

# The Charger

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O.Box 444, Vermilion, Ohio 44089

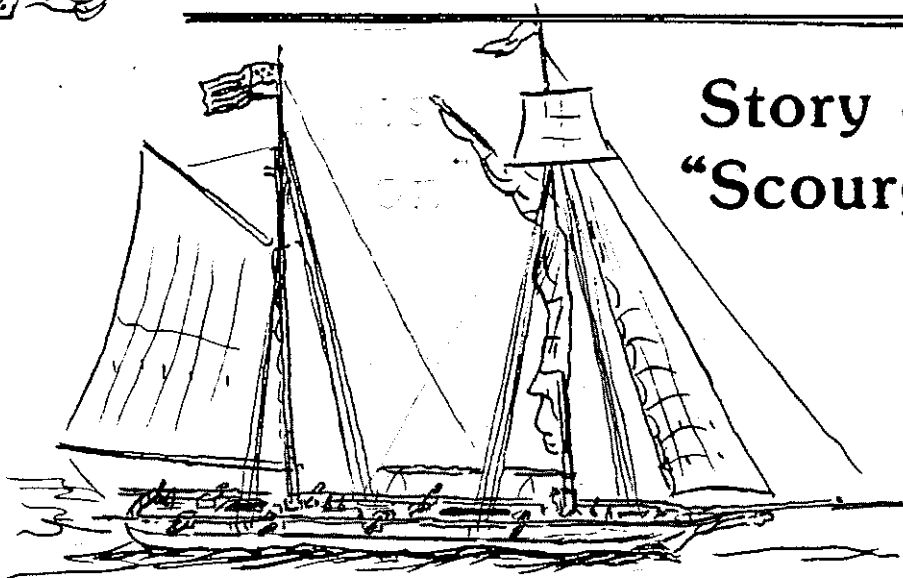
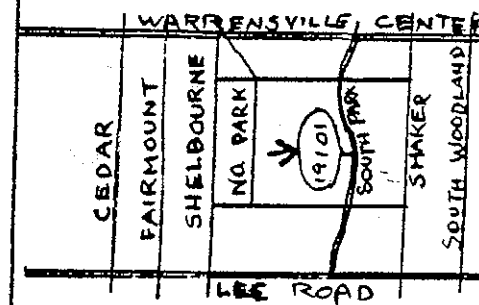
SEPTEMBER 1983

226th Meeting

VOLUME 6 NO. 8

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th  
 PLACE: RESIDENCE OF MEMBER KEN CALLAHAN  
 19101 South Park Blvd., Shaker  
 Heights, Ohio.  
 SPEAKER: BILL McCULLOCH, of Hamilton, Ont.  
 SUBJECT: DISCOVERY OF TWO U.S. GUNBOATS  
 SUNK IN LAKE ONTARIO DURING THE  
 WAR OF 1812.  
 TIME: Preliminaries: 6:00 P.M.  
 Dinner: 7:00 P.M.  
 PRICE: \$17.00 which includes drinks

### HOW TO GET TO THE SEPTEMBER MEETING



## Story of U. S. Gunboats "Scourge" and "Hamilton"

(WAR OF  
1812)

Our speaker, William McCulloch, a fourth generation native of Hamilton, Ontario, spent 18 years in the Royal Canadian Navy. He served in frigates and destroyers as well as three years in the light cruiser, "HMCS QUEBEC" as officer-in-charge of the six guns Transmitting Station and Executive Assistant to the Captain. A Lieutenant Commander, he was awarded the Canadian Forces Decoration in 1957 and the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1978.

(cont'd on page 2)

In the early hours of August 8, 1813, the two American armed schooners were overwhelmed by sudden violent squall as they lay becalmed about a quarter of a mile apart and within sight a British squadron in western Lake Ontario. Both ships perished almost instantly. Reeling under the lash of the squall, they swamped and went to the bottom carrying all but eight members from each vessel.

