

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

NOVEMBER 1982

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 12

219th Meeting

DATE: November 9th

PLACE: The Hermit Club

SPEAKER: Harrison Frost

SUBJECT: Gettysburg - "I'd Have Sacked
Them Both"

TIME: Happy Hour 6:00 P.M.-

Dinner: 7:00 P.M.

Our late member of fond memory, Bill Clark, often expressed the opinion that our Club should take advantage of the fact that so many of our members, veterans of World War II and Korea, should be asked to share their wartime experiences.

Some of these stories have come to light in the bull sessions during our field trips, but here is a vast reservoir of fascinating first-hand history that is being wasted simply because the participants are reluctant to volunteer. They should be asked!


A typical example is our November member speaker Harrison Frost. A Civil War buff from 'way back, he will talk about the Battle of Gettysburg and in particular the strange and interesting meeting and discussion between Viscount General Montgomery and General Eisenhower, when they visited the battlefield and commented upon the generalship of the contestants.

But whatever Harrison has to say about the action in those early days of July, 1863, he could probably better raise your hair by telling some of his own experiences during a long military career. Here we have a quiet, gentle, retired banker, former Vice-President of Society National Bank...but we wonder how many of those bank customers who sat across from him at his desk ever guessed that they were talking to a tough former cavalryman, with thirteen years in the 107th and 2nd U.S. Cavalry...many times decorated and in 1946 transferred to the 9th Air Corps?

Harrison Frost has been a member of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table for about as long as it has existed, and knows his muttons about that conflict, and if he won't talk about his own wars, he will intrigue you with Generals Pickett, Montgomery and Eisenhower.

PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR NOVEMBER 9th by
CALLING PRESIDENT BILL VICTORY AT 623-4666 (Office)
221-5413 (Home)

The Union Suit and Enigma



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Editor and Illustrator
of the Charger Stuart Cramer

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Dues: \$20 Sept. to Sept.
Non-resident members \$10

Our speaker at the October meeting was Earl Coates of the National Security Agency, where he is Curator of their Material and Equipment collection. Coates, a native of Massillon, Ohio, is also a cryptologist.

The first part of his address was about Union Production for the Union (Union suits!) Coates said the problem was not primarily making the uniforms, but getting proper distribution to outposts. The original and only production point, the Schuylkill Arsenal, at Philadelphia was augmented by new facilities at Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New York. Fortunately most of the quartermaster officers with experience in clothing stayed with the Union. Our speaker told us about the service of Montgomery Meigs, the Quartermaster General.

The second part of Coates' program was devoted to a lively question and answer period on Enigma. It was developed in the 1920's as a commercial cypher machine and sold on the open market. The German Army greatly modified the Enigma for wartime use. The English did the most work in cracking the Enigma system, and it helped them in the aerial Battle of Britain and in Rommel's defeat in North Africa. Coates said that the Germans (dumb clucks) never realized the secret of Enigma had been discovered.

-Neville Bayless

The Civil War Round Table Associates' Bulletin urges all clubs to take advantage of this month's CBS showing of the eight-hour Civil War spectacular, "The Blue and the Gray," to build identity and membership.

This TV series is scheduled for November 14, 16 and 17th, and has been given nation-wide publicity, with elaborate color brochures and Viewer's Guide from Cultural Information Service. The story, based upon the writings of Bruce Catton, embraces the entire period from

John Brown to Lincoln's assassination. A Civil War buff's dream!



Fred Gill's Book Review

LISTEN TO A PRO

Practising History by Barbara W. Tuchman, Alfred A Knopf. N.Y. 1981

The sub-title of this book is "Selected Essays." This cooled me off quickly, preferring to select my own essays, and I put the book down. Then, remembering A Distant Mirror and Guns of August I picked it up again to my ensuing delight. This talented lady shares with all of us interested in history and good writing her non-academic - and therefore sensible - notions of what history is and how it should be thought about and written about, how it should be dug out of the remains of the past and why history can never be transformed into a system.

