



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

MARCH 1967

Vol. 10 No. 6

84th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1967

SPEAKER: MR. LAWRENCE A. POMEROY JR.

SUBJECT: "THE CIVIL WAR - A VIEW FROM ALTITUDE 780 FEET"

PLACE: THE UNIVERSITY CLUB, 40th & EUCLID AVENUE

PRELIMINARIES: 6 PM DINNER 7 PM

LADIES NIGHT

TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT. . . . Gentlemen, once each year we invite our ladies fair to join us. March 14 will be the night this year. We are a month earlier this year due to other commitments. Also note that we are returning again to the University Club. This is also due other commitments on the part of our regular meeting place the Hermit Club. We will be returning there in April. So fill out the attached reservation slip and return it with your check to our treasurer as soon as possible. I don't need to stress that we must have an accurate count for an affair such as this. Return it as quickly as you can.

OUR SPEAKER

MR. LAWRENCE A. POMEROY JR

Mr. Lawrence A. Pomeroy Jr. is a native Clevelander. He is an executive with the National Castings Company. He is also the Executive Vice President of the Great Lakes Historical Society. He is the assistant editor of the Society's publication INLAND SEAS.

An unusual approach to Cleveland and the Civil War will be our speaker's theme. A blending of the then and now. Mr. Pomeroy's intense interest in transportation, especially in rail and ships, will provide the basis for his talk. He has worked long and hard to provide us and our ladies with a most interesting and entertaining evening. The intriguing title will be left to your imagination until Mr. Pomeroy releases the suspense with his talk.

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

"This research for the anniversary of the War between the States is turning up almost unbelievable situations. Several instances, for example, have been found of a soldier who did not have a brother on the other side." (HARDTACK - West Richfield, Ohio CWRT)

THE CLEVELAND BULLETIN BOARD

CIVIL WAR NAVAL CHRONOLOGY

The Department of the Navy has issued six books entitled "Civil War Naval Chronology." These books are available from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20402 and the price of each part is:

Part I	(1861)	\$.25
Part II	(1862)	.60
Part III	(1863)	1.00
Part IV	(1864)	.75
Part V	(1865)	.75
Part VI	Cumulative Index & Special Studies	2.50

These are wonderful additions to any library and are strongly recommended. This chronology was prepared by the U.S. NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION under Rear Admiral E.M. Eller (ret.). It has special articles, cumulative index, and many fine photographs showing what life was like at sea during the war, plus drawings, maps, and diagrams. An unusual section has reproductions of naval sheet music. A letter from Dr. William May who identified the body of John Wilkes Booth is reproduced. Some eyewitness stories from journals are printed. There are pictures of blockade runners. The Chronology received an Award of Distinction from the Civil War Centennial Commission and is one of the outstanding productions of the centennial years.

The supply is limited so act quickly. Rules of the Government Printing Office are that remittances be made in advance of shipment and by check or money order payable to the Superintendent of Documents.

For those interested I will have the first five parts at our next meeting.

EXPANDED INTEREST

The small, but closely knit and faithful CWRT of Colorado discussed the possibility of expanding the realm of interest for the group to include the American Revolution. After considerable discussion the group decided to remain the Civil War Round Table.

COLLEGE DEGREE

FROM HENRY BASS' monthly newsletter, Dear Everybody: "During this tour I was told of a luncheon held the week before in New York attended by MacKinlay Kantor, Bruce Catton, Herb Kann, Ralph Newman, and Carl Haver. The discussion turned to education. To the surprise of all, not one possessed a college degree. But in the group were three Pulitzer prize winners and a total of thirty-five honorary doctorates." (CHICAGO CWRT)

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

A Virginia farmer during the war was unfortunately situated in the middle of changing battle lines. A raid on his stock and crops by retreating Yanks would soon be followed by a visit from pillaging Rebs-- and vice versa. One day, the dust of blue-coat cavalry still hanging in his yard, he was set upon by a Confederate scouting party. "Name your allegiance," demanded a grizzled sergeant. "Well, I ain't took no sides," moaned the weary farmer, "but, I'll be doggoned if both sides ain't took me."

