

# ***THE CHARGER***

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE**

**P.O. BOX 18900, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118**

---

**MAY 1995**

**334TH MEETING**

**VOL. 16 #9**

---

## ***"LADIES NIGHT"***

**DATE:** WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 1995

**PLACE:** THE HERMIT CLUB

**TIME:** DRINKS 6:00PM DINNER 7:00PM

**RESERVATIONS:** Call J.A.C. Business Communications at 861-5588 and make your reservation. RESERVATIONS ARE A MUST AND WILL NOT BE GUARANTEED AFTER MONDAY MAY 8TH!!!

### **A SPECIAL EPIC PROGRAM - "LINKAGES"**

**Narrator:** General "JET" Tirpak

**Featuring:** Billy Flugan - "The Drummer Boy"  
Peter Smakula - The "Best Banjo Player Around"  
Judy Tirpak - "A Story of a Picture"  
Bob Baucher - "Civil War Teenager Who Leaves A Great Legacy"  
Anet Smith - "The Diarist"  
Rebecca Kimberly - "Pianist/Vocalist"  
Bob Stabile: "Vocalist" "The Inspirational Talk"  
Peter Holman - "The Extraordinary Ally"  
John Moore - "The Poet"  
James Lawson - "Four Generations of Heroism"

**Technical, Photography, and Videography:** Ernie Safran

**Created and Written By:** Robert E. Battisti, Robert Baucher, and Gen. "JET" Tirpak.

# CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

1957 \* 1995



President - Norton London  
Vice-Pres. - John Sutula  
Secretary - Dan Zeiser  
Treasurer - John Moore  
Editor of the Charger -  
Brian Kowell

## Editorial Office

2389 Babcock Road  
Hinckley, Ohio 44233  
(216) 273-9780

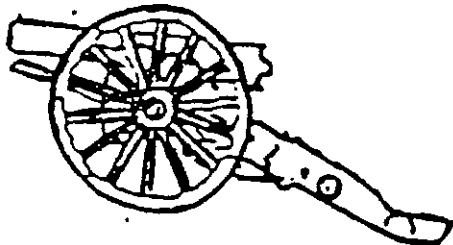
## LAST MONTH'S MEETING

"Lawyers, Politicians, and Clerks" was the title of last month's speaker, Robert K. Krick, Chief Historian at Fredericksburg & Chancellorsville NMP and the country's foremost authority on the Army of Northern Virginia. Mr. Krick enthralled his audience with his erudite delivery peppered with colorful anecdotes concerning the Colonels in Lee's Army.

Mr. Krick said that one truism of these field grade officers was that most came into the army raw. That is to say without any previous military experience or education and most with no military aptitude. There were those that had attended either West Point or VMI but most were lawyers, politicians, or clerks. Of these amateurs, most were rich, tall, young, and well educated. Pre-war prominence was in many cases a determining factor in their attainment of rank, not ability. Like any cross-section of society, this officer corps had its share of incompetents, drunks, lechers, and cowards. By the same token, as E.P. Alexander described one of these colonels, he was a "man who was not only a superb officer but also a gentleman."

**MOVING?**

PLEASE LET US KNOW  
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE  
YOUR NEW ADDRESS...



