



*This is closer to what we are aiming for - and  
still strive to improve each one.*

# The Charger

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

APRIL, 1979

188th Meeting

VOLUME 23 NO. 5

### *Ladies' Night*

**Tues., April 3rd**

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE FROM REGULAR MEETING

### **Hermit Club Main Dining Room**

TIME: Cocktails at 7:00 P.M.      Dinner at 8:00 P.M.

### **On Stage for Your Entertainment**

Master of Ceremonies: Bernie Drews

#### *Act One*

LITTLE-KNOWN CIVIL WAR SONGS by HENRY CLAY WORK

Presented by Martha Schrock and Ethel Taylor,  
accompanied by Margaret Denton

This talented group has performed for the Cecilian and  
Fortnightly Music Clubs of which they are members.

#### *Act Two*

NOW YOU SEE IT

Presented by Stuart Cramer. Magic and Mind Reading,  
"Laughter Born of Bewilderment."

### **Reservations a Must- Please Call ASAP !**

Phone Bill Bates at 579-6876 or  
Chuck Spiegle at 464-5335

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#### MARCH MEETING

Nineteen members attended the March meeting. Our speaker was Reverend Dwight Brown, minister of the First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, Shaker Heights. Rev. Brown was dressed and made up as the famous preacher and orator, Theodore Parker, a prominent abolitionist and philosopher. One of Parker's most famous sermons was read, expressing his views and the philosophy of the time just preceding the Civil War



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Our apologies to Treasurer John Harkness for not mentioning last month that after the meeting, he set up screen and projector and showed the excellent color slides he took on the last field trip. They were great!

# A Visit to Quiet Shiloh

Nine years ago, on a cool, clear December 1st and 2nd, my wife and I spent two delightful days exploring the battlefield of Shiloh. We were the only visitors in the entire park, and the first day, after driving all over it in our rented car, the accommodating Park officers exhibited an excellent slide-film of the battle just for us.

We stayed at a motel in Corinth, and the answer to a problem that had always vexed me came when we drove back the next day to trace the course of the conflict on foot. How could 40,000 mostly inexperienced soldiers, who took three days to make the 20-mile march from Corinth possibly have surprised the Union Army that Sunday morning, the 6th of April, 1862!?

We had prepared for our visit by reading everything we could find about the battle and remembered the stories of the hundreds of rabbits and the many deer that fled through the Union camps, scared up by the approaching gray hosts. We recalled that General Grant had assured Gen. Buell and his superior, Gen. Halleck, that there would be no fight at Pittsburgh Landing; the message that Gen. Sherman sent to Grant the night before stating there was no attack imminent... in fact when Sherman was informed of a little pitched battle between pickets, he had discounted it.

We recalled that the noisy horde of Confederates approaching had disobeyed orders and shot off their guns just to hear the bang - to the extent that the night before, General Beauregard, 2nd in command, had given his opinion that there was no possible chance of a surprise, and that the attack should be called off. But at this midnight council of war Gen. A.S. Johnson had said, "Tomorrow we attack. I would attack if they were a million." And, "Gentlemen, tomorrow we will water our horses in the Tennessee."

The few roads between Corinth and Shiloh are twisting and winding, with hills and valleys on all sides, obviously making the acoustics erratic. This then, combined with the complacency of the Federal command and the success of the Confederate leaders in getting their vast army up and into position the night before the attack, sleeping on their arms, poised two miles from the Union's unprotected camps, ready for the onslaught at 4:30 a.m. the next day, answered my question.

We started at Fraley Field, where the screaming rebels first burst forth from the woods, stood where Sherman's tent was pitched, within sight of Shiloh church; we walked the Sunken Road, much today as it was then; looked out at the massed Confederate artillery from inside the Hornet's Nest, where Gen. Prentiss made such an important stand and delayed the sweep of the attack. The Bloody Pool is still there, where one can picture the wounded of both sides dragging themselves to its edge to slake their thirst with the gruesome beverage. Then there is the Peach Orchard, with only one small cabin left standing, pockmarked with minieball hits; the mass grave of 700 Unknown Confederate dead; and the oak tree on a knoll under which Albert Sidney Johnson was mortally shot. (Hazel astutely asked, "Why was he astride his horse - so vulnerable, in such an open spot?")

One can stand along the ridge where Grant's line ended at the close of the first day, where all the batteries that could be mustered were placed, along with naval guns hauled up from ships on the river to try to stem the tide of gray soldiery that had swept them back.

