



The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5786 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

FEBRUARY, 1982
Fourth Lincoln Edition

213th Meeting

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 6



DATE: FEBRUARY 9th
SPEAKER: BILL STARK
CIVIL WAR CAMPS OF CLEVELAND, 1861-1865
PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB
TIME: CANTEEN 6:00 P.M. CHOW: 7:00 P.M.

With the call for volunteers in 1861, the State of Ohio swung into action and quickly established registration or recruiting stations in cities and towns throughout the state. Hundreds of young men poured in to answer this call from "Father Abraham." Rendezvous points and preliminary training centers had to be set up. These camps were situated in such places as Cincinnati, Cleveland, Akron, Fremont and so on, and as the war progressed they were relocated and became more or less permanent camps to house and train thousands. The major camps around Cleveland; Camps Taylor, Wood, Cleveland, Brown and Tod, their locations in relation to today's geography, and stories about them are to be the subject of this month's talk.



Our speaker William C. Stark is known to many of our members. He often attends our meetings. Past-President of the Western Reserve Civil War Round Table, Rocky River, Bill is a member of the Cleveland Grays; was Curator of the 103rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Memorial Foundation in Sheffield Lake and its President 1975-1977. He is a teacher, and a Ranger in the Cleveland Metroparks and a member of the Fairview Park Historical Society. Does this give you slight idea of our speaker's qualifications? Fellow Civil War buff Stark graduated from John Marshall High in 1965, got his B.A. in History at the University of Toledo, and a Masters in Teaching Art at John Carroll; and in 1975 was involved in the Ohio Peace Officer Basic Training Program, and is currently working on military history entries, mostly Cleveland's Civil War history, for the Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, to be published in 1984.

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE



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Non-resident members, \$5.00

Last Month's Meeting

About 20 members and guests braved the icy winds and bone-chilling temperatures to see Director John Ford's epic cavalry picture, "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," starring John Wayne.

It was easy to see why this movie won the Academy Award for Cinematography in 1949. Ford set out to capture Frederick Remington's paintings of the Old West on film, and succeeded admirably.

This movie has always been my "yardstick" against which all other cavalry pictures were measured, and few,

John Wayne Rides Again

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if any, ever rated higher for action, authenticity, drama and human interest.

Highlights of the film included a virtually bloodless Indian War; a classic meeting between a veteran Cavalry captain (Wayne) and his old Indian Chief friend Pony-That-Walks, in which Wayne agreed to go buffalo hunting and get drunk together, resulting in a priceless bar-room brawl scene.

Valor was always rewarded with "Good job, corporal (or whatever), keep that up and in 5 or 6 years you'll make sergeant."

Those present thought it was great.

-John Harkness

* * *

THE WISDOM OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

One of the pleasures and privileges of editing your monthly newsletters has been the open sesame of choosing whatever subjects appeal to me personally. Of course, this has always had to be tempered, as any editor knows, by what he thinks his readers might also find of interest.

The study of Abraham Lincoln, his character, his place and part in American history; the facts and fallacies of his legend have fascinated people for generations, not only in this country but throughout the world. Books about the man are without number.

That is why each year I have collected odds and ends about Lincoln from whatever sources I come across to put into our February issues of the Charger. When you study his life, his sayings, his writings; what others have recorded about him, he comes alive to you and you know him, not as a myth, but as a humble human fellow American whose ideals you can grasp and try to emulate.

- Stu Cramer

MARCH MEETING SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO....

Speaker: Dr. James (Bud) Robinson, probably the most popular Civil War speaker in the country! Topic: "The Model Team of Lee and Jackson." Ask those who have heard him! Don't miss this one.

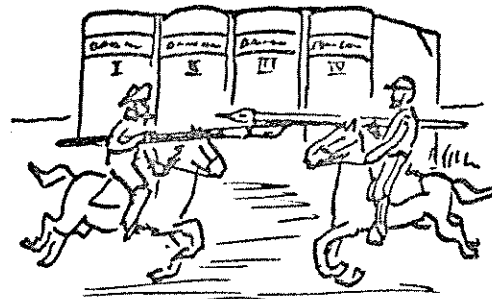
FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

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THIS IS THE W O R D

Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. The Century Co., N.Y., 1887

Here is a book that all of us have read parts of probably many times. So, you may ask, why review it? Well, this is not exactly a review. It is simply a few comments on a unique historical work.



