

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

DECEMBER, 1978

184th Meeting

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 1

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1978
SPEAKER: MORRIS EVERETT
SUBJECT: "The Confederate States Seen Through Philately"
PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB
PRELIMINARIES: 6:00 P.M. DINNER: 7:00 P.M.

There seems to be no end to the variety of subjects pertaining to the study of our 1861-1865 Conflict. Research of any phase when undertaken seriously, combined with specific collecting hobbies, is bound to produce experts and authorities on particular variations.

We have such an authority as our speaker for this meeting. Morris Everett started collecting his material as an undergraduate at Yale (Class of 1933). Through the past 46 years he has continued his hobby while becoming National Vice President and general partner in an investment and counselling firm. Retiring a few years ago he has since acted as Treasurer of the John Huntington Fund for Education.

He has been a member of the Confederate Stamp Alliance since 1940 (about 800 collector members), serving as its Trustee and Northern Vice President for 16 years, and becoming its President a few years ago. For the past 10 years he has acted as chairman of the Alliance Authentication Committee.

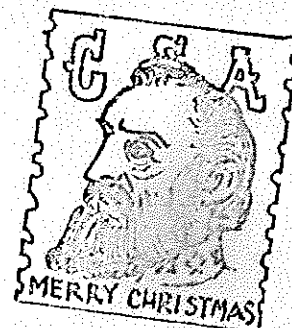
We can look forward to an unusual talk, with slide films, on this "different angle" of tracing the history of the Rebel Nation.

In a listing of the Jefferson Davis cabinet in the opening chapters of The Confederate Soldier in the Civil War, we came across this notation:

"Post Office Department...Henry T. Ellet, Mississippi, First Postmaster General, February 25, 1861 to March 5, 1861....John H. Reagan, Texas, Second Postmaster General, March 6, 1861 to the close of the war." Why did Henry serve for only 9 days? Maybe Mr. Everett can tell us.

FIFTH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONGRESS OF C.W. Round Tables

It is not too early to mark your calendars for this important event to be held Oct. 4,5,6, 1979, at Fayetteville, Arkansas. Battlefield tours to Pea Ridge and Prairie Park will be conducted by Ed Bearss. All who have attended these congresses have attested to their great interest.



THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded Nov. 19, 1957

President: Bill Bates
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Note: V.P. Chuck Spiegle, font
of much knowledge about our
goings-on, has a new address:
9956 Johnnycake Ridge Rd.
Unit C-12, Concord Twnshp.,
Ohio, 44077. 216-357-1695

THE BOY GENERAL

At our November meeting we had more than a full house and enjoyed an address by Greg Urwin, of John Carroll University. His subject was "General George A. Custer and His Wolverines." The speaker was well-prepared and very enthusiastic about his subject. He went into detail on the Civil War career of Custer and the brigade of Michiganders who followed him in dashing charges that sounded at times as though the war could not have been won without them. The talk was interesting and informative, but we doubt if it made many converts to the Custer legend. Most were too aware that the North was always hungry for heroes, and editors were quickly catching on to the fact that they could sell more papers by reporting the exploits of colorful characters. Fiction writers and imaginative biographers had a field day popularizing him. We congratulate Mr. Urwin on his excellent presentation, and despite his ardency for the "boy general" was quite objective in portraying the ambitious, flamboyant and fearless cavalryman.

CUSTER IN PRINT

There is little doubt that interest in George A. Custer is growing. In the book section of the latest catalogue from "The Soldier Shop" these titles are listed:

- Custer Battle Guns, by John duMont
- Boots and Saddles at Big Horn, by James Hutchin
- The Warrior Who Killed Custer, by Chief Joseph White Bull
- Picture Report of the Custer Fight, by William Reusswig
- Custer in the Civil War, John Carroll (seven articles by Custer)
- Gen. Custer in the Battle of Big Horn by Carroll, and by same author:
- Custer in Texas: An Interrupted Narrative.
- Crazy Horse and Custer, by Stephen Ambrose.
- Favor the Bold (2 Vols.) by Kinsley
- Campaigns of Gen. Custer, by Judsen Walket.
- Boots and Saddles, by Elizath Frazer
- Custer's Prelude to Glory, by Herber Krause.
- Troops With Custer, by E.Brininstool

Incidentally, "The Soldier Shop" is a most fascinating place, and their bi-colored catalogue (166 pages 8½x11) is well worth the \$4 if you like to browse through an infinite variety of militaria. It is not, however, the place to buy books...mark up is too high. Also offer grumpy service.

If you would like to purchase a Russian Chevalier Garde Officers' Helmet, Empress' Regt with silver eagle, it's only \$4,000. They offer hundreds of military books on all wars, thousands of miniature soldier medals, swords, musical records, prints and paintings.

Their address: 1013 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021.

* * *



"Where did all these !#! Injuns come from?"

