



The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. Box 18900, Cleveland, Ohio 44118

OCTOBER 1992

309th MEETING

VOL. 14 #2

DATE: Wednesday, October 14, 1992

PLACE: The Hermit Club

SUBJECT: McClausland's Raid & The Burning of Chambersburg

SPEAKER: Ted Alexander. Presently the Park Historian at Antietam National Battlefield, Ted was born in Tupelo, Mississippi and earned his B.A. in History at the University of Maryland and his M.A. from the same institution. An ex-Marine and author of numerous books and magazine articles pertaining to the Civil War, Ted's talk will focus on operational aspects of the McClausland raid on Chambersburg, July 29- August 7, 1864. Emphasis will be placed on events leading to the raid, incidents of the burning of Chambersburg, and the raids impact on the war along the Maryland-Pennsylvania border and in the lower Shenandoah Valley. The talk will also study how the burning of Chambersburg serves as a microcosmic example of a Civil War atrocity. Chambersburg was the only northern town burned by regular Confederate troops during the war.

TIME: Drinks 6PM Dinner 7PM

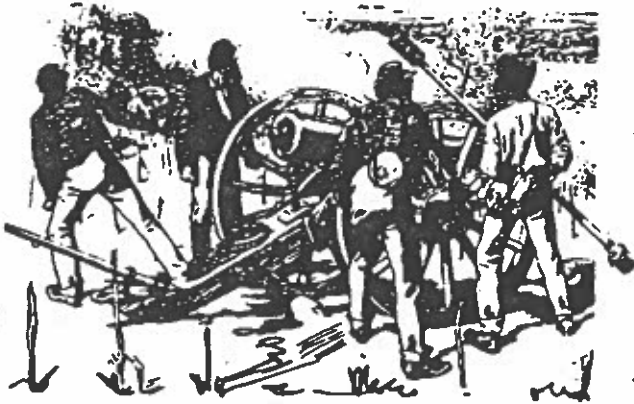
RESERVATIONS: Please call Kevin Callahan at 321-3004 or 861-5393.
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CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

1957 * 1992



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Last Month's Meet.

Speaking before 34 members and guests, Dr. Frank L. Byrne of the Kent State University history department tried to dispell some myths concerning Civil War prisons. This topic almost always provokes emotion. It is an area of vast misinterpretation and one avoided by many historians.

The biggest myth surrounding Civil War prisons concerns the charges of deliberate mistreatment of prisoners by both the North and South. As James McPherson wrote in Battle Cry of Freedom, "neither side could be proud of their treatment of prisoners." Dr. Bryne stated that both sides did use prisoners for political purposes, but this was not of a sadistic nature condoned by either governments. Americans have never had a reputation as barbarians. As James I. Robertson points out: "The key to understanding what went wrong with captured Johnny Reb and Billy Yank lies in recognizing two basic facts: Americans of the mid-19th Century had no experience in the handling of prisoners of war, and the two Governments were totally unprepared for the huge numbers of captured soldiers each held by the wars end." It was not sadism but mismanagement and, in the South, limited resources that resulted in 56,000 prisoner deaths.



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MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT

★ John McCausland ★ (1836 - 1927)



Brigadier General John McCausland, photographed during the last year of the war. (*Civil War Times Illustrated* Collection, Harrisburg, Pa.)

John McCausland was born on September 13, 1836, in St. Louis, Missouri. The son of an Irish immigrant, McCausland received an education in the schools of Point Pleasant in western Virginia where his parents had relocated. Entering the Virginia Military Institute, he was graduated first in the class of 1857. McCausland then spent a year at the University of Virginia before returning to VMI and accepting a position of assistant professor of mathematics.

When Virginia seceded in April 1861, McCausland organized the Rockbridge Artillery from recruits in the Lexington area and was elected its commander. He declined the command, however, when Virginia Governor John Letcher offered him a commission of lieutenant colonel and assigned him to recruiting duties in the Kanawha Valley of western Virginia. McCausland returned to his native section of the state, established headquarters at Charleston, and worked tirelessly to enlist volunteers in the Union-sympathizing region. By summer's end he had organized the 36th Virginia and was commissioned its colonel.

The new regiment joined John B. Floyd's Confederate command, participating in the operations in the region during the fall. McCausland's troops' initial combat occurred on September 10 at the Battle of Carnifax Ferry. Confederate authorities subsequently transferred the regiment to the Western theater, assigned to Southern forces in the Bowling Green, Kentucky, area. In February 1862 McCausland commanded a brigade in Floyd's division at Fort Donelson. A fiery, determined man, McCausland was one of the few officers who led his men out of the doomed works before the Federals sealed the escape routes.

