

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

APRIL, 1981

206th Meeting

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 12

LADIES' NIGHT THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH

6:00 P.M. at THE HERMIT CLUB MAIN DININGROOM

HEAR DAN TYLER MOORE ON "SPIES IN WAR"

Note change of date

Dan Tyler Moore, Director General of the International Platform Ass'n., is a much sought-after speaker. He will feel at home with our Round Tablers and they with him - his grandfather was Civil War General Daniel Tyler, who commanded a division at Bull Run and was responsible for the overhauling of the Union artillery.

But Dan Moore's bloodlines go further back than that - his family history includes General Israel Putnam, of Bunker Hill fame; and his great-great-uncle was President John Tyler. Theodore Roosevelt's wife, Edith, was a cousin of Moore's father, Colonel Daniel Tyler Moore, who saw active service in the Phillipines, and was the army's number one ballistics expert. His brother-in-law was Drew Pearson.

But enough of the roots business, let's get to Dan himself.

After Yale he studied law at George Washington U., worked on Wall Street, and then went to Washington to work for the Securities Exchange Commission. Through President F.D.R. he was appointed by Ohio Governor Davey to clean up a scandal in the Ohio Division of Securities. He reorganized the division and authored the present Ohio Securities Act. In 1938 he headed the regional S.E.C. office and with a staff of 40 went after the swindlers - so successfully that when WW II broke out, "Wild Bill" Donovan, head of the O.S.S., invited Dan to use his con-man-catching abilities on spies.

As a result he ended up stationed in Cairo, Egypt, as Chief of Counter-Intelligence in the Middle East. As a cover, he had the official title of deputy economic minister of the United States. His experiences and storytelling abilities as a speaker promise an outstanding evening. Does this whet your appetite? Well, don't miss this one!

RESERVATIONS A MUST

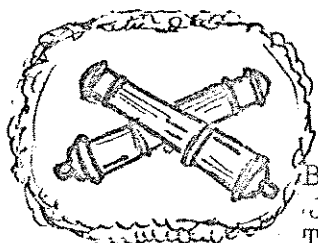


Call Tom Geschke at 845-1828

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

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ANSWER TO FEB. 17TH RIDDLE

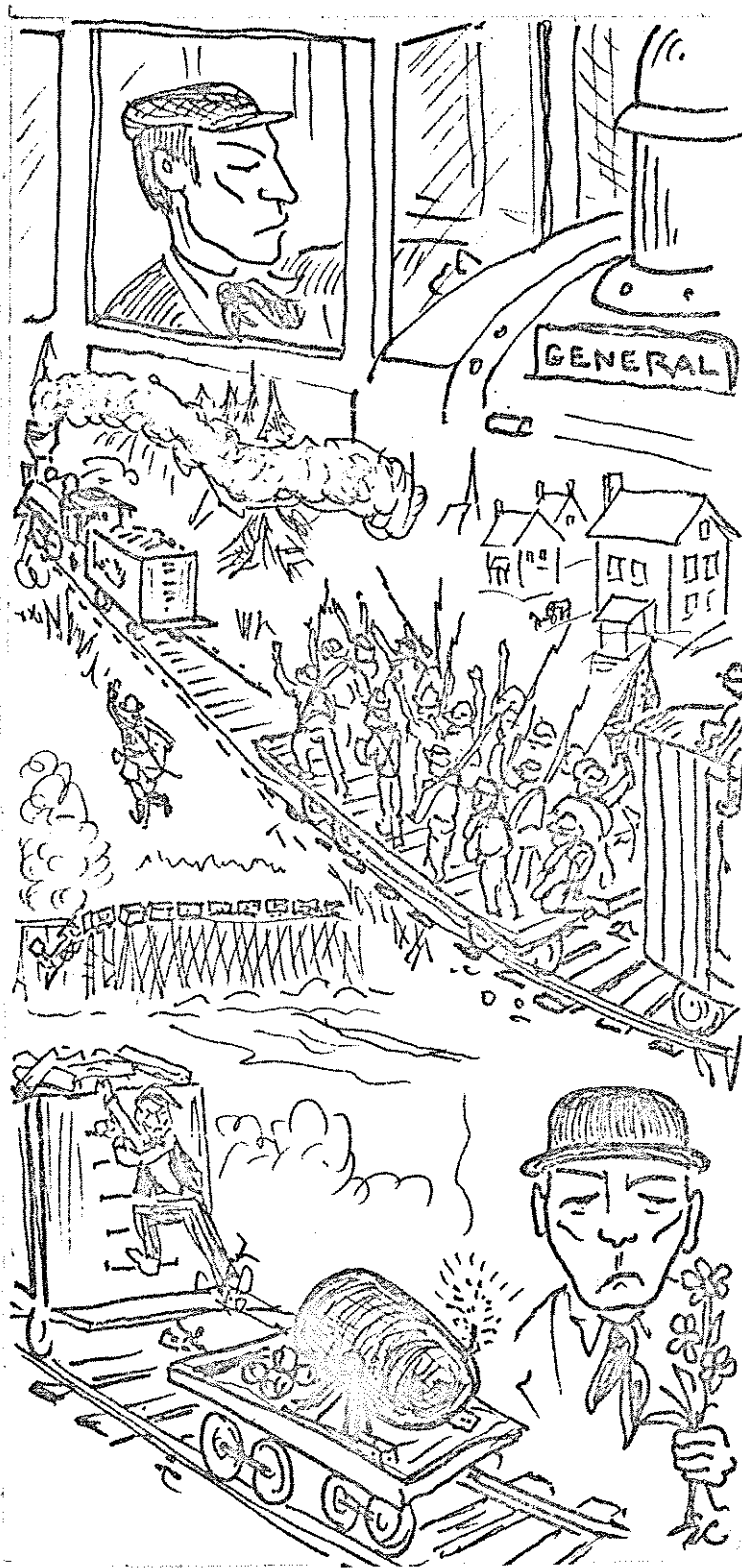
Jack Cullen, who sparked the founding of this club was the only one to come up with an answer to last month's query on why so many Confederate bills-of all denominations- were dated Feb. 17, 1864.

