

**CLEVELAND
CIVIL WAR
ROUND-TABLE**

1957 1982

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Non-resident members \$10

Last Month's Meeting

Besides having the longest title for any talk in the history of the Cleveland CWRT, Dr. Tom VanSickle wowed his audience with a well-delivered account of his collateral cousin, the "Incredible Dan."

Dr. Tom dwelled wittily on the political and religious transmogrifications of the wily "Bowery boy."

Dr. Tom also delighted his listeners by describing General Dan's ability to hornswoggle clergy, politicians, presidents and broads. Not the least of General Dan's accomplishments was to convince everybody that he, not the much touted Josh Chamberlain and the 20th Maine to the contrary notwithstanding, won the Battle of Gettysburg!

By Neville Bayless



Civil War Round Table Associates will present its second annual National Forum on Lincoln & The Union next April 14-16 in Springfield, Illinois, with an all-day tour on Saturday to the Lincoln Shrines, and presentations on Thursday afternoon, Friday morning, and Friday afternoon.

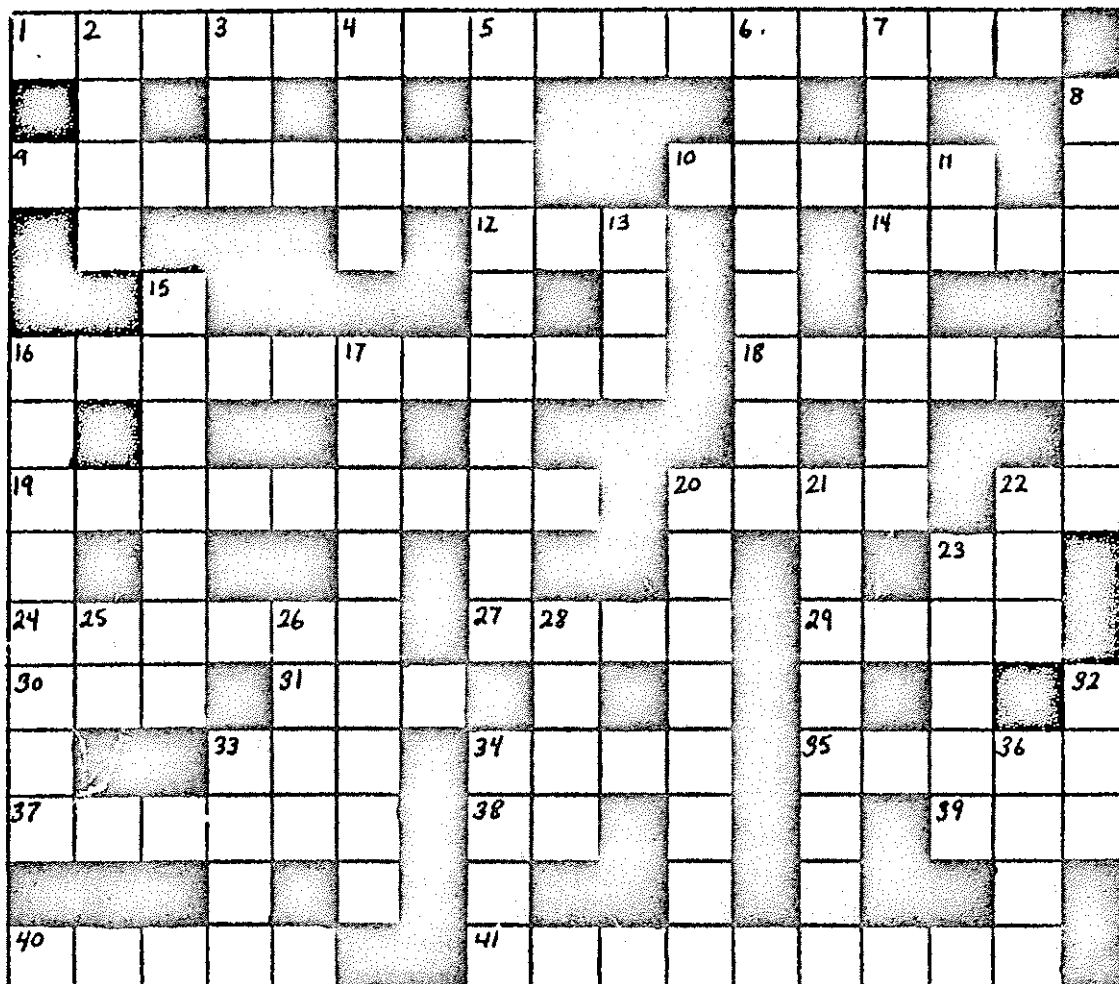
P.O. Box 7388 (AC 501/225-3996), Little Rock, Arkansas 72217

Once again Bernie Drews and Don Heckaman are in charge of the Books-Artifacts Sale. They urge us all to bring in any books on ANY WARS, and whatever you might have in the way of military impedimenta you'd like to sell. Please mark your items with the price and your name.