Unique? Yes, because it is the one great exception to the truism that histories of battles are written by the victors, the reviews of the vanquished being fogged by the views of the conquerors. Not so here, for in this formidable work both have their say. You hear both Grant and Beauregard on Shiloh, McClellan and Joe Johnston on the Peninsular campaign; Pope and Longstreet on Bull Run and scores of lesser participants of both sides on scores of conflicts. It's all here and I doubt there is anywhere on the endless shelf of history books another about battles where both contenders tell their stories completely without political bias.

How did this wonderful book come about? We are forever in the debt to a Century magazine editor named Clarence Clough Buel, who had a truly dynamic idea, and his fellow editors who set the iron standards for the articles. Working with the War Department, which was finishing the Official Records, consulting with both Northern and Southern historical societies, interviewing survivors, walking the battlefields, mapping and photographing them, the editors established the basic physical facts. But the real genius of these men was the persuasive powers they exercised with the authors of the articles. It was a master stroke of diplomacy to persuade writers, so recently come from the fields of valor, to revise and rewrite and to stick to the absolutely no politics dictum.

Happily, the timing of the book was exactly right. The soldiers were ready to do as the editors demanded. A few years earlier their blood would have been too hot and a few years later their memories would be clouded and they would have fallen into glamorous romancing.

This is a ponderous work. The more than 3,000 words in four volumes I have before me make a package heavy enough to stun a mule and anyone who claims to have read it from cover to cover I would approach with the same skepticism I attach to cover-to-cover Bible reader claimants.

On these pages artillery does not reverberate, powder smoke does not obscure the fields, there are no scenes of blood or dusty marches or cold or pall of tragedy, no dash, no valor or skulking, no bright flags. For these, read the other books on that lengthening shelf. Here are the facts. And here Battles and Leaders will head the parade for anyone who wants to read the plain unadorned truth of these battles told in the words of both the conqueror and the conquered.

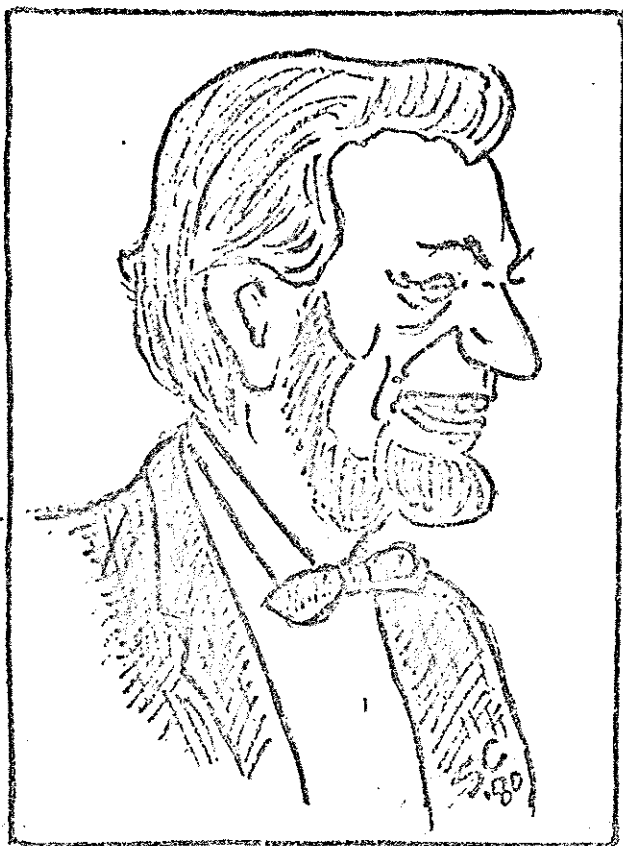
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Research on the Civil War is turning up almost unbelievable facts. Several instances, for example, have been found of a soldier who did not have a brother on the other side.

NYCWRT Newsletter

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Thanks to reader Bob Snodell of Chicago for the professional heads.



Offered champagne on a boat trip Lincoln refused, saying, "No, my friend, I've seen too many men in my time, seasick ashore from drinking that same article."

He always said he preferred "Adam's Ale."

* * * *

Plagued by a horde of applicants for patronage, Lincoln admitted an old acquaintance who was applying for doorkeeper to the House. He was one of those impossible individuals who would not fit into a place where any responsibility whatever would be involved; so the President made his dismissal in this kindly manner:

"So you want to be doorkeeper to the House, eh?"

"Yes, Mr. President."

"Have you ever been a doorkeeper? Had any experience as a doorkeeper?"