Wrote historian Cullen: On Feb. 17th the Confederate Congress passed an Act "To reduce the volume of currency and provide a new issue of notes and bonds." The Act invalidated non-interest bearing notes not funded into four% bonds by April 1, 1864, etc.. There were other specifications effecting interest bearing notes, to "reduce the volume of currency."

\$200,000,000 was authorized by the Act of Feb. 17, 1864; however, the actual amount issued was probably 10 times this figure and the amount printed even greater. Certainly this must be an important factor in determining the authenticity of the tremendous number of Confed. bills printed before the above date. -Thanks Jack, and also thanks for the \$100 Confederate bill you sent to augment my collection.

BUSTER KEATON AT MARCH MEETING

Members enjoyed 1927 silent movie,
"The General"



FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

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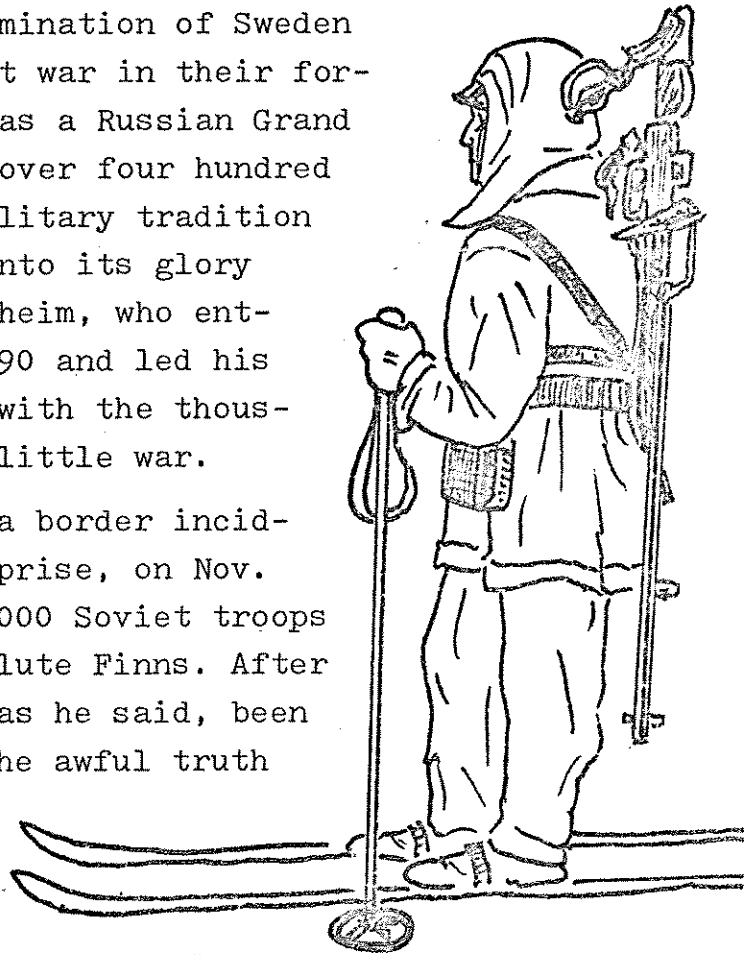
A HYMN TO GUTS

