

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

APRIL, 1980

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 2

197th MEETING

LADIES' NIGHT, TUESDAY, APRIL 8th

SPEAKER: WILLIAM C. "Jack" DAVIS

SUBJECT: "ANATOMY OF A HOAX: LINCOLN CONSPIRACY"

PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB MAIN DININGROOM

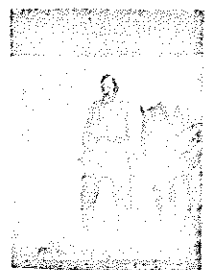
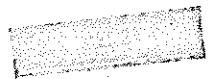
TIME: 7p.m. - DINNER 8p.m.

William C. Davis is President of the National Historical Society and Publisher of the Civil War Times Illustrated, American History Illustrated, and British History Illustrated. They are the largest circulation magazines in their fields.

Mr. Davis is also the author of four books on the Civil War: Breckenridge: Statesman, Soldier, Symbol (1974); The Battle of New Market (Doubleday, 1975); Duel Between The First Ironclads (Doubleday, 1975) and Battle at Bull Run (Doubleday, 1977). The latter book was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in history.

His other honors and awards are: Doctor of Humane Letters (Honorary) Lincoln Memorial University; Jules F. Landry Prize, 1975 (for Breckenridge); Phi Alpha Theta Prize, 1975 (for Breckenridge); Jefferson Davis Award, 1975 (for Breckenridge), and a Pulitzer Prize nomination for biography (again for Breckenridge), and in 1977 the Fletcher Pratt Award from the New York CWRT for continuing contributions to Civil War History.

Our speaker needs little introduction as a noted lecturer. His current address has been delivered before several audiences across the country. It exposes the fraud perpetrated upon the public by the film "The Lincoln Conspiracy," dealing with the assassination of Lincoln. The film is based upon forged documents and plagiarism.



RESERVATIONS A MUST

CALL CHUCK SPIEGLE AT 464 - 5335 (Office) or 357-1695 (Home).

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

Founded Nov. 19, 1957

President: Charles Spiegle
Secretary: Tom Geshke
Treasurer: John Harkness

Executive Committee: 1980

Stuart Cramer
Milton Holmes

1981

Robert Bayless
John Tormey



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Doctors Score Success

An outstanding program was given at the March meeting by members Bill Schlesinger and Paul Schildt on "Medicine and Surgery During the Civil War." Dr. Bill pointed out that the germ theory of disease was not known 'til shortly after the War and that infectious diseases were rampant, particularly because so many of the soldiers were farm boys who for the first time in their lives were exposed to such diseases as measles, mumps, etc. with devastating results. Indeed, sickness led to four times the deaths and disablements that fighting inflicted.

After Dr. Paul gave a graphic account of amputations performed on the battlefields, he showed numerous slides of Civil War field and regular hospitals, plus drawings of surgical instruments used, which caused some members' dinners to set not too well.

After the formal talks, many of the Drs. in the audience did some interesting kibitzing on their own specialties; however, there was no horse doctor >

Battle of Third Bull Run Still Rages

We hate to keep bugging you about this, but some of us forget or procrastinate. Time is of the essence, and that is NOW. Write to Senators Metzenbaum and Glenn, tell them that two bills relating to the Manassas NBP are now pending before the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation. One, HR 5048 authored by Virginia Congressman Herbert E. Harris II, has already passed the House and is awaiting Senate action. The other, S 1857, introduced by Virginia Senators Warner and Byrd, is awaiting action. We much prefer the Harris Bill (HR 5048) because it is much more protective of the Park and the historic areas that NEED to be added to the Park. It would add some 1,700 acres, whereas the Warner Bill only 700.

The problem still is some of the local businessmen and the county Bd. of Supervisors, who, for years have opposed any addition, but now they have apparently seen the handwriting on the wall, and approve the Warner Bill.