There are far too many books on historical subjects that are, or at least sound like, fluffed out doctoral theses. These are the products of the so-called scientific historian. But read them carefully, if the lumpy writing permits it, and it becomes plain some arrive at theories or generalizations not by way of evidence, but by sifting the evidence afterwards to make it fit. These works come from the clutch of "revisionists" whose fancy titles have sucked me in too many times. Then there are the "psycho-historians." These remind me of the Harvard professor, who recently created a fancy system around Martin Luther's chronic constipation to explain the man and his history-changing action at the doors of Wittenberg Cathedral. Psycho professors like this they well may be, but they certainly are not legitimate historians.

Now listen to the author on the subject of language. She says plainly, "There is nothing more satisfying than to write a good sentence." Sure, you can find lapses on her part, especially, I think, in the Stillwell book, but her reverence for the power of everyday English makes her histories literature. I reveled in her paragraph on the sad plight of the behavioral scientists, who, she says ... "by using a proliferating jargon have painted themselves into the corner of intelligibility. They know what they mean, but no one else does."

Psychologists and sociologists are far gone in the disease... and probably incurable." Mrs. Tuchman's lovingly burnished sentences cannot be misunderstood by even one half-educated in English.

Take special note of the author's essays entitled "Should the Presidency Be Abolished?" and "Defusing the Presidency." These are enlightening comments on an idea whose time really could be here.

Even one who said he couldn't stick with A Distant Mirror and the Stillwell book should take this book to his bosom and start all over.



SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



As General Grant gradually pushed his lines and entrenchments closer and closer to the fortifications around Vicksburg during the siege, there were many instances of mining and counter-mining.

At one time a Federal mine was exploded, resulting in a Confederate slave being bodily blown into the Union line. Miraculously, the man was unhurt, except for some cuts and bruises. The fellow's name was Abraham, and the Iowa outfit into whose section he landed, immediately adopted him. The enterprising Iowans ensconced him in a tent, and as the story spread along the lines, they were able to cash in on the freak occurrence by charging 5¢ to see the man.

Naturally, the first question asked of Abraham was how far he had traveled in the air. His response, undoubtedly coached by some Iowa Barnum was, " 'Bout tree mile."

At times the lines were so close that Federal besiegers and Confederate defenders could exchange coffee for tobacco across the short "no-man's land" by means of long poles. Old Abraham was undoubtedly hoisted by the blast only a short distance. This was one of Grant's favorite war stories.

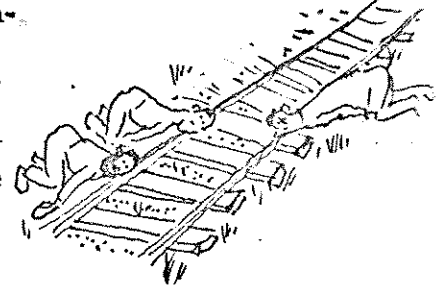
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He Would Not Listen

One of the most successful maneuvers in the entire Civil War was G. T. Beauregard's evacuation of Corinth while being encircled by 100,000 Federal troops under Henry Halleck. When the latter entered the city, much to his surprise the Confederates were no longer there—and yet, some of Halleck's own troops had sent him word of the movement, but neither he nor his second in command, Grant, believed them.