One of the survivors was Ned Myers, and every detail of the terrible night remained locked in his memory for 30 years. In 1843 he told the story to a former shipmate, James Fenimore Coope who included a graphic description of the event in his classic Ned Myers; Or A Life Before the Mast. (cont'd on page 2)

## GUNBOATS

2



President Neil Evans  
Vice Pres. Brian Kowell  
Secretary Tim Beatty  
Treasurer George Vourljianis  
Sgt.-at-Arms Jack Allison

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Editor and Illustrator  
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

The two sunken ships lay largely forgotten over the next 158 years, with no memorial but Ned Myers' account and terse references in the U.S. Naval archives.

Then in the summer of 1971 the Royal Ontario Museum at Toronto commissioned a research project to look for these vessels in western Lake Ontario. Dr. Daniel A. Nelson, an experienced underwater archaeologist was named to direct the search.

J. Fenimore Cooper's book provided a wealth of detail on the ships and gave some idea of their whereabouts. With the help of the Canada Centre for Inland Waters and others, Dr. Nelson searched the logs of many U.S. and British ships, and after years finally found in the logbook of H.M.S. "Wolf," the flagship of the British forces that had been skirmishing with the American squadron before the "Hamilton" & "Scourge" went down - the exact location.

Using sophisticated electronic equipment and the CCIW's side-scan sonar, the lost ships were located.

Because of the depth of the lake and its cold waters, the vessels were found to be perfectly preserved, and hundreds of pictures were taken of them. Many appeared in an article by Dr. Nelson in the March 1983 National Geographic Magazine.

The slides that will be used by Bill McCulloch in telling this dramatic story at the September meeting are a part of this unique collection of historically significant photographs.

## OUR SPEAKER

Bill McCulloch was elected to the Hamilton City Council in 1957, and since 1974 has served as Alderman for Ward Two and is a full time City and Regional Councillor, as well as serving on a number of Boards and Committees relating to city development, awards and police work; Member Co. Military Historians. He has a keen interest in local and military history: Past Chairman of the Hamilton Historical Board; Military Museum; and Chairman of the "Hamilton" "Scourge" Foundation to recover the 2 1812 vessels from the bottom of Lake Ontario.



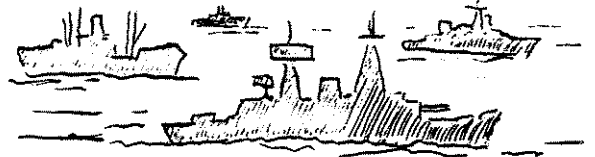
# Fred Gill's Book Review



War in the Falklands by the Sunday Times of London Insight Team, Harper and Row, New York, 1982.

Here is the story of another of those "splendid little wars." \* It ranks right up there with the Spanish-American War, the War of Jenkin's Ear and our curious little brouhaha with the Barbary States. The seventy-four day Falklands Islands War had the same sort of justification morally and politically, and it had the same bloody, violent and costly features of any war despite its quick resolution.

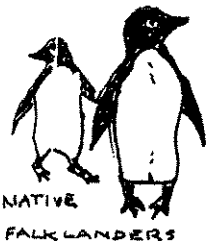
The feckless Argentines opened things with a well-planned invasion that swiftly subdued what little opposition the British could muster. Somewhat to the Argentine's surprise Britain put together an irresistible response, commandeering ocean liners, including the Queen Elizabeth 2, and quietly sending ashore small commando units to scout the situation and setting up Ascension Island as a way station on the 8,000 mile route from England for larger forces. In short order and in spite of high command bumbling, the strange islands soon swarmed with skilled British battalions who made quick work of the ill-equipped Argentine forces. There were a few surprises, however, not the least being the instantaneous destruction of a Royal Navy warship by a French-made Exocet Missile fired from forty miles away by an Argentine flyer.



The story is superbly told by a team of the Sunday Times of London reporters and is remarkable for its immediacy, being assembled, written and published less than six months from the imbroglio's end. The military story is crisply told and is buttressed by the diplomatic dancing that preceded the dream-obsessed Argentine generals' invasion. The diplomatic efforts of Alexander Haig and the Secretary General of the United Nations were doomed by the intransigence of the Argentines and the bumbling cussedness of the British.

