



The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

OCTOBER 1983

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 9

227th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11

PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB

SPEAKERS: BILL VICTORY AND BRIAN KOWELL

SUBJECT: CIVIL WAR ANECDOTES, HUMOROUS
AND OTHERWISE

TIME: Preliminaries 6:00 P.M.

Dinner 7:00 P.M.

RESERVATIONS:

Call Neil Evans ~~752-2296~~ 621-0150



This is probably the first time in the history of the Club that an Immediate Past President and a President Elect have teamed up to present a regular meeting program. Not that that fact has anything to do with the program; it just happens that these two well-known members are collectors of Civil War anecdotes and humor, and decided to pool their fund of stories to make up the program. Both are died-in-the-wool Civil War buffs, and each one has a very good sense of humor. This will make for an outstanding meeting.

Bill Victory was born in Pittsburg, but decided to take up residence here at the age of 2. A little later he graduated from Cathedral Latin High, went to Western Reserve University and graduated from Adelbert College in 1937. He was married in 1942 and has seven children. Served in the U.S. Navy during WW II for four years. After that he became a National Bank Examiner, and in 1951 went with Consolidated National Gas Company and then to East Ohio Gas, a subsidiary of the former. He retired in 1983 as Systems Manager of the Employee Benefits Division. He retired as President of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table last May.

Brian Kowell, a young enthusiast, became a member of the Civil War Round Table here in 1977. He is a native Clevelander who graduated from Valley Forge High School and received his B.A. at Baldwin Wallace. He has two children, Jennifer and Bobby. He is a salesman for the pharmaceutical firm of Riker Labs, a subsidiary of 3-M. Brian has contributed a great deal to the Club in the way of submitting articles to the Charger and being active in all of its activities. He is responsible for the success of the recent field trip. His extensive library of Civil war books marks him as a true Student of our favorite subject. We can look forward to an outstanding year when he takes over the presidency next year.

1983 FIELD TRIP



President Neil Evans
 Vice Pres. Brian Kowell
 Secretary Tim Beatty
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 of the Charger Stuart
 Cramer

Assistant Editor Hazel
 Cramer

Editorial Office 967-
 5971, Box 444, Vermilion,
 Ohio 44089

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

Them Ding-Dong Dues

Those who have not paid their September, 1983-to-September 1984 dues are requested to do so as soon as possible. We must keep up the good record of last year and stay ahead in the black. Send your check to Treasurer George Vourlojianis, 2216 Warrensville Center Rd., University Hts., Ohio 44118.

Twenty-three members and two guests arrived at Culpepper on the doublequick Friday, September 30th. Reporting for duty were Neville and Bob Bayless, Brian Kowell, Chamberlain, Spiegle, Greenwood, Wood, Van Sickle, Victory, Demington, Graham, Gillen, Riel, McCrae, Schlesinger, Drews, Harkness, Tirpak, Tanger, Sonn, Skoch, Evans (and those missed).

Famous guide Ed Bearss moved the troops to Kelly's Ford, Brandy Station to the slopes of Cedar and Clark's Mountains and on a back road to Mine Run; then around Pope's Army with Jackson and on to the Battlegrounds of Groveton and Bristoe Station.

Amid the jungle drums of nearby N.A.A.C.P. our troops rallied to hear Bob Kriek's talk on General Barksdale.

On the following night Bill Chamberlain and his interpretation of the Virginia Reel by showing his X-rated movies of past field trips. Between each movie the troops sang their ribald, bawdy soldier songs.

Wiser in knowledge but weaker in flesh members dispersed the next day from what Ed Bearss declared one of the best organized field trips by any Round Table he had ever attended.

By Your Videttes

* * * *



Congratulations Neville and Brian!

FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

3.

WANT TO BE A GENERAL?

Seymour, William. Yours to Reason Why, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.

