jackson, spared an early death at Chancellorsville, is his top general.

Frederick Douglass is still fighting the good fight in 1881, still laboring against racism in a truncated United States which blames blacks for the Union's dissolution and couldn't care less about slaves in the South. And Abraham Lincoln, defeated in 1864, is widely hated for losing the war, but nevertheless travels the country speaking on behalf of what we would now call democratic socialism. Turtledove also gives us cameo appearances by the Apache chief Geronimo, Alfred von Schlieffen, Gen. John Pope and John Hay, among others. There are some interesting omissions in the novel, as well: Lee is nowhere to be seen, and is barely referred to in the Confederacy's postwar years, a major difference from *\*The Guns of the South\**, in which he succeeds Jefferson Davis as president and is a central figure. But, as in his earlier book, Turtledove writes well and holds your interest throughout; I recommend the book.



*Frederick Douglass*

But now I think it's time for a new take on the Civil War alternative-history novel, one in which the Union wins, but in a different way than we know: perhaps Robert E. Lee accepts Lincoln's offer to command the Federal forces and, with his military genius, brings the war to a much earlier conclusion. Maybe Meade decisively wins at Gettysburg, destroying Lee's tattered army not long after Pickett's Charge. What if Lincoln never issues the Emancipation Proclamation at all and the issue of slavery is still unsettled when the guns fall silent? Or perhaps Lincoln sidesteps fate at Ford's Theatre and proves a better leader during Reconstruction than Andrew Johnson ever did.

Is alternative history unlikely? Yes. Implausible? Maybe. Interesting? Undoubtedly. Harry Turtledove has now made two important contributions to the genre.

*William Vodrey*



Harriet Tubman (far Left), shown with some of the slaves she help escape.

## THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION

By Matt Slattery

No end of books and articles have been written on "Why the South Lost the War" Few cite as the possible principle reason -- slavery. The closed minds of the firebrands who fired on Fort Sumter and declared for secession could not see that evident fact and that it had existed decades before the guns began firing.

This closure obscure the evidence at the opening of hostilities; and it was only after the war dragged into the second, the third, the fourth year did the Confederate leaders recognize their dearth of manpower--of soldiers and skilled workmen. We know that hundreds of thousands of these latter had been flowing in from Europe in the decades immediately preceding the war, but they all came to the northern states as the rebel states neither needed nor wanted them. Slavery precluded it. And the managers of the "peculiar institution" could not and did not trust the slaves to become soldiers or acquire the skills to become makers of war material.

Another element of this oversight hit the southern leaders like the proverbial ton of bricks soon after the war commenced. While they, of course, looked on slavery as a God-given right, even the north was not opposed to it. Lincoln did not issue his Emancipation Proclamation until 1863, and the Thirteenth Amendment was not passed until after the war had ended. But the European countries, on which the south desperately depended for supplies, had abolished slavery (England in 1833, France in 1848) and they rebuffed all pleas from the Confederacy for official recognition and therefor the opening of trade.

Matt Slattery is retired and a member of the Cleveland CWRT since 1984

It is true that some ships were built and arms were sent through undercover deals by individuals seeking to make a quick pound or franc, but All European governments frowned on and prevented any general traffic. England was the generally accepted leader and Lord John Russell, British Foreign Secretary, refused to even accept the accreditation papers of Messrs mason AND Slidell, the Confederate emissaries. And then just when rebel military victories were beginning to cause some wavering, Lincoln's Proclamation came down. In the South it was vilified In the North it caused some bickering. In Europe it slammed the door on any faint hope of recognition.

The institution also evolved as a military force -- not a decisive, one but one which appreciably tilted the scales. The Union began to enlist blacks early in 1862 and eventually built up to 10,000. The army did not accept them until later when they built to a total of 180,000. The delay was simply that there were so the Union army had occupied few in the north and until vast areas of the south. But their beginnings are an interesting story. They were first recruited, with Lincoln's approval, by that hated "dictator" of New Orleans, General Benjamin Butler. He signed up two regiments of free blacks with 75 black officers, their military organization dating back to the War of 1812.

