

# *The Charger*

## **CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE**

P.O. Box 5786, Cleveland, Ohio 44101

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JANUARY 1987

257th Meeting

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DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 1987

PLACE: HERMIT CLUB

SUBJECT: Annual Book and Artifact Sale, and Quiz Show for North/South Teams.

PROGRAM: This year's Sale and Quiz Show will be under the direction of members Bernie Drews and Don Heckaman. If any help or information is needed in regard to the handling or display of materials, please contact either of them.

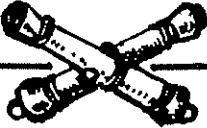
Quiz participants in the teams of experts will be announced at the meeting. Test your knowledge against those on the panels, but please, no audible hints or answers from the floor. Applause, or even some groans, is permitted. The Quiz Program, held annually for many years, is always one of our most popular events--a builder of understanding and fellowship.

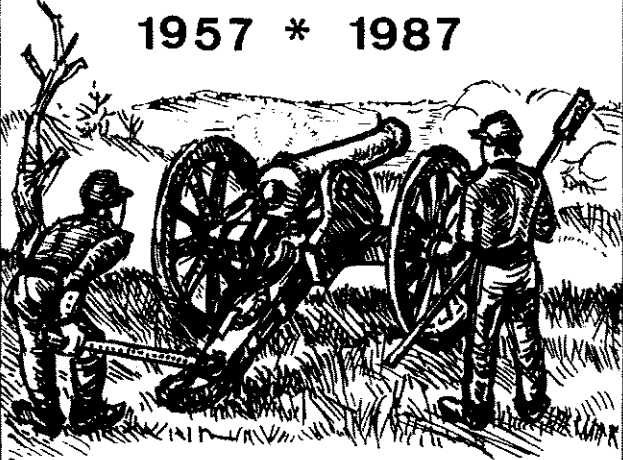
TIME: Sale and Salutations 6:00p.m. Dinner 7:30 p.m.

RESERVATIONS: YES! Call 381-1538 and leave message.

In the September 1986 issue of the CHARGER it was suggested that a table be provided for the display of things that any member might treasure as valued possessions, the appreciation of which he would like to share with other members, but would not necessarily be for sale. Any member wishing to participate in this "show and tell" display is encouraged to do so. Let us all have a look, and a chance to learn by seeing, and, if permissible, by handling. Be sure to identify ownership.

Due to the unexpected December hospitalization of the editor, this first 1987 edition of the CHARGER is a brief one. We apologize for the omission of material submitted for publication by members. Forthcoming issues are planned to be larger and more comprehensive. Watch us grow!

  
**CLEVELAND  
CIVIL WAR  
ROUND TABLE**  
**1957 \* 1987**



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## DECEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Frank L. Byrne of Kent State University once again shared his knowledge of the Civil War Period with members of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable on December 9th, and the large number of members who attended this year-end meeting are indebted to him for an enlightening and engaging talk. Confederate Experiments with Prisoners as Manpower was the subject. Dr. Byrne is a recognized authority on Civil War prisons, those necessary institutions which neither the North nor the South, on looking back, can take any pride in.

The sufferings and deprivations of the general population on either side of such a massive war effort almost inevitably fall most heavily on those unfortunate enough to become prisoners of war. To the burden of physical hardship--cold, overcrowding and discomfort, dietary lack and disease--is added the almost overwhelming one of having no engaging or interesting tasks to perform, a psychological trauma keenly felt by many trained and skilled workers. It so happened that the Confederate "home front" was greatly hampered by a lack of skilled labor, even more so than the North. It was natural enough that Southern authorities should try to avail themselves of the latent talent incarcerated there, especially after the collapse of the prisoner exchange in 1863. Forced labor was not a solution to the problem. Neither side used it, except with blacks who were made to do menial tasks. The answer was to induce some collaboration, not by offering high pay but by granting extra rations, relief of boredom, more freedom to move around and better surroundings. By such inducements as these the Confederates needed to spend little and are said to have saved over one million dollars. Prisoners were persuaded to engage in shoemaking, tailoring, toolmaking, and other tasks suited to the individual's skill.

The Union side, too, engaged in similar efforts to a lesser extent, and, by and large, the results of both programs were only a partial success. Since the line between any collaboration whatsoever, even the smallest, and outright treachery and turncoatism is hard to define, did those who worked along side their captors suffer any repercussions? Some were able to keep their activities hidden, but for many their questionable record plagued them interminably after the war. It wasn't until 1916 that the records were officially wiped clean.

The examples and instances cited by Dr. Byrne in the course of his talk gave a sparkle and timelessness to the subject, which all in attendance appreciated. Those of you who couldn't come missed a most instructive and entertaining session.

TIA