HELLIE GRAY

In the November issue of this sheet mention was made of several famous C. I. horses, and at that meeting member E. Hoover expressed his disappointment that "Hellie Gray," the steed that carried General Fitz Hugh Lee through the war until killed at the battle of Opequon, had not been included. We asked Earl to send further information on same, and what a Pandora's Box of engrossing information bubbled out of that request!

The story of this "brave and sagacious little mare on the battle-fields" (Miller's Photographic History of the C. I.) pales when compared to that of the composer of the historic piece of music for which the horse was named; Benjamin R. Hanby.

Earl Hoover's oft-given talk on composer Hanby, "The Stephen Foster of Ohio" and reported in toto in The Congressional Record of Aug. 9, 1965, is an absolute gem of research and composition. The lyrics of "Darling Hellie Gray" were based upon a true tale of two run-away slaves, Hellie Gray and her dying sweetheart, who had stopped at the Hanby home, a station on the underground railway. The song became abolitionist propaganda, powerful, and more widely known than "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Space does not permit a detailed review of Hoover's biography of the tragic career of the Ohio country composer whose songs were sung by both Northern and Southern soldiers, and are still popular throughout the world, etc. "Up On The Housetop." He wrote 30 songs in his short 33 years and never received the acclaim or rewards he deserved.

In Earl Hoover's talk, he reveals other Ohio composers which came as a surprise to this reader; George F. Root, from Cleveland, wrote "Just Before the Battle Mother," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp the Boys Are Marching," "Battle Cry of Freedom" and many others. Dan Emmett, of Mt. Vernon, Ohio, with "Dixie." Tell Tyler, Findlay, Ohio, "Down By the Old Mill Stream," and Oley Speaks, of Canal Winchester, who composed "On the Road to Mandalay."

If you can get hold of a copy of Earl's "Benjamin R. Hanby - The Stephen Foster of Ohio," do so by all means. Note: Any information about Fitz Hugh Lee's horse will be appreciated. For instance, it is known that Jefferson Davis was astride "Hellie Gray" at a grand review of Confederate troops at one time.

REPORT OF THE BOOK SALE

A thank you to the ten members who lugged in their books, sold them at bargain prices and then lugged the remainder back home. All in all, comments indicate that the affair was successful and of interest. About 125 books were offered, of which some 35,000 changed hands. Many went home with treasures.

A few books got away without leaving their slips or money behind, ironically one being "The Custer Myth," but then, there was a lot of confusion and talk as the books were passed among the browsers.

Wanted: Some one to handle the book sale next year. Present handler just moved to Peshawar.

FIRST ANNUAL CONFEDERATE HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

Another interesting event coming up next spring..April 19,20,21, 1979, at Montgomery, Alabama, "The Cradle of the Confederacy." Dedicated to the study of the history of the Confederate States, many prominent speakers and students have been engaged. Write to C. I. R. T. Associates, P.O. Box 7383, Little Rock, Ark. 72117 for details.

Ollapodria
(a potpourri of odds and ends)

- * Two states generally considered Southern, raised twice as many troops for the Union as they did for the Confederacy; Missouri, with 108,000 for the Union, 50,000 for the Confederacy; Kentucky, 80,000 to the U.S.A and 40,000 to the C.S.A.

The Marquis de Lafayette was not the only French nobleman to serve in the U.S. Army as a Major General. The Count, Regis de Trobriand, son of a general in Napoleon's army was Brevet Major General in the Union Army. In 1866 he was appointed a Colonel in the regular Army (having renounced his French citizenship), only one of 25 colonels chosen by Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant to be retained. More about this little known Union officer in a later Charger.

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For months, at the height of the war, General Lee had a pet hen which laid an egg under his cot every day - and he never forgot to leave the tent flap open for her. Lee saw to it that the hen traveled with the army, even on so fateful a campaign as the invasion that ended at Gettysburg. When he began the retreat from the field, the hen was nowhere to be found. The Commanding General joined the search for his pet, and was not content until she was discovered and perched safely in his headquarters wagon.

Burke Davis, "Our Incredible Civil War" B.K.

* * * * *

General Lee, according to a lady diarist of the day, "had a deep bass voice, very deep. He used the broad 'a' as all the ladies and gentlemen did then, but he didn't say 'gyaden (garden), or 'cyalf' (calf) as many did then."

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Footnote to the recent field trip:

Observed on the streets of Charleston, South Carolina: canvas bags fastened under the tails of the horses and mules that pulled sightseers' carriages. Inquiry revealed a city ordinance requiring this preventive street-cleaning device. It is said to have been the invention of the Japanese, who highly prized this fertilizer and wanted to be sure that it was carried home. You'll find a lot of this kind of stuff in The Charger.

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IT HAPPENED ON CHRISTMAS

Probably the best known Civil War Christmas anecdote was Sherman's wire to Lincoln: "I beg to present you, as a Christmas gift, the City of Savannah." The wire reached Washington on Christmas Eve, and the President released it for publication Christmas morning, pleased to share the gift with the whole country.