(From: "General Orders", Cincinnati CWRT)

THE COURIER
of
THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

FOUNDED FEBRUARY 19, 1957

PRESIDENT Dr. WM. SCHLESINGER
VICE PRESIDENT. FRANK A. MORAN
SECRETARY GUY DI CARLO JR.
TREASURER DONALD A. HECKAMAN

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TERMS EXPIRING 1967: WM. HUGHES
PIERCE O'CONNOR
1968: JOHN W. CULLEN JR.
FRANK SAXTON

EDITOR, NEWSLETTER. .GUY DICARLO JR...BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO

WHEN CANNON FIRST BLAZED AT AIRMEN

by Lt. Col. Willard L. Jones
TIMES-PICAYUNE ROTO MAGAZINE
AUGUST 19, 1956

The official statement of the United States Army proclaims that its antiaircraft artillery originated October 10, 1917--in France during World War I. But a closer look at history reveals that the Washington Artillery of New Orleans probably inaugurated American antiaircraft fire during the War Between the States.

To say a closer look is putting it lightly. The story is all but buried in the "Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies" (published in 1899), in William Miller Owen's "In Camp and Battle with the Washington Artillery of New Orleans" (1885) and in the yellowed papers stored in the National Archives and the Library of Congress.

That the target was not an airplane but an observation balloon is immaterial. It was an aircraft used in war.

The balloon service was started with the personal encouragement of President Abraham Lincoln. The need for such a service was shown soon after that war started. The Union army had marched forth from Washington, D.C., to try to scatter the Confederate forces massed along Bull Run, a stream that ran little more than 20 miles away at Manassas, Va. On July 21, 1861, a Union army returned much quicker than it had started out, with the Confederates in hot pursuit.

The victors pushed down the Potomac river and even threw shells at the lock houses along the Chesapeake and Ohio canal in Maryland, within earshot of the Union capital. Rumors ran through the Blue ranks that Gen Joseph E. Johnston was massing his men for an assault on Washington. Gen George Brinton McClellan, commander of the Union forces, had no idea of when or where to meet the threat. The question that worked up more sweat than the August heat was: Where are the Rebs?

To get an answer, McClellan sent Prof. T.S.C. Lowe and his balloon across the Potomac to Arlington, Va. Prof Lowe had shown the practicality of aeronautics in military service by experiments in and around Washington earlier in the summer. The army employed him to construct a balloon of the best India silk, containing about 25,000 cubic feet of gas--the first substantial war balloon ever built.

Before his own use of balloons for military observation from the air, Prof Lowe knew of only two instances of their employment. The first was at Fleurus, Belgium, during the French Revolutionary wars in 1794. The enemy shot at the balloon but it is not clear whether the fire was from artillery or small arms. The second instance was at Solferino, Italy, in 1859. Again the users were the French.

In each case the balloon was on the side of the victors. Unfortunately for Prof Lowe and the Union, however, the Washington Artillery broke the chain. As minor an engagement as it was in the overall picture of the war, the first recorded use of cannon against aircraft in the history of the United States was a Confederate victory.

Prof Lowe decided to ascend at Ball's Cross Roads, Va., on the torrid afternoon of August 29, 1861. It didn't take him long to find an unsettling sight. On Munson's hill, scarcely two miles away, a Confederate artillery battery was in position. More particularly, the professor was looking down the throat of an enemy six-pounder.

The distance from Ball's Cross Roads to Munson's Hill is 3960 yards. Because the Washington Artillery did not have a cannon believed capable of that range, there has been some doubt that the New Orleans unit could have fired upon the balloon. The balloon was raised from a point south of Ball's Cross Roads, however, and tests of Confederate field pieces at the Aberdeen, Md., proving grounds have indicated that these cannons could fire a greater distance than contemporary range tables give them credit for.

Lowe had aroused the most pugnacious instincts of artillerymen. Gunners always have taken a dim view of anyone who spots their carefully selected positions since this is usually a prelude to counterbattery fire besides being a source of valuable intelligence of the disposition of the rest of their force. The immediate reaction, therefore, of the artillery Lowe saw was to try to knock him out of the sky.

This is what the Confederates proceeded to do with a will. Lowe didn't know then, and much less cared, but he was looking at the guns of the Second Company of the Washington Artillery, composed of the cream of New Orleans--well-to-do, for the most part, self equipped men.

They were commanded by a 23-year-old Virginian and a former West Point cadet, Lt. Thomas L. Rosser. The young officer was to change from the artillery to the cavalry and rise to wear the wreathed stars of major general before the peace. At Munson's Hill he made anti-aircraft history. That his rifled six-pounder was not designed for use against aircraft did not deter him in the least. He opened fire.

