



# The Charger

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5786 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

APRIL , 1982

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 8

215th MEETING

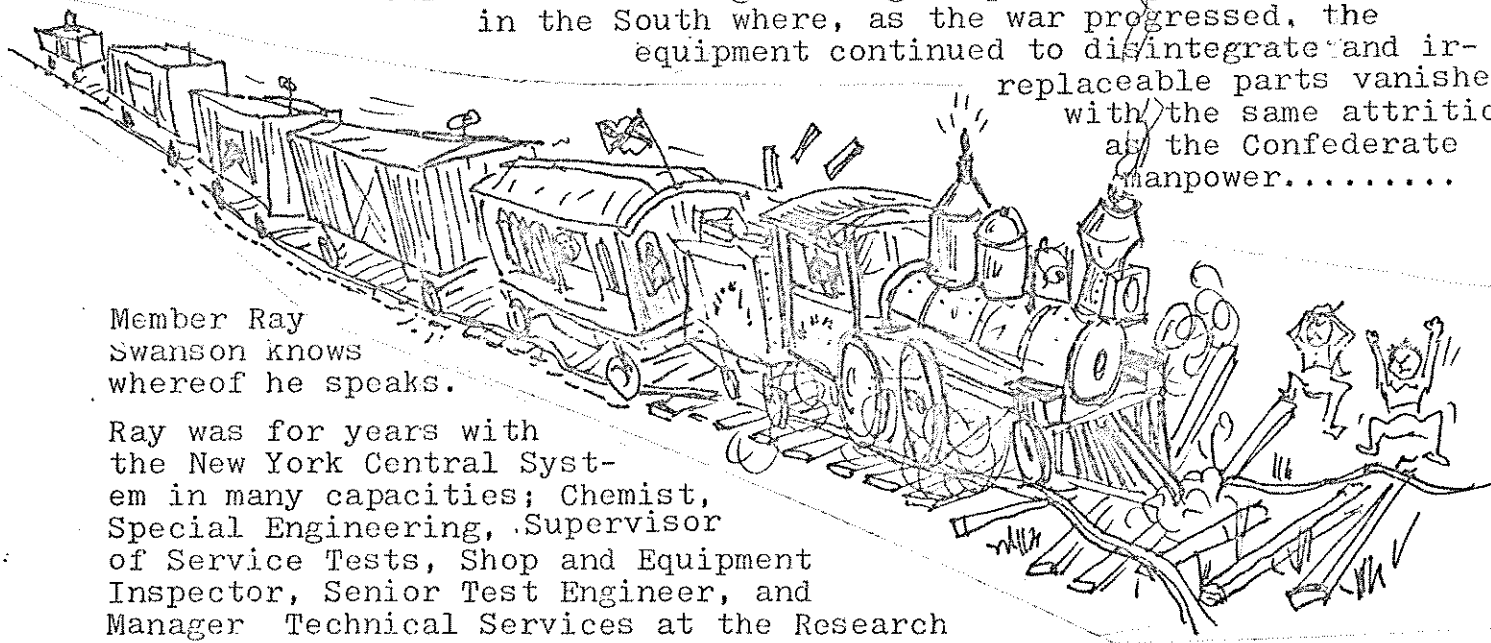
DATE : APRIL 13th  
PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB  
SPEAKER: RAY SWANSON  
SUBJECT: "INFLUENCE OF RAILROAD TRANSPORTATION ON THE  
CIVIL WAR WITH REFERENCE TO HOW AND WHY IT  
FAILED IN THE CONFEDERACY."  
TIME: PRELIMINARIES...6:00 P.M. DINNER...7:00 P.M.

\*\*\*\*\*  
We all know the importance of the part played by the railroads during the Civil War - dictating the areas of conflict, the reason for battles; their first use in the transportation of armies and matériel; their fatal significance to both sides.

At the October 14th, 1975 meeting of the club, member Ray Swanson presented a fine talk on this subject. He will expand that talk at this coming meeting, emphasizing the situation in the South where, as the war progressed, the equipment continued to disintegrate and irreplaceable parts vanished with the same attrition as the Confederate manpower.....

Member Ray Swanson knows whereof he speaks.