Claims to the territory by both sides are at best dubious. The Argentine claim goes back to their insistence that they are the heirs to Spain's claim of earlier centuries. Britain has admitted more than once their shaky position. In 1936 a Foreign Office official wrote: "The difficulty of the position is that our seizure of the Falkland Islands in 1833 was so arbitrary a procedure it is not easy to explain our possession without showing ourselves up as international bandits."

And what sort of place is it that all the fighting was for? It is a geological chance throw of 4,700 square miles (about the size of Connecticut) of ugly islands about 300 miles east of the Straits of Magellan. It is peopled by fewer than 2,000 souls of English, Welsh and Scottish derivation; there are about 650,000 sheep; temperatures range from 50°F in January to 40°F in July; the land is barren and assailed by storms all year round; there are twenty-two miles of roads, ten of them paved, and half the land is owned by a less than benign royal charter company.



In 1780, when things were hot between England and Spain, Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote about the Falkland Islands: "We have maintained

\*From a letter to Col. Roosevelt by John Hay after the fall of Santiago, Cuba.

(Continued on page )

the honor of the Crown and the superiority of our influence. Beyond that what have we acquired? What, but a bleak and gloomy solitude, an island thrown aside from human use, barren, stormy in winter; which not even the southern savages have dignified with habitation; where a garrison must be kept in a state that contemplates with envy the exiles of Siberia; of which the expense will be perpetual and the use only occasional..."

No wonder the islanders are dreary, and it was only in 1860 they slipped out of their apathy to voice their desire to stay British when the Argentines renewed their interest in the place.

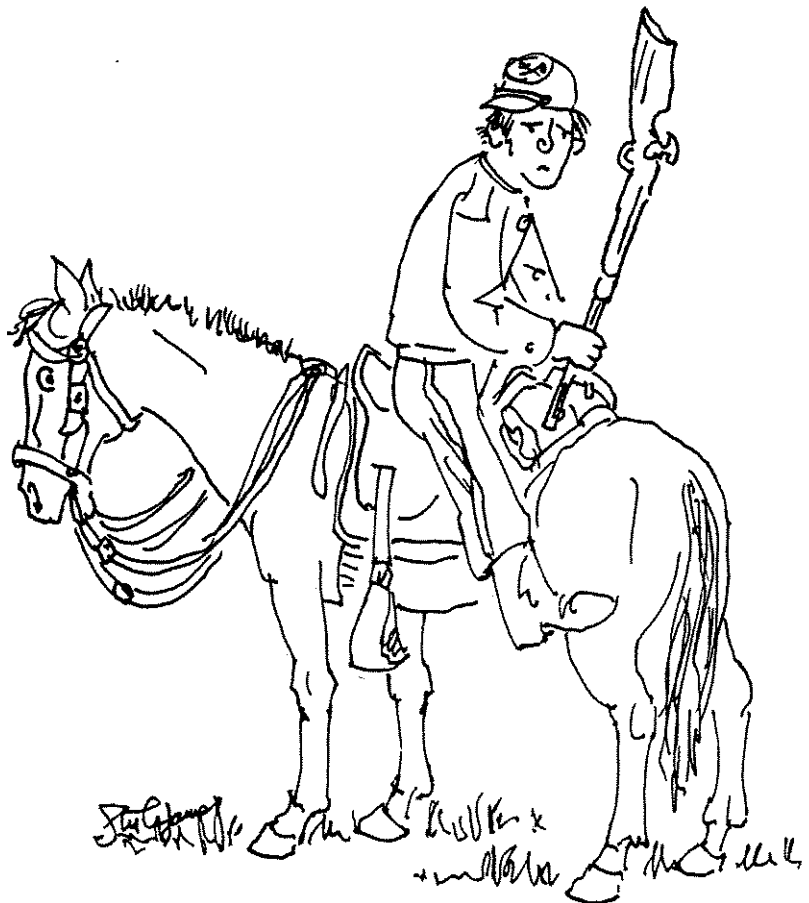
So what are the results of this odd little conflict? The be-medalled Argentine rulers departed in what passes in that floundering country as ignominy to be replaced by similar types. In Britain, as Dr. Johnson said, the honor of the Crown has been maintained, Mrs. Thatcher won more seats in Parliament than she expected, and, as the Associated Press reported in May, 66% of British soldiers' and sailors' wives became pregnant within weeks of their husbands' triumphant return. This is not to mention the 4,000 men and the Royal Navy ships required for garrison duty at an annual cost of \$674,000.00, and the agony of the families of both sides.