Tell the Senators that this is a matter of NATIONAL concern that is more important than strictly local concern (expansion of industrial plans). Tell them you support the Harris Bill. Remember, it lost out in the past because it got bottled up in the Senate Subcommittee until it was too late to achieve independent consideration. Tell 'em the Harris Bill has passed the House handily on five occasions in the past. If local considerations ARE a matter of concern, point out that the local Congressman, who depends upon the votes of the Manassas area to get reelected, has been sponsoring this bill for five years now; so he must feel there is more local

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present, or at least anyone who would admit to being one.
Report by Neville Bayless

FORGOTTEN VICTORY?

Bridge Across the Sky by Richard Collier: McGraw-Hill: N.Y. 1978

This is the story of a great feat of war. It tells in chilling detail of an epic battle waged and won without a gun fired, a bomb dropped, a bayonet thrust. It is the story of the Berlin Blockade. Its telling is proof again, if we need it, that we are in a war beginning with the end of World War II, a war with an intransigent bunch of Asiatic despots, despots with the intractable aim, as Krushchev said, to bury us.

The Berlin Blockade was a siege, in many ways like sieges since the beginning of cities and wars, but different in that the besieged out-thought, out-foxed, out-couraged and out-determined the enemy and beat them.

The premier hero in a great company of heroes was General Lucius Clay, U.S. Commander in Europe. Clay was backed by the British and the French, of course, and by his people, mainly Robert Murphy, his political advisor, and his Berlin commandant, a wonderful tough Irishman, Colonel Frank Howley.

It was Clay alone, however, who battled the unrealistic and defeatist Washington brass - Bradley, Vandenburg, Radford and Marshall. Yes, even the great Marshall would have abandoned Berlin and left the city in thrall to the fearsome barbarians. Clay maintained the Russian aim was to force the allies out of Berlin by every aggravation short of war and the only answer was an airlift. But Clay had one man on his side. This man of great common sense said, "If we lose Berlin, we shall lose everything we fought for." He was Harry Truman; and the bridge across the sky was started.

In the eleven months of the blockade, 276,926 flights were made across the Soviet Germany by 689 American and British crews in all kinds of planes ferrying over two and a quarter million tons of life to Berlin. And as Clay so rightly knew, the Russians caved in.

Now, if it is hard for some, even today, to believe the Byzantine tactics of the enemy, note this: when Colonel Howley, pressing for an increase in rations for hungry Berliners said, "We can't kick a lady when she's down," an ice-blooded Russian colonel replied, "My dear Colonel, that is the best time."

Carter and Vance please note.

* * * *

BULL RUN CONTINUED

support than opposition or he wouldn't be sticking his neck out.

If you have written to Metzenbaum and Glenn before, write to them again - these are new arguments for you to advance. Urge them to stand firm on the HARRIS BILL (HR 5048), and express that support to the Subcommittee. Ask them to commit themselves to you in that support.

Then, write to Senator Dale Bumpers, Chairman, Senate Parks and Recreation Subcommittee, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510, and tell him the same thing. Ed. Note: The Wayne compromise bill is obviously a sop to the local businessmen, and aside from letting the Harris bill die in committee, it's the easy way out - "throw 'em both a bone and fergit it."

Lincoln's Enforcer

Major General Marsena R. Patrick was Provost Marshal General of the Army of the Potomac. He was a towering man with a full white beard that stuck out like a porcupine's quills. He must have seemed like an avenging angel of the Old Testament to cowering stragglers and skulkers back of the battle line, as he rode among them with a slashing whip.

Patrick was a remorseless super-cop as he sought out grafters, slackers, and criminals, and many times stood on the gallows platform when the trap was sprung beneath convicted deserters and rapists.

Although he was often on strained terms officially with the various commanders of the Army of the Potomac, they seemed to trust and rely upon him (maybe they too were scared of him.) He had a cynical attitude and seemed to dislike nearly all of the senior officers with whom he came in contact.