## ***Matt Slattery***





# LINCOLN THE PRESIDENT



JAMES G. RANDALL

*Abraham Lincoln*

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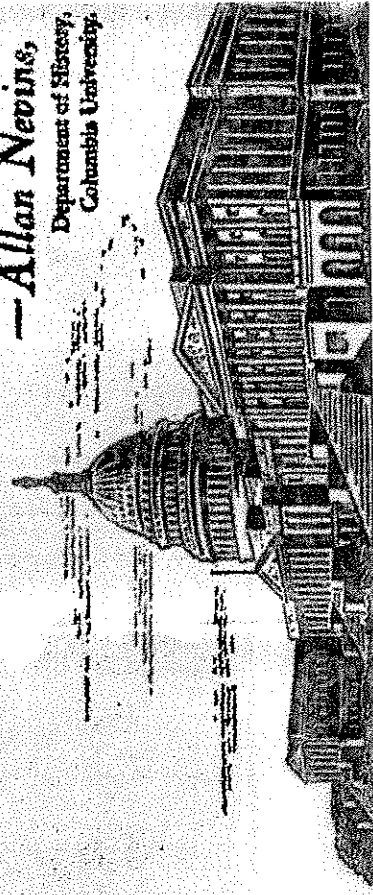
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Coming in October

**H**e sets forth what is in many respects a new Lincoln; the fullest, clearest, and most accurate portrait of Lincoln in the critical years of the Civil War yet presented. In its destruction of old fables and errors, its marshalling of new material, and its fine interpretation of Lincoln's mind and personality, the biography stands out as a great landmark."

—Allan Nevins,

Department of History,  
Columbia University.



# University of Illinois

Department Of History  
Urbana, Illinois

July 6, 1945

Dear Ralph:

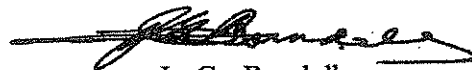
Did I hear someone ask whether the Lincoln theme had been "exhausted? On the contrary, if a man does research for a book on Lincoln--one that is not superficial--he will be pretty sure to have other books in his system waiting to be written. My problem, in Lincoln the President, was to keep the main theme before reader and not overload the story. There is so very much to give that is fresh, having been gathered by years of source study in manuscript collections the country over.

The book does not follow the beaten path. It is what they call "revisionary." It may upset certain established ideas, and some people may not like that. I can't help it; I can only present the documentary evidence. In my researches I had some of my own ideas revised.

By the way, it was a lush and sentimental radio program that caused me to include a factual, down-to-earth analysis of the Ann Rutledge subject. It seemed to me that it was high time. It is only in fictional sentimentalizing that the Ann Rutledge theme has been exhausted. On examining the voluminous Herndon-Weik manuscripts I realized that the evidence had not before been adequately sifted and evaluated.

Out of it all I have developed an even deeper appreciation for the man who rode these prairies modestly, but "forgot himself into immortality."

Yours cordially

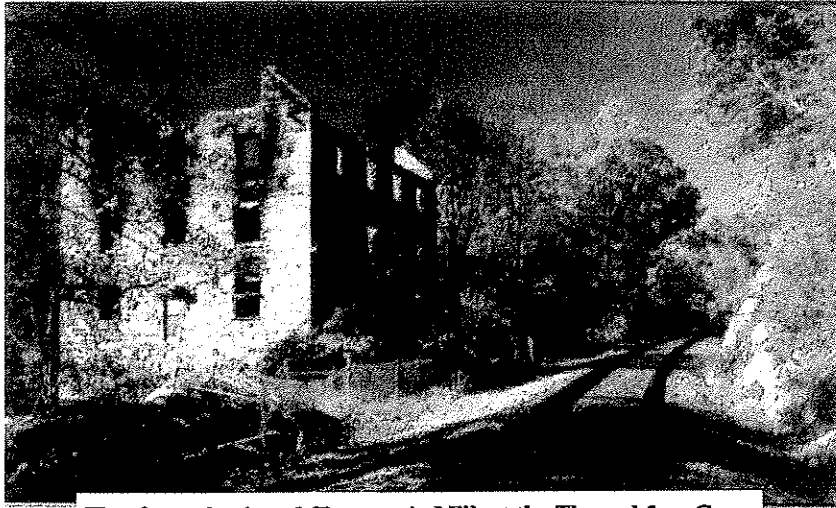


J. G. Randall

The Ralph in the letter is the late Ralph Newman founder of the Civil War Roundtable movement. Note the **1945 date**.

The above letter came from our friend and long time Cleveland CWRT member **Al Enlow**. James Randall is a relative of Al's.





The charred ruins of Chapman's Mill on the Thoroughfare Gap battlefield in Northern Virginia.