He later wrote a friend: "We fired at the enemy's balloon with one of our rifled guns a few days ago. It was pulled down immediately and has not been sent up since. Two prisoners taken the night after report that the ball came within 10 feet of the thing and frightened (Lowe) almost out of his senses."

In his own account, Lowe wrote: "The enemy opened their batteries on the balloon and several shots passed by it and struck the ground beyond. These shots were the nearest to the US capital that had been fired by the enemy."

The professor was excited. His use of the word "batteries" proves it. Careful research has not established that any battery except Rosser's fired at him or was in range to fire.

The net result was that a very nervous Lowe let the gas out of his balloon and retreated to Washington. For about two years Lowe continued to use his balloons for observation. The Confederates continued to shoot at them. A study of the Federal Air Service gives details of hundreds of flights, usually at altitudes of 1000 to 1400 feet.

Union Gen Fitz-John Porter took an involuntary ride over the Confederate lines when his ground crew was so upset by the enemy fire that they let Porter's balloon get away. The wind was from the north and Porter got a much closer look at the Gray positions than he had bargained for.

A moving aerial target was too much for the crude fire control systems of the 1860s. And, fortunately for the general's peace of mind, a shift of wind brought him safely back to the Union lines. (SEE ARTICLE... "THE FIRST AMERICAN WAR-TIME AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE" FOR MORE DETAILS.....)

THE FIRST AMERICAN WAR-TIME AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE

Professor Thaddeus Lowe was known as the Chief Aeronaut and head of the Balloon Department of the Army of the Potomac. He was undoubtedly the first man to send telegraphic messages from a captive balloon to the ground.

Lowe's balloons usually were tethered to a cable wound around a windlass. But on one occasion the cable broke and a prominent Union General made a forced trip over enemy lines, returned and landed safely. The following account of this mishap is from the narrative of a war correspondent.

"On the 11th of April, 1862, at 5 o'clock, an event at once amusing and thrilling occurred at our quarters. The Commander-in-Chief had appointed his personal and confidential friend, General Fitz John Porter, to conduct the siege of Yorktown. . . He made frequent ascensions with Lowe, and learned to go aloft alone. One day he ascended thrice, and finally seemed as cosily at home in the firmament as upon the solid earth. It is needless to say that he grew careless, and on this particular morning leaped into the car and demanded the cables to be let out with all speed. I saw with some surprise that the flurried assistants were sending up the great straining canvas with a single rope attached. The enormous bag was only partially inflated, and the loose folds opened and shut with a crack like that of a market. Nosily fitfully, the yellow mass rose into the sky, the basket rocking like a feather in the zephyr; and just as I turned aside to speak to a comrade a sound came from overhead, like the explosion of a shell, and something striking me across the face laid me flat upon the ground.

"Half blind and stunned, I staggered to my feet, but the air seemed full of cries and curses. Opening my eyes ruefully, I saw all faces turned upwards, and when I looked above,--the balloon was adrift.

"The treacherous cable, rotted with vitriol (The balloons were inflated with hydrogen generated by mixing iron filings and sulfuric acid. This chemical apparatus was transported in a horse-drawn vehicle) had snapped in twain; one fragment had been the cause of my downfall, and the other trailed, like a great entrail, from the receding car, where Fitz John Porter was bounding upward upon a Pegasus that he could neither check nor direct.

"The whole army was agitated by the unwonted occurrence. From battery No. 1, on the brink of the York, to the mouth of the Warwick river, every soldier and officer was absorbed. Far within the Confederate lines the confusion extended. We heard the enemy's alarm-guns, and directly the signal flags were waving up and down our front.

"The General appeared directly over the edge of the car. He was tossing his hand frightenedly, and shouting something that we could not comprehend. "O--pen--the--valve" called Lowe, in his shrill tones; 'climb--to--the--netting--and--reach--the--valve--rope.'

"The valve--the valve.' repeated a multitude of tongues, and all gazed with thrilling interest at the retreating hulk that still kept straight upward, swerving neither to the east nor the west.