McCausland's troops remained in Tennessee for a few months but did not participate in the Battle of

Shiloh in April. After that engagement he returned to Virginia where his regiment was assigned to the command of William Loring in western Virginia. From the spring of 1862 until the spring of 1864 McCausland served in this region under Loring, Brigadier General John Echols, and Major General Samuel Jones. When Brigadier General Albert Jenkins was killed in the battle at Cloyd's Mountain on May 9, 1864, McCausland assumed command of Jenkins' scattered cavalry units. Nine days later on May 24, 1864, he was promoted to brigadier general, to rank from May 18.

McCausland's initial cavalry service followed the next month when he ably opposed the advance of Major General David Hunter's Union army on Lynchburg. But Hunter was stopped in the outskirts of the railroad center by troops from the Army of Northern Virginia under Lieutenant General Jubal Early. For his role in the defense, the grateful citizens of Lynchburg gave McCausland an address of congratulations, a cavalry officer's uniform, sword, spurs, and a horse.

With Hunter swept from the Shenandoah Valley, Early marched northward in a raid into Maryland and against Washington, D.C. Early ordered McCausland to exact a two hundred thousand dollar ransom from the citizens of Hagerstown, Maryland, but McCausland erred in his demand and secured only twenty thousand and some clothing. On July 9 at the Battle of Monocacy McCausland crossed the river, securing a passage for Confederate infantry to advance on the Union lines. Early stated that McCausland's movement "was brilliantly executed." McCausland's thousand-man brigade then led the march on the Federal capital, but the Confederates could not overcome the miles of earthworks and cannon.

After the Confederate withdrawal into Virginia, Early ordered McCausland and Brigadier General Bradley Johnson to raid into Pennsylvania and demand one hundred thousand dollars in gold or five hundred thousand dollars in cash from the community of Chambersburg. If the citizens refused, Early directed that the town should be burned in retaliation for Hunter's devastation in the Shenandoah Valley.

McCausland and Johnson's cavalymen reached Chambersburg on the morning of July 30. McCausland, nicknamed "Tiger John," was intensely devoted to the Confederate cause, and he demanded the tribute. When town officials refused to comply, his men began looting and burning. The flames engulfed eleven squares of Chambersburg, destroying over

four hundred buildings, including 274 private dwellings. Damages amounted to over one and a half million dollars.

During the raiders' return march to Virginia, Union pursuers under William W. Averell surprised the Confederates on the morning of August 7 at Moorefield, West Virginia, and routed the Southerners. It was an embarrassing conclusion to a controversial operation. Johnson blamed McCausland for the defeat, but Confederate authorities took no formal action against either general.

McCausland then participated in the 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign that resulted in a string of defeats for Early's army. By the spring of 1865 McCausland's brigade was attached to the cavalry division of Major General Thomas Rosser at Petersburg. On April 1, 1865, McCausland fought under Rosser at Five Forks. Before Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox on the 9th, McCausland led his veterans through the Federal lines and escaped, riding to Lynchburg where the cavalymen restored civil order.

An unreconstructed Rebel who refused to accept Confederate defeat, McCausland fled the country, journeying for two years in Europe and Mexico. Returning to West Virginia, he bought six thousand acres of land, called his farm "McCausland," and resided there for six decades. The controversial but capable Southern officer died on January 22, 1927. Only one other Confederate general outlived him. McCausland was buried at Henderson, West Virginia.

Jeffry D. Wert

Cooling, Benjamin Franklin, *Jubal Early's Raid on Washington 1864* (Hamden, Conn., 1989).

Lowry, Terry, *The Battle of Scary Creek: Military Operations in the Kanawha Valley, April, July 1861*, (Charleston, 1982).

Lowry, Terry, *September Blood: The Battle of Carnifex Ferry*, (Charleston, 1985).

TAKEN FROM *The Confederate General* Vol. IV



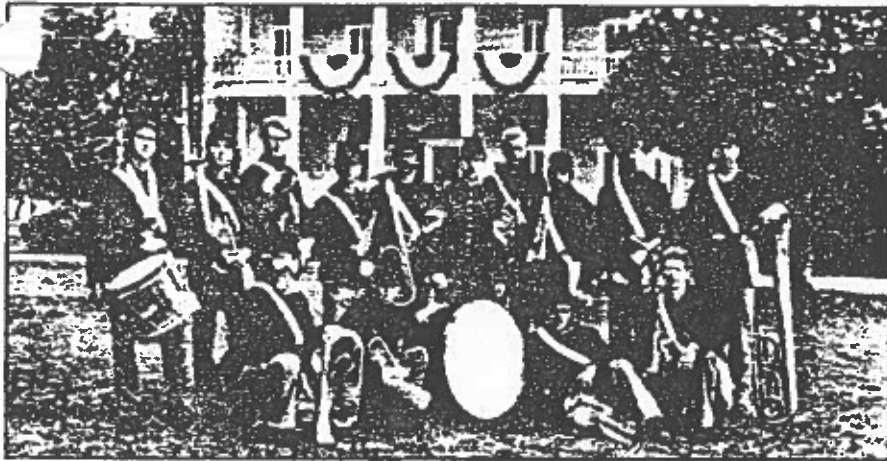
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PRESERVATION REPORT