The feisty General was a bitter antagonist of Lafayette Baker, the unsavory self-styled Secret Service Chief in Washington. Each arrested each other's agents as soon as they were discovered in his zone of operation.

Before joining the New York State Volunteers, Marsena Rudolph Patrick was President of the Agricultural College which became the Cornell College of Agriculture. From May 25 until June 9th, 1865, he was commander of the District of Henrico (which included Richmond.) In this short time he exhibited such compassion and kindness for the fallen foe that Grant suggested to Halleck that he be relieved, "lest his leniency interfere with the proper government of the city."

Inside Lincoln's Army
Diary of Gen. Patrick, edited
by David S. Sparks, Yoseff, 1964

More About Scurvy Than You Ever Wanted To Know

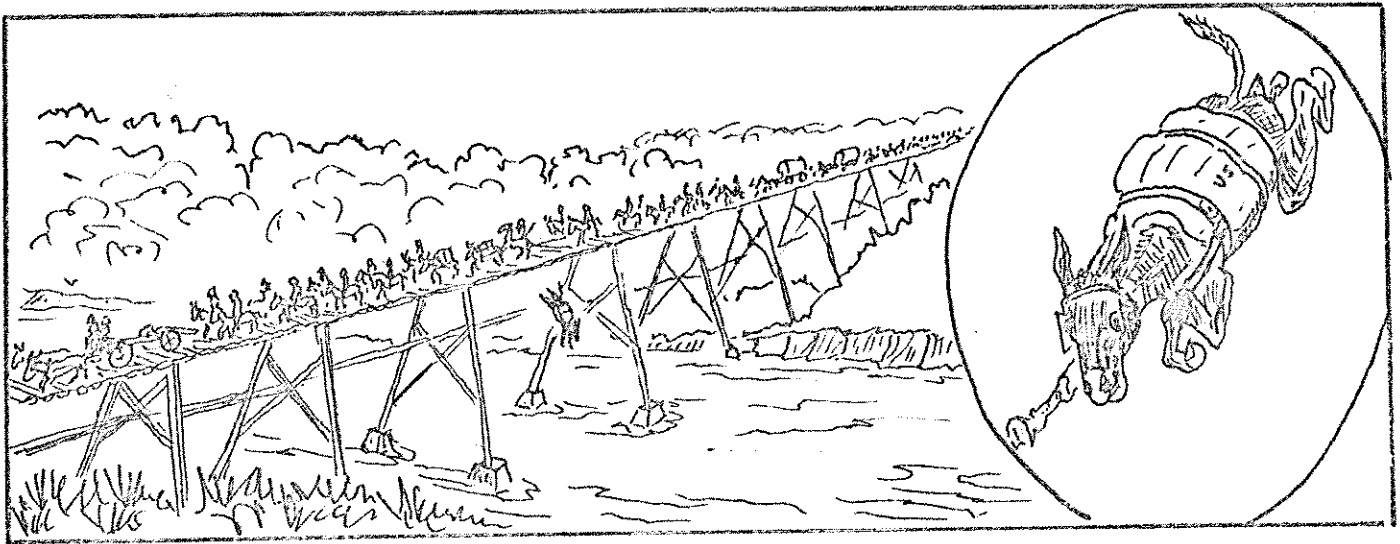
In 1795 the Royal Navy provided a lime ration by regulation after the experimental work of Surgeon James Lind in 1747. The purpose and result was to curb the scourge of scurvy. (Side effect: the name "limey" applied to British sailors, and then to the inhabitants of English seaports...so some say.) Symptoms were well-known to Civil War surgeons: swollen gums, loose teeth, enlarged joints and general lassitude, for much had been gained by studies of the Crimean War.

Still, medical science didn't know much about vitamins; that it was the lack of Vitamin C which caused the disease. Potatoes and onions were thought by Union medics to be the best answer. Also vinegar was prescribed as the best antiscorbutic, but this was in error.