Could you have done better than Lee at Gettysburg? Or better than Burgoyne at Saratoga, Clark at Anzio, Henry V at Agincourt? This exciting book, aptly sub-titled "Decision in Battle," gives you a chance to find out. The author lays out all the information on events leading up to a dozen well-known battles, then lists the options to the commanders. You know what really happened in most of the battles, but consider the options the author describes open to the generals commanding on both sides and see if you could have done better - or possibly worse.

Clear and simple maps show the important details in each situation and following the list of options the author tells you what happened and what might have happened. I can't say I agree with all his comments but I am heartened to see that Mark Clark is properly castigated for some of his choices at Anzio. Things happened that need not have happened if he had not let ambition cloud his soldierly competence. Sure, we won the campaign but at an appalling cost.

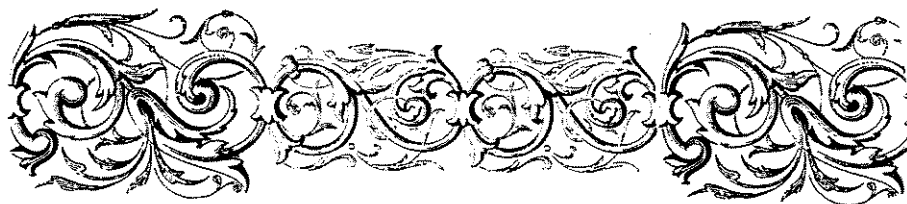
The author was in the Scots Guards from 1934 to 1939 and it is a safe bet that he saw some questionable command decisions. Maybe he made some himself. However, he saw and heard enough to spark the idea of this fascinating book. When his military career ended he must have read a ton of books and traveled to a score or more battlefields, for his knowledge of these campaigns is formidably vast.

You cannot read the book straight through from page one but you can take each campaign separately, dip into other books you have handy, then make your own battle decisions. Maybe you could have done better than Gates or Burgoyne at Saratoga or better than poor old Hooker at Chancellorsville. What a chance he missed because of timidity to whip His Eminence of Northern Virginia!

The only regret I have after pouring over this book is that I did not have the idea myself. The royalties, even at \$17.95 per copy, wouldn't have made me rich, but writing the book would have been a hell of a lot of fun.

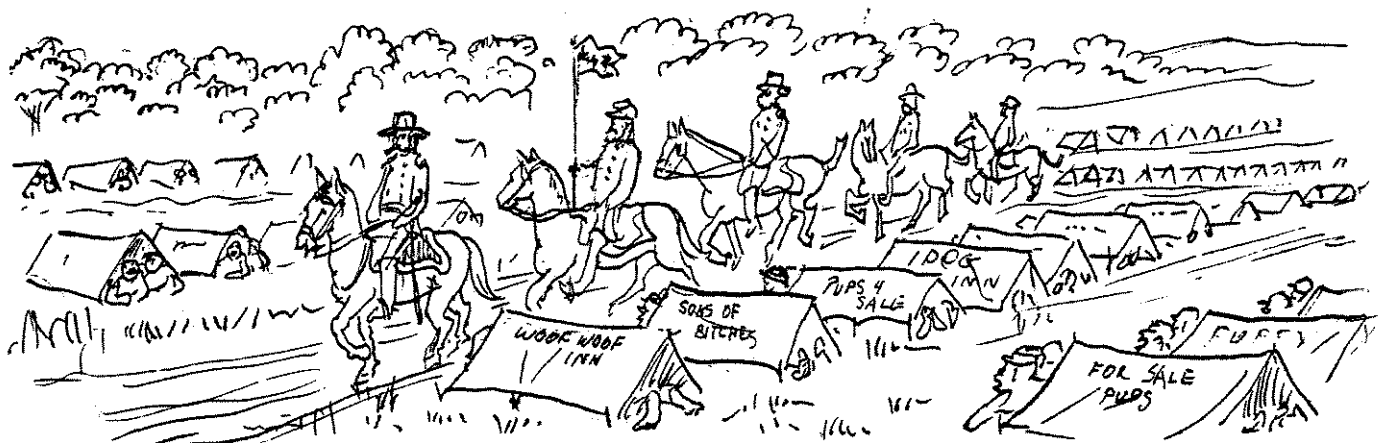
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NOTE ON FALKLANDS WAR BOOKS. In the September Charger I wrote about a book entitled War in the Falklands. Hard on its heels comes another book entitled The Battle of the Falklands. A review in the Plain Dealer was headed "The real story of the Falklands." Talk about a cheap shot! The word real in this head should have been in quotation marks. The book tells the same story, adding a few dubious authorial opinions, and not told with the almost breathless immediacy of the book I wrote about. Unless you want to tread water, don't bother with The Battle of the Falklands.



