

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

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SEPTEMBER 1984

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 6

235th Meeting

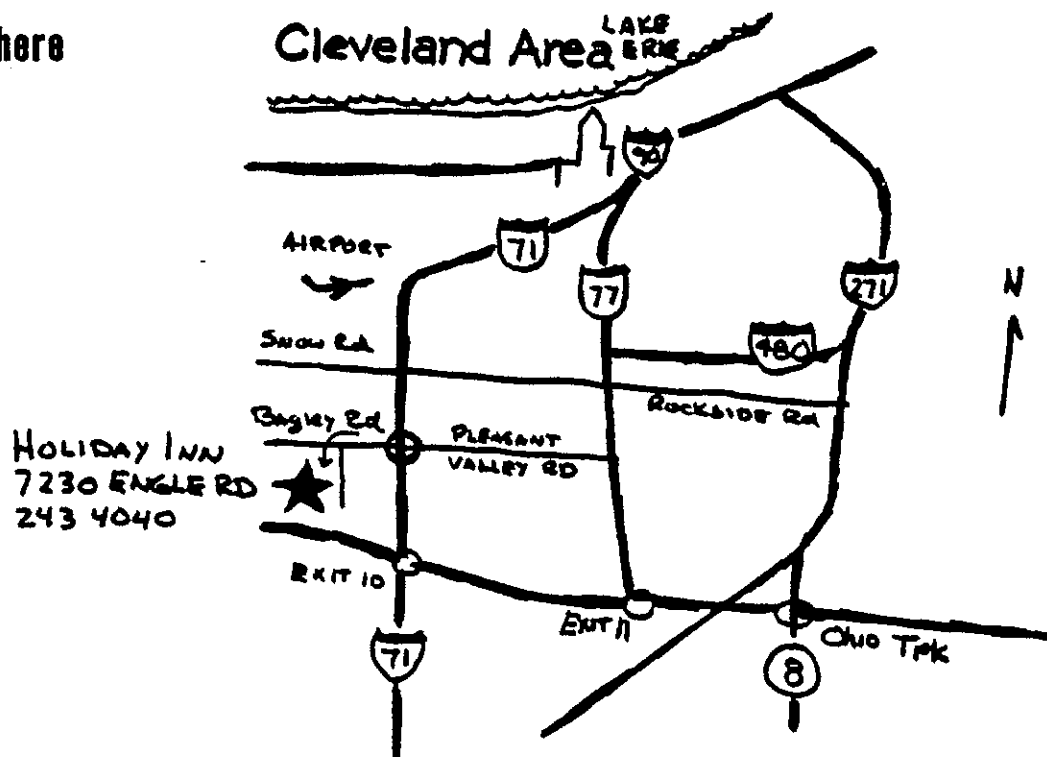
DATE: SEPTEMBER 11
PLACE: HOLIDAY INN, MIDDLEBURG HEIGHTS
SPEAKER: ED BEARSS
SUBJECT: SURPRISE
TIME: Cash Bar 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. followed by Dinner