The incidence of scurvy was well under 10% in the Union Army, but at Andersonville, where the staple food was cornbread, the sickness amounted to 1,000 out of 1,000 men. There is no Vitamin C in cornbread. Then how did the Confederates survive on the stuff? One theory is that they supplemented it with acorns and wild fruits in the field.

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SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN



One of the myriad of mishaps that must have occurred daily during the war involved a pack mule on the return of Sheridan's sixteen-day raid in May, 1864. The raid had taken him within sight of Richmond, and he had wrecked railroads, bridges and fortifications on the way. Coming back to join Grant at Chesterfield Station, the long blue column of horsemen crossed the Pamunky River near White House. They crossed on the ruins of a railroad bridge which a whole regiment had repaired in a matter of hours by tearing down a nearby house and putting boards across the ties.

The mishap pictured was the fall of the pack-mule from the bridge into the river thirty feet below. It turned a complete somersault in the air, disappeared into the water, came up, and swam tranquilly ashore without disturbing its pack!

* * * * *

MORE SCURVY

Sherman's men suffered from scurvy during the battles around Atlanta in 1864. The hard marching up to that time had precluded the forging that characterized the later "march to the sea." Bacon and hardtack were the only supplies issued, other than ammunition. The idea then was prevalent (Sherman always kept a supply in his saddlebag) that the ordinary army biscuit contained all the essential nutrients necessary for the human body. In fact, it was worse than cornbread-no vitamins.

It must be said that medical science entered the Civil War with little more insight than the Romans - but emerged with the nucleus of modern ideas. They searched for every scrap of information and used it.

* * * * *

PRAISE LORD AND PASS THE AMMO

The propriety of chaplains indulging in actual combat has often been debated. Here are some interesting facts from official records: Sixty-six Union chaplains died in service. Fourteen were killed, two while fighting on the front line, one by accident, and one shot down by Jesse James. Twenty-five Confederate chaplains died in service, thirteen killed in battle.

In Memoriam

Let us pause for a moment and remember.

Look down this list of friends and fellow members who shared our common interest and camaraderie....and recall how much they did to build the Club we now enjoy in the present.

We salute them - and miss them - every one.

Kenneth Grant	1957	(*, C, PP)
Robert Gravatt	1960	
Paul Sihler	1964	
Robert Warren	1966	(C)
Efflo Plazer	1966	
Wells K. Stanley	1966	
James R. Clary	1967	(C)
Harold T. Ammerman	1967	
George Farr, Jr.	1967	(*, C, PP)
Edward T. Downer	1968	(C, PP)
Roy H. Smith, Jr.	1968	(*, C)
Donald R. Ryan	1968	
Clay Marsteller	1968	
John Sturges	1969	
Frank Saxton	1970	
Pierce O'Conner	1970	
William Ralls	1971	(C)
William Clark	1972	
Lester L. Swift	1972	(C, PP)
Paul Guenther	1974	(C, PP)
Richard Henn	1974	
Ralston Smith	1975	
Joseph Fawcett	1976	
Alfred H. Narhold	1977	
Harold Peters	1977	
Arthur Jordan	1978	(PP)

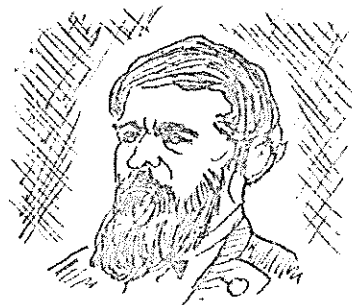
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- (*) - Co-Founder
- (C) - Charter Member
- (PP) - Past President

One of the most fascinating phases of the study of Civil War history is the enquiry into the lives of those characters who, for better or for worse, left the mark of their activities upon the great events that made up that history. Some were noble, devoted to their cause whether for North or South, their motives unquestioned in the light of their honest beliefs. There are others who were devious and self-serving, unrelated to the good of the Cause they espoused.