The original **Americus Brass Band** was founded in 1860 in Americus, Georgia and was one of two confederate bands to remain intact throughout the entire Civil War. This staged presentation is historically accurate, including authentic costumes of the North and South, popular vocal and dance numbers of the period, and Civil War regimental brass band music performed on original instruments. Patriotic songs like "Yankee Doodle," "Dixie," and "Battle Cry of Freedom," as well as popular songs like "Tenting Tonight," "Goober Peas," and "Pop Goes the Weasel" became universally known to troops on both sides. Through them, we relive the excitement, the glory, the loneliness, and the sadness of that awful time in our country's history. The **Americus Brass Band** is the foremost professional Civil War replica band in the United States, having appeared in the television series *The North and South* and providing sound tracks for the Oscar-winning movie *Glory*.

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A Copy Of Our Report Is On File With The Federal Election Commission.

None Of Your Contributions Are Used For Salaries, Fees, Or Office Overhead.

Gov. William D. Schaefer has established a Maryland Civil Heritage Commission.

Please write him (c/o State Capitol, Annapolis MD 21401) and ask him to send you information about the Commission.

Then, send that information to YOUR Governor and ask that a Civil War Heritage Commission be established in YOUR state to work with the American Battlefield Protection Program and the National Park Service in identifying Civil War sites in your state and coming up with strategies to help preserve and enhance your state's Civil War heritage.

Also write your U.S. Senators (c/o U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510) and ask them to urge your governor to establish this state commission to work with the Federal program.

PLEASE WRITE TODAY!!! IF YOU DON'T, WHO WILL???

(Write, even if you don't send a contribution!)

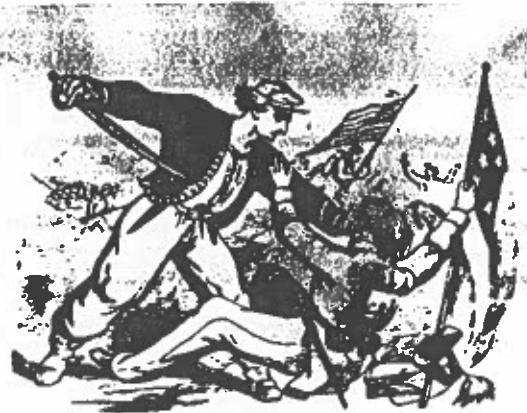
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We Who Study Must Also Strive To Save!



This group is performing at Lorain County Community College in October. For dates and ticket prices call 774-3300. Our thanks to George V. for bringing this to our attention.

THE CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELD FOUNDATION
1225 Eye St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 326-8420

CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION ALERT

To all Civil War Round Tables:

We need you to rally your troops in support of the Civil War Battlefield Commemorative Coin Act of 1992.

The act, now before Congress, would authorize the minting and sale of three commemorative coins marking a century of federal preservation of Civil War battlefields.

Proceeds, as much as \$30 million, would go to the Civil War Battlefield Foundation, a private, non-profit organization initiated in 1991 by the Secretary of the Interior to raise funds for battlefield acquisition. The Foundation's mission is to raise \$200 million by the year 2000 to preserve acreage at more than 50 battlefields across the nation.

We face a tough fight for passage this session -- a short session in a campaign year. But we can prevail if we demonstrate to Congress once again the breadth and power of the Civil War preservation constituency.

PLEASE WRITE:

- 1) your representatives in Congress, asking them to co-sponsor **H.R. 5126**, sponsored by Congressmen Vento (D-MN) and Wylie (R-OH), at the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 20515.
- 2) your two senators, asking them to co-sponsor **S. 2682**, sponsored by Senators Bumpers (D-AR) and Warner (R-VA), at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510.

Here are some points you should try to make:

- Over 85 percent of our most important Civil War landscapes are now unprotected. Many could be lost within five years.
- We cannot afford another Manassas. In times of budget austerity the private sector must assume more responsibility for preserving these living memorials.
- This legislation will enable the private, non-profit Civil War Battlefield Foundation to raise as much as \$30 million in private funding for Civil War battlefield preservation.