"It was a weird spectacle,--that frail, fading oval, gliding against the sky, floating in the serene azure, the little vessel swinging silently beneath, and a hundred thousand martial men watching the loss of their brother in arms, but powerless to relieve or recover him. Had Fitz John Porter been drifting down the rapids of Niagara, he could not have been so far from human assistance. But we saw him directly, no bigger than a child's toy, clambering up the netting and for the cord. "He can't do it," muttered a man beside me; 'the wind blows the valve-rope to and fro, and only a spry, cool-headed fellow can catch it.

"We saw the General descend, and appearing again over the edge of the basket, he seemed to be motioning to the breathless hordes below, the story of his failure. Then he dropped out of sight, and when we next saw him, he was re-connoitring the Confederate works through a long black spy-glass. A great laugh went up and down the lines at this cool procedure was observed, and then a cheer of applause ran from group to group. For a moment it was doubtful that the balloon would float in either direction; it seemed to falter, like an irresolute being, and moved reluctantly southeastward, toward Fortress Monroe. A huzza, half uttered, quivered on every lip. All eyes listened, and some were dim with tears of joy. But the wayward canvas now turned due westward, and was blown rapidly toward the Confederate works. Its course was fitfully direct, and the wind seemed to veer often, as if contrary currents, conscious of the opportunity, were struggling for the possession of the daring navigator. The south wind held mastery for awhile, and the balloon passed the Federal front amid a howl of despair from the soldiery. It kept right on, over sharpshooters, rifle pits, and outworks, and finally passed as if to deliver up its freight, directly over the heights of Yorktown. The cool courage, either of heroism or despair, had seized upon Fitz John Porter. He turned his black glass upon the ramparts and masked cannon below, upon the remote camps, upon the beleaguered town, upon the guns of Gloucester Point, and upon distant Norfolk. Had he been reconnoitring from a secure perch at the tip of the moon, he could not have been more vigilant, and the Confederates probably thought this some Yankee device to peer into their sanctuary in despite of ball or shell. None of their great guns could be brought to bear upon the balloon; but there were some discharges of musketry that appeared to have no effect, and finally even these demonstrations ceased. Both armies in solemn silence were gazing aloft, while the imperturbable mariner continued to spy out the land. "The sun was now rising behind us, and roseate rays struggled up to the zenith, like the arcs made by showery bombs. They threw a hazy atmosphere upon the balloon, and the light shone through the network like the sun through the ribs of the skeleton ship in the Ancient Mariner. Then, as all looked a-ape, the air-craft 'plunged, and tacked, and veered,' and drifted rapidly toward the Federal lines again.

"The allelujah that now went up shook the spheres, and when he had regained our camp limits, the General was seen clambering up again to clutch the valve-rope. This time he was successful, and the balloon fell like a stone, so that all hearts once more leaped up, and the cheers were hushed. Cavalry rode pell-mell from several directions, to reach the place of descent, and the General's personal staff galloped past me like the wind, to be the first at his debarkation. I followed the throng of soldiery with due haste, and came up to the horsemen in a few minutes. The balloon had struck a canvas tent with great violence, felling it as by a bolt, and the General, unharmed, had disentangled himself from innumerable folds of oiled canvas, and was now the cynosure of an immense group of people. While the officers shook his hands, the rabble bawled their satisfaction in hurrahs, and a band of music marching up directly, the throng on foot and horse gave him a vociferous escort to his quarters. According to Professor Lowe, the General was not injured by his fall because "as the balloon was constantly falling the silk was kept extended, and presented so large a surface to the atmosphere that it served the purpose of a parachute, and consequently the descent was not rapid enough to be dangerous.

"I would here remark that a balloon suddenly relieved of its gas will always form half a sphere, provided it has a sufficient distance to fall in to condense a column of air under it. A 1000 feet would, I presume, be sufficiently high to effect this and to make the descent in safety." THANKS TO MEMBER LES SWIFT FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION.....

AERONAUTICS IN THE CIVIL WAR

In the 20th-century aeronautics means airplanes; in the 19th-century it meant balloons. The heavier-than-air idea was not unknown, but it was a theory, while balloons were a thrilling fact. Neither concept was American. Balloons and their military use originated in France. In England, Cayley and Henson designed powered planes. Hence we find some sketches of Civil War patents for familiar looking "airplanes" which constitute an unwritten footnote to war. There is no evidence that any left the drawing board or that they excelled the English designs.

In the mid-19th-century balloons were the thing and trans-Atlantic flights were planned. In 1859 credence was given a story that a balloon would sail to Charlestown, Va., disrupt the town by bombing, rescue John Brown, and ferry him safely across the Atlantic.