Ray was for years with the New York Central System in many capacities; Chemist, Special Engineering, Supervisor of Service Tests, Shop and Equipment Inspector, Senior Test Engineer, and Manager Technical Services at the Research Dept. in Collinwood. A Case Graduate in Electrical Engineering, our speaker helped develop an air brake hose now standard on all North American railroads, and worked many other projects, authoring a paper on diesel locomotive lubrication. He retired in 1968 shortly after the Penn-Central merger. Ray currently pursues his interests in history and genealogy. We can look forward to an interesting and informative talk.





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Dues: \$17.00 from Sept. to Sept.  
 Non-resident members, \$5.00

As an extension of our Annual  
 Books and Artifacts Sale, the  
Charger will from time to time  
 list "Wanted" items. For start-  
 ers, here are some books I'm  
 looking for:  
Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce,  
Selected Works of Stephen Vincent  
Benet, and War Years With Jeb  
Stuart, by Blackford. If you have  
 any of these please advise, with  
 price. If you are seeking any

## Last Month's Meeting

Member Neville Bayless thoroughly enter-  
 tained the club with a well-researched  
 and painstakingly illustrated talk on the  
 Pumunky-Chickahominy Expedition of June  
 12-15, 1862 - J.E.B. Stuart's renowned  
 circumnavigation of McClellan's army in  
 the Peninsular Campaign. Neville combin-  
 ed scholarship, captivating (and sometimes  
 salty) prose, and professionally drawn  
 maps and site-by-historical-site slides to  
 unfold the story of this romantic Civil  
 War event.

All who heard it agreed that the Cleve-  
 land Round Table has been much poorer for  
 having to wait 22 years to hear again  
 from Neville, who last appeared before us  
 presenting the same talk in 1960!

Of special note at this meeting was a  
 visit by out-of-town member Jim Ramsey  
 and his son-in-law. Here's hoping we  
 can see or hear from more of our out-of-  
 towners on their occasional visitations  
 to this area.

The resignation from office, but not from  
 membership, of our secretary Tim Moran  
 was announced. Tim cited pressing de-  
 mands of job and growing family as reas-  
 ons for his request to be relieved from  
 his duties. We thank Tim for services  
 rendered. Our Sergeant-at-Arms Brian  
 Kowell has agreed to serve the remainder  
 of the 1981-82 term as secretary in ad-  
 dition to his current duties. Any ques-  
 tions concerning membership applications  
 or correspondence should be referred to  
 Brian.

-John Harkness

Ed. Note: Oh the joys of being our prez!  
 Last month John ran off the overlay on  
 page 1 and also did the stuffing-stamping  
 and mailing detail.

particular books or artifacts,  
 send your list and we'll publish  
 them under "WANTED." S.C.

# FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

YOU THINK WE WON THIS WAR?

The Invasion of Canada: 1812-1813 by Pierre Berton: Atl. Little, Brown 1980

This book is about that useless little war we Americans call the War of 1812 and which our history books say we won. This part of the war Canadians see simply and politely as the invasion of Canada, a military imbroglio in which Canada was the hands-down winner.

The War of 1812 was, of course, part of the greater struggle of Britain and Napoleon, and we, despite Perry's victory on Lake Erie and Jackson's ex-post facto triumph at New Orleans, won precisely nothing.

The British Orders in Council, one of the history book causes of the war, were revoked before the action began and the issue of impressment of American sailors, so indignantly emphasized in the same books, was not stopped or even mentioned in the Treaty of Ghent ending the sorry business.

The whole war was really one nobody wanted except a handful of - what else? - American politicians. Henry Clay, with groundless swagger, said, "I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous when I state that verily I believe that the militia of Kentucky are alone competent to place Montreal and upper Canada at our feet." Even Jefferson said it was "a mere matter of marching."

It was thanks, however, to the brilliant British soldier Major General Isaac Brock and to his equally brilliant Indian ally Tecumseh, one of the greatest native Americans on record; to the almost solid disinterest of the people of the United States and to the total incompetence of the American military that the invasion of Canada was a string of humiliating and disgraceful defeats, a true American disaster.

The author is a Canadian writer and broadcaster, and while he wrote from a Canadian viewpoint, he gives full honor to Americans where deserved. He must have read every published and unpublished paper on the invasion and has woven a narrative tapestry that is impossible to put aside.