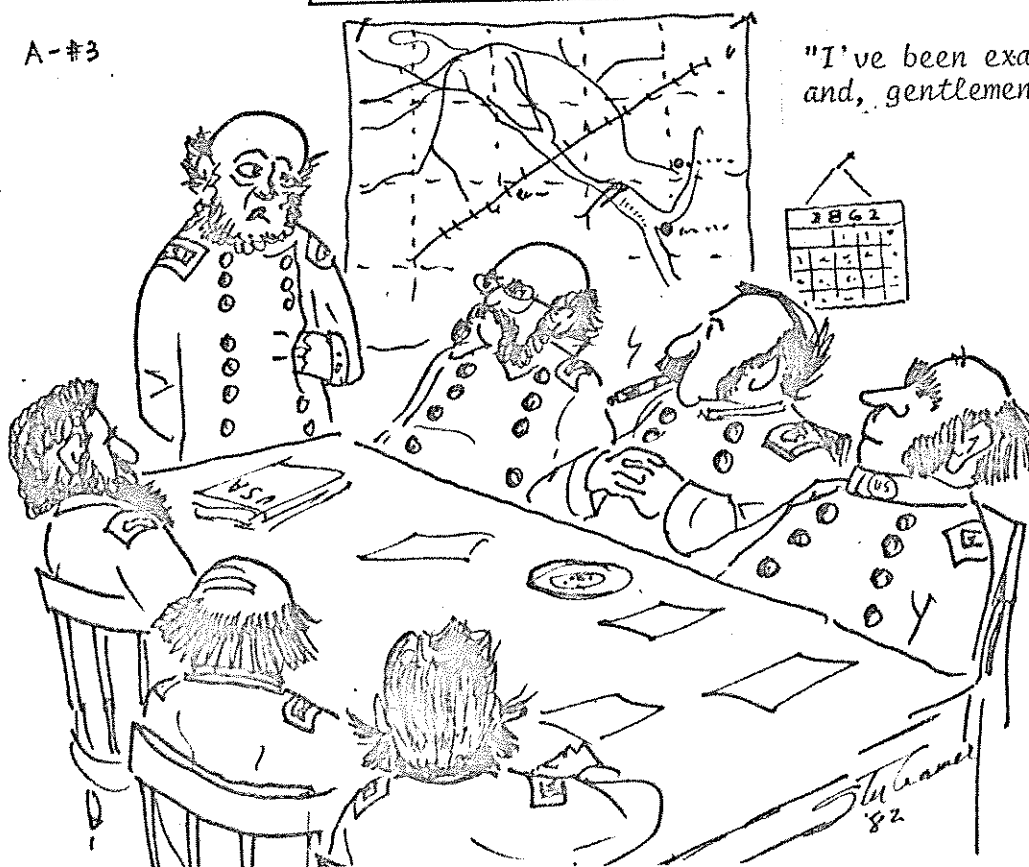
In late May, 1862, overly cautious Halleck slowly pushed the Union Army toward Corinth, where he thought he could surround Beauregard's army of 50,000 and destroy them. When the Unionists stopped just outside the city to entrench, as they had every other night on the way, they could hear the trains running into Corinth and the cheers. This was interpreted by the brass to mean that the Confederates were receiving reinforcements. So Halleck demanded more men and waited for Washington to comply. But the trains going in and out of Corinth continued to bring in more and more, or so they thought.

The Union Army was composed mostly of Westerners, farm boys who had grown up in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and other states where they had watched the coming of the railroads. One of the tricks these boys knew was that if you put your ear to the rails and listened to an approaching train, you could tell from the vibrations whether it was loaded or empty. As a matter of course, and to kill time, many of Halleck's soldiers were listening to Beauregard's trains. They soon realized that the cars coming into Corinth were empty, while those leaving the city were full. The cheers were designed to deceive the Yankees...the Rebs were pulling out!

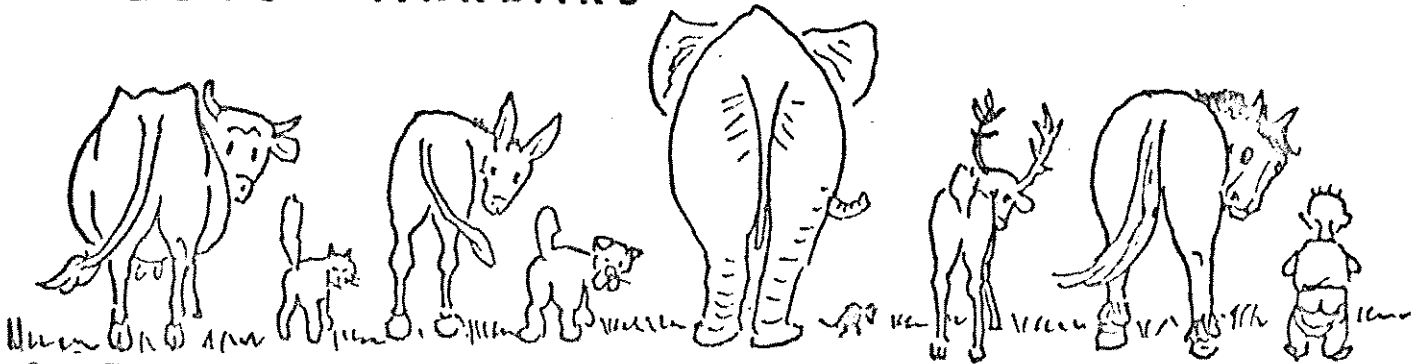


On May 30th, a number of explosions in Corinth set the Union High Command to wondering what was happening. Yankees started rushing into the city of empty warehouses and empty fortifications, verifying what the farm boys had been telling their officers all along.