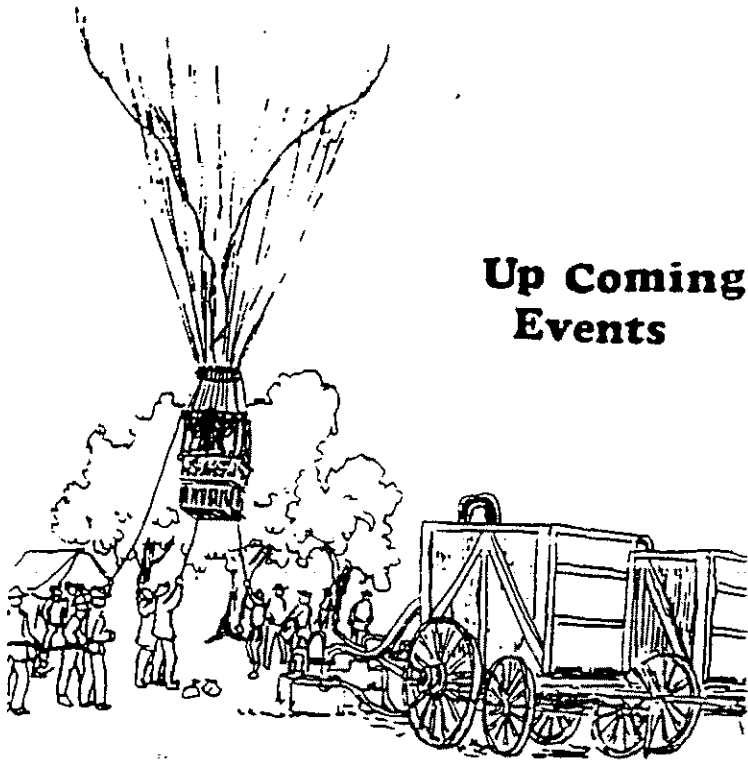
Preserve Your Battlefields

# ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

The Second Annual Cleveland Civil War Round Table Essay Contest has been conducted and a winner has been selected. John Moore and his panel of judges have once again burned the midnight oil to review and evaluated the numerous essays submitted by local high school students under the direction of their American history teachers. Without John Moore and the support of these high school history teachers this contest would not be the success it is. This year the theme was: "Who was the Greatest Civil War General and Why."

The Grand Prize winner, to receive a plaque and a \$100 U.S. Savings bond was Nicholas Mamone of Chanel High School. The title of his essay was, "A.P. Hill: The Greatest Civil War General." Congratulations Nicholas.

If your local high school would like to participate in next year's contest, please contact your local high school history teacher and John Moore.



## Up Coming Events

### NEXT YEAR'S SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS & SPEAKERS

September 13 - Ed Bearss - "Vicksburg"

October 11 - Don Breen - "Johnson's Island"

November 8 - Frank Mercante - "Custer"

December 13 - William McGrath - "Civil War Navy"

January 10 - Quiz - prepared by Kevin Casey

February 14 - Hugh Ernhardt - "Lincoln"

March 13 - Panel Discussion - "Opportunities Lost" Bob Boyda moderator

April 10 - Jeffery Wert - "Custer"

May 8 - Ladies Night - William A. Young, Jr. "Rev. Findley at Pickett's Charge"

President-elect John Sutula has put together an outstanding program of speakers for the 1995-1996 year.

# The Vicksburg Campaign and Siege

BY EDWIN C. BEARSS

The Vicksburg campaign and siege, culminating in the surrender of the city and its defending army, was a milestone on the road that led to the final success of the Union army and the reunification of the nation. The campaign, particularly the twenty days from April 30 to May 19, was critical to Grant's career and ensured his reputation as one of the great generals in U.S. military history. In the days following their Bruinsburg landing, his troops marched more than two hundred miles, won five battles, inflicted more than 8,000 confederate casualties, and captured eighty-eight cannon. Although generals Pemberton and Johnston between them had more soldiers and presumably were more familiar with the area, Grant so maneuvered his columns that he had decisive superiority in numbers and artillery at each battle. From Vicksburg, Grant's career took him to Chattanooga, then-as commander of all Union armies-to the wilderness, Petersburg, and Appomattox, and finally to Washington and the Presidency.

On July 4, a thousand miles to the northeast of Vicksburg, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was about to begin its retreat from Gettysburg. Although the War continued for another twenty months, these twin disasters blunted southern morale and hopes. News that Vicksburg had fallen caused the Confederate forces invested at Port Hudson to surrender. With the capture of these two bastions, the Union regained control of the Mississippi River from Cairo to the Gulf,



*Major General Ulysses S. Grant*

and President Abraham Lincoln wrote, "The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea."