Such a one was Lafayette Curry Baker.

A sinister personality (1826-1868), he started out as a member of the vigilance committee of San Francisco in 1856, later a detective in the State Dept., and when war came was used as a special agent. Sent by Gen. Scott to gather information about the enemy, he went to Richmond in July and was so successful that the Confederates sent him back to Washington in the belief that he was their spy. Another famous exploit was his 100-mile ride through enemy lines after Bull Run (2nd) as a courier between Sec'y Stanton and Gen. Banks. As a Colonel 1st D.C. Cav. from May, 1863, he led this regiment, under the direct control of the War Dept., in security missions in the vicinity of the capital. Named a brigadier in 1865, he organized the pursuit of Booth after Lincoln's assassination and was present at his capture and death.



Before that he had become head of the National Police Detectives force operating under Edwin M. Stanton, and wielded great power in wartime Washington, arresting persons suspected of aiding the South or defrauding the Federal Government and holding them without charges for long periods.

There is considerable evidence that toward the end of the war and just after that Baker was enriching himself from the sale of goods he and his men confiscated from Confederate sympathizers. There is ample evidence that Baker was a crook; his reputation was that of a liar and an underhanded dealer...but the most interesting facts that have been uncovered in recent years ~~are~~ that he had a direct part...well-covered up, as being a party to the plot of assassinating President Lincoln.

Lafayette Baker died suddenly in 1868. There are some researchers who believe that he was poisoned to prevent further disclosures of his nefarious activities and connections.

* * * * *

Brevet Major-General of the United States Volunteers, George H. Gordon in Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain, describes a crossing of the Shenandoah River by two Union regiments during the Valley Campaign.

"The passage of the Shenandoah was a ludicrous sight. The river was very very swift, waist-deep, and very rocky; the Massachusetts men generally held up their coat-skirts, and went in as they were; the Indiana boys went in in a uniform of boots, shirt and coat carefully tucked up to be out of the water. An individual is a funny enough-looking spectacle in such a dress, or rather undress, but a whole regiment, officers and men alike the same, makes a sight that is quite overpowering. Every one came over safely, but a few guns were lost. The current was so strong that it took the legs out from under several of the men, and gave them a good washing, an operation that long abstinence rendered sadly necessary." (Sic)

Thanks to the Hagerstown CWRT's The Bugle Call



Recent newspaper and television reporting the hullabaloo about registration, with its attendant student protests and Congressional shenanigans brings to mind the conscription acts during the Civil War.

In 1862 the Confederacy had to resort to conscription to preserve its armies. This action, denounced by many Confederates as incompatible with state and individual rights, was the first conscription in America. President Davis and the Confederate Congress didn't want it; their reluctance was overcome by necessity. The act, however, was filled with so many exemptions it was most inequitable. Richmond teemed with able-bodied political beneficiaries of this discrimination.

The U.S. Congress passed the Enrollment Act in 1863, which led to the bloody draft riot in New York City. Of course, the bounty system of the North was downright disgraceful. New York State, which furnished about 20% of the men in the Union armies, abounded with bounty-brokers and bounty-jumpers.

These systems gave credence to the popular expression "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight." Napoleon drafted 'em for 20 years.

* * * * *

Battle statistics can be boring or fascinating, but here is a comparison interesting to all history buffs:

The strength of the U.S. forces at the Battle of Iwo Jima was 111,308, and the Battle lasted 26 days (1945.) Combining the continuous Battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor, which lasted 31 days (1864) U.S. forces numbered 127,471. Casualties at Iwo Jima were 25,992, or 23%; Union casualties during the 31 days were 48,802, or 38.3%. The most gruesome record was at Cold Harbor, where some 5,000 were lost in less than an hour.

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From the New Yorker
Magazine

"No, I don't think so. I've never really liked the Civil War."