A-#3



"I've been examining the brighter side, and, gentlemen, it does'nt look good."



Our Treasurer tells us that ONE THIRD of our membership is in arrears. The Cleveland Civil War Round Table's fiscal and social year is from September to September. If you have not sent in your \$20 please do so at once. Send check TODAY to: Brian Kowell, 20566 Williamsburg Court, Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130

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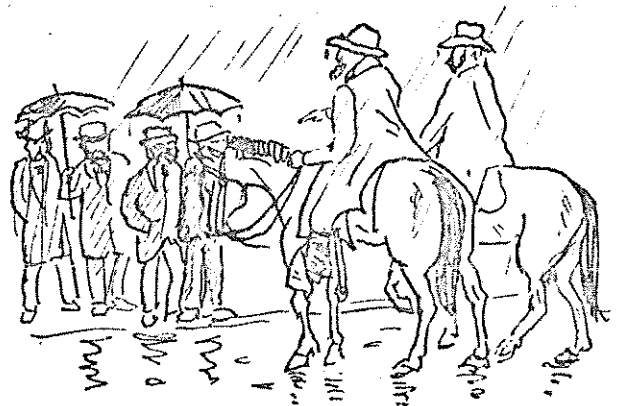
Our Annual Book Sale and Quizz Program are coming up at the January Meeting. If you would like to be on one of the quizz panels, or if you have a suggested question (give answer and source) send the information to Brian at the above address.

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GEN. EARLY STILL IN THE NEWS

Irascible, tobacco-chewing, cussin' old Jubal Early was in no mood to shilly shally when his army stopped off in Frederick, Maryland, on his historic march to scare the daylights out of Washington, D.C. He was badly in need of supplies and had no money to pay for them; so he resorted to the age-old custom of invading armies to demand cash in trade for not burning up the town. The incessant rain didn't help his disposition when he gathered the leading citizens in a little conference in the square. Hand over 20 grand or git yer city leveled. That was on July 9, 1864.

A year or so before this, a Confederate raiding party had enveloped the city of Chambersburg, Pa., where a like ultimatum was issued. The local citizens thought the Rebs were kidding and ignored it, with the result that their city was left a mass of smoking rubble.



Fearing the fate of Chambersburg, the Frederick Fathers floated a loan from the five banks in town and delivered the ransom money in a big basket. Old Jube took the dough and continued down the Washington road.

In 1951 the final payment of \$20,000 was made to the Frederick banks. The money was paid in cash, in a similar basket. Time and again the city tried to get the U.S. Congress to reimburse it for this wartime debt, the last request being a couple of years ago. We have not heard of the final outcome.



Suggested Field Trip

Member Leigh Tanger, of Pineville, Arkansas, sent a copy of the Leatherwood Civil War Round Table's news letter telling about a talk given by their member Charles Hammett. In an accompanying letter Leigh suggested that we consider a trip to the Ozarks for a field trip, and that they had several good speakers such as the above who would make excellent guides. The area, Leigh says, is rich in gurrilla warfare history, with numerous caves that were used by the Confederates to manufacture powder from the guana in them as a source of nitre. One of their members still lives on his family farm where he has the remnants of the equipment used and is well versed in all its phases. The Leatherwood group numbers fifteen and would be very happy to host our trip.

* * * * *

Don Hamill propounds a question:

What general is described below (he commanded an army sometime between 1861 and 1945, and could be American, British or German)?



"He was pernickety, methodical, and deadly slow."
"Unless he had his supply and maintenance organization ready, he would not move."
"He was a little fellow of average ability who had such a buildup that he thinks of himself as Napoleon. He is not." (Answer on back page.)