The Winter War by Eloise Angle and Lauri Paananen. Scribner's: N.Y., 1973

This is a story of indomitable courage and bottomless stupidity. It is the enthralling account of a very short war, a war of only 105 days between a handful of Finns and a horde of Russians.

For centuries the Finns, under the domination of Sweden and Russia, learned a great deal about war in their forbidding land. In the years Finland was a Russian Grand Duchy the Finns supplied Russia with over four hundred generals and admirals, and a solid military tradition had been long established. It came into its glory with Field Marshal Carl Gustav Mannerheim, who entered the Russian Imperial Guard in 1890 and led his country to independence in 1914, and with the thousands of Finns who led and fought this little war.

Emulating Germany, Russia fabricated a border incident and, not really to the Finns' surprise, on Nov. 23rd, 1939, the war began. Over 800,000 Soviet troops marched that day against 180,000 resolute Finns. After all, Mannerheim had for eight years, as he said, been "racing the storm," for he had seen the awful truth of what was inevitably to come. The Russians marched out, but to the puzzlement of the Soviet command, did not get very far.



Patrouilleur finlandais avec fusil antichar

As Mannerheim says in his memoirs, "It was characteristic of the Red high command to start military operations without paying necessary attention to the basic factors in the war against Finland." The basic factors: Russian armies were ill prepared and simply too cumbersome to fight in deep winter; Russia's blind faith in modern technology; their overlooking the fact that Finns are Finns and would be fighting on their own land (they had held it since the Stone Age) and on familiar ground, for their homes, their families and their long cherished and dearly bought independence.

(Continued on page 4)

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The stories in this book of Finnish tactics against the shabby Russian behemoth are gems of courage and sacrifice and tribute to sensible leadership, a quality not confined to Finn generals and colonels.

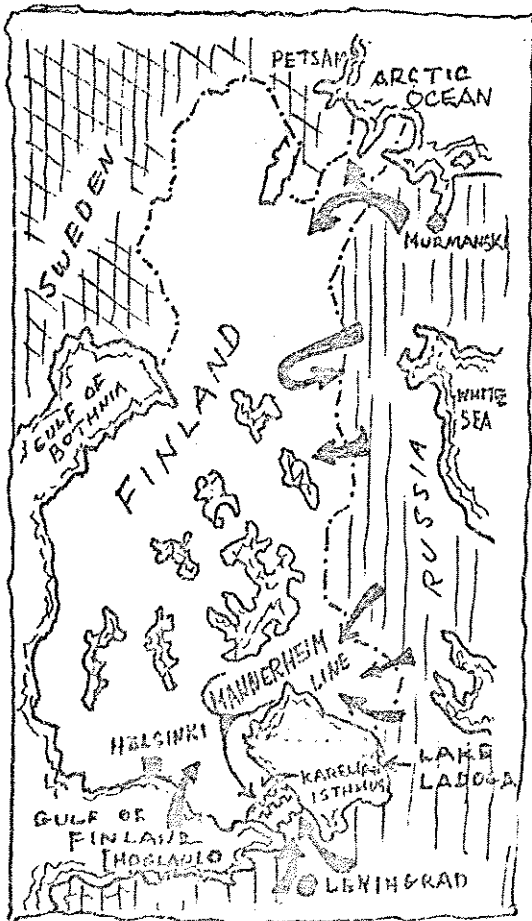
How well it worked is reflected in the statistics. At the war's end, by the Russians' own estimates, Russian dead numbered 1,000,000 and a never mentioned number of wounded out of 2,000,000 Russians engaged. Set this off against Finland's losses of 25,000 killed and 55,000 wounded.