Actually the record was impressive. Captive or anchored gas bags had been used for observation in the Napoleonic battle of Fleurus. The French had a special Corps and used them until the end of the 18th century. In 1848 automatic bomb dropping balloons were tried. The Russians used aerostats in the Crimean War. And the U.S. Army twice considered them before 1850.

All knew the capabilities of balloons. Distances of over 1000 miles had been covered, heights of over 20,000 feet reached; the largest contained over a million cubic feet of gas, were 130 feet across, and could lift 20 tons. Then in the 1850's U.S. technique and popularity alike soared.

Thus the air score for the Civil War should have been outstanding-what took place? Patriotic aeronauts on both sides came forward. One James Allen (37) had two old, civilian type balloons. First scheduled in an abortive relief mission to Harpers Ferry they then roosted in Washington until McDowell made his grand march. The one currently flyable had to be filled at the gas works in Alexandria and towed battlementward by hand. In a few miles, roadside trees and military impatience had torn it. Allen and the Army stopped speaking.

The fact is that Bull Run was rough on balloons. The famous John Wise (53), dean of American aeronauts, had brought the U.S. military made-to-order aircraft; capacity 20,000 cu. ft.; 450 sq. yards of India silk; and armor plate on the car bottom. It, too, marched for Manassas after inflation, but the start was late, military handling wrecked it-and the battle was over anyway. Aeronaut T.S.C. Lowe (29) was the third and latest starter. Filling the Wise gas bag took precedence over his and he finally met the Bull Run boys on their way back-at least his was still intact.

Wise had his craft repaired and bobbing over the Arlington front at once. Came July 26, 1861 and a stiff Potomac breeze which sawed the moorings against a telegraph line. The unready aerostat, temporarily loaded only with the ground crew's rations and muskets, soared southward until a Union volley into the bag landed it short of the Confederacy. A military interview with the aeronaut resulted including unkind words on the role of balloons in the late battle. Wise retorted truthfully that the aeronautics had been on a par with Union generalship - then he went home to raise an infantry outfit. In him the Union lost its best aeronautical brain but the brass never knew it.

Remained Thaddeus Sobieski Constantine Lowe. On June 18 he had sent the first electric air to ground message wired directly to Lincoln in the White House. In addition to ability he had friends and frequent aerial ascents in Washington won military approbation. Soon he would be the Aeronaut.

Meanwhile the uneasy Confederates damned Union balloons and demanded their own. Were Confederate balloons near Fairfax that June? Newspapers said so but the point is yet to be proved. Lapses exist in the Confederate record. Also a balloon was reported hovering over Leesburg in November 1861.

On the Peninsula Ben Butler's air cover was John La Mountain (30). In July of '61 his view covered a 30-mile radius, Confederate activities were pinpointed, and an almost continuous reconnaissance to last through the late summer was begun. He also made the first ascension from an armed vessel. General Butler was highly satisfied with the aerial reports but his own transfer signalled the shift of La Mountain to Gen. McClellan - who already had Lowe. La Mountain and Lowe were utterly incompatible and the former was the man to leave. It was a loss since he had free lance daring and was the only balloonist to make untethered flights. Drifting over the Confederate lines he trusted to reverse currents to bring him back to the Union side. They always did, too, but no one else tried it.

Fortune and his genius favored Lowe; accomplished aeronaut, organizer, inventor, technician. We remember him and forget his comrades just as we tend to do with Brady in photography. In September of 1861 he did the first aerial fire control, the artillery shots being called by telegraph. In that month also McClellan took the first step toward a "Balloon Corps" by ordering more balloons. Aeronauts were plentiful and they gladly served under Lowe. (Ground crews were another matter. Untrained soldiers were called on as available and were a headache to the very end). In late '61 the first portable hydrogen generators (Lowe's) were in service. Now a balloon could go to any site and be inflated on the spot - no need for a city gas works. Balloon service to the armies increased but only seven aeronauts in the field at one time (a fair average) meant just seven balloons possibly active.

Aerial reporting and mapping were usually accurate and much in demand. The observed Confederates were sufficiently irked to apply camouflage and arrange special deceptions. Of course they blasted away at the bag with everything on hand. The balloonists had many close escapes but no craft was ever brought down by gunfire - in fact a man lost to a Confederate landmine was the sole casualty.