Looking down the other way, from the crest above Pittsburgh Landing, one can see the bluff under which thousands of demoralized bluecoats who had fled in terror huddled through that fateful night, oblivious to the sneering barbs hurled by Buell's Army of the Ohio as they arrived from across the river... and on the other side of the ravine around Dill's Creek one can look down on the Tennessee River, where the two Union

*Lost somewhere:*

# The Cleveland Civil War Round Table

*Founded Nov. 19, 1957*

President: Bill Bates  
Vice Pres.: Chuck Spiegle  
Secretary: Tom Geshke  
Treasurer: John Harkness

Executive Committee: 1979  
Paul Schilte  
Robert Fricke  
1980  
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This story by member Bob Thum  
appeared in the Bennington (Vt.)  
Banner on December 27th, 1978.

## A tragic day in Manchester

### DORSET.

WHEN ONE TURNS at Mark Skinner Library and proceeds south down Route 7 through Manchester Village, one is passing through an historic place. The monument of Ethan Allan was not built until 1905, and where it now stands was the village green. The court house, built in 1831, was there and the Equinox Hotel, built in bits and pieces, was architecturally about as it looks today.

There was great excitement on this village green in the summer of 1861. The Union disaster of Bull Run had just occurred, and additional Union regiments were being called up from the northern states to quell the insurrection of the south. Vermont was responding to the call by raising 5000 men in

those summer months to form the famed 1st Vermont Brigade. The Northshire of Bennington County quickly recruited a company of 100 men to form Company E of the 5th Regiment of Vermont Volunteers. They were organized in Manchester in August of 1861 and spent most of a month in town. They were fed in Vanderlip's (now the northern wing of the ancient Equinox House), and those that did not go home at night were lodged in the court house. Over half of the company were from Manchester, Arlington and Dorset. Thirty three came from Manchester.

They took the name of Equinox Guards, drilled on the village green and in inclement weather and evenings in Adams Hall in Manchester Center, now the Battenkill Locker. They

were entertained by the Reverend and Mrs. Anderson of the Congregational Church. (The old brick church of Civil War days was replaced in 1871 by the present frame structure.)

Mrs. Anderson had taught many of the young men in Sunday School. They were mostly unmarried and averaged 25 years of age.

When it was time for the company to journey to St. Albans to be mustered into federal service in September 1861 they formed in front of the Equinox House and marched to Manchester Depot. Their bright bayonets gleamed in the sunlight, and they boarded the train amid a wild waving of hands and handkerchiefs. The cheers, blessings and prayers of the whole community went with the train that pulled out of Manchester that day.

It was said by the local orator, "May they return ere long, unharmed and covered with glory, to lay down the weapons of their warfare, and cultivate the arts of Peace once more, among the Green Mountains and valleys of Vermont."

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ALAS, THESE words of hope could hardly have been farther from reality. June 29, 1862 was a terrible day in the history of Manchester. To Arlington, Dorset and small hamlets of Wallingford, Winhall, Landgrove, Pawlet and Rupert, it was equally tragic. July 5, 1862 the townspeople learned the stunning news that the youths they had seen march off so bravely less than a year before had almost literally been wiped out.

A letter from Levi C. Orvis Jr. brought the terrible news. He wrote to his sister, "I have got dreadful news to communicate. I presume it has not reached Manchester yet. In the last fight before Richmond all of Company E, 5th Vermont Volunteers were killed, or taken prisoner, with the exception of seven." A message came from Lieutenant Burnham on July 6th, "I am in command of all that is left of Company E present fit for duty — seven men!"

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## Help!

The Shenandoah Valley Civil War Round Table asks our help. The town of Grottoes, Va. plans to build a sewerage disposal plant north of the village of Port Republic, approved by the Rockingham County board of supervisors to encourage future industrial developmt.

The proposed construction lies well within the area from which Stonewall Jackson directed the Battle of Port Republic, June 9, 1862. It was from this area that Generals Ewell and Taylor planned the near-disastrous but successful flanking movement that resulted in a Confederate victory. Jackson's classic Valley campaign ended here. This CWRT's members conduct tours regularly and free to anyone requesting same.

You can help preserve this historic spot (approved as a Virginia State Historic District) by writing the following expressing your concern and indignation:

Mr. Fenton Roudabush  
Environmental Protection Agency, 6th & Walnut Sts. Phila.Pa. 19160  
Greg Coffman  
Valley Regional Office, State Water Control Board, 116 No. Main Street, Bridgewater, Virginia 22812.  
Please don't delay.

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gunboats, The "U.S.S. Lexington" and "U.S.S. Tyler" lobbed their noisy shells into the Confederate lines every fifteen minutes all through the night.

Yes, we were able to relive the battle those two fascinating days and stood in reverence before the many memorials and statues, and even climbed some of the thirty-odd Indian mounds found on the battlefield. The Corinth and Shiloh cemeteries are awesome in their deep solitude, isolated as they are from civilization. S.C.

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## Destination Shiloh for 1979 Field Trip

At the last Board Meeting Shiloh was selected as the battlefield to be visited on our 1979 field trip this early fall. Details are being worked out by an enthusiastic committee headed by President Bill Bates. As soon as these details are crystallized you will be informed in these pages.