"Well, no - no actual experience, sir."

"Any theoretical experience? Any instructions as a doorkeeper?"

"Um - no."

"Ever attended any lectures on doorkeeping?"

"No."

"Have you ever read any textbooks on the subject?"

"No. Don't read very much."

"Ever conversed with anyone who has read such a book?"

"No."

"Well then, my friend, don't you see you haven't a single qualification for this important post?"

"Yes, I do," said the applicant, and took his leave, almost gratefully.

* * * * *

The Secretary of War was continually complaining about Lincoln's weakness in granting pardons and showing clemency when the lives of condemned men were at stake. A typical order was: "Colonel Mulligan: If you haven't shot Barney D--- yet--don't."

* * * * *

Lincoln describes himself: "I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

* * * * *

Above from Little Known Lincoln Humor by Louis A. Warren. 1917

An army officer, related to a very distinguished general, reluctant to ask the President for a promotion, implored the aid of one of the President's friends. This gentleman, presenting the case, said that the officer in question had remarked that his own relationship to General ___ was a disadvantage, for it kept him down. Lincoln jumped from his chair, and, shrieking with laughter, said: "Keeps him down? Keeps him down? That's all that keeps him up!"

- Noah Brooks

Sometimes ^{* * *} Lincoln's humor was "sharp as an Illinois ax."

---L. said of a lawyer he didn't like; "He can compress the most words into the smallest ideas better than any man I know."

---L., commenting on an elaborate funeral of an army officer, "If the General had known what a big funeral we would have, he'd have died years ago."

-Smithsonian Magazine

REMINISCENCES OF BANNERMAN'S

(Continued from last month)

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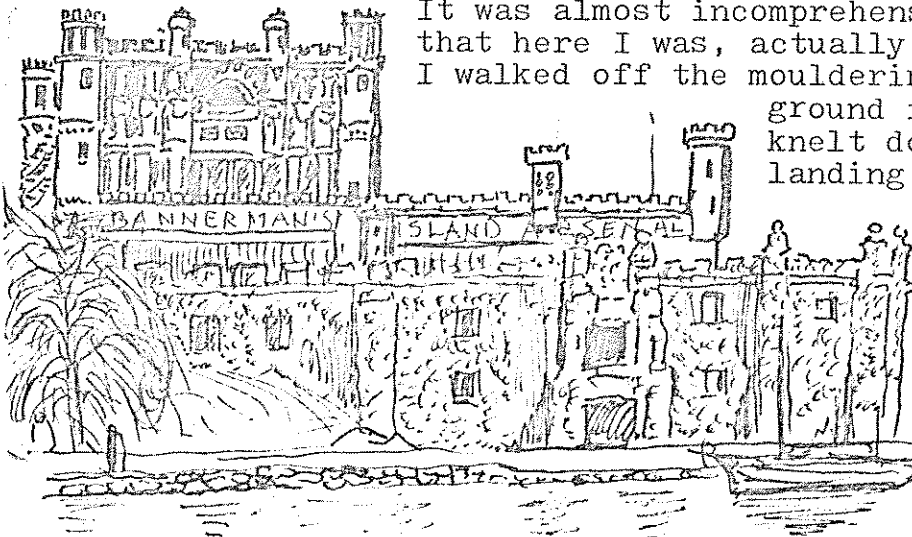
by Frank Gillen

Several years later I went back to Bannerman's, a wiser and calmer person, and had a very pleasant visit to this store of my dreams, although they didn't seem the least impressed by the fact that I had come all the way from Ohio to see them. I got some nice old relics and wandered about enjoying the huge variety of military junk, but was not permitted above the first floor, nor allowed to go more than 15 or 20 feet into the first floor.

Not long after that visit the building was torn down, and the tales I heard of truck loads of relics and building materials being hauled to the East River to be dumped made one shudder. I heard of collectors chasing after the dump trucks tossing off sponges, rammers, cannon worms, etc. on the street as the trucks pulled away. There is one tale of the demolition contractor allowing collectors to make one trip in and take all they could carry out at one time for \$5! I talked to one fellow who told me he personally dragged a Civil War limber chest over half full of brass military insignia down several flights of stairs into the street, almost rupturing himself in the process. This field day was soon over, and Bannerman's opened a new store in Blue Point, Long Island, devoted only to mail order business. Eventually it was sold by the family to the former manager, a Jim Hoga.