The Confederates took the air in April 1862 with a hot air balloon on the Peninsula. Lowe was amused but the hastily made observations were valuable. Bryan, the Confederate pilot, was accidentally cut loose on a night ascent and had an exciting free flight which ended near Williamsburg. But he had observed as he sailed and the results foiled a Union attack the following morning. The South's next aerial action was near Richmond and involved the famous "Silk Dress" acrostat (attributed to Southern belles but actually made of specially imported new silk). Made by a Captain Langdon Choeves at his own expense in Savannah it had about 7500 cu. ft. capacity with 200 pounds lift (on city gas). On June 27 it observed the Gaines Mill battle. On subsequent days, as the front moved, it was kept to the fore by rail (an innovation) and steam tug. When necessary it was hauled to Richmond's gas works for replenishment. The naval tours ended suddenly July 4 when both air and surface craft were captured by the Union Monitor.

While Union balloons were present at many actions in the Richmond campaigns and one was even sent west to zero in the mortar bombardment of Island #10 (which it did most effectively), a hint of Lowe's troubles comes from his absence at Antietam. En route to the battlefield the quartermaster had seized his transportation. In spite of such difficulties aerostats kept hanging over the fronts and in the spring of 1863 one was towed over 13 miles of ground at Fredericksburg while observations were being made from the car at 5000 feet.

In Richmond a new "silk-dress" arrived, from Savannah but this time paid for by the Confederacy. Apparently inactive it went south in the autumn of '62 and was put to effective use around Charleston during the winter.

Although the Union had air cover at Chancellorsville in 1863 the service was still a lost orphan and things were bad. T.S.C. Lowe had resigned. Fed up. His friends, the expert Allen brothers, attempted to carry on the "Corps" under difficulties and official indifference. Then in June Lee raised a ruckus in Pennsylvania and the Federals rushed that way. Army officers full of their own responsibilities felt it was no time for gas bags. The balloon train was checked in mid-career, sent back to Washington - disbanded. There would be no balloons at Gettysburg.

July 1863 in the Charleston theatre. A treacherous wind emancipates the second "silk-dress" and lands it in Yankee hands. Thus ends the tiny Confederate air arm - after outliving its Union sister by nearly a month.

Why did we - North or South put on such a wretched performance? It could be argued indefinitely. To dismiss the South first, it had plenty of red tape but no materials or technique, no field generators, no silk. It had aeronauts but few assistants. In the Union, rich in material, manpower, and technology it was primarily lack of status. All balloonists were civilian technicians; no rank, no standing, no authority - in less than three years the "Corps" was wished on three unwilling service branches in turn. Provision for men, materials or pay was always indefinite, sometimes nonexistent. Friction was constant. McClellan, if he had lasted, might have created a military corps with rank and status. Burnside and Butler were favorable; Sherman, Halleck, and Pope showed the most cold indifference.

One thing was incontestable, only with a favorable commander could aeronautics be efficient. And why so little favor? Chiefly military conservatism. No tactics established. No balloons or accessories in the quartermaster tables. To generals unindoctrinated in balloon capabilities they were below service standard; no other military machine was so dependent on wind and weather; rain, fog, or powder smoke ruined observation. Also as prime targets they constantly drew down a rain of shells on soldiers in otherwise quiet areas. Whatever the reasons the great opportunity for development in American military aeronautics became a historical footnote - - Suppose there had been an alert, long established military air arm in 1900 to back the Wright brothers - and to have had, perhaps, the planes of 1940 in 1914.

THIS IS AN ARTICLE BY LANGDON BACKUS THAT APPEARED IN THE APRIL, 1964 AND SEPTEMBER, 1964 EDITIONS OF THE BUGLE CALL, NEWSLETTER OF THE HAGERSTOWN CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE.

FOOTBALL CHEER?

Regimental Yells Are Held Origin of
College Custom, With Refinements Added

The first football cheer was based, in fact, on a specific American battle cry, the National Geographic Society says: When Princeton and Rutgers played the first American football game in 1869, some Princetonians roared out a lusty "Siss, boom ah." The shout derived from the rocket yell of the Seventh Regiment of New York which had passed through the Princeton campus during the Civil War and left a lasting impression. The Confederate Army also made a contribution to football cheering. The fearsome Rebel yell echoes from many southern stadium.
from the NEW YORK TIMES, NOVEMBER 6, 1960.