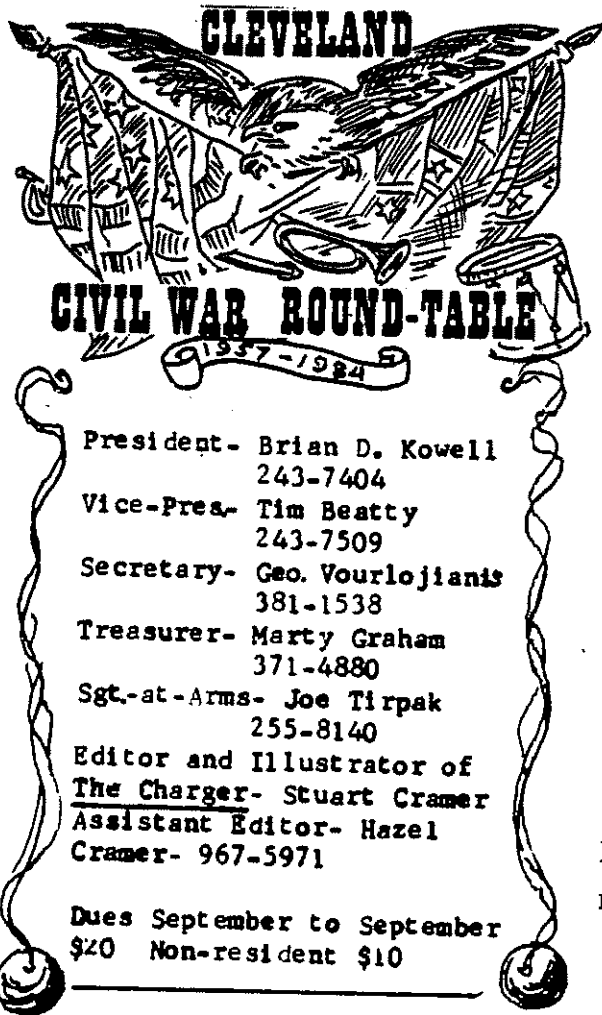
EVER POPULAR ED BEARSS

Our Annual Combined Meeting with the Western Reserve Civil War Round Table will once again feature a talk by Ed Bearss. That alone should inspire a good attendance, because Ed always comes through with an interesting, educational presentation in his own inimitable style.

Chief Historian of the National Park Service, author of many books and learned leader on many of our field trips, Edwin Bearss is an old friend whom we all hold in great esteem. We are fortunate indeed to have him kick off the new season at this meeting.

How To Get There





President- Brian D. Kowell
243-7404
Vice-Pres- Tim Beatty
243-7509
Secretary- Geo. Vourlojianis
381-1538
Treasurer- Marty Graham
371-4880
Sgt.-at-Arms- Joe Tirpak
255-8140
Editor and Illustrator of
The Charger- Stuart Cramer
Assistant Editor- Hazel
Cramer- 967-5971

Dues September to September
\$20 Non-resident \$10

If you run fast you can still catch the Bunch heading for Chancellorsville on our 1984 Field Trip, September 27, 28, 29 and 30th. Get your \$25 deposit to our treasurer just as soon as you possibly can:

MARTY GRAHAM
1957 Revere Road
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118
Call him at 371-0260

Here's a chance to study the battle under the expert guidance of Bob Krick, Chief Historian of the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania Military Park. Those sites will also be visited. If you have never gone on one of the field trips, you owe it to yourself to do so...if you have gone before you know what a good time you'll have, to say nothing of the addition to your CW knowledge.



New Policy for Non-Reservationists

It has become increasingly ~~more~~ imperative that members make reservations before coming to our meetings. Many are lax in this, and as a result the club's officers are embarrassed, and the places where we have our dinners get more upset having to improvise. We are not the only club plagued by this lack of consideration. It got so bad with the St. Louis Round Table that their Bushwhacker newsletter published a series of proposed punishments that would be imposed upon its remiss messmates - first offenders might be required to wear the wooden coat, and second offenders could earn the buck and gag.

We will publish further common camp punishments if these do not effect a cure.

So....to make your reservation for the September meeting, call:

BRIAN KOWELL
216-243-7404

HE MUST HAVE A HEAD-COUNT 48
HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING DATE-
SEPTEMBER 11th!!!

Menu: Boneless Breast of Chicken Cordon Bleu,
which includes soup, salad and sherbet. \$10.



FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

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HERE WE GO AGAIN

Smith, Gene. Lee and Grant, New York: McGraw Hill, 1984.



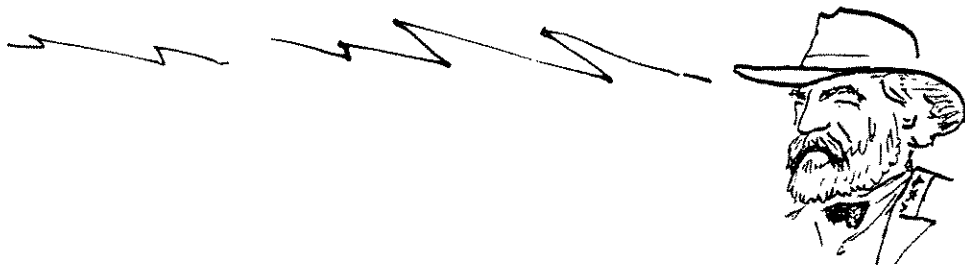
To many of us Civil Warriors seeing a title like this evokes a conditioned reflex and, like Pavlov's dogs, we drool until we get a hand on it. I don't know if Pavlov's dogs felt any satisfaction after he threw them their bones, but I do know my conditioned salivating for this book brought more disappointment than satisfaction.

