



# THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

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JANUARY, 1977

Vol. 20 No. 5

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----- 168th Meeting -----

Date: Tuesday, January 11th  
Speaker: Prof. Allan Peskin  
Subject: "The Mind of an Assassin"  
Place: The Hermit Club, Dodge Court  
Preliminaries: 6:00 P.M.      Dinner: 7:00 P.M.

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Why was Guiteau wackeau\* ??? Cuyahoga county's gift to the presidency, James A. Garfield, was slain by Charles J. Guiteau and it is usually believed that he was just a disappointed office seeker. Our speaker, who is a Garfield authority, has delved much deeper into the strange career and psyche of Guiteau and finds more subtle reasons that caused him to commit murder. Apparently the assassin thought he was inspired by God, that he could bind up the Union's wounds caused by the Civil War, and also gain the rightful fruits of the Northern Victory.

Allan Peskin, an associate professor of history at Cleveland State University, has researched and written extensively on Garfield. He will be glad to answer questions on his military career.

Peskin has also written about the presidential election of 1876 and the ensuing "compromise", the Reconstruction, Stephen A. Mallory, and the Underground Railroad. He teaches the course in the American Civil War & Reconstruction at Cleveland State.

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\* wackeau - a gallicized variant of wacko, (meaning buggy)

SNEAKY END RUN BY "THE CRIMSON TIDE" (1862 version)

In August, 1862, Moelfre Bay, Northern Anglessey, Northern Wales, was the scene of the wreck-that-never-was which cost the British taxpayer 15 1/2 million dollars compensation to the United States government. The "USS. TUSCARORA" had been sent to the Welsh Coast to keep an eye on the steam barque No. 290 which was being built by Lairdes of Birkenhead, to the specifications of Confederate Agent James Bulloch.

It was obvious to the protesting United States Ambassador that the #290 had been designed for rapid conversion into a warship and the "TUSCARORA" was detailed to ensure that she never joined the Confederate Navy. However, the US Consul at Liverpool had no cause for alarm when the #290, now named "ENRICA" steamed away one fine July morning. His spies had informed him that several of Liverpool's leading citizens and their ladies had been invited aboard for the "ENRICA'S" first sea trials in Liverpool Bay, during which the Mersey tug "Hercules" would be standing by as a safety precaution.

Later in the day, the Consul was told that the tug had returned alone, her tiny deck crowded with smartly dressed women, their angry husbands and the Agent Bulloch. At first the Consul hoped that the "ENRICA" had met with some disaster but before long, he discovered that he had fallen for the simplest of ruses. Working twenty-four hours ahead of the "TUSCARORA" Bulloch and a crew of Confederate sailors calmly made their way to Moelfre Bay to board the "ENRICA" and to sail her into the Atlantic, where she became the famous CSS "ALABAMA."

-Grape & Canister-Cincinnati CWRT

INVERSE PECKING ORDER

In his Reminiscences of the Civil War, General John B. Gordon wrote of the old farmer near Appomattox who, after the surrender, decided to give employment to any of Lee's veterans who might wish to work a few days for food and small wages. He divided the ex-soldiers into squads according to rank. A neighbor asked him about the different squads: "Who are those men working over there?"

"Them is privates, sir, of Lee's army."

"Well, how do they work?"

"Very fine, sir. First-rate workers."

"Who are those in the second group?"

"Them is lieutenants and captains, and they works farily well but not as good as the privates."

"I see you have a third squad. Who are they?"

"Them is colonels."

"Well, what about the colonels? How do they work?"

"Now, neighbor", answered the farmer, "you'll never hear me say one word agin any man who fit in the Southern Army. But I ain't a-gwine to hire no generals!"

-Frankfort, Ky. CWRT

THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

FOUNDED FEBRUARY 19, 1957

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OL' KAINTUCK WAS REALLY PRO-UNION

An interesting talk was given to the Frankfort, Ky. CWRT by Lowell H. Harrison, professor of history at Western Kentucky University. He gave the answers to four "persistent" questions about Kentucky's role in the Civil War.