Thank you for your help in this critical test of our cause. The Foundation intends to keep in touch with Round Tables nationwide to foster a united front for battlefield preservation.



REPORT ON FIELD TRIP

by Bob Baucher

PETERSBURG Sept. 24-26, 1992

Fourteen brave Ohio troopers gathered at the Best Western in Petersburg, Virginia for two full days of fieldwork and merriment. The roster included: Norton London, General Joe Tirpak, John Howard, Bob Battisti and his uncle George Stillwagon, Major Bob Baucher, Fraizer Webb, Dick McCrea, Dave Chollett, Bob Bayless, Brian Kowell, Dr. Robert Eiben, John Moore, and Kevin Casey. Thursday night the Company took rations at King's Bar B.Q.

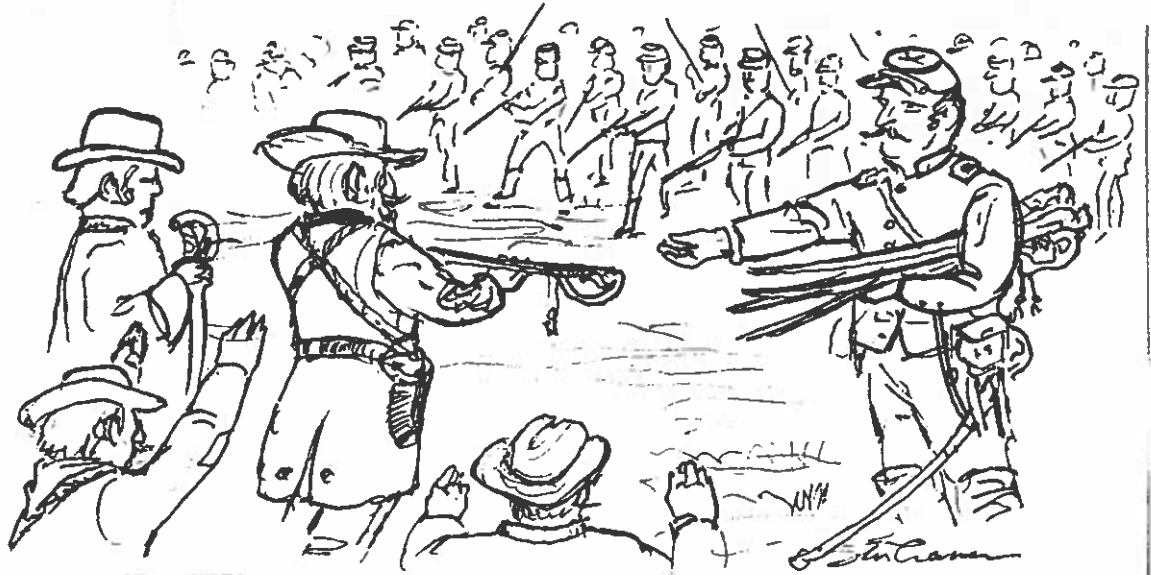
Friday morning special guide Chris Calkins, Chief Historian at Petersburg National Military Park, took us to the Battlefield visitors center followed by an extensive tour of the battlefield which included Battery No. 5, site of the "Dictator", Fort Stedman, reconstructed rifle pits, trench and camp, and the site of the Crater. Following lunch we visited City Point - Grant's headquarters and supply depot. Returning to Petersburg we got a glimpse of war-time civilian life during the seige at the Seige Museum, Center Hill Mansion, and Blandford Church and Cemetary. Evening sucor was taken at the French Betsy.

While Friday had been overcast and cold, Saturday dawned sunny and warm as the group was treated to the hospitality of the Calkin's household. Greeted by Chris' charming wife Sarah, the period home was decorated in pre-1865 motiff. It was like stepping back into time. Each trooper received a minie ball and shrapnel piece as a souvenir from Chris' vast relic collection. Next stop was the Appomattox Ironworks where we learned about 19th Century iron casting and manufacturing. The troopers then marched to Five Forks and Little Saylor's Creek to study those battles. Our final dinner was at the Home Place Restaurant - home site of Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott.