The author's idea is brilliant. He presents parallel biographies of the two great commanders of the Civil War - Lee, the stainless cavalier of a fading age, and Grant, the awkward embodiment of a burgeoning age. He alternates contrasting chapters of their forbears, their early years, military experience, family life and their post bellum activities, all balanced neatly in the middle on a hundred page chapter on their great battles from the Wilderness to Appomattox.

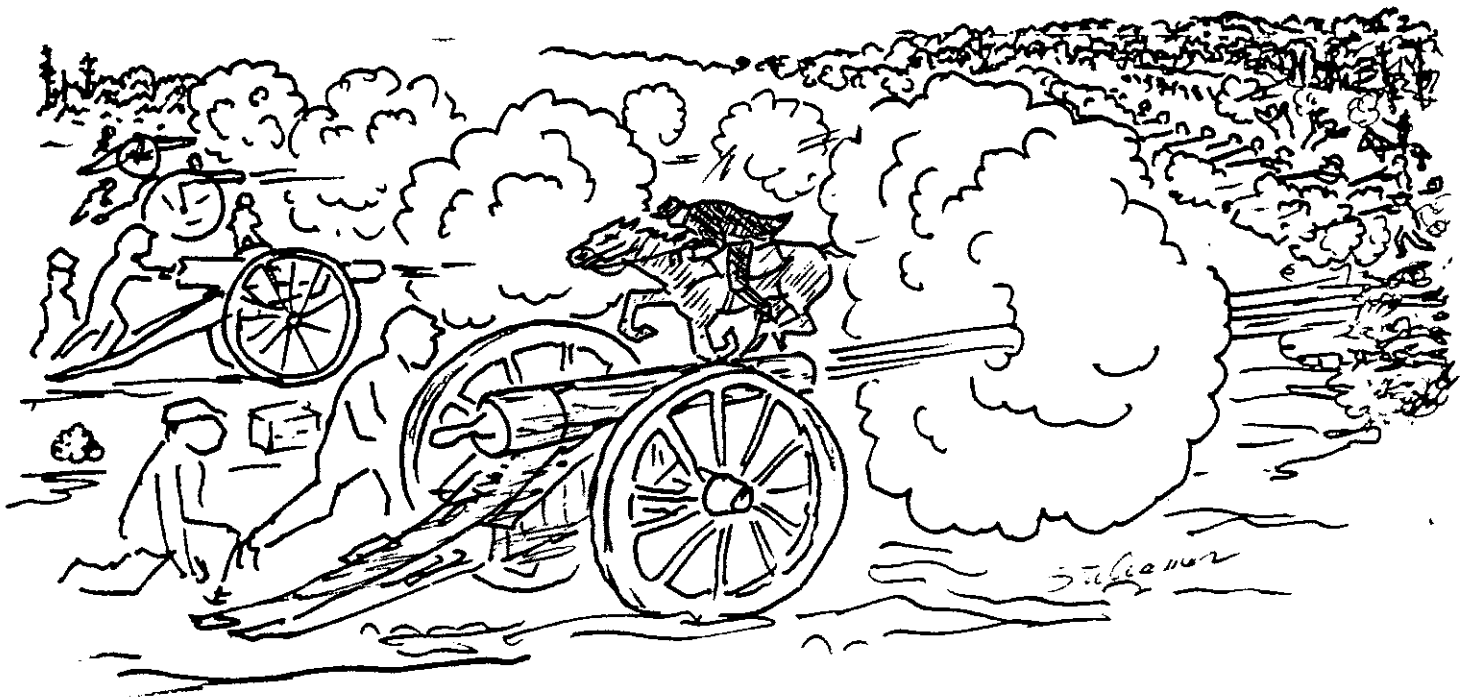
All this is well enough, but Smith's brilliant idea is told with admirable conciseness in a superbly written six page introductory essay which makes the rest of the book almost superfluous. Unless you have read little about the Civil War, the contrapuntal chapters are mere filler. The essence of Smith's shining idea is in the essay. The battle chapter simply illustrates the qualities that make any commander great, neatly illustrated by these two very great commanders and their ability to read each others' minds.