The Confederacy was now divided. In the weeks between March 29 and July 4, Grant had destroyed a Confederate Army of 40,000 at a cost of 10,000 battle casualties. He captured 260 cannon, 60,000 stand-of-arms, and more than two million rounds of ammunition. The Confederacy could not afford such the loss of men and materiel.

---

**Vicksburg**  
Field Trip 1995

---

# Ulysses S. Grant's Vicksburg Campaign

1863

30 April, *Grant crosses Mississippi River at Bruinsburg*

1 May, *Battle of Port Gibson*  
Federals: 23,000 engaged. 875 casualties  
Confederate: 8,000 engaged. 1,327 casualties

12 May, *Battle of Raymond*  
Federals: 12,000 engaged. Casualties: 442  
Confederate 4,000 engaged. Casualties 514

14 May, *Battle of Jackson (Capital)*  
Federals: 23,000 engaged. Casualties 300  
Confederate: 6,000 engaged. Casualties 845

16 May, *Battle of Champion Hill*  
Federals: 32,000 engaged. Casualties: 2,241  
Confederate 22,000 engaged Casualties: 3,840

17 May, *Battle of Big Black River Bridge*  
Federals Casualties: 279  
Confederate Casualties : unknown, captured 1,751

19 May, *1st Assault on Vicksburg*  
Federal Casualties: 1,000

22 May, *2nd Assault on Vicksburg*  
Federal Casualties: 3,000

4 July, *Vicksburg surrenders*  
Confederate troops surrendered: 31,300

# **Vicksburg**

***1995 Field Trip***

**September 28 to 30, 1995**

**Park Inn International  
Vicksburg, Mississippi**

---

**I am interested in going on the 1995 Field Trip to Vicksburg, Mississippi, from September 28, to September 30, 1995.**

***Enclosed is my \$ 50.00 deposit to hold my room.***

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

***Send or call:*** **Dick Crews**  
**3673 Traver Rd.**  
**Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122**  
**(W) 751-0060**  
**(H) 752-9961**

# MOTHER KNOWS BEST

*General Sherman Knew a Losing Battle When He Saw One*



**B**acked by one hundred thousand Union soldiers—the greatest army since Caesar's—General William T. Sherman had a president counting on him. With orders to cut the Confederacy in half, destroy their production, and demolish their will to continue, he unfailingly led his troops through battles in such Rebel strongholds as Dalton, Atlanta, and Jonesboro. He feared no one.

Except, perhaps, the "Cyclone in Calico," Mary Bickerdyke.

A widow in her late forties, Mother Bickerdyke was the Civil War's most determined nurse. She had come to the army in 1861 to deliver donated supplies. She took one look at the filthy hospital in Cairo, Illinois, and began the first of her "cyclone cleanups." From then on, from Fort Donelson to Shiloh, from Vicksburg to Peachtree Creek, she mothered "her boys," and heaven help anyone who interfered.

She was most forceful when she needed medical supplies. Browbeating Sherman was the best way to get them. "General! Fix this thing as it ought to be fixed! Have some sense!" she would lecture. When she caught a ward master wearing clothes intended for patients, she made him strip in front of everyone.

When she confronted doctors who were stealing hospital food and liquor, they ordered her home. Instead, she laced the hospital's stewed peaches with an emetic. Soon the doctors were vomiting. Next time, she told them, she'd use rat poison.

Mary served through nineteen battles, always carrying a lantern onto the battlefields at night to search for wounded men. In Chattanooga, she tore down federal barricades and burned them to heat her hospital. And by whose authority? "On the authority of Lord God Almighty," she told officers. "Have you anything that outranks that?"

Once, she fired a drunken army surgeon who'd failed to provide breakfast for his patients. When the surgeon appealed to the top, Sherman asked him, "Who caused your discharge?"