On behalf of the Club we would like to thank Jim Chapman, his secretary Janet Letsky, who address the envelopes in which the Charger is mailed, and Jim McClimans, who delivers them directly from Baker and Hostetler to "Crumbling Manor," your editorial office.



C.W.
PUZZLE
BY
TIM
BEATTY



ACROSS

1. Wilderness battle
9. Part of Lee's command
10. Union Gen. who was Sec'y War in 1867
12. Thoroughfare for one
14. Fuel for ironclad
16. McLean House site
18. Girl of Civil War song
19. A CW steed
20. Early C.S.A. flag feature
22. McClellan advanced on Richmond from this direction
23. Small military unit
24. States in C.S.A.
27. "Aye, ___ her tattered ensign down..."
29. Part of June 3, 1864, battle
30. A Lincoln
31. Initials of Rebel Bonaparte
33. Artilleryman's goal
34. Lightfoot, Lighthouse
35. Military Commander of Ala., Ga., Fla. during Reconstruction
37. Where Monroe Doctrine was snubbed
38. Word with top or target
39. Yank's antagonist
40. Ambrose and Daniel
41. Chickahominy contests

DOWN

2. Led Texas Brigade at Gaines' Mill
3. Turner of 1831
4. Sides were seldom ___ in CW battles
5. General who became Minister to Turkey
6. First state of upper south to secede
7. Cooper Union orator
8. Lee milieu after war
11. Toward
13. Disease
15. Canister ___ shot widely
16. "A defeat for both armies" (1862)
17. Custis mansion
20. Roanoke captor in 1862
21. Henrico community
22. House or buster
23. The way Farragut liked the deck
25. Short for state in deep south
26. John Brown's Body, ___ poem of CW
28. See #4 down
32. Equestrian acronym of Civil War
33. Round Top for one
34. Mortar trajectories
36. Lions or devils

Answers on page 7

Fred Gill's Book Review

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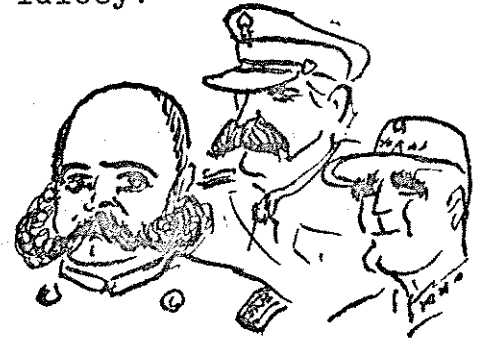
Fair, Charles. From the Jaws of Victory, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971.

The tip-off on the subject of this book is this, the author's dedication:

"TO THE MEMORY OF
AMBROSE BURNSIDE-
ONE OF THE GREATEST
IN A TRADITION STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE"

Bad generals, then, it is, and while poor old Ambrose handily snatched defeat from the jaws of victory, he is only one of a long and dishonorable list, a list the author begins with Crassus and the decay of the Roman Republic and ends with Westmoreland and the humiliation of Vietnam. He describes them all and, in many cases, details their artful duplicity, all the while shuddering at the bloody results of their idiocy.

Wars whenever fought do not differ much and the essential nastiness of combat does not change. The descriptions of wars by generals change really only in the words used. Each war creates new ways of describing the ancient horrors. Oh, some things do change. Once the generals, idiotic or not, were in as much mortal danger as the lowliest foot slogger in the front rank. Now, as the author points out, "...top ranking officers are among the safest of minorities in modern war."



The writing in the book is very dense and to get to the author's point, too often you need to shoulder your way through tight thickets of detail, much of it needed to describe a situation properly, I suppose, but it often seemed more than I needed to know to grasp what happened. I found myself wishing Charles XII and Peter the great would hurry up and get something settled. And all that killing and noise thrust upon Europe by Edward III and Philip IV, told in a forbidding chapter of two-page paragraphs, is almost too much for a reader like me.