# **Landmark Mill Burns at Thoroughfare Gap**

(near Manassas, Virginia)

**By Dick Crews**

Chapman's Mill in Thoroughfare Gap suffered a fire in late 1998. The Cleveland CWRT visited Chapman's Mill on our Manassas field trip in 1995 arranged by Jim Mauk. We spent about an hour looking at this mill, the Bull Run Railroad, and reviewing this important pass in the Bull Run mountains.

Through Thoroughfare Gap Confederate General Beauregard was reinforced at the first battle of Manassas. This Gap was also how Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson came to the second battle of Manassas. Following Jackson came Robert E. Lee and General Longstreet to defeat Union General John Pope. In the second battle to occur along Virginia's Bull Run Creek.

Unfortunately the mill is next to Interstate 66 which runs from the Shenandoah Valley to Washington, D.C. Naturally the highway Department used this pass through the Bull Run mountains. These mountains are 20 miles East of the Blue Ridge mountains and 50 miles West of Washington, D.C..

Experts have told the Mill's owner, The Virginia County of Prince William., that the Mill can be restored.

For more information about Chapman's Mill or about hiking the battlefield, contact the Friends of Bull Run at P.O. Box 210, Broad Run, Virginia 20137 or (703) 753-2631.

*Dick Crews*



## **Harrison House**

***Franklin, Tennessee***

This fine home of William Harrison about three miles south of Franklin on Columbia Pike was Gen. Hood's command post during the Battle of Franklin. This was the scene of the pre-battle meeting where Hood and Gen. Nathan B. Forrest stormed out in a towering rage

After the battle, the house was used as a hospital for an extended period. CS General John Carter, wounded as he led his Tennesseans, was brought to the Harrison House where he succumbed to his severe wounds on December 10. He was the sixth Confederate General to die in November 30, 1864, Battle of Franklin.

# ***The Blue, The Gray and The Red***

## ***Franklin***

***Once distant battles  
suddenly near.***

***A town bombarded:  
battlefield sounds,  
smoke, smells  
and sorrow.***

***Main Street,  
Town Square  
crowded: soldiers,  
horses, wagons  
and fear.***

***Homes, stores,  
churches open -  
townspeople care:  
for the Red Blue;  
for the Red Gray.***

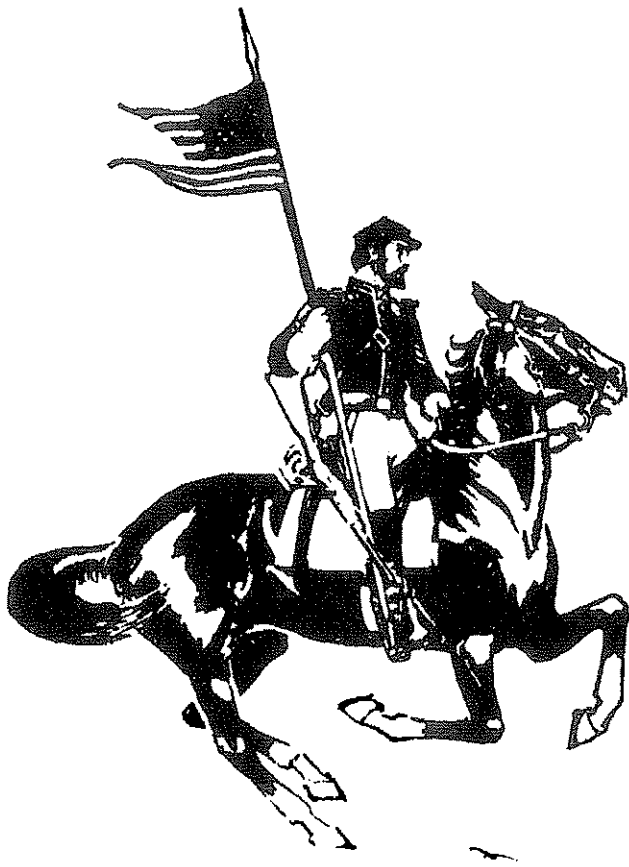
***Historic conflict.  
Historic love.***

***November 30, 1864.***

***Franklin, Tennessee***

***Mel Maurer  
February 1994***

*Mel Maurer  
12-98*



Cleveland Civil War Roundtable PO Box 18900 Cleveland, OH 44118

Wednesday,  
February 17, 1999

Note this is a date change.