More years passed and I became acquainted with people who had actually been on Bannerman's Island, sleeping on the grounds, and taking away sacks of relics. (There was a great explosion and fire, destroying the arsenal in 1920.) Their descriptions made me glow with excitement, and I thought it would be like a visit to the very gates of Valhalla to go there.

I finally met Don Heckaman and Fred Schuhle, fellow members of the Cleve. Civil War Round Table, and we arranged to make the trip in my station wagon. They obtained the necessary permission, and we made a rendezvous with "Clem," the caretaker, who ferried us from the mainland in his tin motor-boat. That was in the early 50's.



It was almost incomprehensible for me to believe that here I was, actually stepping onto this island.

I walked off the mouldering concrete dock; the ground felt spongy and strange. I knelt down (feeling like Columbus landing in the New World, as shown on the 1892-3 postage stamp)...noticing that the ground was strewn with pieces of leather, rotting in the weeds.

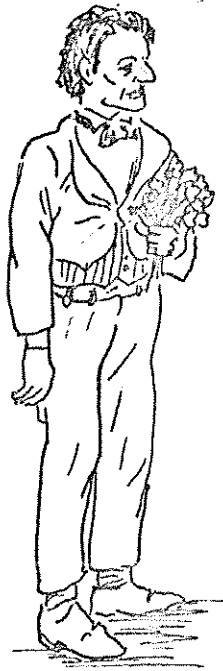
The six-story castle was a magnificent ruin, so grand it was a sight I shall never forget. There were sally ports, battlement towers, moat and moat lodge, port-

cullis, almost all of it of cast concrete, now covered with a layer of vines. (I returned 3 or 4 times and was always stunned by the sheer beauty of these ruins.) While the 5th and 6th floors were open to the sky, with pigeons flying in and out of the roofless upper rooms, there were still 4 floors to explore. With no more time to reflect, I went in the big front door, out of the bright sunshine into the dark, clutching a burlap bag in one hand and a 6 volt seal-beam light in the other. It was cool and dank, and dark, dark, dark...with the smells of old leather, dust, decay and the acrid odor of burned wood and metal. I felt very much alone in that deep darkness although I could hear the faint and distant noises made by Don and Frank. The room I was in seemed enormous, and I caught my breath when my torch revealed

Continued next month

LINCOLN THE LOVER

Somewhere back in your past is an old girlfriend(s), and if your good wife ever objects to your mentioning her (or them,) tell her about Abe Lincoln - he had 16! That is, after he became famous, 16 claimed that distinct-
ion. Remember that in those days of Lincoln's early life in Illinois there were a lot more young swains seeking a wife than there were girls to go around.



Here is a list of those who claimed he had fallen for their charms.....

Polly Richardson claimed to be Abe's first sweetheart. Marriage records show she was married on March 15, 1821, when Lincoln was 12-years old. Scratch Polly.

Elizabeth Tulley, born in Mercer Cty., Ky., met Abe at a church and they dated several months but he never proposed.

Sarah Lukins, of southern Indiana, said she could have married him, yessiree, but pressed for details she admitted that he had only taken her home from church once.

Caroline Meeker, niece of Lincoln's friend Squire Pate while the former worked as a ferryman at the mouth of the Anderson River, once slipped Abe a red ear at a corn husking bee that earned him a kiss.

Katy Roby, during Lincoln's Indiana days, got acquainted at a spelling match and he instructed her about astronomy on a moonlight night. But she married Allen Gentry, with whom Lincoln made a flatboat trip to New Orleans in 1828.

Julia Evans, daughter of James Evans of Princeton, Ind., "captured Lincoln by her beautiful face and figure," according to Jesse Weik, "but he was turned down by his ungainly and awkward appearance."

Hanna Gentry, belle of the community, noted for her amiable disposition,

(and her father was the richest man in Spencer County) claimed that she could have been Mrs. L. if "Abraham had not been so fond of onions."

Elizabeth Wood, daughter of Abe's best Indiana friend, said she was sure he wanted to become better acquainted with her, but she declined his company because of his oversized feet.

Polly Warwick, daughter of Mayor Warwick, of Macon City, Illinois, with whom Lincoln made his home for four weeks in 1830, might have developed a romance, except that she was already secretly married to one Joseph Stevens.

Martha Williams, Sagamon Cty., Ill., turned down Lincoln's formal offer of marriage "because of a previous attachment."

Ann Rutledge, about whom so much romantic drivel has been written, such as Lincoln's supposed desolation when she died. The imaginative Herndon claimed L. courted her in New Salem, but the fact is she was living with her parents in the home of John McNamer, to whom she was betrothed at the time of her death.

