



The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. Box 18900, Cleveland, Ohio 44118

JANUARY 1993

312th MEETING

VOL. 14 #5

DATE: Wednesday, January 13, 1993

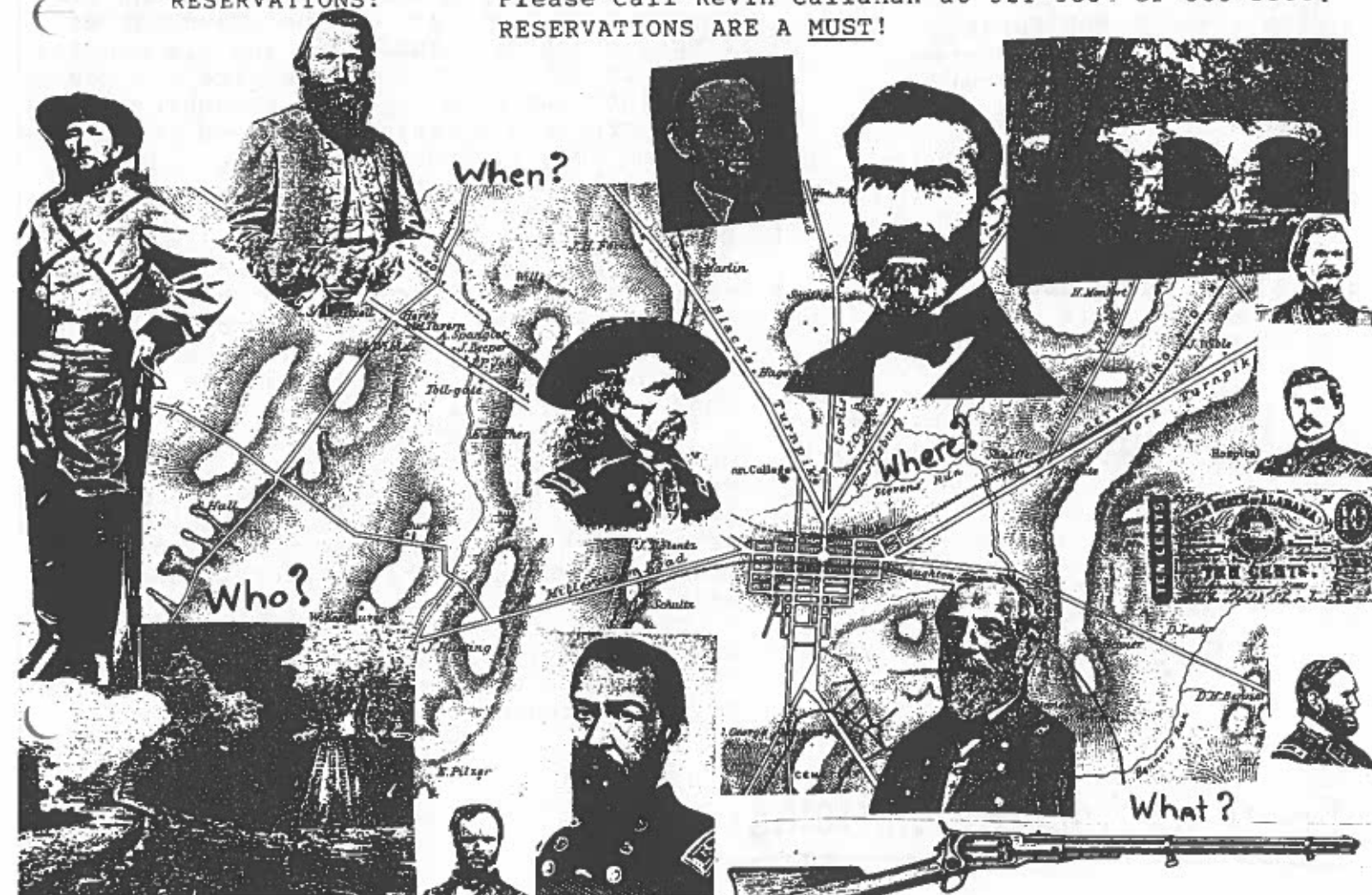
PLACE: The Hermit Club

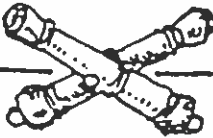
SUBJECT: The Annual Civil War Quiz

QUIZMASTERS: George Vourlojianis & Tim Beatty

TIME: Drinks 6PM Dinner 7PM Answers ???