"That woman, that Mrs. Bickerdyke."

"Oh," said Sherman. "I can do nothing for you. She outranks me."

In fitting tribute, Mary rode with the victorious troops in the Grand Review past the White House. Sitting sidesaddle on an army horse, she looked demure in her sunbonnet and calico dress.



Sherman knew better. —*John Phillips, Sherman rolls through the South on four different episodes of Smithsonian's Great Battles of the Civil War, on Mondays at 10 p.m. and 1 a.m. and Thursdays at 8 and 11 p.m. ET.*

TLC MONTHLY MARCH 2005 3



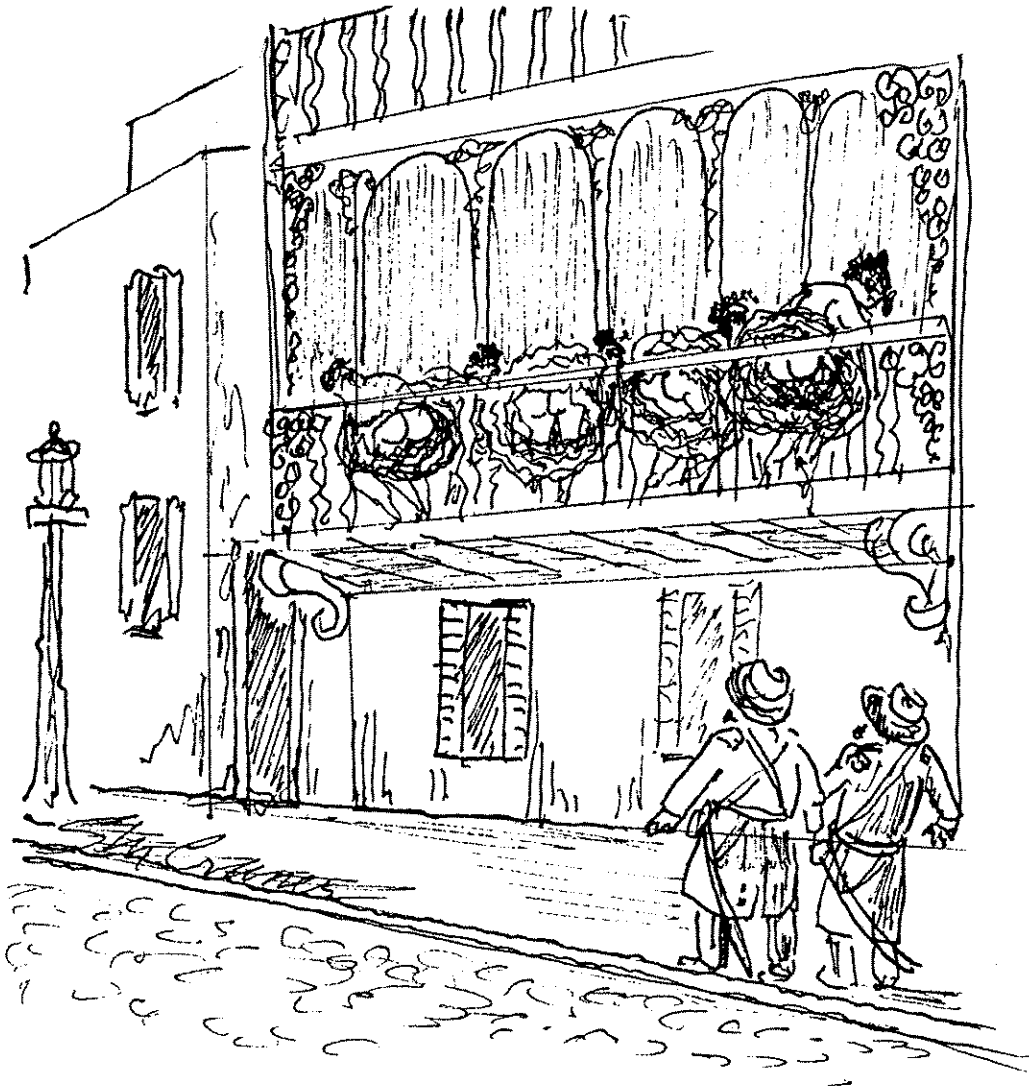
PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS

PLEASE CALL 861-5588





## SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



General Benjamin F. Butler confronted a problem with the women of New Orleans in the Spring of 1862. Their brazen insolence and resistance to Yankee occupation resulted in the General's infamous Order No. 28. One incident helped to prompt Butler to consider issuing this order. Butler usually rode out with no guard, only an orderly. A few days after his arrival, as he passed a balcony, the five women above pirouetted, raised the hems of their skirts, and presented their nether parts to his gaze. He remarked loudly, "Those women evidently know which end of them looks best."

from The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell: Sex in the Civil War by Thomas P. Lowry pp 152  
Illustrated by Stu Cramer



## OLLAPODRIDA

William M. Oates, an officer in the Washington Artillery, noted how hardened and how desperate for any small comforts or diversion the Confederate soldiers and citizens had become during the siege of Petersburg: "While we were in the trenches and matters comparatively quiet, we would often slip into town and get the girls together and have a dance. On several occasions while we were thus enjoying ourselves, furious firing would break out and the officers would have to scamper, but not without securing a partner for a dance after their return. An hour or so would pass, and we would return and say, 'You have kept the dance for me, Miss \_\_\_\_\_? Only a small affair; one man killed, that's all'

"'Oh, is that all!' she would reply. 'Come, they are forming the set.'"

--- The American Illiad by Newman & Eisenschiml pp596

A Federal bummer named Charles E. Belknap related an incident during Sherman's march to the sea: "One day we captured a plantation rich in chickens and other articles. While the men were busy twisting necks and gathering eggs, a troop of Wheeler's men came down on us like a whirlwind and drove the boys to the woods nearby. Hasty preparations were made for a fight. The lady of the house came out and, shaking her fist, shouted, 'You miserable Yankees! You have taken every chicken on the place.'

"What's that?" said the Confederate. "Taken all the chickens? Then there is nothing left worth fighting for." He called his men and rode away, leaving the woman calling names and shaking fists until the miserable Yankees returned to gather up the odds and ends."

--- The American Illiad by Newman & Eisenschiml pp653-654

Many of America's first ladies were caught up in the turmoil of the Civil War.

James K. Polk's widow, Sarah, supported the Confederacy, but sold her slaves and declared her Tennessee home and property to be neutral territory.

Martin Van Buren's widow, South Carolinian Angelica, sent blankets to Confederate soldiers in prison at Elmira, New York.

Franklin Pierce's wife, Jane, was an avid abolitionist and advocated the devastation of the South.

Benjamin Harrison was urged to fight for the Union by Anna Harrison, his grandmother and first lady to former President William Henry Harrison.

Elizabeth Johnson, Andrew Johnson's wife, supported the Union and was forced to leave her Tennessee home by Gen. E. Kirby Smith, commander of the Confederate force controlling that part of the state.

Future first lady Lucy Hayes worked as a volunteer nurse for Union wounded.

Woodrow Wilson's future wife, Ellen Axson, came from a loyal Southern family.

Julia Gardiner Tyler, whose husband, John Tyler, died while serving as a Confederate legislator, managed to get their Virginia plantation's cotton crop on a blockade runner and then sold it for a high price in the Bahamas. She went to live with her mother on Staten Island, where she was active with the pro-Confederate Copperheads. When her tidewater Virginia home, Sherwood, was overrun and wrecked by Union soldiers, she wrote to President Lincoln begging him to protect her property, but to no avail.