It is not an exhilarating picture but worth knowing about.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Civil War Smiles by STU GRAMER

"Me? Nervous?"



# A Chess Game

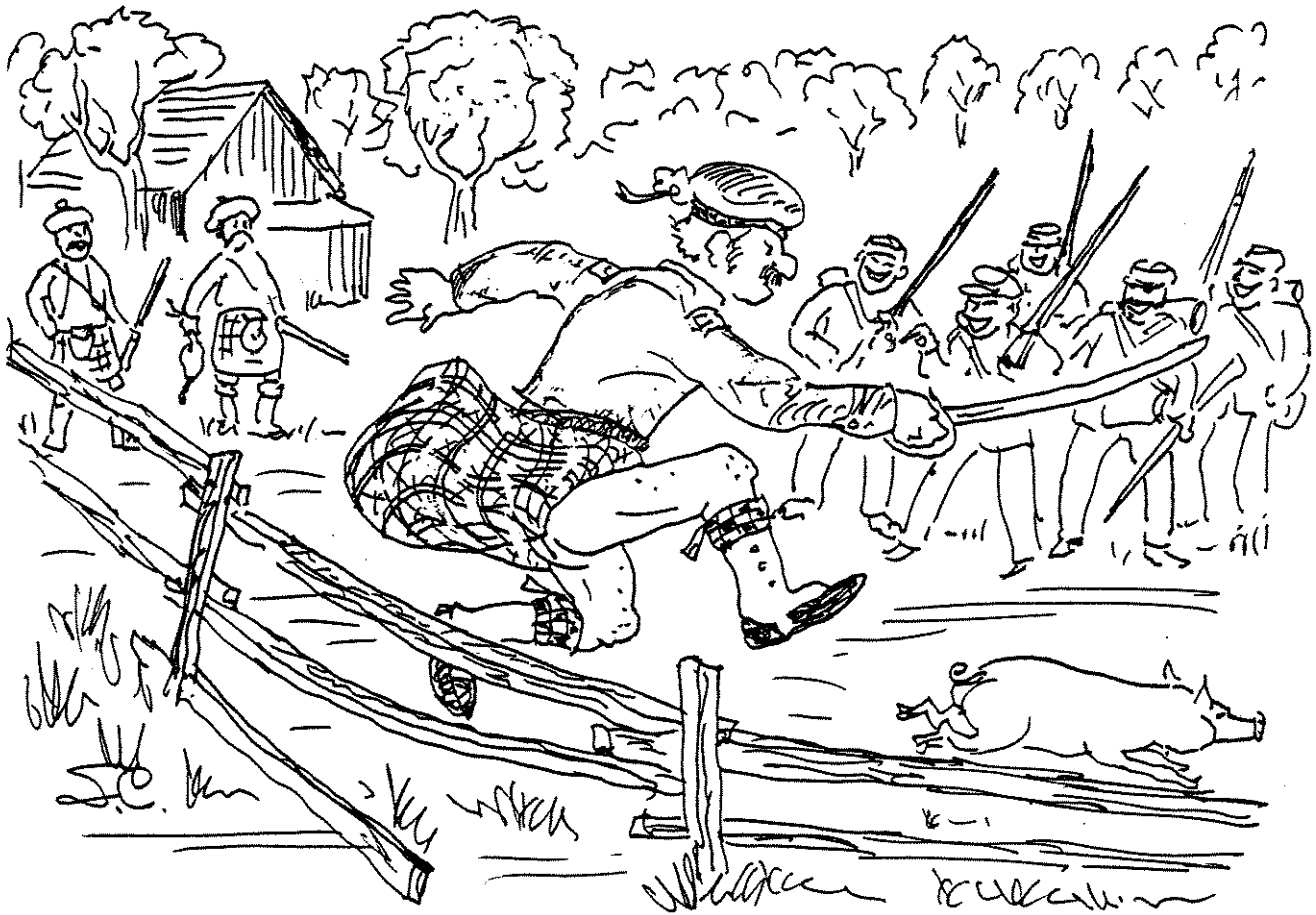
Recently The Franklin Mint ran a full page ad in the Cleveland Plain Dealer among others, for a pewter chess set, under the auspices of the National Historical Society. It read "...a dramatic tribute to the heroes of both North and South - and a work all the more intriguing because the pieces include richly detailed three-dimensional portrait sculptures of the great generals of the Union and Confederacy, captured for the ages in pewter, solid brass and enamels." The 32 pieces will eventually cost the subscriber \$576.00 over a 32 month period.