"Wasn't Kentucky Really Pro-Confederacy?" was the first question addressed by the speaker. According to Harrison, the staunch support later given by Kentucky to Southern Democrats has given rise to an exaggerated belief in Kentuckians' wartime allegiance to the Confederate cause.

Standards which can reasonably be used as gauges of sentiment clearly label Kentucky a border state, Harrison said. As evidence, he listed the 1860 Congressional elections in which Unionists captured 71 per cent of the vote in Kentucky, and records on military enlistment which reveal that 90,000 Kentuckians went into the Union Army whereas only 24,000 to 40,000 men from this state served in the Confederate Army.

Secondly, could Albert Sidney Johnston have held Kentucky? "No," answered Harrison, explaining that the Confederate general lacked the resources to successfully resist a Union advance, thus assuring that a retreat at sometime or other was inevitable. Harrison went on to say that the army commanded by Johnston in Kentucky numbered only 27,000, which was far too small to hold a long line devoid of strong, natural anchoring points.

Harrison said Johnston was unable to obtain neither additional troops nor the horses and supplies they would have required. But perhaps most important, he noted, the Confederate leader failed to give his situation the personal attention it demanded. Johnston, said Harrison, continued to concentrate on the Bowling Green area and "the resultant comedy of errors made a number of Confederate generals look like ... the Marx Brothers."

Next, could Kirby Smith and Braxton Bragg have taken and held Kentucky in 1862? "There is little doubt that, with a little more professionalism, they could have taken the state," according to Harrison, but holding it would have been another matter entirely. Harrison cited the lack of organization and teamwork between the two Confederate generals as the explanation for their failure to take Kentucky.

Finally, what went wrong with John Hunt Morgan? Harrison said a number of factors contributed to the decline of Morgan's career--among them being his marriage to a young woman who displayed intense anxiety for her husband's safety; the departure from Morgan's command of the Englishman, Col. George St. Leger Grenfell; and the capture and imprisonment of Morgan's tactical genius, his brother-in-law Basil Duke.

#### TEN TOP TOMES ... A CIVIL WAR "HIT PARADE"

If you could have just 10 titles in your Civil War library, what would they be.

That question was put recently to members of the Chicago Round Table and other students of the war by a past president of the Chicago group. Answers were received from 274 persons. Here, in order, are their favorite works on the conflict:

1. Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (4 vols.)
2. Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant (2 vols.)
3. R. E. Lee (Freeman, 4 vols.)
4. The Civil War Day by Day (Long)
5. West Point Atlas of American Wars (Esposito, 2 vols.)
6. Life of Billy Yank-Life of Johnny Reb (Wiley, 2 vols.)
7. A Tour Guide to the Civil War (Cromie)
8. Sherman: Fighting Prophet (Lewis)
9. A Stillness at Appomattox (Catton)
- 10-11. (tie) Abraham Lincoln (Sandburg, 6 vols.)  
and Abraham Lincoln (Thomas)

Rounding out the top 20 titles as disclosed by the Chicago poll were the American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War; Chickamauga; Bloody Battle in the West (Tucker); Ordeal of the Union (Nevins); Photographic History of the Civil War (Miller, ed.); Lee's Lieutenants (Freeman); The Civil War--A Narrative (Foote); Gettysburg (Coddington); From Manassas to Appomattox (Longstreet), and Arms and Equipment of the Civil War (Coggins).

#### DOUBLE BINGO!!

The American tradition of rifle marksmanship began in the Revolution and was epitomized by the legendary Tim Murphy who, at Saratoga, at a range of 300 yards, picked off Burgoyne's aide-de-camp with his second shot and General Simon Fraser with his third!

During the Civil War, Berdan's Sharpshooters and similar units carried on the tradition of makin every shot count.

### TWO MEMBERS SLATED FOR TALKS ELSEWHERE

On January 12, Earl Hoover will speak on the "Western Reserve" before the Mayfield Township Historical Society. On February 9, Ken Callahan will speak to the group about his "Gettysburg Maps".

This society meets in the Mayfield Village City Hall, located at SOM Center and Wilson Mills Roads. Meetings are at 8:00 P.M., and Round Table members are welcome to attend.