Julia Dent Grant came from a slaveholding family, but Grant did not ask his wife to give up her four slaves, whom she brought with her when visiting in his camps.

Almost all of Mary Todd Lincoln's relatives fought against her husband's Union armies. Both Mary Todd Lincoln and Varina Davis, Jefferson Davis' wife, were personally criticized in newspapers for entertaining during wartime and various other offenses. Mrs. Lincoln eventually suffered a nervous breakdown because of the relentless attacks.

Future first ladies Lucretia Garfield, Caroline Harrison, Ida McKinley, Helen Taft, and Florence Harding were all members of pro-Union Ohio families.

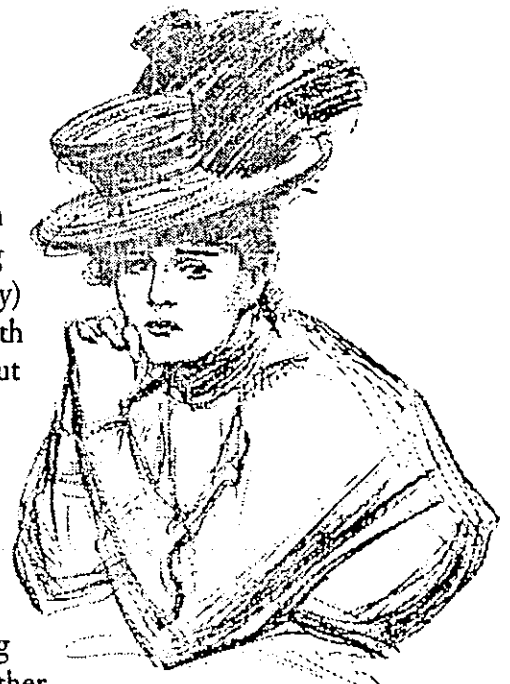
---- written by Stephen T. Foster for Atlas Editions, U.S.A.

## A YOUNG LADY'S VIEW OF ABNER DOUBLEDAY

The following is taken from a letter written sometime in 1858 or 59 by Carrie Reynolds Slemmer, (then the young wife of Lieutenant Adam Jacoby Slemmer of the United States Army) to one of her sisters. The letter describes her experiences while living with her husband at Ft. Moultrie, South Carolina. She has this to say about Doubleday:

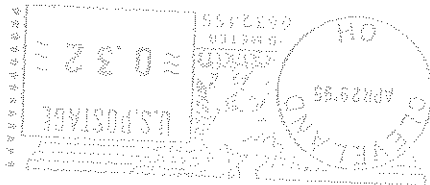
"First in height, decidedly first in weight, first in years . . . stands Captain Abner Doubleday of the 1st Artillery, U.S. (very disrespectfully called "Old Forty-eight hours" by those who have no veneration for a man's patronymic). He is remarkable for being a thorough, simon prue spiritualist, and for nothing else. Oh, I beg your pardon, he does tell anecdotes most amusingly. He had the misfortune to be in Mexico during the latter part of the war and you can't tell what a misfortune it is for other people. Lieut. Davis says that Capt. Doubleday was not within ten miles of a single battle, but . . . the captain has told me once a day, ever since I came here, that he participated in the battle of Monterey, always accompanying the information with a full, true and very particular account of the whole, from the moment they opened their eyes in the morning, up to the end of the third day, when they were allowed to close them again.

. . . He is one of the most amusing men on first acquaintance that I have ever met. His only fault is that he is an extremely small pamphlet. . .



Dick Crews  
3673 Traver Road  
Shaker Heights, OH 44122

The Cleveland Civil War Round-Table  
P.O. Box 18900  
Cleveland, Ohio 44118-0900



Mark Your Calendar  
Don't Miss It!  
"Ladies Night - Special Event"

May 10, 1995

"Linkages"

Created and Written by :

Robert E. Battisti  
Robert Baucher  
General "JET" Tirpak