In one classic ten-day engagement three Finnish battalions, about 3,200 men, pushed 36,000 Reds back twenty-five miles, losing 630 and killing 4,000 Russians. In another, a crack division of Ukrainians was completely eliminated, all killed or frozen to death except for 1,300 prisoners.

This epic little struggle (still studied in war colleges around the world) is a David and Goliath story except that Goliath won, but won only by sheer numbing numbers. Goliath was held off and well bloodied, to the world's amazement and Russia's acute embarrassment. Finnish leadership was, of course, a factor, but the root reason is that Finns have a certain priceless, national characteristic, a characteristic shared by all of them, men, women, children and maybe even their dogs and reindeer. The Finns call it sisu. Loosely this means iron obstinacy, patient endurance, dogged courage, plain cussedness, or, if you will, just guts.

So let us remember the Finns then. Many Americans remember Paavo Nurmi, the legendary Olympic figure of the '20s. Some may recall that Finland was the only country to pay in full its World War I debt to the United States. A few will think of this strange country in hearing Sibelius' haunting "Finlandia." But now let us remember the Winter War. It is an unforgettable hymn to guts.

* * * *



Editor's Note:

The map at the left will remind the reader of the geography of the Finnish War, and the points of the Russian invasion. The original advance was a direct push from Leningrad up the Karelian Isthmus and came to a halt in the forward layers of the Mannerheim Line. An advance near Lake Ladoga was also stopped. The country cramped an invader at every turn, being full of natural obstacles that narrowed the avenues of approach.

Between Lake Ladoga and the Arctic Ocean the frontier appeared wide open on the map but in reality was a tangle of lakes and forests, ideal for laying traps as well as for stubborn resistance. The Finns had another advantage in their railroads, which furnished an interior line, and Mannerheim used them to shift his troops in broad flanking movements, reminiscent of the Confederacy in the early stages of our Civil War.

Probably the most telling effect of Finland's early successes was that it reinforced the general tendency of other world powers to underrate the Soviet military strength. This misjudgment was shared by Hitler - with momentous consequences the following year.

It is ironic that the Russian bear didn't become so strong until fed by American Lend-Lease...through the Port of Murmansk.

SCENES I LIKE TO IMAGINE



Gen. George "Rock of Chickamauga" Thomas stated, after the Battle of Franklin that he planned to remain on the defensive in Nashville until his cavalry, under Gen. Wilson, could get adequately equipped. This did not suit President Lincoln or Secretary Stanton - they wanted him to go after Confederate Gen. Hood immediately, and they put a lot of pressure on Gen. Grant to make Thomas move. As you recall, Grant almost removed Gen. T., but in the end, the thorough Thomas had his way and completely destroyed Hood and his Army of Tennessee.

While they were prodding him, Gen. Thomas mentioned repeatedly in his dispatches that it was absolutely necessary to reorganize, remount and equip a cavalry force "sufficient to contend with Forrest." Ever since the end of November, "old Bedford" had been giving the Federal horsemen a very rough time. Thomas, a former cavalryman, knew the importance of remounting before he could make an all-out effort for a decisive defeat of the Confederate army before him.

So every horse in Nashville and its environs was impressed - carriage horses, work horses, plow horses and the PERFORMING HORSES OF A CIRCUS THAT WAS THEN APPEARING IN THE CITY.

Performing circus horses, (remember the "Liberty Horses" of Ringling Barnum and Bailey Circus?) trained to go through their act without any restraints - hence "liberty" on cues from the band. On certain fanfares they would rear up and pirouette on their hind legs; a change of music might then send them trotting around the circle nose-to-tail, and a pause in the music on a different key make them reverse direction, and so on.


When impressed horses were herded into the cavalry compounds, naturally, the officers had first choice of the animals. I can just imagine the gold braid latching onto those beautiful and well-groomed circus horses. And I like to imagine the disastrous result the first time a regimental band struck up....and the trained equine performers going into their dancing act!