Mary Owens, of New Salem, Ky., was "squired" by Lincoln in 1836, and in his own writing received a proposal of marriage. Why she turned him down is not recorded.

Mary Frances Vanderberg claimed that Lincoln proposed to her in 1839 when she was living in Quincy, Ill.. She rejected him because of constant onion breath and married a Mr. Riley, of Sioux City.

Matilda Edwards, charming sister of Ninian Edwards, brother-in-law of Mary Todd. Said to be the reason for Lincoln's breaking his engagement with Mary Todd.

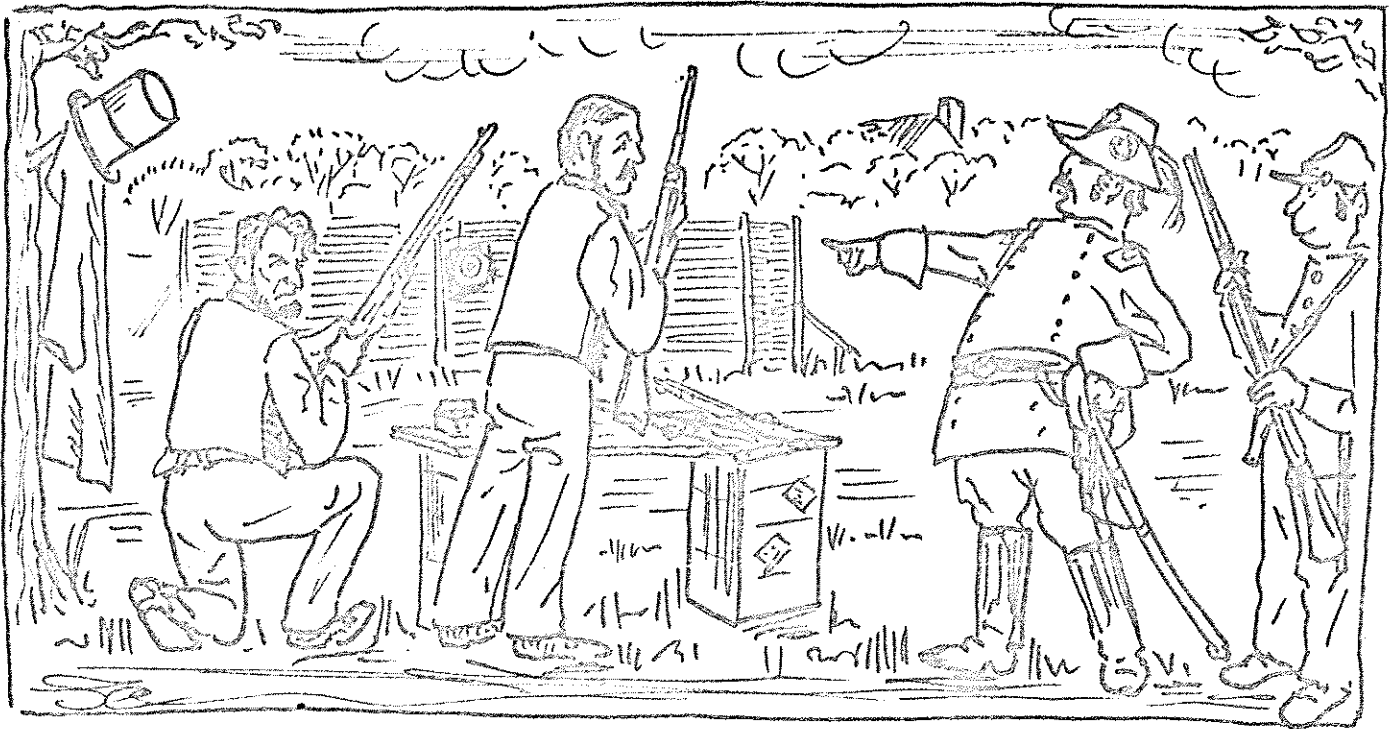
Sarah Rickard, whom Herndon claimed turned down Lincoln's proposal in 1840. Reason not given.

Mary Todd became Mrs. Lincoln and they lived happily ever after.

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NEXT MONTH: "THE TRIAL OF MARY LINCOLN," VICTIM OF A POLITICAL PLOT AND UNFAIR HISTORIANS.