* * * * *

Don's answer is on the back page.

* * * * *

An historical marker, observed at the corner of East Market and Columbus Streets in Sandusky, Ohio, reads:

JAY COOKE WAS BORN ON THIS SITE AUGUST 10, 1821
FINANCIER AND PROMOTER OF THE NORTHERN PACIFIC
RAILROAD. SOLD BONDS TO FINANCE THE UNION IN
THE CIVIL WAR 1861 - 1865.


That's just across Sandusky Bay from Johnson's Island, home of Confederate officers who had been captured.

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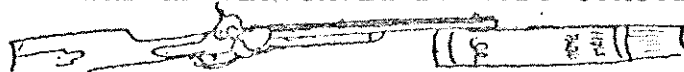
FAMOUS LAST WORDS

—Union Gen. John Sedgwick rebuking his men for taking cover from Confederate fire: "Come, come, why, they couldn't hit an elephant at this dist. . . ."

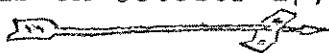
HOW THE BLUCHERTINI WAS INVENTED by Fred Gill
History tells us that Marshal Blucher, speeding to support Wellington at Waterloo, was thrown from his horse. What history has not emphasized is that Blucher's aides rubbed his bruises with a mixture of gin and rhubarb. Could it be that the vapors arising from this interesting concoction revived the Prussian enough to insure his timely arrival at Waterloo?



"Beecher's Bibles" were Sharps Carbines (Shields 88), so-called because many of them were shipped to Kansas in crates labeled "Bibles." It was professed that Henry Ward Beecher, the great Preacher-Orator and advocate of abolition, had said that there was "more moral power in one of these instruments so far as slaveholders were concerned than in a hundred Bibles."



Jefferson Davis and Robert E. Lee died as men without a country. These Southern leaders were denied U.S. citizenship after the end of the Civil War and did not gain it until more than a hundred years later. Davis was never interested in a pardon, but Lee did want to rejoin the Union and work to rebuild the defeated south. His appeals were denied. Both were given back their citizenships through special resolutions of Congress - Lee on July 22, 1975, and Davis on October 17, 1978.



San Sebastiano is the Capital of Guipuzcoa Prov. in No. Spain in Basque country near the French border. A picturesque seaport on Conch Bay of the Bay of Biscay, it was the summer residence of the Spanish court, and is still one of the most fashionable seaside resorts in Spain. It was here that Wellington fought a bloody battle with the French in 1813. Descendants of CONFEDERATE families who migrated there after the Civil War belong to an organization called "Filles du Sud." On St. Sebastian's Day, members pass through the crowds with long arrows on which spectators impale bank notes. These arrows are later inserted in the papier maché statue of the saint in Place d'Iota, and the proceeds go to the Marbeuf Museum. This museum displays only paintings of food. SO NOW YOU KNOW!



Bedford Forrest III lost his life in WW II in a bombing mission over Germany....George Pickett III was a leader in starting the Civil War Round Table movement and died in 1959. Ulysses S. Grant III was a retired Major General when he headed the Centennial Commission.....George Patton III is the son of old "Blood and Guts" Patton (our blood his guts) and the grandson of the first George, who taught at Virginia Military Institute and was killed in the Battle of Winchester, Virginia.



A friend once tried to get U.S. Grant to learn the increasingly popular game of golf. After persistent prodding, Grant finally consented to go to a course as an observer.

As they arrived, a man stepped up to the ball and began hacking furiously at it with his driver. Dirt and grass flew everywhere, but the duffer simply could not connect with the ball. Somewhat confused, Grant turned to his friend. "That

does look like very good exercise," he admitted. "What is the little white ball for?" Thanks to the Indianapolis CWRT newsletter.

Confederate money still good.....in August, 1956, a teller in a Swedish bank cashed a \$500 Confederate bill for the full exchange value at the time, and his error was discovered after it was much too late.

Don't forget-
make reservation
for Nov. meeting-
Call Bill Victory.



Don't forget - duze
are due/do it now!

Answer to Don Hamill's (?)...Gen. Montgomery!