There are no great new facts here about Lee and Grant or about the Civil War. Sure, there are some wayward facts in the book. I did not know that Lee went to Montgomery Blair before he called on Scott to tender his resignation. I had never read how Lee once had to be forcibly restrained from leading a Confederate charge. Nor did I know until now that Grant in St. Louis before the war began had to force Longstreet to take repayment of a small loan. If I had stumbled on these trifles before, I had forgotten them, interesting as they may be. These picayune bits and their inclusion here does not make the book a significant addition to your library. What does make the book significant is Smith's acute observation of these two extraordinary men facing each other in battle. Copy the essay by hand and save \$17.95.

After reading the whole book I was not completely satisfied. Maybe Pavlov's dogs weren't either.



SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



Some of us sometimes wish that we could go back in time and participate in a Civil War battle. Of course, we usually place ourselves in a seemingly "safe" occupation such as a staff officer. Next time this happens, put yourself in Major Clifford Thomson's place.

On May 2, 1863, Stonewall Jackson's 2nd Corps charged out of the Wilderness and routed the Eleventh Corps of Hooker's Army of the Potomac during the Battle of Chancellorsville. Jackson's onslaught seemed irresistible and about to sweep the Yankees from the field.

General Alfred Pleasanton began to mass twenty-two Federal cannon (without any infantry support) at a clearing called Hazel Grove, one mile west of Hooker's headquarters. Pleasanton rode from gun to gun directing the gunners to use double shotted cannister and to aim low.

It was dusk when troops swarmed out of the woods 200 yards in front of the poised guns. They called out not to shoot, they were friends and they carried a Union flag. General Pleasanton, unsure whose troops the advancing men were, ordered Major Clifford Thomson, his aide-de-camp, to "Ride out there and see who those people are."

According to Major Thomson: "For myself I was not at all curious about 'those people,' being perfectly willing to wait till they introduced themselves. Riding out between our guns I galloped to within thirty yards of them; all along the line they cried out to me 'Come on, we're friends!'" It was quite dark and I couldn't make out the uniforms, but I could see three of our flags and these caused me to hesitate; I came to a halt, peering into the darkness to make sure, when a bullet whistled by me, and then came the 'Rebel yell!'

Major Thomson wheeled his horse and lying low on its neck, he dashed toward his own line as the Confederates let loose a volley. Simultaneously all 22 Federal guns opened. The roar was continuous

Continued on page 6

OLD "GIMLET EYE" BUTLER

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CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

He confiscated every board foot of lumber and buildings for miles around to construct wooden paths, streets and runways.

At Brest he earned the D.S.M. and the French Order of Black Star. Following the war he became the Commanding General at Quantico...he was now a Major General, and his highest ambition was to become the Marine Corps Commander.

In 1927-29 he was sent back to China where he proved of valuable service to the United States through his diplomacy. Always one to speak out, regardless of whose toes he stepped on, when he returned to this country he was frequently called upon for speeches, and never one to hide his candle under a bush, was often in the news.

Those were in the days of prohibition, and Philadelphia, like all cities in the U.S., had a growing problem with organized crime and corrupt law enforcement. With prohibition, Philadelphia's saloons had grown in number from about 1400 to 8,000; so when the new mayor, one W. Freeland Kendrick, got the idea of borrowing the famous General Butler to come in and clean things up, the Marine Corps was glad to give the latter a leave of absence - the powers that be didn't quite know what to do with the critical maverick.

Before the General had been on the job two weeks, the city had been "cleaned up" as few cities had ever been cleaned up before. High police officials had been fired or reduced to the ranks, three-quarters of the most notorious joints had been closed, and numerous Philadelphia crooks were either in jail or on their way to new spheres of activity in other cities. It soon became apparent that Mayor Kendrick's anguish over the morals of his city were being palliated to a degree that the other politicians could not tolerate. Bodily threats and bribes never deterred the new Director of Safety, who had been promised a free hand, which he'd taken literally. Now there was no stopping him.

He undertook bringing decency, smartness and efficiency to the police force, modelled, naturally, on the U.S. Marine Corps. He appealed to the righteousness of the soul, by startling epithets, threats of hell-fire, gymnastic speechmaking and by sheer exhortation of the public. He was likened to Billy Sunday, (the Billy Graham of that day), but added pomp and circumstances to his methods. He dressed in a fancy uniform, and made his cops spruce up. This writer recalls a humorous part of the lecture he heard, of Butler's description of the first line-up he held. The policemen were all overweight, and were buttoned up with their guns on the inside, where they couldn't possibly get at them even if they had wanted to.