Early in the war it was a common thing for the inventors and makers of new rifles, shells, armor-vests, gunboats, breech-loading cannon, and a great variety of military weapons to try to interest the President directly, often by sending him a "presentation copy." Sometimes he took great pleasure in trying them out.

One day in 1862, Lincoln and his secretary William O. Stoddard carried an armful of rifles to a spot near the Potomac, south of the White House, where they had found a pile of old lumber to use as a backstop for a target. The President, who was a very good shot, enjoyed the relaxation of competing with Stoddard, and on this day they were banging away and keeping a running score of their marksmanship.

Suddenly they were interrupted by a squad of bluecoats that had just been put on guard in that locality, and an officious second lieutenant proceeded to bawl them out, shouting his orders for them to drop their weapons and follow him.

Lincoln had been firing from a kneeling position and slowly rose to his full six feet four inches, immediately being recognized then by the soldiers as their Commander-in Chief. Without a word they all turned and fled. The President laughed heartily, and said, "Well, they might have stayed and seen the shooting."

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HONORARY DEGREES FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Knox College, Galesburg, Ill., granted Lincoln the honorary L.L.D degree on July 4, 1860. On June 26, 1860, Columbia College (now Columbia Univ. honored the new president with the same degree, L.L.B., and on Dec. 20, 1864, the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University,) granted Lincoln his third L.L.B.

- Thanks to the Milwaukee C.W.R.T.

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OUR MARCH 9TH MEETING WILL CELEBRATE THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY. BE THERE!

In 1861, Edwin Thomas Booth, who was well on his way to becoming the most noted tragedian on the American stage, made a daring rescue of an 18-year-old boy. En route from New York to Philadelphia, Booth was standing just outside his train on a crowded platform in the Penn Station at Jersey City, when the train lurched forward and a well-dressed lad, pressed by the crowd, lost his footing and fell to his feet between the platform and the cars. Edwin, an athletic young man, quickly locked one leg around a railing and, holding on with one hand, grabbed the boy by the collar and pulled him up to safety. The boy exclaimed, "What a narrow escape!" He recognized his rescuer, whom he called by name, thanking him warmly.

The one thus rescued, asked in 1908, when he was 65 and Edwin Booth had been dead 15 years, if he recalled the incident, replied that he certainly did, and recounted the details.

Two weeks after the incident, Booth was surprised to learn, through letters he received from Washington, that the young man whose life he had saved was Robert Todd Lincoln, the President's oldest son. Edwin Booth was a great admirer of Lincoln, and in his effects was a letter from his friend, Adam Badeau, in which he said that the grateful Lincolns had told him about the rescue. Booth and his young brother, John Wilkes, so intensely disagreed on "political topics" that they avoided one another. Edwin's life came close to being ruined just because he was the assassin's brother. But he never used the letters "blessing and thanking him" for saving Robert Lincoln's life.

-From American History Illustrated, June, 1979.
Thanks to Fred Gill for sending this in.

* * * * *

No piece of American money displayed the profile of an historical person until the impersonal Indian head was replaced by the likeness of Abraham Lincoln in 1909, the centennial year of his birth. In the decade after the Civil War, the output of Indian head pennies was 6,500,000 a year; during the eighties, the annual output was about 34,000,000, and in the nineties, the number for a twelve months period jumped to 80,000,000, and by 1907 the die machines turned out 108,000,000! Peanuts to what the mint is grinding out today!

* * * * *

Last month on this page we stated that Henry Morton Stanley ("Dr Livingstone, I presume?") "joined the Union ranks and finished the war in Yankee blue." Member Neil Evans, our beagle-eyed treasurer, called us on this one, and rightfully so. He pointed out that Richard Hall, in his Stanley (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1975) on page 139, indicates that Stanley, with his friend Lewis H. Noe deserted from the U.S.S. Minnesota on Feb. 10, 1865, while the frigate was at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. According to Noe, Stanley forged a pass out of the dockyard, put the commodore's name on it and as soon as they were clear of the gates they stripped off their uniforms, put on civilian clothes which they had purchased from naval carpenters who had been overhauling the Minnesota. Henry Morton Stanley fled to New York City, where he worked for a lawyer named Lyons. By April 14th, the date of Lincoln's assassination, he was seeking a position as a journalist, and at the end of May, he was out of New York and headed west by train and stagecoach.

So Stanley did not finish the war in Yankee blue: rather, he was a deserter from the U.S. Navy and a turncoat from the Confederate service. Thanks, Neil; we appreciate your interest in setting our records straight.