Still the author knows how to get you thinking. In one place he says "...this period (the time of the 17th century religious wars in Europe) some think reduced Germany to a barbarity from which it has never quite recovered." And in another place: "Grant pioneered the technique of victory by strangulation, the ultima ratio of bad generals, especially, as it were, rich ones."

Burnside, whose idiocy is nicely documented here, we all know about.

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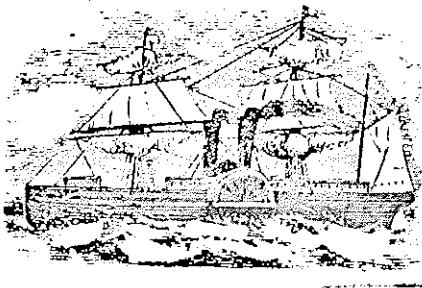
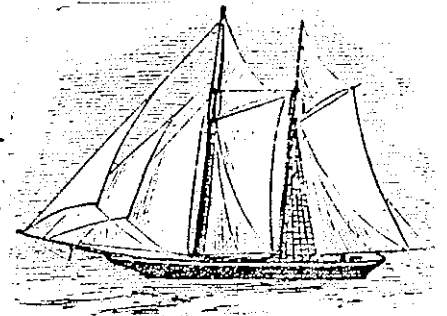
SHORT THE CANDLE BRIGHT THE FLAME

One of the real heroes in the history of the United States Navy is relatively unknown to many Civil War devotees. His exploits during that war were daring and he was a "natural born leader"... proving himself before the age of 25! He remained in the Navy after the war, but died at the age of 32.

Member Neil Evans will talk about William B. Cushing when he addresses the Club at its February meeting and has asked the Charger to carry some preliminary biographical facts to acquaint the membership with this extraordinary young man.

Cushing was born November 4, 1842, at Delafield, Wisconsin, the son of a doctor. He was given his first command of a ship when he was less than 20 years old. Some of his heroic feats before this included the bringing in of the first prize ship, a schooner laden with tobacco. It was the first captured Southern vessel. At the time, Cushing was an Acting Master's Mate on the U.S.S. Minnesota.

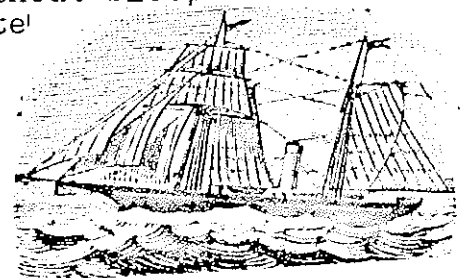
In the same month of May, 1861, he and another master's mate sailed in a second prize, the two taking turns standing watch with drawn pistols over the 16 member crew all the way from Hampton Roads to New York. In October of that same year he was promoted to Midshipman in the U.S. Navy, then in July, 1862, he was elevated to the rank of Lieutenant due to the authorization of an increase in Navy personnel and the fact that his mother was a cousin of Commodore Joseph Smith, a good friend of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Gustavus V. Fox. He was assigned, at his choosing, to the U.S.S. Commodore Perry as Executive Officer. This sidewheeler steamer was commanded by his friend, Lt. Cmdr. Charles Flusser, along whose side Cushing is buried at the Naval Academy Cemetery. It was while on duty on the Commodore Perry that Lt. Cushing helped fight off some Confederate infantry trying to board her when the ship got too close to the shore in a bend in the Blackwater River. Because of this action he was given his first command, The U.S.S. Ellis, a 100 ton ship captured from the Confederacy.



Stationed off Bogue Inlet, No. Carolina, in late October, 1862, Cushing took the Ellis into New Topsail Inlet and captured and burned the Confederate schooner Adelaide; returning later he took possession of the town of Jacksonville, destroyed a Confederate camp, captured the mail and two small schooners, but in making his way out had to fire the Ellis and escape in the schooners.

On February 9, 1863, Cushing sailed from the Philadelphia Naval Yard in his new command, the U.S.S. Monticello, a trim fast steam-sail powered vessel with crew of 28 arriving off Wilmington, N. C.. He conducted several shore raids around this area, disrupting communications and taking prisoners, as well as intercepting important mail. On one of these raids he and about fifteen of his men went 68 hours without sleep from the time they left the Monticello, eluding Confederate infantry after their raids, until they returned to the safety of their ship.