CONSCRIPTION DURING CIVIL WAR

UNION

America's faith in the volunteer system, bolstered by success in the Mexican War, finally vanished in 1863. Previously, on 4 August 1862, the President had called on the states to provide 300,000 militia for nine months service, declaring that failure to provide the men would result in imposition of the draft. Unable to find the volunteers, the states were like wise incapable of executing a draft. On 3 March 1863, the Enrollment Act became law. To establish its constitutionality the Republicans fell back on the constitutional power of the Federal government to raise armies, in which they were upheld by the Supreme Court. The law declared the liability to military service of all able-bodied males between the ages of 20 and 45, allowing for certain exemptions. Colonel James B. Frye was detailed as provost marshal general. All his assistants, to include the personnel of the boards set up in the congressional districts, were federal officials---usually army officers. Registration was a first function of such boards, followed by the examination of pleas for exemptions. The entire procedure was federal, to include the compulsory registration of every man, which often occurred at the point of the bayonet. Four months of work left the registration still incomplete. Meanwhile 98 registrars had been killed or wounded. When the time came to induct the registrants into the service, the states were given one more opportunity to furnish their quotas on a voluntary basis. As a result, wealthy men purchased exemption by hiring substitutes, while the poor were forced into the ranks. Draft riots broke out in many part of the country. In New York City, a reign of terror prevailed for three days. Before the end of the war, the Draft Act had brought into the ranks approximately 1,300,000 men. Of that number only 46,347 were actually drafted. Coercion or the bounty had brought the rest into the army as volunteers.

"Conscription During Civil War", *ENCYCLOPEDIA AMERICANA*, Vol 7, pp546, Herman Beukema, Professor of History, United States Military Academy.

CONFEDERATE

Confederate conscription did not differ that notably from the Union brand. It is quite possible that Union conscription laws were modeled after the Confederate. The Confederates passed their Conscription Act in 1862. The first in our country's history. The standard legal fee for getting a man exempted in Dixie was \$500. A man in the North could buy exemption for \$300. Remember even Lincoln provided a substitute for himself. An estimated 50,000 men were substituted in the Confederate armies. It is most difficult to compare figures of substitutes on both sides because there were not many substitutes available in the South and most Southerners did not have money to hire one. The Southern conscription law contained a strange exemption clause...."Any man who had 20 slaves or 500 head of cattle or 250 head of horses was exempt." This lead to the famous cry in the South...."A rich man's war and a poor man's fight." Needless to say this clause was quickly repealed.

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

A Union soldier was carrying a wounded comrade when a cannon ball whizzed by decapitating the wounded soldier. When asked why he was carrying a dead man, the Union soldier replied, "Why that dirty so and so, he told me he was shot in the leg."

IRONCLAD OF FARRAGUT FLEET IS FOUND IN MOBILE BAY

By John Noble Wilford

NEW YORK TIMES FEBRUARY 17, 1967

The Civil War ironclad whose sinking is said to have inspired Rear Adm. David G. Farragut to cry, "amn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" has been found at the bottom of the mouth of Mobile Bay.

The 225-foot Tecumseh, which sank on Aug. 5, 1864, during the Battle of Mobile Bay, is expected to be hauled up, refurbished and placed on display in the Smithsonian Institution's proposed National Armed Forces Museum in Washington. For years the Tecumseh was presumed lost beyond recovery, either buried too deep or fragmented hopelessly. Her exact location was unknown. Previous dragging operations had failed in attempts to find the war ship. Then, last month, engineers systematically probed the bottom of the bay, using detection techniques sensitive to electricity emanating from metal objects in salt water.

Within three days--on Feb 1--they found the ship at a depth of 38 feet. She was almost completely overturned, with only six feet of her keel sticking out of the mud. Divers went down for positive identification. If the Tecumseh's restoration is accomplished, she would be the only surviving example of the Monitor class of fighting ships that ushered in the era of armored naval warfare.

The original Monitor, which defeated the Confederate ironclad Merrimack in 1862, lies deep at sea off North Carolina. She sank while under tow later that year. The six other ships of her kind were dismantled for scrap after the Civil War.

Like the other seven ships, the Tecumseh was slow and ungainly but completely veneered with iron, making her relatively invulnerable to the shelling and ramming from wooden warships of the day. She was 225 feet long and 43 feet 8 inches wide. Her draught was 13 feet 6 inches, with a displacement of 2100 tons. Mounted in the single turret were two 15 inch cannon. The turret and pilot house were covered with 10 layers of iron, each an inch thick. The sides had 5 inches of armor plate, and the deck an inch and a half.