It lasted only a year. It was too much for the politicians, who, after all, represented a public that had to sluice its larynx with John Barley-corn's healing emollients regardless of law and order. So the General went back to the marines and continued to make speeches that finally got him into trouble with the BIG politicians.

In 1931 Benito Mussolini, the self-styled latter-day Roman Emperor, ran over a little Italian kid and killed him, without bothering to stop. This riled Old Gimlet Eye, who couldn't abide the blustering dictator anyway; he made some pretty cutting remarks that prompted a formal protest by the Italian government, result-

Continued on page 6



Colonel Clapsaddle here is from OLD Virginia

Bibliography for the Butler Story:

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Charles L. Lewis (1950)

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(1935)

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(1944)

Marine Corps Gazette,
(4/'49: 11/'50)

N.Y. Times, (6/22/'40)

N.Y. Herald Tribune,
(6/22-23/'40)

Old Gimlet Eye, Lowell
Thomas (1937)

Scenes I'd Like to Have Seen

and the execution terrific. The rebel attack was stopped in its tracks.

Guiding his horse between the flashing muzzles of the cannons, Thomson made it into his lines and rode to Pleasanton to report: "General, those people over there are rebels!"

From Battles and Leaders, pg.180. Thanks to Brian Kowell


Butler Story Concluded

ing in much embarrassment to the U.S.State and Navy Departments. Butler was actually arrested and put up for court martial. Such people as F.D.R., then Governor of New York, offered to testify in his behalf, and eventually the charges were dropped on Butler's own terms. He resigned from the Corps after being passed up as the Senior Major General for the Marine Corps Commandant in 1935. It was then he took to the lecture platform professionally and published a book entitled War Is a Racket.

At one time in the latter part of his career, the General had charge of a Civil War ceremony, and he had Stonewall Jackson's amputated arm buried with honors and a headstone - also with a plaque telling who was responsible.

General Smedley Darlington Butler died in May, 1940, at the U.S.Naval Hospital in Philadelphia. He was 58 years old and is buried in West Chester. A U.S.Navy destroyer was named for Butler, and in 1942 the U.S.S. Butler was converted to a high speed mine sweeper.

Thanks to Fred Gill for helping research this article.



National Congress of Civil War Round Tables

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10TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLES, OCTOBER 4-6, 1984
DOWNTOWN HOLIDAY INN, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

REGISTRATION FEE: \$170 non-members; \$150 members (and family members)
(\$10 discount if paid by September 10, 1984)

(Individual Ticket Prices: Sessions/\$10; Breakfasts/\$10; Luncheon/\$15;
Banquets/\$20; Saturday Tour [incl. lunch]/\$50; Sunday tour [incl. lunch]/\$35)

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE ASSOCIATES

PO Box 7388, Little Rock, AR 72271/(501) 225-3996

Jerry L. Russell, National Chairman/Founded 1968

Your Dues Are Due NOW

As you all know by now, our dues cover us from September to September. Strange, sometimes everyone remembers to send them in and we start off the season in great shape - at other times, well, some drag their feet (or check writin' fingers.) Let's make this one of the good years! Send checks to Marty Graham, 1957 Revere Rd., Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118 *

New Member

We welcome a new member this September: Matthew T. Slattery of Parma Heights. He is a long-time history buff and is the author of Felipe Angeles and the Mexican Revolution, the biography of a military genius who was Pancho Villa's right hand man.

G O O D ! ! !



The rations on which the Confederate Army subsisted were from the first scant and often of poor quality. They would have been bad enough even if properly prepared, but were usually rendered worse by poor cooking.

One of General Wheeler's veterans tells how the cooking was managed in his mess. "Our rule was," he said, "that each member should cook for a week, provided nobody growled about the cooking; in which event the growler must take the cook's place.

"As may be imagined, this rule was not very conducive to good cooking, and some of the revolting results we uncomplainingly swallowed would have destroyed the digestion of any animal on earth except for a rebel cavalryman.