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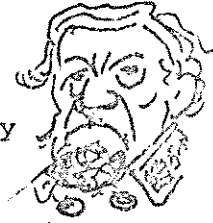


OKLAHOMA

Long before President Franklin Pierce appointed Jefferson Davis Secretary of War, the latter had been hostile to Scott, who lost no time after Pierce's inauguration in moving Army headquarters to New York. Soon Davis began to question Scott's administration. The General-in-Chief had been accustomed to submitting his mileage vouchers for travel without the travel being ordered by anyone but himself. Davis suspended such a mileage payment for about \$600. Many other disputes arose, including one about Scott's Mexican War accounts, and the acrimonious correspondence between Scott and Davis filled 354 pages of a Senate report. When Davis was elected President of the Confederacy, Scott is said to have exclaimed, in part:



"I am amazed that any man of judgment should hope for the success of any cause in which Jefferson Davis is a leader. * * He is not a cheap Judas. I do not think he would have sold the Saviour for thirty shillings; but for the successorship of Pontius Pilate he would have betrayed Christ and the apostles and the whole Christian Church!"



Courtesy Dist. Col. CWRT

Davis

Scott

* * * * *

From within the Petersburg trenches, Col. Theodore Lyman of Meade's staff penned some thoughts on how the War might be settled. With regard to his boss' opinion, he wrote: "General Meade is fond of saying that the whole could be settled by the exercise of common Christian charity; but I don't know any thin old gentleman, with a hooked nose and cold blue eye who, when he is wrathful exercises less of Christian charity than my well beloved Chief!"

Courtesy Hagerstown CWRT

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LINCOLN COMBINES CLUBS

Along about 8 o'clock Thursday night, they dimmed the lights in the Seventh Regiment Armory's fourth-floor Rumpus Room and the Civil War Round Table and the Abraham Lincoln Group of New York once again turned the clocks back to their favorite era.

They had gathered among the flintlocks, the mounted elk horns and the Lincoln 1860 Presidential campaign posters to hear Dr. John K. Lattimer "prove beyond all doubt that John Wilkes Booth did not commit suicide with his carbine but was probably murdered with an 1860 .44 caliber Army colt, and by Boston Corbett."

To most that sort of thing might seem exceedingly arcane, but to the once-a-year combined meeting of Civil War-Lincoln buffs it was an event of almost unbridled excitement, compounded by the presence of the English actor Roy Dotrice, who had portrayed Lincoln on Broadway in the Ford's Theater production of Herbert Mitgang's play "Mr. Lincoln."

A Bitter Recollection

They would also see Mr. Mitgang receive the Round Table's annual Baroness/Lincoln Award and hear R. Gerald McMurtry, perhaps the country's leading authority on such Lincoln trivia as the swimming hole the President swam in as a boy in Kentucky, and the house in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, where Lincoln's sister was born.

The members of the groups are a mixed bag of avid history devotees ranging from corporate executives to municipal workers, from authors to salesmen, united by their common interest in the life and times of Lincoln.

Because it was an extra-special evening, Lynne Carver came all the way up from Tennessee, sat down at the table, put up a small Confederate flag between her coffee cup and her apple pie, and announced that her "grandfather's uncle, a Confederate, had been captured by Union soldiers and sent to Elmira, and died there, and I want you all to know it."

Before the formal program the 80 people around the U-shaped table had drunk some beer, coffee and soft drinks and collected from the Round Table's treasurer, George Craig, dinner cards that read, "The Bearer of this Receipt is Entitled to Draw from the Regimental Sutter: One Ration."

They had also admired the bowie knife, owned by Dr. Lattimer, that Lewis Payne had used to stab William Seward the same night Lincoln was assassinated.

Dr. Lattimer basked in this interest and allowed as how he owned "Lewis Payne's manacles and I'm negotiating for the noose they hanged him with."

Usually the Round Table and the Lincoln Group meet separately, despite their common interests, but because it was Lincoln's Birthday, according to Guy Di Carlo, president of the Round Table, "we decided on a joint meeting to combine speakers and to talk about our annual May battlefield field trip."

This year, he said, they are going in mid-May to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia to visit the sites of "Jackson's Valley Campaign, Early's Valley Campaign and the Battle of Newmarket, where V.M.I. cadets fought so valiantly."