If you want to understand truly why Canadians are Canadians and not Americans, read this book and see why the war that aimed at making British America part of the United States had precisely the opposite effect.

This book covers only the years 1812 and 1813. A volume two is promised, and I am anticipating the fun of reading it even if it continues to make Americans look bad.



British  
Regular



American  
Militia



American  
Regular



Tecumseh



CANADIAN  
REGULAR

4

# SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

This one I'd rather have  
heard than seen -

Seven weeks after Ulysses S. Grant was elected President, a go-between intimated to Gen. Lee that it "would be most agreeable to General Grant to receive him."

Lee, then President of Washington College, had no desire to spend time in a city where he could not escape the long vista across the Potomac, at the end of which on its heights sat his beloved (now confiscated) Arlington. However, because he was dedicated to healing the wounds between the North and South, and understanding Grant's friendly gesture, he accepted.

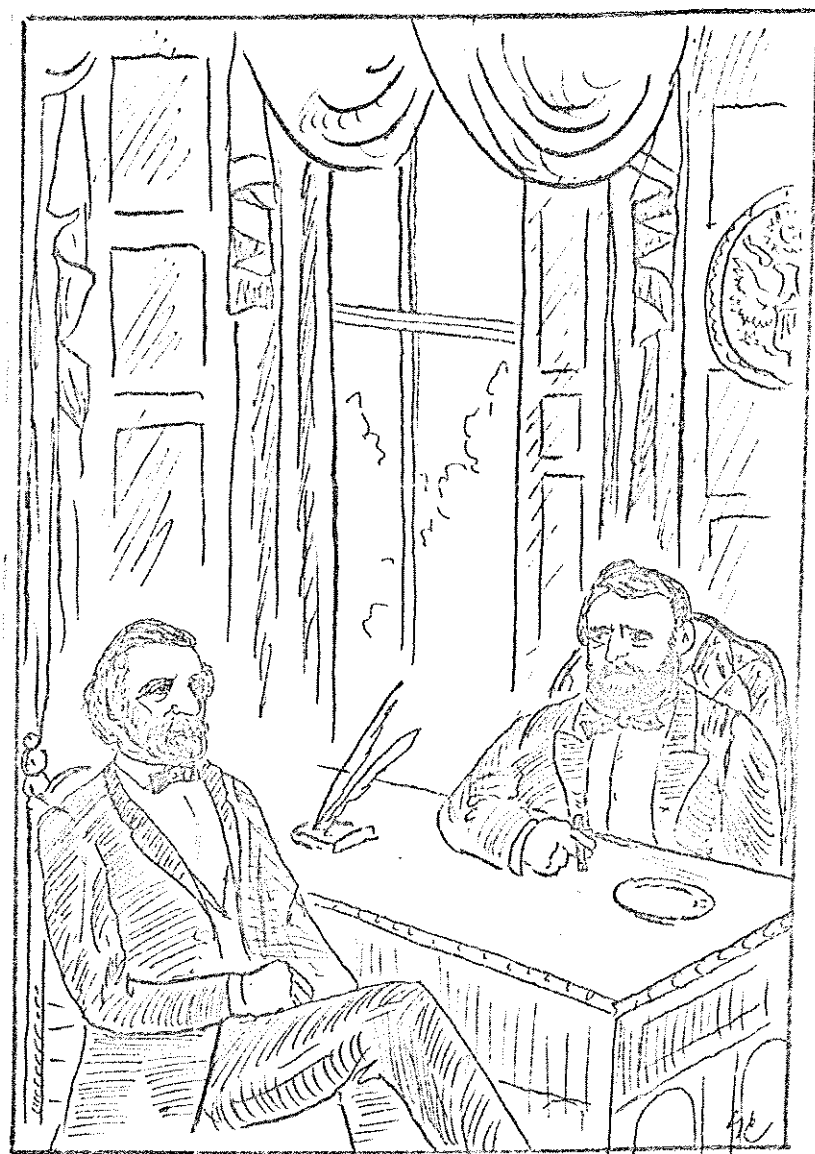
On Sat., May 1, 1869, Lee boarded an early train from Baltimore to Washington. Just seven years before on that

date Lee and Grant had been about to clash for the first time in the bloody Wilderness Campaign. The last time they had seen one another was at Appomattox.