### LINCOLN'S FIFTH WHEEL -- THE SANITARY COMMISSION

(This article by fellow member Ray Swanson ties in with Guy Dicarlo's talk at our last meeting since Mother Bickerdyke served with the Sanitary Commission.)

Soon after Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers it became evident that aid for soldiers in various forms was badly needed. A number of women's organizations sprang up in Northern cities including Cleveland which culminated in the formation of the Womens Central Association of Relief. After being snubbed by the Army Medical Bureau, four of the leaders including Dr. Henry Bellows, a minister and Dr. Elisha Harris, a physician went to Washington to enlist the help of President Lincoln and Secretary of War Cameron.

It was decided to form a United States Sanitary Commission with a governing body of 21 commissioners on June 21, 1861. Secretary Cameron was extremely suspicious of it and insisted that it confine its efforts to the volunteers and the Navy thus excluding the Regular Army. Lincoln signed the bill passed by Congress creating the Commission with reluctance stating, "a novelty like this might become the fifth wheel to the coach." His attitude of skepticism was widely reflected in official Washington. No provision for government funding of the Commission was ever made and throughout the war it depended solely on voluntary contributions from cities, towns, and villages from all over the nation.

The Army Medical Bureau contained a number of hidebound, non-progressive physicians and surgeons who made little or no effort to keep up with the latest medical and surgical techniques developed in recent European wars. The Bureau strictly followed the Army Regulations and often refused to cooperate with the Commission. However, because the Medical Bureau in many cases had not the foresight to order ahead, it was often obliged to depend on the Sanitary Commission to furnish the necessary materials, especially after a great battle.

Sanitary inspectors were appointed to travel throughout the armies and take note of the health conditions. There were numerous things to be corrected. For example, originally, soldiers had to cook their own food and in most cases the results were not good. It was found that the difference between well cooked digestible food and poorly cooked food consumed by a regiment during three months service in the field equalled a difference of forty per cent of its available strength at the

end of that period. Efforts were made by the Sanitary Commission to teach the soldiers how to cook but with indifferent success. Not until March, 1863, did Congress pass laws requiring that cooking be done by specifically hired cooks with officers held responsible for supervision of the results.

A visit from the paymaster always improved the fighting stamina wrote a Sanitary inspector. The Sanitary agent often followed the paymaster throughout the regiments and would take any amount on the spot; he would then deposit the sums of money in savings banks in the various cities or towns in the names of designated persons. Such practice also increased the popularity of the Sanitary Commission with the cities and towns as they got the money not the sutlers. Fifty-seven per cent of the men in 200 regiments sent home a large part of their pay, perhaps from one half to three quarters of it.

The Army Medical Bureau was supposed to provide all medicines, bandages, ambulances, hospitals, and railroad cars suitable for transportation of the wounded to base hospitals with the surgeons and men necessary to man them. In actual practice, after a major battle, much of the supplies, medicine and personnel were provided for by the Sanitary Commission over the fierce opposition of the Medical Bureau which was very jealous of its' authority.

In December, 1861, Commissioner Olmstead reported that out of 200 regiments the hospitals were as follows: 105 were good, 52 were indifferent or tolerable, 26 were bad while 14 regiments had no hospitals. He found surgical instruments were especially poor and often useless. Nursing was bad; attendants were negligent and nurses were not employed for night duty. After the approval of women for nurses in July, 1861, the situation improved although Congress had grudgingly voted a pay scale of only 40 cents per day and maintenance for the nurses. They were put under the exclusive direction of medical officers.

During the Civil War, five men died from disease for every two who died from wounds. Hundreds of gallons of quinine and large quantities of vaccine virus was supplied by the Sanitary Commission to combat the ravages of malaria and smallpox. Many front line doctors and surgeons had cordial relations with the Sanitary Commission and often ignored the restrictive orders and red tape of the Medical Bureau in regard to Commission requests.

The accomplishments of the Sanitary Commission were closely watched in Europe and were highly praised. When the International Red Cross was organized many of its regulations and practices were adopted from the experiences of the United States Sanitary Commission.

Shortly after the War, the Sanitary Commission was disbanded. However, the ordinary soldiers both North and South were always grateful for the aid and comfort provided by the Sanitary Commission in helping the wounded and the able bodied during the long four years of warfare.