Scenes I'd Like to Have Seen

4



In the fall of 1862 small shelter tents were issued to the Pioneer Brigade of the Army of the Cumberland to replace their large cumbersome Sibley tents. The new tents were so small that a man could not stand up inside. The soldiers were very bitter in condemnation of them and called them dog, or pup tents. Almost every one of these new tents was marked in a way to indicate unfavorable opinion:

Pups for Sale
Rat Terriers
Bull Pups Here
Dog Hole No. 1
Sons of Bitches Within

General Rosecrans and staff, while riding through the camp one day, were greeted with a tremendous bow-wow. The boys were on their hands and knees, stretching their heads out of the ends of the tents barking furiously at the passing cavalcade.

Beatty, John, The Citizen Soldier;
Wilstach, Baldwin & Co., Cincinnati,
1879. Thanks to Brian Kowell.

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September Meeting an Outstanding Success

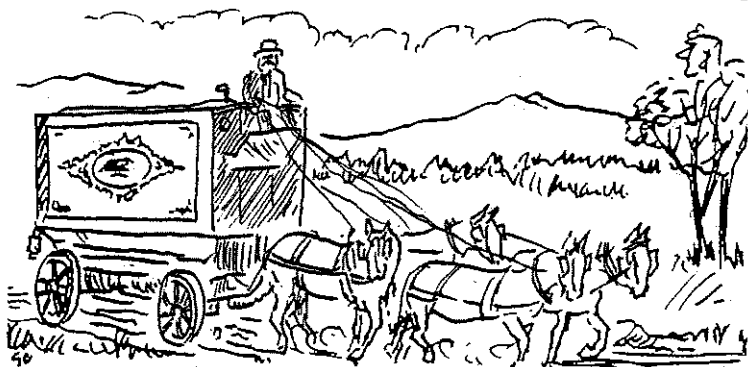
Fifty members attended the September meeting at the home of Past President Ken Callahan, the second meeting to be held there. The lovely home, the delicious catered meal, and a good program made this another OUTSTANDING meeting. Thanks to Ken and family. The speaker, Bill McCulloch, of Ontario, Canada, did a great job of dramatizing, with slides, the story of the discovering of two schooners that sank in Lake Ontario during the War of 1812. He pointed out that the result of this war was the solidifying of Canada and the recognition of the United States as a coming world power..

The OLD PANORAMA

5.

During the 1850's and early 60's the entertainment-starved towns in America's hinterland were served by showmen exhibiting painted panoramas - huge canvases with moving parts, some much more elaborate than others. The subject matter of these "breathtaking pieces of artwork" embraced a great variety: The Lord's Supper, Mt. Vernon and Washington's Tomb, The Raising of Lazarus, The Ascent of Mt. Blanc, etc.. Many were models in bas relief, illustrating Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Dr. Kane's Arctic Exposition, The Holy Land, and P.T. Barnum's Solomon's Temple. He advertised that there was \$10,000 of gold used in its construction. These showmen moved their "panstereoramas" from town to town in wagons, usually setting up in the largest room available in the community. In the early years of the Civil War, the most popular subject was the battlefield scenes of the conflict.