The two great American soldiers shook hands in the President's office. Others present withdrew after introductions, and the last thing they saw was Lee and Grant sitting down together. No account of what they discussed was ever recorded.

Historians have speculated that Grant hoped to get Lee's ideas of what Federal policy should be in the South under his administration. They also think that Lee might have spoken about his pet project, the construction of a new railway from Baltimore to Richmond to open up the South to more commerce, but there is no way of knowing just what did pass between the country's two most famous men.

From - Lee, the Last Years, by C.B. Flood, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1981



# CONFEDERATE HUMOR

## *Army of Tennessee*

Informality in the Confederate Army is excessively evident in some of the commands heard in the Army of Tennessee:

On a dark night a captain formed a line of battle by saying, "Boys, yo'all cain't see me, but y'all dress on mah voice, y'heah?"

Instead of "Blow the Bugle," it was "Toot the Dinner Horn."

One officer drilling his company would shout, "Men, tangle in fours!"

"Move forward." "Put!" "Wheel into line." "Turn around." "Git!"

As in every army, there were always the jokers, like those who would start a whole camp to yelling in answer to the guards' "T-w-e-l-v-e o'-c-l-o-c-k and a-l-l's well," with "T-w-e-l-v-e o'-c-l-o-c-k and sleepy as h-e-l-l."

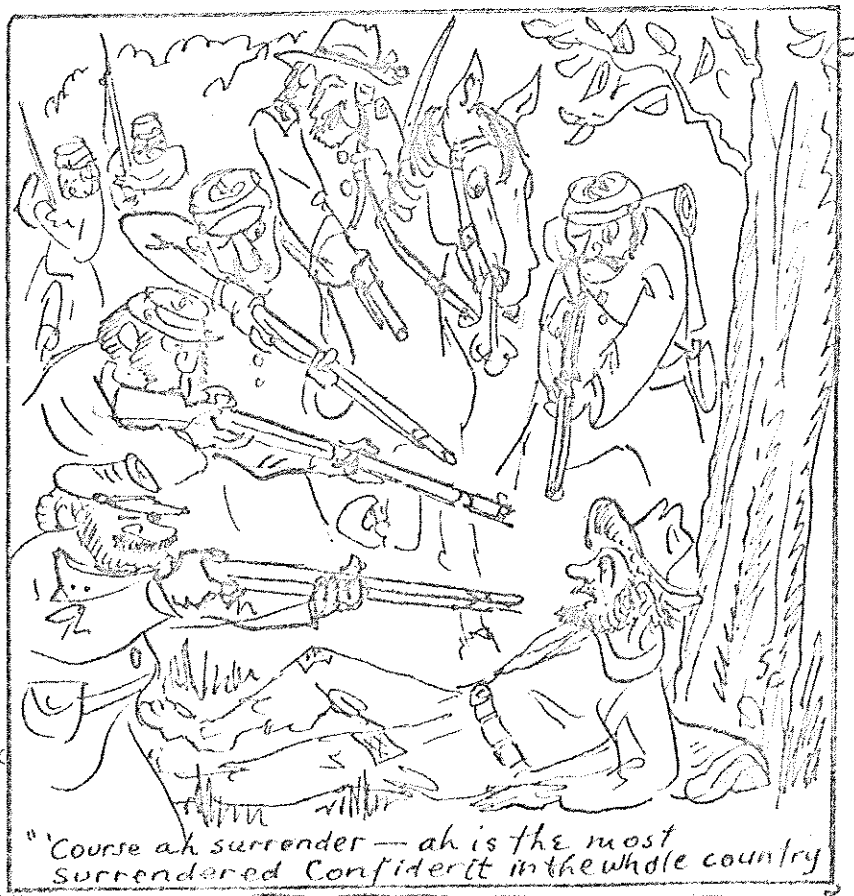
In both Rebel and Union camps it was almost standard procedure when a stranger entered and asked for a certain company - say, Co. F. Some joker would call out, "Here's Company F." By the time the fellow could get there, another would cry out at the far part of the regiment, "Here's Company F." Then the whole camp would take up the refrain, until the poor victim in vexation would wander away, completely lost.