It was the Tecumseh's arrival with three other ironclads the night before the battle that bolstered Admiral Farragut's resolve to assault Mobile, one of the last remaining ports in the hands of the Confederacy. The admiral had waited beyond the mouth of the bay for months for the ironclads to be outfitted in Pensacola.

In the harbor lay only four Confederate warships. But one of them was the formidable Tennessee, the newest and largest ironclad in the Confederate fleet, under the command of Adm. Franklin Buchanan.

Guns at forts on either side of the narrow mouth to the bay also blocked Admiral Farragut's way. The Confederates had strung a net of submerged mines, called torpedoes in those days.

At dawn on August 5 Admiral Farragut, in his wooden flagship the Hartford, proceeded to run the gantlet with 14 regular warships and with the Tecumseh leading the ironclads. The Tecumseh fired the first shot at Fort Morgan.

An hour later, as Admiral Farragut paused for the slow-moving ironclads to catch up, he saw the Tecumseh suddenly tip over and sink within 30 seconds. The ship had veered slightly off course, presumably to avoid fire from the fort, and had struck a torpedo.

Down with the Tecumseh went all but a score of its crew of 105 men, including the captain, Commander Tunis Augustus M. Craven.

Undaunted, Admiral Farragut ordered his flagship to take the lead. When an aide reminded him of the torpedoes that had sunk the Tecumseh, the admiral is said to have shouted:

"Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!"

And before the morning was out, the Tennessee had capitulated. By Aug. 23 the forts and the port were in Federal hands. The Tecumseh was the only major Federal loss.

The latest efforts to recover the sunken ship began Jan 30 under the sponsorship of the Navy and the Smithsonian Institution. A team of engineers from Weston Instruments, Inc., of Newark was called in.

They employed a sea recovery technique called spontaneous potential. In the past it had been successful in the recovery of \$8.5 million worth of silver from the bottom of Manila Bay and in the location of lost torpedoes and downed military planes in deep water.

The technique involves dropping one cable from the surface ship to the bottom and letting another cable trail the ship by about 200 feet. Each cable is tipped with an electrode sensitive to any electric fields. In seawater any metallic object, even a beer can, acts as a low-powered battery, generating a faint electric field in all directions.

As the surface ship moved methodically back and forth across the bay in the search for the Tecumseh, engineers monitored the amplified signals picked up by the cables and transcribed to graph paper. The first clue as to the Tecumseh's whereabouts was a sharply jagged line on the graph. By going back over the same area a number of times the engineers picked up similar signals until they were able to plot an outline of the portions of the hull that protruded from the mud. These were compared with the Tecumseh's dimensions. Divers also took measurements and definitely identified the ship.

"The technique is so simple that it is a matter of skill in analyzing the signals rather than any revolutionary apparatus," said James Harte, director of product planning for Weston Instruments.

He explained the method of discovery at a news conference at the New York Hilton Hotel yesterday. He added that sonar, which is often used for detecting objects underwater, was rejected for this task because it cannot differentiate between metals and other objects. Sonar is a radar-like system that bounces sound pulses off the bottom of the sea and locates objects by noting variations in the time it takes for the signal to return.

The Smithsonian Institution and the Naval Salvage Office are now studying the problems involved in prying the ship loose from the mud.

* * * * *

CAIRO REVISITED

You may be interested in the following quotation from the Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Mississippi. The Editor tells us:

"A visit to the CAIRO as she is being dismantled at Ingalls Shipyards set my mind at rest about her treatment.

"As she was towed down the Mississippi with broken timbers and twisted armor, with sections upside down and rust eating away at the metal, my heart was heavy and as much as I love the CAIRO, I had to admit that she looked like a large pile of junk. This week end I saw the work being done at Ingalls. The armor had been partially removed and each piece match-marked for re-assembly. Every metal part is being treated for rust and the rust and corrosion is gone. The wood has been cleaned of mud and thousands of fine sprays of water play over the wood constantly. Sagging timbers and broken timbers have been braced with steel beams.

"It is my opinion that the CAIRO is being properly treated by experts with the proper equipment."

(DECATUR, ILL. CWRT - SEP 65)