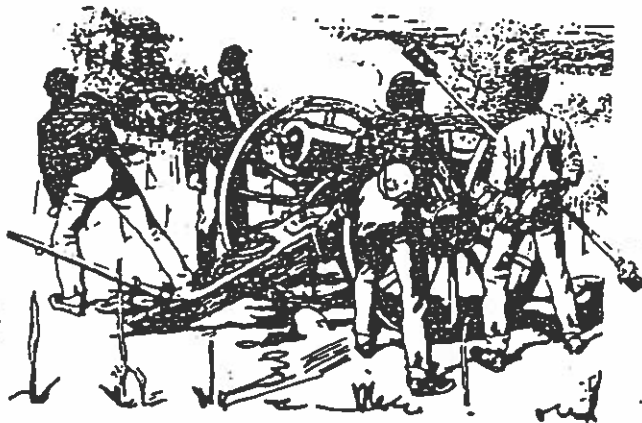
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CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

1957 * 1993



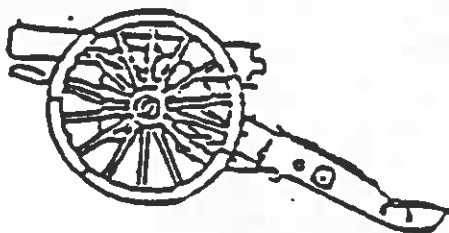
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Last Month's Meeting

Mr. Eric J. Wittenburg addressed our members on the life of Joshua L. Chamberlain of Maine. Mr. Wittenburg confessed that he is only a student of Chamberlain's life and for a more authoritative examination of the General he recommended two books: Soul of a Lion by Wallace and In the Hands of Providence by Trulock.

Mr. Wittenburg's talk dealt primarily with the Civil War career of Chamberlain and he tried to exam his career through what the general's contemporaries said or wrote of him along with the general's own comments and writings.

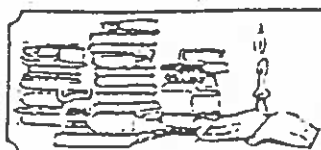
In the summer of 1862, 34-year-old Professor at Bowdoin College, Joshua Chamberlain, secured a sabbatical and, following a pronounced sense of patriotic duty, became lieutenant colonel of the 20th Maine Infantry. As part of the V Corps, Chamberlain and the 20th Maine saw most of the Army of the Potomac's engagements from Antietam to Appomattox. He studied hard at his new profession and coupling discipline and his innate sense of fairness and humanity, molded his regiment into one of the best in the army. At the slaughter of Fredericksburg, Chamberlain and his men lay under relentless Confederate fire for hours well into the cold night of December 13, 1862.

Chamberlain's finest hour came at Gettysburg on July 2. Ordered to anchor the Federal left on Little Round Top, the 20th Maine repulsed several attacks. As the Confederates formed for another assault, Chamberlain realized his men had exhausted their ammunition. Refusing to retreat, he ordered bayonets to be fixed and led a furious charge that broke the enemy onslaught. For this he would receive the Congressional Medal of Honor 30 years later.

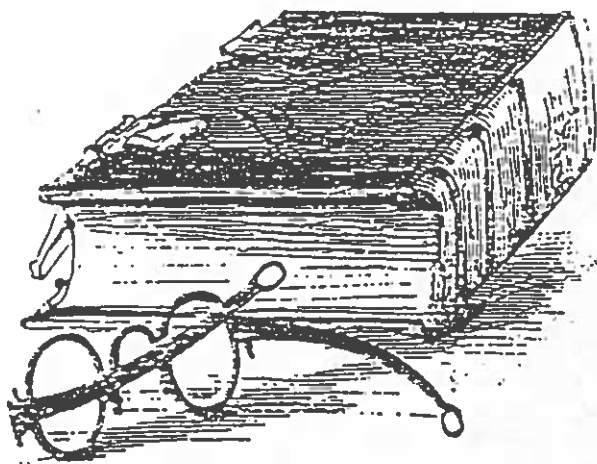
Still commanding the 20th Maine, Chamberlain suffered his fourth and most grievous wound during the Petersburg assaults of June 1864. His impressive gallantry and the supposed mortal wound prompted General Grant to promote Chamberlain to general on the battlefield.