In these scenes realism thrilled the audiences by means of moving soldie and equipment, painted metal cut-outs fastened to traveling belts, the use of booming bassdrums backstage, and the puffs of smoke from cannon, produce by cigar-smoking operators blowing through holes in the picture.



One Amos Hummel traveled the country exhibiting The Burning of Moscow, with smoke, fire and bits of debris showered before the canvas. Another was old Yankee Robinson, later a circus owner, but in the early days traversing the rural areas in a one horse wagon, exhibiting some of the Napoleonic Wars. In an article that appeared in the Dec. 3rd, 1900 issue of the Billboard, one Doc

Judd wrote the following story (which brings us to the point of this piece):

One week in 1860 we were showing in Galena, Ill. and while there we were overhauling the exhibition and needed some leather belting. I went out around town to find some, and I came across a store that had a sign over the door, "Leather Store." I went in, found what I thought would answer the purpose and wanted to take it down to the hall to see if it would work with what I had. The man who waited on me did not seem to want to trust me with the rolls, so he called out to some one in the back part of the store, "Orville, Orville, is Ulysses there? Send him here." Ulysses took one or two rolls, I the rest, and we went to the hall. There I found that even the narrow would not fit into our grooves, so Ulysses, as he had been called, said: "I will take it back to the store. I think they have a machine there that will trim off the edge better than you can do it here, and right after dinner I will bring it back and you can pay me." "All right," said I. After dinner he was back with it, and when he came into the hall we had spread out on the floor lots of our scenery, and all kinds of figures of men, soldiers and horses. "Well, well," he said, "what have you got here, any way. War, more war." I began to tell him, and I saw him looking intently at a scene that was partly set up into

General Scott and his army's triumphal march and grand parade through the principal streets of the City of Mexico. Pulling out another scene, I said: "This is the famous building known as the Hall of the Montezumas, of which General Scott took possession." Then I picked up a figure from the floor, a full uniformed officer on horseback, and said to him: "This is General Winfield Scott." "Yes," he said, "Old Fuss and Feathers. Can you bring out 'Old Rough and Ready'?" I said, "Yes, here is General Taylor." Then he said he was in and all through the Mexican War. We soon got to work on the belting that he had brought. I paid him, but he lingered around and sat down where we were working putting hooks on the belting. Soon he pulled off his coat, picked up a punch and mallet and went to punching holes in the belt where one of our men had marked them, and then went on telling more about himself and stories of the Mexican War. It was getting pretty late in the afternoon and almost dark, when a man came into the hall and called out: "Ulysses, Orville wants to know when you are coming back to the store, and wants to know if you have hired

time he might as well have said he was Captain Jones, as far as it would be of any unusual interest to us. We thought of him only as one with whom we had spent a very pleasant afternoon listening to his stories. We would have some one tell us most every day that they were in the Mexican War or were in some battle that we represented in our exhibition. However, it was only just a few more years when we did begin to think it was a little out of the usual occurrence when we would hear and read of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

There never was on land and sea such color as stared from those canvases (panoramas); the soaring battle smoke, flags in processions, artillery rushing by, so painted that the audiences imagined they heard the clatter... fires, sunsets, mines exploding, battered forts, the Merrimac, a fabulous marine monster, and the Monitor

the frame on the exhibition stage. He said: "What is that scene over there?" I told him it was the battle of Buena Vista, in the Mexican War, and I told him the scene leaning against the wall and the figures around on the floor all went to make up a moving picture of

out to the show." He looked up, took out his watch and said: "I declare, I did not think it was so late. I must go." I thrust a number of complimentary tickets into his hand and told him to come down to the show. He did and brought his wife and two children. The afternoon that he helped us he told us that he was formerly of the regular army and was Captain Grant when he left the service, but at that

SHE INSISTED ON WEARING PANTS

If old Mary Walker could visit a supermarket today she'd think her life's ambition had come true just looking at the panted shapes to be seen. In a day when custom dictated such practices in modesty as covering piano legs and the use of side-saddles, Mary's proclivity for wearing trousers marked her as a troublesome freak.