For those who might like to refresh their memories about this first great battle in the western theatre, just for starters here are some references dug up in my library:

Shiloh: Bloody Shiloh by Wiley Sword ... Shiloh by Shelby Foote ...  
Shiloh: In Hell Before Night by James L. McDonough ... Meet General Grant by W. E. Woodward, Chapter XVIII pp 245-255 ... Red Badge of Courage by Crane... Army of Tennessee by Stanley F. Horn, Chapter VIII, pp 122-143... Tennessee's War by S.F. Horn, Chapter V, pp 80-98 The Civil War by Shelby Foote, Vol. I, pp 321-351... The First With the Most by Robert Selph Henry, Chapter VI, pp 72-82... That Devil Forrest by John Allan Wyeth, Chapter IV, pp 58-68... Battles and Leaders Vol. I, pp 465-486 (An account by U.S. Grant) and pp. 487-536, quite a different story by Don Carlos Buell.

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## To Cramer From Bayless

Your version of Forrest's famous confrontation with Bragg as given in the hyped up dialect in the last Charger brings to mind other famous sayings of the incomparable General.

The following two have been widely attributed to Forrest, but their authenticity has never been established:

"War means fightin and fightin means killin--"

" I git thar fustus with the mostus and leave the lastus with the leastus."

However, Forrest's best biographer, the famous Dr. Wyeth, attests the following which matches the ass-chewing Bragg got, but is more succinct. I take the liberty of heading it:

### OL' BEDFORD AND THE MULES

An order went out from General Hood's quartermaster reducing the number of mules in the wagons and ordering all surplus mules to be turned over to the quartermaster of transportation. General Forrest ignored the order. A day later a young officer visited Forrest and wanted to know why the mules had not been sent. For awhile the air was blue. Stripped of all its profanity, Forrest's reply was, "Go back to your quarters and don't come back here again or send anybody about mules. The order will not be obeyed; and moreover, if Major Ewing bothers me further about this matter, I'll come down to his office, tie his long legs into a double bowknot around his neck and choke him to death with his own shins!"

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Have so much good info on this area I'd be willing to take on the 1980 trip sales!

# OLD DRIP

John Singleton Mosby, "The Gray Ghost," made life miserable for the Federals. With his Partisan Rangers, the Major would dash into Union territory and grab anything that wasn't nailed down: horses, payrolls, intelligence. In superb arrogance, he once rode incognito with Union cavalry just to see what they were up to.

## Scenes I'd Like to Have Seen



His most audacious exploit one wet night was to lead 29 of his dedicated followers through six Union regiments right into the billet of General Edwin Stroughton, the Union commander. Mosby lifted the sleeping general's nightshirt and administered a mighty slap on the exposed bare rump. Stroughton, befuddled after a night of revelry awoke snarling. "Ever hear of Mosby?" asked the intruder. "Have you caught the g-d- horsethief?" the general sputtered. "No, but he has caught YOU." Mosby replied. The raiders got away with the captive, over 30 other prisoners and 58 horses.

### Exploding a Myth



The myth that German Field Marshal Rommel was a Civil War buff and had gone over the battlefields studying the campaigns of Stonewall Jackson has been perpetuated by repeated printed tittle-tattle. The truth is that it all started as a case of mistaken identity. After WWI when the German Embassy was re-opened in Washington, a General Friedrich von Boetticher, who had served on the General Staff in that war came here as a military attaché. He became a good friend of Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman, and with their mutual friend, Mr. J. Ambler Johnson, of Richmond, visited many Civil War battlefields.

Evidently the myth regarding Rommel started around 1935-39, at which time General von Boetticher was visiting Virginia. In a letter to Mr. Johnson, the German general included an affidavit from Mrs. Rommel, widow of The Desert Fox, that (1) He had never been to America, (2) She knew nothing of his interest in the Civil War, and (3) He had never so much as ever mentioned Stonewall Jackson. (Condensed from a story by Dr. Wm. Stauffer in the Civil War Times magazine, July, 1961)

### Footnote to the First Aircraft Carrier Story

There just seems to be no end to Civil War research. In preparing the articles about Professor Lowe, the balloonist who launched his aerial observations from the barge "Curtis," I examined dozens of books and magazines. Now comes a brochure from the Fort Monroe Casemate Museum about one John La Mountain, who was engaged by General Butler, Commandant of the fort, to make an ascension in a balloon secured to the stern of the gunboat "Fanny" in Hampton Roads, August 3, 1861, almost a year before Lowe's exercises. La Mountain made only a few trips up to observe the Rebel Army's dispositions, however, before he faded from the scene.

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Money isn't everything...Confederate money, that is.