Chamberlain survived his wound and returned to the army where, on April 12, 1865 the General received the honor of receiving the formal surrender of Lee's Army.

BOOK REVIEW:



Books



Fueling readers' insatiable appetite for Civil War stories

TO THE GATES OF RICHMOND: *The Peninsula Campaign.* By Stephen W. Sears. Ticknor & Fields, 480 pp., \$25.

CIVIL WAR COMMAND AND STRATEGY: *The Process of Victory and Defeat.* By Archer Jones. Free Press, 338 pp., \$24.95.

By **ALLAN PESKIN**

Spurred by the success of last year's hit series on PBS television, the American Civil War has become a growth industry. Ironically, at the very time that universities across the country are dropping their Civil War courses in favor of more politically proper subjects such as Gender Studies, Minority Studies or Gay History, the reading public has revealed an insatiable appetite for Civil War books.

Merely to list those that have crossed my desk in the past few months would consume the space allotted for this review. They include specialized studies ("The Civil War in the American West" by Alvin M. Josephy); super-specialized studies ("Embrace an Angry Wind" by the aptly named Wiley Sword, a narrative of the battles of Franklin and Nashville); bio-

ographies ("A Battle From the Start" by Brian Steel Wills, a life of Confederate Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest); novels ("Grant's War" by Ted ones); picture books and guides to battlefields (too numerous to list); and even science fiction "Lurid Dreams" by Charles Harness).

Is it possible that more ink has been spilled over the American Civil War than blood?

To avoid drowning in this flood of print, a reviewer must be selective. The two books considered here stand out from the pack by offering something beyond the usual fare of guns and glory.

At first glance, "To the Gates of Richmond" might seem just another super-specialized study of a single military campaign. In fact, it is a morality tale. The central figure is Gen. George B. McClellan, the 35-year-old "Young Napoleon" who assumed command of the Union armies boasting, "I can do it all."

His plan was to capture Richmond from the back way of the so-called "Peninsula" between the rivers York and James. Assembling a magnificent army of more than 100,000 men, he landed near Yorktown and then, despite his

bluster, became paralyzed by indecision. Although he initially outnumbered his opponents by as much as 8-1, he settled down for a month-long siege that allowed the Confederates to gather their strength.

Convinced that the Rebels outnumbered him 2-1 (although the odds actually ran the other way), Young Napoleon slowly crawled up the Peninsula to the gates of Richmond. There, after fighting the first of the Seven Days' Battles — which he won — he lost what remained of his nerve and retreated, whining that President Lincoln had not supported him sufficiently.

McClellan's behavior is reminiscent of that King of France in the nursery rhyme who, with 20,000 men, marched them up a hill and marched them down again. The result, however, was not humorous. Sixty-thousand men on both sides lay dead or maimed and the war would drag on for three more years — all as a result of McClellan's moral, and perhaps physical, cowardice.

For this performance the general was rewarded with the adulation of his troops, the Democratic nomination for president and the respect of many subsequent historians. Stephen