On a personal note: one of our "Generals" was busted in rank to Captain for conduct unbecoming an officer or a gentleman. Corporal Fraizer Webb resigned his Kentucky colonelacy and joined the Buckeye troopers - a galvanized yankee. Intelligence officer Battisti could not perform all his duties due to dead batteries. Trooper Chollett resembled more a ragged rebel in his shot-torn shorts. Outstanding field rations were provided by Commissary Chief Natalie Bayless. Corporal Kevin Casey filed his report Saturday night concerning Private McCrea, our lone casualty during the Applejack Raid. Private McCrea apparently sustained a greivous shrapnel wound and unable to attend dinner, remained behind to apply copious quantities of "anesthetic". There was a breakdown in communications with our leader. Something to do with lost orders delaying the troops march. They were later found wrapped around two cigars. Morale specialist first class Baucher kept the troopers in high spirits. On a positive note, Sergeant London has been railroaded to lead next years fieldtrip to Chattanooga and Chickamauga - here after to be known as "Chatt-Chic".

A great time was had by all. "What else can I say!"

SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



Lieutenant Colonel Rufus R. Dawes of Ohio, ordered his regiment, the 6th Wisconsin, to charge the rebels of Brigadier General Joseph R. Davis' Mississippi Brigade in the railroad cut at Gettysburg, July 1, 1863. It was a bloody charge but his men reached the edge of the cut to find themselves face-to-face with hundreds of Confederates. As the two lines confronted each other, it was a question of who should surrender. Dawes got in the first word telling Major John Blair of the 2nd Mississippi, "I command this regiment. Surrender or I will fire!" Blair, without saying a word, handed Dawes his sword as the Mississippians threw down their muskets. Other rebel officers came up and also handed Dawes their swords, as the young Ohioan tried to gather the awkward bundle under his arm. That must have been some sight of Dawes with an armful of captured swords.

from In the Bloody Railroad Cut at Gettysburg
by Herdegen & Beaudot pp 196-197
Illustrated by Stu Cramer



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OLLAPODRIDA

At graduation in 1829, Robert E. Lee stood second among 45 graduates and finished his full term at West Point without receiving a single demerit. Who was the lone cadet graduating ahead of Lee? (For the answer see below.)

Politics began to overshadow military matters in the Fall of 1864. The Confederacy pinned their hopes on the Democratic party nominee, McClellan, to defeat Lincoln and then sue for peace. Many Federal troops would be voting for the first time and many of these troops still had fond feelings towards McClellan. A few Confederates did their part to encourage a Democratic victory. William Hyndman, a New York cavalryman, took note of a "curious circumstance": as he explained it, "Two of our pickets were captured...and on being asked who they would vote for, replying that they were McClellan men, they were promptly released by the rebel scoundrels, and allowed to poll their votes at liberty."

— The Last Citadel by Noah Andre Trudeau pp 220

The tension was palpable at Union headquarters at City Point, Virginia, on November 8, 1864. Everyone was anxious about the Presidential election. General Grant did his best to heighten that anxiety. Throughout the evening, he insisted on reading aloud the election returns as they were received from Washington; each time, he solemnly announced that McClellan was leading. Many officers went to bed convinced that "Little Mac" had won. Only after midnight did Grant confess that he had been pulling their legs all along and that, in fact, Lincoln was the clean winner.

— The Last Citadel by Noah Andre Trudeau pp 252

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION. This was submitted by Bob Baucher to your editor without either of us knowing the answer. I have to thank Ms Carole Griffin of the Brunswick Public Library while Bob is indebted to the historian at West Point.

The lone cadet graduating ahead of Lee was Charles Mason of New York. He resigned from the Army in 1831 and became a lawyer in New York. Later moving to Iowa and practicing there, he became active in railroading and edited a local newspaper. He became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Iowa and died in February 1882, never having returned to the military after resigning.

— Robert E. Lee: The West Pointers by Charles Dudley Rhodes

Gentlemen,

We had an excellent turnout for our September meeting, and heard a great presentation by Dr. Frank Byrne on the Civil War prison system.

The annual field trip is forthcoming, a trip organized by members, Joe Tirpak and Bob Baucher. Everyone is planning to meet in Petersburg, Virginia on Thursday, September 26th. We will be able to give a full report on the trip at the next meeting.

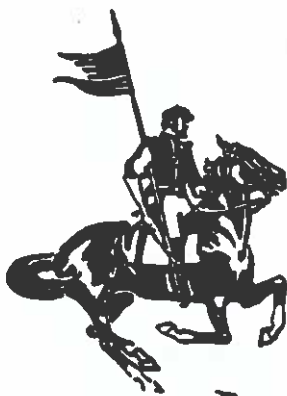
The October meeting will be upstairs in the Main Room of the Hermit Club, and will feature Mr. Ted Alexander, a noted historian and member of The Park Service at The Antietam Battlefield, who will speak on McClausand's raid and the burning of Chambersburg.

This should be an excellent talk and I hope it will be well attended.

Sincerely,



Kevin R. Callahan



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