A couple of years ago when the postal authorities were searching for a famous female face, they put Walker's on a stamp. Although nine out of ten stamp lickers had no idea of who she was, this notoriety she would have taken as her just deserts.

Her greatest claim to fame was the fact that she was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor - the only woman ever so decorated - only to have the award cancelled, years later, by an Act of Congress.

In June, 1855, twenty-two year old Mary Edward Walker graduated from the Syracuse Medical College (one year) with a degree of Doctor of Medicine. Although medicine was not an approved calling for women of her day, she became one of the few female practitioners. Shortly after her graduation, she married a classmate named Albert Miller, and she wore a man's full dress suit at the wedding, refusing ever to use her married name. The marriage lasted 14 years, including 9 of separation, and across the official papers she wrote, "Last of the Villain," thereafter referring to her ex as "the monster."

With the outbreak of the war in 1861, Dr. Mary applied for a medical commission, but was rejected by the Surgeon General, who was reluctant to break with tradition by commissioning a woman as an officer. In early 1862 she presented herself at the Virginia headquarters of Major General Ambrose Burnside, who accepted her services on a volunteer basis - he needed plenty of help for the thousands of casualties^{that} poured in after the Battle of Fredericksburg - but no one has been able to unearth the authorization for her wearing the uniform of a U.S. Army officer, with its gold-striped trousers and greensash of a surgeon. The records show, however, that she rendered unstinting service, night and day.

The autumn of 1863 found her on the Tennessee front: on September 19 she reached Chattanooga just as the casualties of the Battle of Chickamauga were streaming into the city. Shortly after that battle, her services were recognized by Major General Geo. H. Thomas, who gave her a contract as a civilian surgeon. The medical staff of the Army of the Cumberland was reluctant to use her services because she

was such a disrupting influence, always antagonizing whomever she had to work with and sounding off about women's rights. In 1865 President Lincoln recommended the Medal of Honor for her work in the field, vaguely mentioning "other services" which, it seems were obtaining information about the enemy for General Thomas. President Johnson carried out Lincoln's wish



Under contract as an Acting Assistant Surgeon in 1864, and after spending four months as a Confederate prisoner, she was assigned as Surgeon to the Female Military Prison in Louisville, Kentucky. After a stormy tour there, from which she asked to be relieved, she was reassigned on 1865 and placed in charge of the Orphan Asylum in Clarksville, Tennessee. During this period she achieved another interesting, though macabre, distinction. While visiting Washington she managed to be the only female to witness the hanging of the four persons convicted of conspiracy in the assassination of President Lincoln.

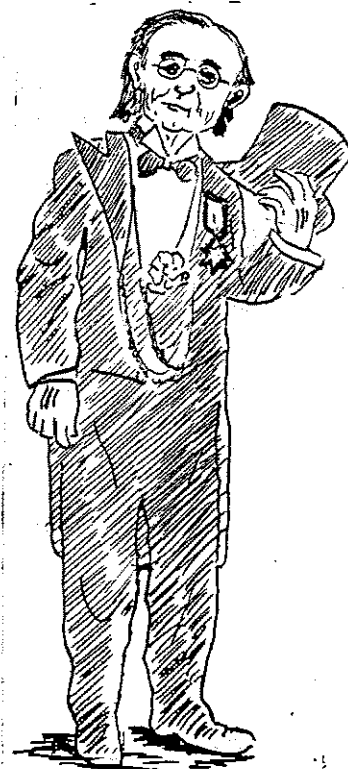
After the war Doctor Walker devoted most of her time to women's causes, notably suffrage and dress reform, and collaborated with other leading suffragettes in gathering signatures to petitions to Congress. For awhile she earned a precarious living lecturing on her war experiences. In 1866 she went to England and for one year went on a very lucrative lecture tour. Her unorthodox attire with its prominently displayed medal, the highest American military decoration, caught the fancy of the British press. Her lecture was entitled "The Experiences of a Female Physician in College, Private Practice and in the Federal Army." The novelty eventually wore off and Mary returned to the U.S., where her lectures were poorly attended.