From- Battles and Sketches of The Army of Tennessee, by Ridle

## *On the Road to Gettysburg*

When the Army of Northern Virginia was marching north to meet its destiny at Gettysburg, Gen. Lee issued stringent orders protecting private property and persons along the route. Wrote Ge. Gordon of his men, "Going into camp in an open country and after dark, it was ascertained that there was no wood to be had for even the limited amount of necessary cooking, and I

was appealed to by the men for permission to use a few rails from an old-fashioned fence near the camp. I agreed that they might take the top layer of rails, as the fence would still be high enough to answer the farmer's purpose. When morning came, the fence had nearly all disappeared, and each man declared that he had only taken the top rail... it was a case of adherence to the letter, and neglect of the spirit; but there was no alternative except good-naturedly to admit that my men had got the better of me that time."



-Voices of the Civil War, by Richard Wheeler

# Strange things are happening under the Lincoln Memorial

L.A. Times/Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — Last week, when rangers locked the doors to the cavernous underground vaults beneath the Lincoln Memorial, where they give nightly flashlight tours, they returned to find the doors open. When they turned off lights, they found them on moments later. Or when they turned the lights on, they saw them go off.

National Park Service rangers may not believe that ghosts, gnomes or goblins inhabit the 40-year-old marble monument, but the locks on all the doors were changed Thursday. The damp underground grottoes have been thoroughly searched, and armed U.S. park policemen have accompanied the flashlight tours for the last three nights.

"It's unsettling. You just want an explanation," says Ranger Bonnie Blaford, a native of Illinois who has worked at four Lincoln historic sites and never before encountered any unusual occurrences.

"We've had trouble all summer with lights," Ms. Blaford says. "After all, they were installed in 1928. But in the past week I have physically turned off a light underneath, come back and it was on. And we have found doors open" that have just been shut.

The search was made to see if someone was living under the memorial, but no human evidence was found except for the discarded shoes, bottles and lit-

"Why is that policeman following us?" asked a voice in the dark on Thursday night's tour. It was one of the few questions that was not answered by Ranger Connie Shemro, who led the tour among the stalactites and stalagmites under the memorial steps and among the huge cartoon-festooned columns that keep the memorial from sinking in the mud.

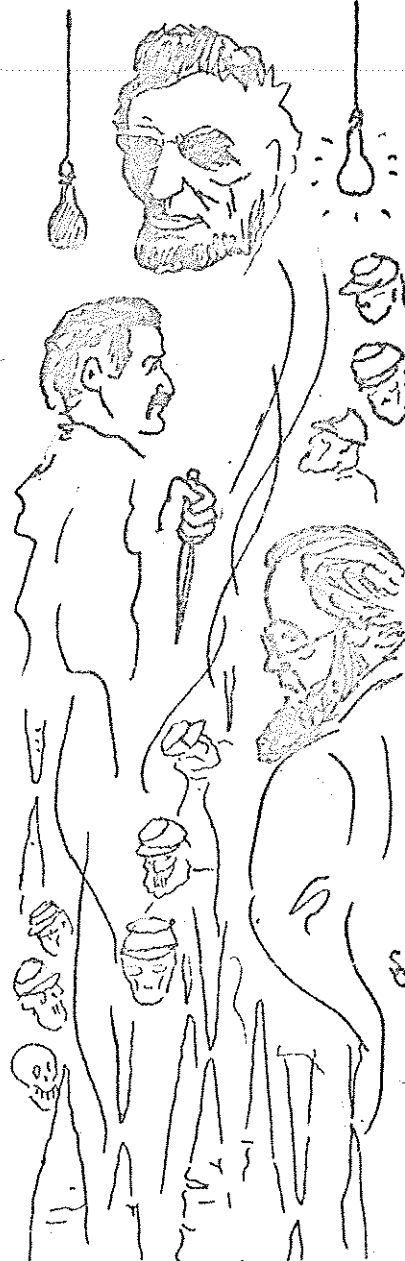
The iciclelike stalactites and stalagmites — called soda straws by the rangers — have been formed from dripping water full of lime, leached over the years from the concrete in the steps and plaza at the memorial, Washington's most popular monument.