Next month we will have a few more of Will Cushing's heroic exploits in preparation for Neil Evans' presentation.



SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

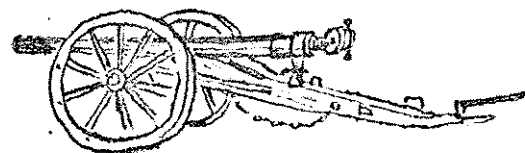


Before the Battle of Fredericksburg when the Union host was sitting around waiting for its pontoons, the artillery on both sides engaged in a rather desultory duel each day.

Present in one of the Confederate batteries was a new breech-loading Whitworth cannon, made in England and capable of firing five miles. (During one of our Cleveland CWRT field trips, a photo was taken of some of our members grouped around this very field piece.) In the 1860's this ultra modern engine of destruction cost \$50,000, and five of them had been presented to the Confederacy by a British sympathizer. The only catch was that the gunners didn't know exactly what to do with them.

One of the scenes I'd like to have seen was the rebels' lobbing a shell five miles into the rear of the Union army, and all unknowingly, hit the tables of a paymaster who had just laid out stacks of greenbacks on payday. The shell blew the money sky-high, and the rain of dollar bills provided a windfall (... pun intended) for those Union soldiers who could get to the area fast enough to gather a harvest.

THAT FANCY GUN



The Whitworth 12-pounder breech loading cannon had an hexagonal bore and the projectile a long bolt with twisted surfaces to conform to the rifling. The shape of the shell did not permit a very large charge because of a small cavity. The cannon was considered the best in either army. The Federals bought a battery of these but they were never used. (spent the war in the Washington defenses) Lee had four of them at Gettysburg.

JAWS OF VICTORY

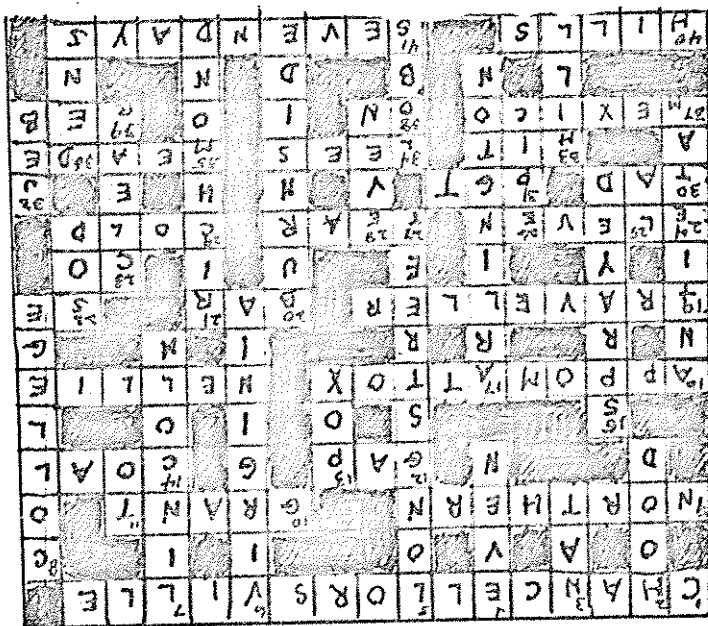
(continued from page 3)

But read about the rest of the shabby figures in this pantheon of bad generals, and do not pass by two of my favorites: Sir Douglas Haig, who did not believe in machine guns and sent thousands of soldiers on their eternal way, and Sir Ian Hamilton, the delicate commander at Gallipoli, who never knew what was happening.

Despite the density of the prose, the book is full of insights on two thousand years of wars, a tribute to the author's wide scholarship. For an understanding of the peculiar ways of command and how it is affected by stupidity, duplicity and hypocrisy, this book should be read and pondered.