After trying for a couple of years to obtain some kind of government job to supplement her meager pension, she was given a clerkship in the Bureau of Pensions. After little more than a year she was dismissed, with her superiors noting that she was "violent, high-tempered, abusive, aggressive and insolent."

In 1887 she started to accept engagements to appear in sideshows, showing her medal and giving a short talk on her war experiences, women's rights and the beneficial aspects of wearing pants. The New York booking agents, Kohl and Middleton, booked her at \$150 a week for their stage shows. In 1901 the sideshow performer nearly lost her pension for circulating a petition for clemency for the anarchist Leon Czolgosz, President McKinley's assassin.

And now comes the most controversial event in the life of this eccentric woman. In 1917 Congress appointed a committee called the Adverse Action Medal of Honor Board, the purpose of which was to review the merits of some 900 recipients of this highest honor. What brought this on was the revelation that 864 members of the 27th Maine regiment had received the award through the efforts of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. It seems that a week before the Battle of Gettysburg, this Maine outfit's enlistment was up, and in order to induce them to reenlist the Secretary offered to get them the medal. In Mary's case it was found that she had used the medal for financial gain. This, of course, infuriated her and she refused to give it up. In 1919, at the age of 84, she was still trying to get Congress to reinstate her medal and fell down the steps of the U.S. Capitol building and died.

In 1978 Dr. Walker's grand niece finally did get the revocation revoked. So now, women, who always did wear the pants in the family, can wear them any time, anywhere, because Mary Walker broke the ice.



OVERLAP ORDER DAY

All over the country builders and money-makers look with greedy eyes upon the National Military Parks and their environs as lush places to put up their condominiums and private developments. The Civil War Round Table Associates has fought this encroachment upon our historical heritage foot by foot, pleading with members to write their Congressmen and Senators to make these politicians aware that there is a great section of citizens who wish to have this country's battlefields and memorials preserved.

Now comes the news that condominium buidlers want to take over Johnson's Island, in Sandusky Bay. We cannot allow this to happen. Letters DO help. It is up to the members of the Round Tables to preserve these memorials. It doesn't take much time or money to sit down and write to your legislators and tell them how you feel about the matter. All it takes is the umph to DO IT.

* * * *

And while you are writing, you might mention that you believe that the Park should prohibit the use of alcohol at Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield. This is the main cause of vandalism there. All other military parks in Virginia have come to face this fact. Prohibiting it at Kennesaw would make all the difference in the world to personnel there dealing with visitors.

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The Bob Thum articles promised for this month will appear in the November issue. We are too much "down to the wire" at this writing to include many such interesting subjects.

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Notice: The Third Annual Midwest Civil War Round Table Conference will be held in Indianapolis on April 28th, 1984. It's not too early to make plans to attend. Outstanding speakers have been lined up, including "Bud" Robertson and Wiley Sword. For more information write The Charger.

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During the winter and early spring of 1864 a wave of spiritual revival swept through the armies of the South. Prayer meetings, the singing of spirituals, and baptisms were the order of the day.

Private Sam Watkins of the Army of Tennessee discovered that God works in mysterious ways. Being less than reverent, he attended one of these revival meetings. The meeting was held beneath a shaky, dead tree. A group of converts were called to kneel in a line before the improvised altar and dedicate their souls to the Lord. At that moment Providence decreed that the dying tree should also relinquish its earthly ties. Crashing to the ground it struck ten of the converts, killing them instantly.

"God has heard their prayers," Watkins concluded philosophically, "henceforth there were no marching, camp duty or battling for them."

Carter, Samuel, Siege of Atlanta, 1864.BK .

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