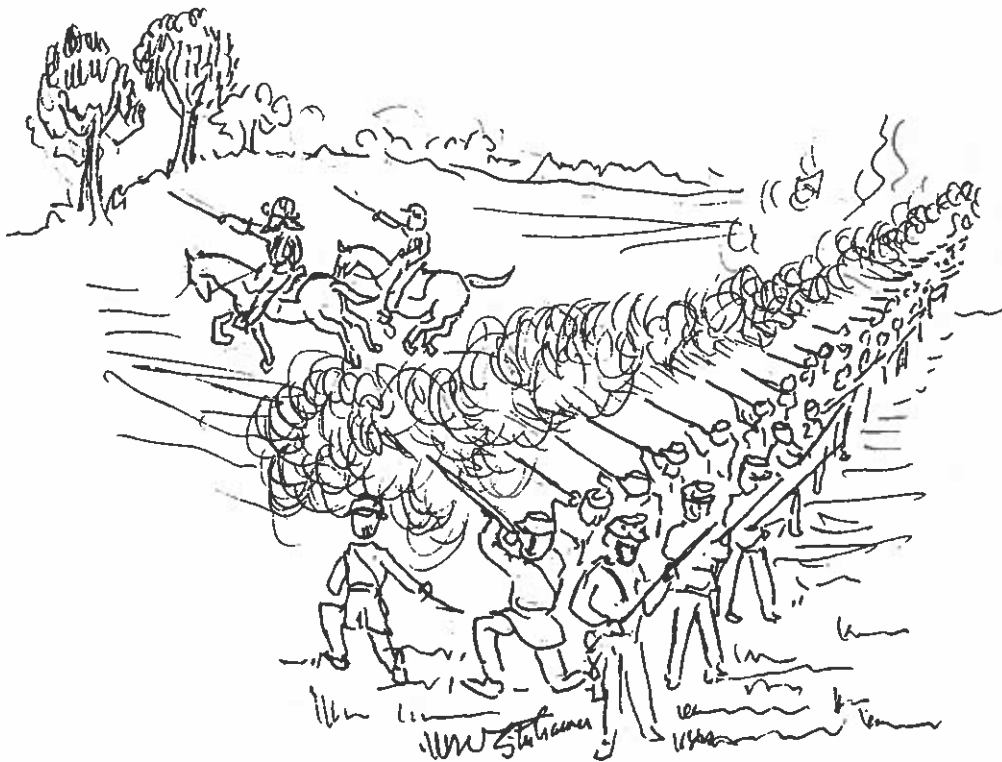
W. Sears, who earlier wrote a splendid biography of McClellan, reveals at last that though the clothes were there, there was no emperor inside.

In "Civil War Command and Strategy" Archer Jones rises above the battlefield to place the often confusing events of the Civil War within a clarifying theoretical framework. Dealing with such often-neglected categories as command structure, logistical imperatives, strategic doctrine and tactical maneuvers, he not only explains what happened but why it happened.

One can take issue with some of Jones' conclusions (such as that Antietam was a Confederate victory) but still respect his effort to find fresh and stimulating re-evaluations of a thrice-familiar topic. McClellan would have profited from reading this book; so too will all those whose interest in the Civil War was piqued by TV and now want more solid fare.

Peskin, the author of a biography of President Garfield, more recently edited "Volunteers" (Kent State University Press), the journals of two enlisted men in the Mexican War.

SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



In early 1862, in the camps outside of Washington D.C., an inexperienced Colonel (Joseph Vander of Milwaukee, a Hungarian new to America) was drilling his regiment on firing by front and rear ranks. He confused the orders telling his men, "Rear rank, about face, ready, aim...". This sudden innovation brought the long line of file closers and officers in the rear of the double line to their knees, while the gallant lieutenant colonel and major were seen charging toward some friendly trees. The adjutant shouted, "Colonel, that is not correct. You will shoot the file closers!" "I don't care a tam," responded the unbending Colonel. "If your Colonel ist te mark, fire away." With that a thousand muskets emptied their cartridges (luckily they were blank ones) at their noble Colonel. A few days later the Colonel was "promoted" to a foriegn consulship by President Lincoln.

from In the Bloody Railroad Cut at Gettysburg
by Herdegen & Beaudot pp 107
Illustrated by Syu Cramer



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PRESERVATION REPORT by BILL STARK

A RECRUITING DRIVE is currently being undertaken by the Battlefield Advisory Preservation Coalition, under the leadership of membership chairman Bob Maher of the American Blue & Gray Association. Dues for 1993 are \$25. Remember, any organization with 20 members or more and an interest in Civil War preservation is eligible for membership. If your group is interested, please contact Bob Maher, AB&GA, 202 Ash Hollow Dr., Winchester VA 22602.