The mule skinner, or handler, was also a breed unto himself. It was common knowledge that mules would respond only to the strongest kind of language, and frequently only to a rawhide whip. Some claimed that mules would not pull a pound unless spoken to in a peculiar manner.

This may be illustrated by a personal experience (not during the C.W., but in Marion County, Fla., back in the twenties.) My father and I were traveling down a sandy road in his open touring car when we came across a strange sight in the middle of the road. A colored driver was standing there cursing one of a team of mules which sat ludicrously on its haunches, like a big dog, ears twitching, looking straight ahead. His skinny teammate stood unperturbed beside him, the dilapidated wagon overloaded, up to the hubs in sand.

The mule-skinner started to beat the balky beast without mercy, drawing blood on its back. Father yelled to the fellow that he'd give him a dollar for the whip. Without hesitation, the long woven whip, attached to a worn wooden handle was immediately passed over. With a grunt the mule got to his feet and the team moved the wagon on with no apparent effort. Dem mules jes KNOW.

"Kick of a mule" is an expression that still denotes "powerful," be it a wallop or a swallow.

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LOTTERIES

With certain odors beginning to emanate from the Ohio Lottery, one is reminded of some in the past.

In 1776 The Continental Congress voted a lottery to raise \$10 million to help finance the Revolution. There were to be 1 million tickets selling for prices from \$10 to \$40 with prizes ranging from \$50 to \$50,000. The scheme was abandoned, however, when it was realized that the population was less than 4 million, and about the only people who could afford even the \$10 tickets were the wealthier Tories.

The only other lottery authorized by the U.S. Congress was the Lottery Act of 1823 permitting a group of professionals to run a lottery for the beautification of Washington, D. C.. Thousands of tickets were sold, but the operators absconded and were never caught. The top prize winner of \$100,000 sued the City of Washington in the U.S. Supreme Court and WON. After that both crooked and legitimate lotteries were rampant.

We have read of the sad spectacle of naive old Generals Longstreet and Johnson after the C.W. lending dignity to a Louisiana lottery with their weekly appearances at the drawings...until scandal closed it.

In 1890 Congress barred the distribution of lottery tickets through the U.S. mails. Waste, political appointments and the corruptive influence of easy money kill most lotteries eventually. (Anyway, they are lousy odds.)

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No stories about humorous incidents or experiences have been sent in by members who served in the Armed Forces. We know there are a lot of them out there ... how about sharing these memories...(any old war). And don't forget...we need new members, so - bring a guest.

! ! ! ! !

Next month: The story of a magician who became the U.S. Army's first Air Force and introduced our first aircraft carrier. Not enough space this time.

HOW I BECAME INTERESTED IN THE CIVIL WAR

Note: In response to this question several interesting letters were received, at least a sufficient number to carry this as a regular feature for awhile...but we need more. How about sending in your answer, even a sentence or two? Thanks.

"I became interested in the CWRT through the late Ken Grant and George Farr. George was working on some original research as to how ordinary civil Law suits were tried in the Confederacy during the Unpleasantness. I worked with him a little bit on it, and it was finally delivered by George as a speech. Lord only knows what happened to the transcript because it represented original research on an interesting subject, i.e., the day-to-day business of the law courts in the South from 1861-1865 on non-military matters.

After that introduction, George asked me to write the original Cleveland CWRT Constitution, which I did and after that it has been downhill all the way, and I have enjoyed every moment of it.

I remember Ken Grant's only objection to the draft of the Constitution was that it did not absolutely forbid woman members. He wanted a clause to that effect. While this was before the federal statutes banning sex discrimination, one could see the handwriting on the wall, so I told him, "no way." Grant was a Scotsman with fairly strong views."

Charlie Clarke

"I first became interested in the Civil War after seeing "Gone With the Wind"

Name withheld on request

MULE POWER

One of our city-bred members asked for an explanation of the line in the story by a "Civil War Horse Heir," which read, "the brave Army mule - from whom, unfortunately, for scientific reasons, none of us horses can claim descent."

A mule is the result of mating a jackass to a mare. Mules are sterile and cannot reproduce their own kind. A rarer crossbreed is the "hinny", which results from mating a stallion to a female donkey. Smaller than the mule and without its characteristics, the hinny is able to reproduce.

Hundreds of thousands of mules have been bred for use by armies and farmers. They are much stronger than a horse and more durable, less prone to sickness and injury, and, like a goat, will eat anything. They were known in the Civil War, when provender was scarce, to eat rail fences, rubber blankets, shrubbery, thorns and leather boots. In one instance, when Burnside was marching from Camp Nelson to Knoxville with no forage whatsoever, the mules started to eat the wagons. Literally! Handlers had to wrap iron bands around the wagon tongues to save them.

The Army mule was a character, incomprehensible at times, with a grim humor, balking without reason, mean, and lethal from the rear. The long ears and sad expression, its horrendous rasping bray, once heard never forgotten, made this hybrid an unique animal. Slow and deliberate, invaluable in pulling power, it is doubtful whether the North and South could have floundered through the oceans of mud but for this plodding quadruped.