The caricatures of Mutt and Jeff, President Taft, memorial architect Henry Bacon and assorted people were apparently inscribed by workmen during the eight years it took to complete the memorial and sink pilings down through marshy West Potomac Park to bedrock. The drawings were noticed in 1975 by Park Service officials when they installed an elevator for the handicapped.

Thanks, Jack Cullen,  
for sending this in.

ter left by workmen before the memorial was completed in 1922.

Now, when Ms. Blaford and other rangers lead the flashlight tours, the only underground tours for the public in Washington, they carry walkie-talkies and go in pairs — in addition to having the U.S. Park Police officer tag along.



From ghoulies and ghosties and long-leggety beasties that go OOMP in the night, Good Lord deliver us.

## MAY 11 MTG.

Things are still a bit up in the air about the details of this meeting.

Here are the solid facts decided at the last executive board meeting:

1. May will be the official celebration of our 25th Anniversary and appropriate recognitions will be made. (Remember February snows snafued plans for that night.)
2. May will be LADIES' NIGHT, with plans to entice and interest the fair sex.
3. A bonus will be included with the May Charger. This will be a complete index for the past 25 years of our speakers and the subjects of their talks. It has been compiled by John Harkness, bringing up-to-date the list started by Neville Bayless.

MORE DETAILS LATER.....  
BUT MARK MAY 11 th a MUST!

## S'A FACT

Another Civil War first. The first U.S. Naval hospital ship, the Red Rover, was used on the inland waters during the Vicksburg campaign.



Those Virginia rebels who operated as "irregulars" and carried on pullulating guerilla hostilities from 1861-1865 were generations ahead of their time. They set up a resistance movement for occupied territory and supported it with vigor and ingenuity. In spite of the fact that the Union armies occupied a great deal of Virginia, it cannot be said that they conquered any of it.

Wars since the Civil War, especially the Vietnam conflict, bear out the fact that certain Confederate operations behind the Federal lines were forerunners of ultramodern warfare.

Of course, guerilla tactics - disrupting supply lines and lines of communication, killing sentinels, pickets, couriers and drivers; attacking convoys and forage trains and stealing materiel - goes back into antiquity. And, the writer is well aware of guerrilla activities in almost all other parts of the Confederacy, to say nothing of the style of war connected with American Indians - but because there is more (though sparse) written material on the Virginia - West Virginia theatre, this article will be limited to that area.

From the very beginning of the Civil War, guerrilla bands sprang up all along the 400 miles of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad. The Union armies were literally surrounded by partisans, singly and in bands and brigades, harassing the invaders constantly.

The effectiveness of this behind-the-scenes war has caused much speculation amongst historians, some holding that it was a mere annoyance to Northern generals; others that it played a major role in evening up the disparity of numbers between North and South. There is little doubt that vast numbers of Federal troops had to be diverted from army movements to guard duty and chasing phantoms. We'll leave that question for your own conclusions and deal with the fascinating characters and adventures of those bold, sneaky and ruthless "terrorists."

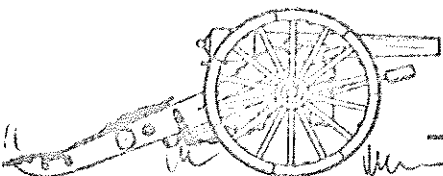
Probably the most famous were Colonel John Singleton Mosby, whose exploits have filled books, and Turner Ashby, the bewhiskered daredevil bent on reeking revenge for the foul murder of his brother Richard. He became the dashing and fearless leader of Stonewall Jackson's cavalry and like Mosby, became a living legend until he got himself shot. We will explore the doings of Harry Gilmore, "Lige" White, "Hanse" McNeill, and many other imaginative southern horsemen who became household (and army camp) names that induced terror with their relentless independent fighting.

This bouillabaisse has been stewing for over a year. It will be fed to you in small portions over the next few issues. S.C.