AUSTRALIAN POST TENDS GRAVES

FOR THE past 12 years, Post 1 of Sydney, Australia, has honored American Civil War veterans by tending their grave sites and conducting memorial services.

In 1980, Post 1 learned about the neglected grave sites of three former U.S. Civil War veterans in Sydney's Waverley Cemetery. Legionnaires of the "Yanks Down Under" Post 1 quickly worked to tidy the grave sites. And since 1980, Post 1 has conducted graveside services on Memorial Day to honor the American vet-

Post 1 Legionnaires now tend to about 20 more Civil War veterans' graves at the cemetery and place plaques or headstones at any of the veterans' unmarked graves.

"We want to ensure that no honorably discharged veterans lie in unmarked graves," says Post 1 Commander David L. Raymond.

Post 1 Historian Roy Parker has invited descendants of some of these Civil War veterans to participate in the memorial services. According to Parker's research, the veterans left the United States after the Civil War looking for business opportunities in "The Land

FROM THE RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH:

Southerner leads effort to restore Grant's Tomb

Despite mixed emotions, magazine editor urges cleanup to show respect for dead
by Charles Slack, Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

Richmond native Dean King hopes the South will rise again, not in rebellion, but in an effort to clean up the memorial to the 18th U.S. president and the man who, as commander of the Union forces, orchestrated their defeat in the Civil War.

King, editor of the Southern Farmer's Almanac, says he was shocked to visit the tomb and find it so dilapidated. Squiggles of spray paint cover entire sections of the mausoleum where Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia, rest side by side. A colonnaded lookout over the Hudson River is in even worse shape, with smashed, boarded-up windows.

Lee's horse has better

"This is something that wouldn't have happened in the South," King says. "The burial place of Robert E. Lee's horse is in better shape than Grant's Tomb."

With a \$100 seed donation, the almanac has started a fund drive through the National Park Foundation. The NPF is a private organization that disburses funds to the government-run National Park Service, which oversees Grant's Tomb.

In the spirit of honoring the dead, which he claims Southerners do better than just about anybody else, King says the residents of Dixie should cast aside old resentments to preserve the tomb of one of the nation's most important historical figures.

He got the idea after reading this comment penned by a Virginian in the Tomb's guest book: "As a Southerner, my emotions about General Grant are mixed. I am, however, dismayed at the desecration of his Tomb."

In the 1993 Southern Farmer's Almanac, King writes that, "In properly maintaining Grant's resting place, we perpetuate our hallowed way of life, and we remind the nation that the South did not fight a war in vain."

And what would New Yorkers think of having a tomb in their back yard resurrected by sons and daughters of the Confederacy? "It might needle them a little bit. I hope it's taken in a good spirit." Besides, King says, "Most Southerners now are very glad that we are one nation."

(The address for the Grant's Tomb Fund is Grave Cleaning, c/o National Park Foundation, 1101 17th St. NW, Suite 1102, Washington DC 20036.)

Few fight 'Dixie' decision

Confederate flag, song dropped by Toledo high school

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOLEDO

Forget about whistling "Dixie" at Bowsher High School. The Confederate flag is history as well. The Rebels have decided to stop using the flag and the song at athletic events next year.

A committee of parents, teachers, students and boosters made the decision Thursday night, saying it might be offensive because it conjures up images of slavery and the old South.

The decision came a month after Principal Louis Woods suspended 11 students for three days for defying an order prohibiting them from flying the flag during the homecoming parade.

"I'm glad we're getting rid of the flag," said Walter Longoria, one of the students on the committee. "If the flag and the song offends, then I agree they should get rid of it."

Linda Sattler, a Bowsher art teacher who graduated from the school in 1965, said the flag and song were school traditions.

"That flag meant to me football games, friends, and now they're telling me it's wrong," she said.

But, "if it's offensive to someone, then we ought to change it," she said.