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ANSWERS

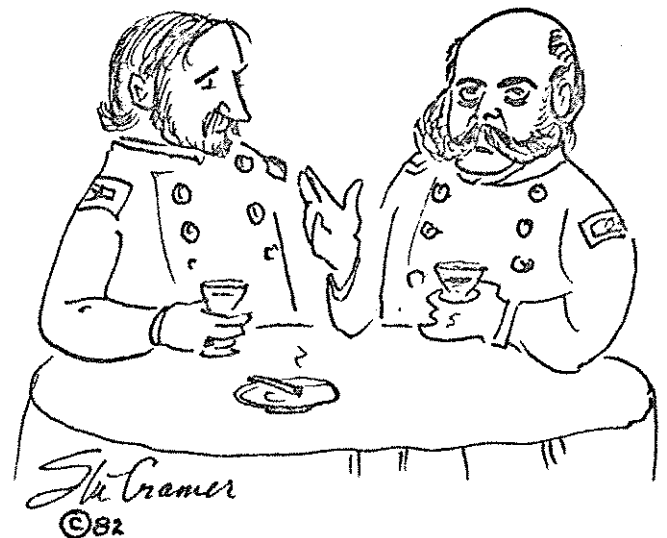


T. S. vs. S. C.

Early in the Civil War Thaddeus Stevens warned Lincoln that Simon Cameron was not trustworthy as head of the War Department. "You don't mean to say you think Cameron would steal?" asked Lincoln. "No," was the reply, "I don't think he'd steal a red-hot stove." Amused by this, Lincoln repeated it to Cameron, who insisted that Stevens should retract. Going to see Lincoln at the White House, Stevens said, "Why did you tell Cameron what I said?" "I thought it was a good joke; I never thought it would make him mad." "Well, he is mad and made me promise to retract. So I will. I believe I told you he would NOT steal a red-hot stove. I now take that back." -From The Indianapolis CWRT Hardtack.



'A Series No. 5



"Oh, I've had some nice things said about me, but I have never been - well- hailed."



A recently read biography (unpublished-a doctoral thesis) of my old friend, the late Harlowe Randall Hoyt, tells of an incident that occurred when Harlowe was publicity director of the Davidson Theatre, in Milwaukee. The first showing of "Birth of a Nation" was not drawing any crowds; so Hoyt, through a Negro preacher acquaintance got word out that he would pay 50¢ per colored person who would show up on a certain date to protest the showing of this movie because it portrayed their subservient role. About 250 appeared on the appointed day and the Milwaukee Board of Censors immediately closed it for two weeks. When the show reopened it was an S.R.O. sell-out.

There is also mentioned an article Harlowe once wrote for the Cleveland Plain Dealer on an interview he had with an old fellow back in his home town of Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. This fellow, a former Union soldier, had been an eye witness to the hanging of the Lincoln conspirators. The immediate result of the witnessing: the fellow threw up.

Several years ago your editor came into possession of six suitcases filled with H.R.Hoyt's papers. My friend Jack Wingert, dramatics teacher at Baldwin Wallace, used much of this material for his biography of the noted dramatic critic, author and columnist. The bulk of these papers have gone to Kent State University's Manuscript Museum and is known as the "Hoyt-Cramer Collection." Harlowe Hoyt was a Civil War buff and an expert on the Lincoln assassination, in fact lectured on it.

* * * * *

In March 1863, the First South Carolina Volunteers (Union-colored) occupied Jacksonville, Florida. One afternoon Company K was involved in a skirmish. On the advancing skirmish line was an 'unusually' active fellow with a very strange appearance. He was observed to move clumsily and irregularly. The reason soon became apparent. The hungry soldier had encountered a fine specimen of domestic goose which had surrendered at the soldier's discretion. Not wishing to lose it he could find no way to hold the goose and maintain firing and advancing in line. To solve this dilemma he held the bird between his legs and went awkwardly on, loading and firing, advancing and halting with the goose writhing and struggling and hissing in this unnatural pair of stocks. Both came off in good order much to the hungry soldier's delight.

- Fields, Thomas W.H. Army Life in a Black Regiment, Boston: Osgood and Company, 1870. Thanks to Brian Kowell.



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"Scalping was much practised by Indian troops during the Civil War. One bald victim had his beard removed in lieu of head hair, and some Chocktaw troopers are said to have mailed scalps to relatives in Mississippi."

- From the Jaws book, ibid. page 4. Thanks to Fred Gill.

* * * * *

Twenty-five of our Presidents served in the military; three were wounded: Monroe in the Revolutionary War, Hayes in the Civil War, and Kennedy in WW I. Hayes and McKinley served in the same Ohio regiment during the CW. Nine did not attend college: Washington, Jackson, Van Buren, Taylor, and Fillmore, Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, Cleveland and Truman.