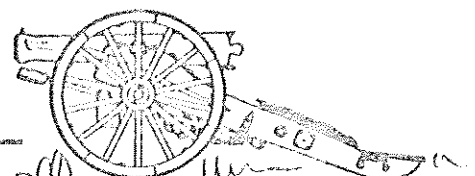
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W FLASH...THE BATTLE OF PETERSBURG HAS APPARENTLY BEEN WON! W

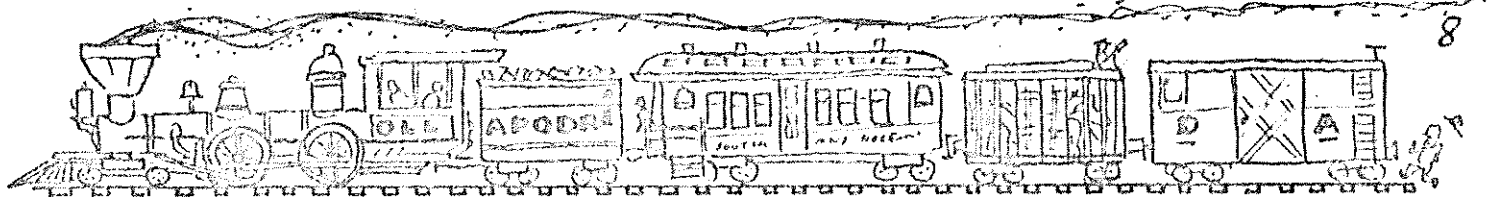
H.U.D. has stopped plans to build another low income housing project on the edge of the Petersburg Battlefield National Park. Local organizations have fought valiantly to stay this because of the misuse and vandalism resulting from the first such housing. The letters that poured in from CWRT members helped sway local authorities. So your letters DO HELP!



**Preserve Your Battlefields!**







A few months after Gettysburg when Lee was maneuvering to confuse Meade, the latter backed his army upon Fairfax and Washington, frank to admit he didn't know what the Confederates planned to do. This gave rise to an interesting exchange between General-in-Chief Halleck and the quick-tempered Meade. Halleck wired, "When King Joseph wrote to Napoleon that he could not ascertain the position and strength of the enemy's army the Emperor replied, "Attack him and you'll find out." Meade fired back: "If you have any orders to give me, I am prepared to receive and obey them, but I insist on being spared the infliction of such truisms in the guise of opinions as you have recently honored me with.."

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Not only in Washington, D.C. during the Civil War, but in all major cities throughout both North and South were numerous brothels that catered to all classes of society.

Soldiers paid the penalty for promiscuity. Medical records and reports from soldiers themselves indicate that syphilis and gonorrhoea were prevalent.

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Mrs. Malaprop: "Abe Lincoln said we're all cremated equal."

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A report in the Atlanta CWRT's Battle Lines newsletter indicates that the city's famed Cyclorama, closed for a long time, has reopened as an All-New Cyclorama, depicting the Battle of Atlanta. Your editor will never forget taking an Italian friend to the old Cyclorama years ago. I practically had to drag him, because he knew nothing about the Civil War and cared even less. Afterwards he said, "Say, that was damned interesting!" and henceforth became a Civil War buff.

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In excerpts from a letter to former President Buchanan on July 26th, 1861, Edwin H. Stanton wrote:

"...The dreadful disaster of Sunday (First Bull Run) can scarcely be mentioned. The imbecility of this Administration culminated in that catastrophe - an inevitable misfortune and national disgrace never to be forgotten are to be added to the ruin of all peaceful pursuits and national bankruptcy as the result of Lincoln's "running the machine for five months. ...The capture of Washington seems now inevitable - during the whole Monday and Tuesday it might have been taken without any resistance. The rout, overthrow, and utter demoralization of the whole army is complete. Even now I doubt whether any serious opposition to the entrance of the Confederate forces could be offered..."

A short time later Lincoln appointed Stanton the new Secretary of War!

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Edward V. Valentine, the young sculptor who fashioned many models of the famous general, including the Recumbent Statue in the statue chamber of the chapel of Washington and Lee University, took detailed measurements of Robert E. Lee and spent many hours with him in the last year of his life.

"If I were asked to name the most characteristic feature of General Lee," Valentine wrote some time afterward, "...my answer would be, 'A complete absence of the melodramatic in all that he said and did.' And I may add that an artist, above all other men, is quick to observe the faintest suggestion of posing; the slightest indication of movement or expression which smacks of vanity...Such weaknesses were totally lacking in Gen. Lee."

Robert E. Lee. His Last years, ibid