The use of the flag has been discouraged since 1980 when a group of parents, school officials, faculty and students said the banner was offensive. Although flying the Confederate flag wasn't banned until Thursday, Woods told students they could not display the flag during the homecoming parade Oct. 16.

About 40 students walked out of classes Oct. 23 to protest the suspensions, several of them waving the flag.

Bowsher is a predominantly white school. Woods is white as are the 11 students who were suspended.

The Bowsher band had stopped playing "Dixie" during games with the predominately black Scott High School at the request of Scott's principal, Woods said. The song is used in games with other schools.

Dan Koechel, a parent, said the decision to drop the flag and song showed that the school was ready to move on.

"I think it shows that school officials and parents can be sensitive to these things," he said.

Woods said the committee would try to come up with a new fight song for the school.

"I think the phrase that came up a lot during the meeting was 'This is the right thing to do.' I think this is the right thing to do," he said.

PLAIN DEALER (Cleveland, O.) Nov. 21, 1992

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We've been in touch with U.S. Senator Dale Bumpers about a Congressional designation of April 1993 as **CIVIL WAR HISTORY MONTH.**

Please write Senator Bumpers (c/o Federal Building, Little Rock, AR 72217) and ask him how the effort is coming. Then write your Senators (c/o U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510) and ask them to contact Senator Bumpers.

A Congressional designation for April 1993 as **CIVIL WAR HISTORY MONTH** will focus national attention on Civil War Battlefield Preservation. Please do all you can to help!!!

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OLLAPODRIDA

Outside Atlanta in 1864, rumors spread through both armies that Joe Johnston was in danger of being relieved. A union picket tried to find out. "Hello, Johnny, who's your commander now?" he asked. A Confederate called back, "Sherman." "How's that?" the Federal said. "Well, when you move we move."

— Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order by John F. Marszalek pp 276

On May 31, 1864, Lieutenant Elisha Hunt Rhodes of the 2nd Rhode Island Infantry was sitting on his horse near Peake's Station, Virginia. He relates: "I was sitting on my horse in the rear of the regiment when I saw across the fields two bright spots in the woods. I knew at once that there were two brass cannons there looking toward us. Just then a surgeon of the English Army who was with us watching the course of the war rode up and said: 'Lieutenant, Ah, is there anything hinteresting to be seen here?' I replied: 'Just wait a moment, Doctor, and you will see something interesting.' Just then both guns were fired, and the shells went screaming over our heads. The doctor turned and rode off saying: 'I will go to the hospital and see what is going on there.' The boys shouted: 'Is it hinteresting, Doctor?' I did not blame him for he had no buisness to be at the front."

— All for the Union: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes edited by Robert Hunt Rhodes pp 155

"Why Capt. Jenks Requested Lieut. Schriver To Curse His Men." by Surgeon Lothrop.

Captain Jenks, Company D, before he entered the service, was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church. He was a strict disciplinarian, a brave and exemplary man. His Lieutenant, W.R. Schriver, was also a most excellent and brave officer. He had, however, a habit when excited of resorting to very emphatic language, not found in Church discipline. As the old saw goes, he could "swear by rote." The Captain took great pride in having his men perfectly drilled, often making it exceedingly tedious for them. At such times they would be very slow, awkward, and appear ridiculous in obeying orders. For instance, when the Captain gave the order to draw sabre, the boys would draw their sabres and put them under their arms or stick the points in the ground, and when the order to prepare to fight on foot was given, they would manage to tread on each other's toes. On one occasion the pranks of the boys were too much for the Captain, and in a tone of utter disgust he called to his Lieutenant, saying, "Lieutenant Schriver, please curse these men; I am a Lieutenant in the Church at home and I can't."

— The Harpers Ferry QWRT ed. Mike Musick

from The President's Desk



January, 1993

Gentlemen,

The upcoming January Quiz night shall be in the Great Room on the top floor of the Hermit Club. We once again have to thank Mr. George Vourlojianis for putting together the annual quiz for the group. Please call ahead for reservations for the Hermit Club.

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and wish everyone an excellent 1993.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kevin R. Callahan".

Kevin R. Callahan



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



Kevin Callahan
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