Brian Kowell, who sent in the clipping, accompanied it by suggesting that it would be fun to think of alternate personalities to portray each playing piece and gave some amusing examples.... "I see General Beauregard is depicted as a bishop where General Leonidas Polk would be a more logical choice. Or even General Pendleton, who was an Episcopal minister. Of course Union General Pope would hesitate to lower himself on the ecclesiastic ladder to become a mere bishop. Vollandigham would make a good knight since he was involved with the 'Knights of the Golden Circle.' Stonewall Jackson would either be a rook (because of its stone walls) or a knight because of his fondness for flanking movements. McClellan would make a good pawn because they are the slowest moving pieces on the board.

"I am surprised that they didn't use Abraham Lincoln or Jefferson Davis as pieces (Grant and Lee were designated as the kings). Davis, of course could be the Southern Queen for the untrue rumor that he dressed in his wife's clothes to avoid capture. I can understand why they decided not to use Ewell, Hood, or Sickles for the fact that all three were missing legs and as pieces would be continually falling over.

It occurs to your editors that Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Davis should be the queens, but we opt for Belle Boyd and Mother Bickerdyke since they got around so much faster.....certainly Ambrose Burnside should be a rook - he could only go in one direction at a time, and General Porter should also be a rook since he had experience at being rooked. We think Forrest should have been a knight instead of the designated Sheridan; old Bedford charged enough and was a night rider in the Invisible Empire of the KKK. Bragg, of course, being a pawn of Davis, is a natural for that piece, and speaking being a slow mover, Albert Pike with all his 300 plus pounds qualifies there. What can YOU make out of Spiegle, Howard, Longstreet, Early, Butte, Fremont, Banks, Rosecrans, Kirby Smith, Van Dorn, Marmaduke and Gideon Pillow? Go to it.

## SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



During the long, sweltering march toward Bull Run in mid-July of 1861, there were repeated incidents of the undisciplined troops casually breaking ranks for drinks of water, or to wash caked-grimed faces, or to pick berries, or forage for chickens - all in defiance of the best efforts of their officers to maintain order. Even officers yielded to the yen for plunder. On one occasion during the march, a kilted officer of the 79th New York Highlanders went running after a pig. During the chase he leaped a rail fence, presenting what a comrade called, "Such an exhibition of his anatomy as to call forth a roar of laughter." He never wore the kilt again.

Davis, Wm. The Civil War: First Blood, Time-Life Books, Alexandria, Virginia, 1983. Thanks to Brian Kowell.

DUEZ IZ DEW - DO IT

# VISIT HILDENE

Home of Robert Todd Lincoln, in the scenic Village of Manchester, Vermont.

At hand is a recent letter from member Bob Thum, of Dorset, Vermont, with a few of his fascinating articles written for the Bennington Banner. Bob as you may know, is the C.C.W.R.T.'s one man airforce and has flown his plane to many a rendezvous with our field trippers (He plans on joining us this year.)