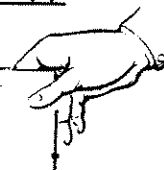
"Once one of these cooks, finding that he was about to serve out his week in spite of his efforts to the contrary (consisting of sweetening the coffee with salt, salting the soup with sugar, etc.) grew desperate, and proceeded to boil the beef with a whole string of red peppers. Of course this made the mixture hot enough to blister the nose even to smell it. John -- got the first mouthful, and it fairly took his breath away. As soon as he could speak, he blurted out, 'Great Caesar, boys, this meat is hottern hell - but (suddenly remembering the penalty for complaining) but it's good though, but GOOD!'"

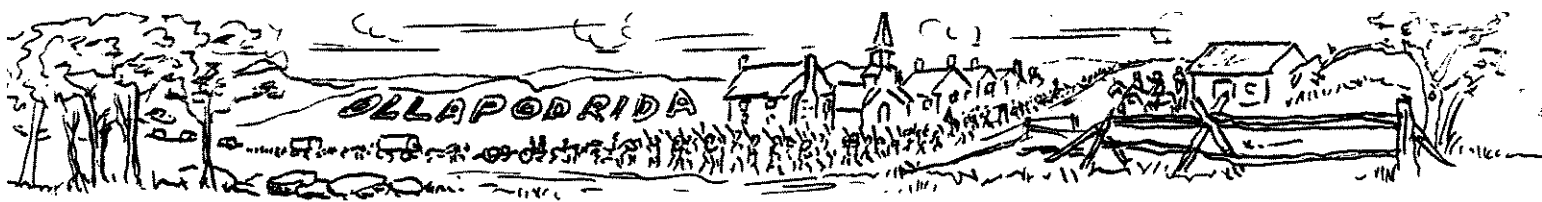
- From Campaigns of Wheeler and His Cavalry, 1899

Members \$20
Non-resident \$10

Please Make Reservation →

CALL 216-243-7464
By SEPT. 9th





A classic Civil War joke: A negro slave was asked why he didn't fight for either the north or the south. He replied, "Ah's seed two dawgs fightin' ovah a bone, but ah nevah seed de bone git up an' fight."

* * * *

Zachary Taylor's wife smoked a corncob pipe in the White House and President Zachary disowned his daughter Sarah for marrying one Jefferson Davis. (This was Davis' first wife, long before he became associated with an organization called the Confederate States of America.)

* * * *

It has long been contended that Lincoln's ghost stalks the White House. Among those claiming same were ~~was~~ Theodore Roosevelt, Grace Coolidge, Eisenhower, and a number of visiting dignitaries. They probably really did hear strange noises - the White House has been infested with rats ever since it was built (the furry four-legged kind.) That undoubtedly was the true manifestus of the phenomenon.

* * * *

It was November 25, 1864, that the three famous brothers, Edwin Booth, John Wilkes Booth and Junius Brutus Booth, Jr., appeared together in "Julius Caesar" at the Winter Garden Theatre in New York City. The theatre was crowded with 2,000 people, and the three were acclaimed after every scene.

When the curtain rose on the second act, Edwin was on stage. There was a scent of smoke, and soon the theatre began to fill with it. The Lafarge Hotel, which adjoined the theatre, was afire. Edwin walked to the footlights, and, in a commanding voice, quieted the audience, and after a bit, the play continued.

This was the night when Confederate secret service agents tried to burn the City of New York. Spies had engaged rooms in various hotels, leaving combustibles and then departing. Only through the special intervention of Providence was a wholesale holocaust averted. In the majority of instances, agents failed in their haste, and the fires burned themselves out incipiently with little damage.

The late Harlowe R. Hoyt

* * * *

"At the great pivotal Battle of Gettysburg, the 75th Pennsylvania stands unexcelled in the record of its personal bravery and the severity of its losses. This all-German regiment, although thrice ordered to withdraw, was the last to retire from the field, and was, in fact, still performing yeoman service on the battle line while some of the distinctively American troops were actively engaged in beating a precipitate retreat; and through their indiscretion and lack of stability, though they could readily have maintained their position, caused our regiment exceptional loss: and yet, strange to say, there are those among our English speaking companions who are wont to speak in terms of derision and oftentimes find themselves inclined to stigmatize the "Dutch" as lacking in the staying qualities of good soldiers." (Prolonged applause.)

From an address by Lieutenant T. Hans Steiger at the Dedication of The Monument of the 75th Regiment Infantry November 14, 1897 .