Being a lifelong history buff and writer about the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, it wasn't surprising that Bob should have been one of the kingpins in making the estate of the late Robert Lincoln a notable historic visitors' center. The restored mansion, beautiful gardens, exhibits, etc. are open from May through the foliage season, and Bob frequently conducts tours....he extends a welcome to any of our club to visit and will conduct special tours if you let him know ahead of time.

In the next issue of the Charger we will run an interesting account of the brouhaha he stirred up when he asserted that the Battle of Bennington was by no means the turning point of the Revolutionary War, as claimed by the Benningtonians. He also presents a very provocative talk about "that scoundrel Skene, who almost singlehandedly won the war for George Washington."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 1983 FIELD TRIP

Make your reservation for the 27th Annual Field Trip by writing or calling Brian Kowell, 20566 Williamsburg Court, Middleburg Heights, 44130...216-243-7404.

Articles and maps will be provided so you may familiarize yourself with the places to be visited, to wit: Kelley's Ford, Brandy Station, Cedar Mountain, Clarke's Mountain, Mine Run, Bristoe Station and Jackson's march around Pope at Second Manassas.

Not too late to get in on this, but ACT SOON!!

### STRAGGLERS REPORT

On page 7 of the May issue of "The Charger" is a list of new members.

As of January 83 I too am a new member-although my name has been omitted. Perhaps this oversight can be corrected in a future issue.

Here comes the Provost-  
got to go now.

Thanks

George Skene



Sorry about that,  
George .

# AN OLLAPOPRIDA OF CHESS CHARACTER-DESIGNATES



On June 25, 1868, President Andrew Johnson signed a bill he had instigated providing that "eight hours shall constitute a day's work for all laborers, workmen, and mechanics who may be employed by or on behalf of the Government of the United States." Workweeks had always called for 60 to 72 hours during six days. In 1860 the Machinists and Blacksmiths Union endorsed the novel idea that a day should be divided into three equal parts; for working, leisure and sleep. Johnson, who got his political start as a representative of labor, was always for the working man.

\* \* \* \*

As early as the fourteenth century a game was played in England, France and possibly other European countries, in which a ball was swatted with a club. It came to be named "Rounders" because it was necessary to run around a set of safety zones or "bases" in order to score. The game was popular in America, and in 1830 or thereabouts, Colonel Abner Doubleday, of Cooperstown, New York, made a number of modifications in rounders and called the new sport "baseball." To add zest to the competition, Doubleday enlarged the stick or "stump" commonly used in rounders, which made it possible for the players to knock balls much greater distances. One Alex Cartwright, a charter member of the famous Knickerbocker Club of New York, was responsible for establishing a diamond-shaped pattern of bases and for fixing the distance between bases at precisely 90 feet.



\* \* \* \*

In 1477 King Edward IV issued an edict forbidding his subjects to play cricket because it had become so popular that it interfered with the practise of archery.

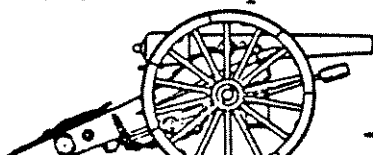
\* \* \* \*

During the Wilderness Campaign a new refinement in communications was introduced, much to the satisfaction of General Grant. A flexible insulated wire that could be uncoiled from muleback made possible the establishment of contact between diverse units of the army "as fast as a mule can walk." Before that, the uninsulated wire required poles to raise the lines to prevent short circuiting. A mule bearing the new type of wire could be led straight forward and draped over fences, bushes and low branches...the wire, that is, not the mule.



\* \* \* \*

From the San Francisco CWRT Dispatch we read an interesting bit about the "three shots" of old Edmund Ruffin, the "Southern firebrand." The first was his alleged firing of the first shot at Ft. Sumter (erroneously credited to him;) the second, at First Bull Run, when a Confederate artillery crew let him pull the lanyard that caused the panic in the retreating Union ranks when the shell overturned a carriage in the middle of the Cub Run bridge. The third shot for which Ruffin is remembered was the one he put in his head when he learned the South had surrendered.



## Preserve Your Battlefields!

