

The Charger

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CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

MARCH, 1980

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 1

196th MEETING

DATE: MARCH 11th
SPEAKERS: DRS. SCHLESINGER & SCHILDT
SUBJECT: Medicine and Surgery in the
Civil War
PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB
SOCIAL HOUR: 6:00 P.M. DINNER: 7:00

In 1962 members Bill Schlesinger and Paul Shildt presented a program on the same subject. During the past 18 years they have "upgraded" the medicine and surgery of the Civil War....that is, much has been written since then, throwing new light on this subject.

The good doctors ask that you bring along some questions... questions that may occur to the lay public that might be overlooked by those too close to such a broad field.

Bill and Paul were classmates at Case Western Reserve Medical School (1938,) and served their internships at University Hospital. Both are long-standing, loyal members of the Cleveland CWRT. Bill is a charter member and past president. We look forward to a gory evening.

Beans Killed More Than Bullets

The Civil War killed more Americans than any other war. Six hundred thousand men from both the North and South died in just four years. Only one-third of this number were killed in actual battle; disease accounted for the other deaths.

Six million cases of illness were reported during the war. Diarrhea and dysentery incapacitated more soldiers than any other disease. In the first year of the war, the reported sick rate from these two diseases was 640 per 1,000 men. In the second year of the war, the sick rate rose to 995 per 1,000 men. The final statistics showed that diarrhea and dysentery took the lives of 44,558 soldiers.

"Beans killed more than bullets" was an expression used by military surgeons after an outbreak of diarrhea caused - by some bean soup.

The source of "death from a frying pan," another popular comment of the time, was the soldier's habit of cooking all his rations in whatever fat or grease he may have had on hand in order to make his food more palatable. Infections resulted and remained unchecked because of poor health hygiene in the camps.

-The Dick Dowling Cannon's Roar (Courtesy The Lone Star Banner)
CWRT of Texas

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

Founded Nov. 19, 1957

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CONV

NEW

The day I bombed

Washington By Member Bob Thum
(From The Bennington Banner, Aug. 10, '79)

AFTER WORLD WAR II I was a pilot in the Ohio Air National Guard. We flew A26's, twin-engined attack bombers. One late fall weekend we flew to Andrews Field, outside of Washington, D.C. where we were briefed for a large scale maneuver. Bombers from our squadron and other state national guard units were to fly out to sea and then come back over Washington to a bombing run. Fighters (P51's and P47's in those days) from other state national guards were to intercept us. This exercise was supposed to test certain air defense capabilities of the country.

When the extensive briefing was concluded the crews repaired to their airplanes. My crew chief and I inspected the airplane carefully. I was fortunate to have the top crew chief in the squadron, and we paid special attention to the nose door, which was a large metal entrance door containing a built-in ladder, that was the entranceway for the bombardier station in the nose of the aircraft. On the walk-around preflight inspection this was supposed to be double checked to see that it was securely latched. We noted this carefully, climbed aboard, fired up, and were away with the squadron.

COMING BACK in close formation from the ocean the bombers swept in over the capitol city on a peaceful Sunday afternoon. The fighters, alerted by radar, dove through the formation in their attack patterns. The early afternoon air was turbulent, and that chop along with formation prop wash, kept me busy holding my place in formation. I could see the fighters slicing by, when there was an abrupt jolt to the airplane and a huge rush of air into the cockpit. I immediately thought we had been hit by one of the fighters, but the airplane held its maneuverability in good shape. On the intercom asked the crew chief what was

the matter and he came back with, "We've dropped the nose door."

Our orders were to proceed back to our various home state bases after the bomb run, so I asked and received permission to break off from the formation and proceed back to Cleveland at a reduced speed. We had a 200 m.p.h. gale coming back into the airplane. The heater could not cope with that wintry blast, and when we landed my chief and I had to be thawed out before we could climb out of the plane. We filled out the proper aircraft forms stating we had lost the nose door on the flight. I was fortunate to have the veteran mechanic with me, who assured all the doubters that he and I indeed had carefully conducted our preflight check, that the departure of the door was not our fault but must have been caused by a mechanical failure perhaps aided by a severe jolt of turbulence. That seemed to be the end of the matter.

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BUT NO, the affairs of government grind slowly. Fully a year later I reported to the squadron hangar one day to do some flying. We had a regular Air Force colonel attached to our squadron, and as I passed his office he summoned me into his place of business. What have I done now, I thought. Seated in his office was a sinister looking character, clad in trench coat, hat on head, and looking all the world like a double agent from Interpol. The colonel said, "Lieutenant, glad you are here, listen to this."

Sure enough, the man was a government agent; he pulled out an identification card from some inner pocket, flashed it before my frightened eyes, looked around him furtively, and began his tale. It seems that a year ago one Monday morning a stolid Washington citizen had arrived at his place of business, opened the front door, and was shocked to see chaos inside. The structure, two stories in height, was

Continued on Page 5

Very Special

On April 8th the Club will hold its Annual Ladies' Night. It will also be a Memorial to past members who are no longer with us.

A real treat is in store: the speaker engaged will be Mr. Wm. C. Davis, Author, President of the Nat'l. Historical Society, and Publisher of The Civil War Times Illustrated, The British History Illustrated, and The American History Illustrated magazines.

His talk will be an exposé of the current hit film, "The Lincoln Conspiracy." More details later, but please note that RESERVATIONS ARE AN ABSOLUTE MUST.

You may make reservations early by calling President Chuck Spiegle at his office 464-5335 or his home 357-1695.

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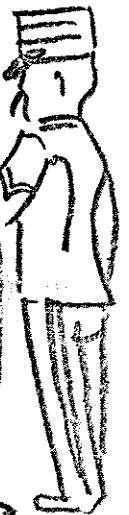
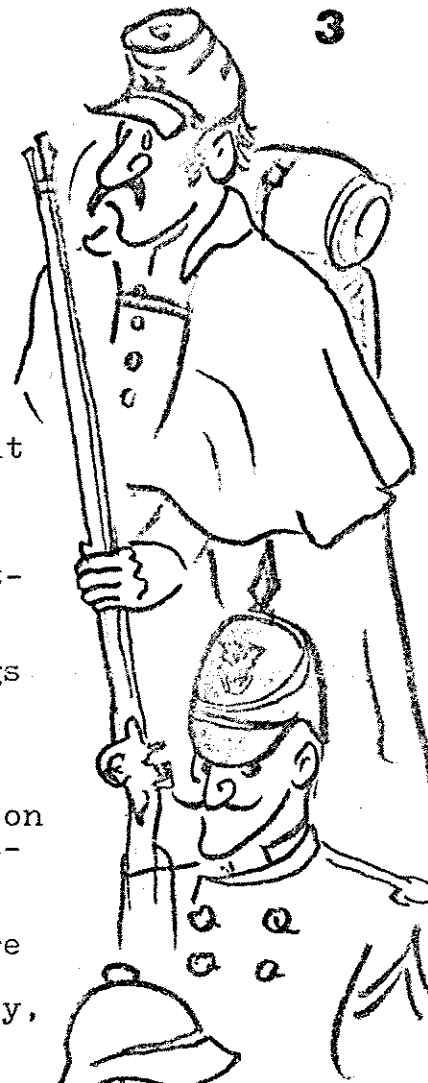
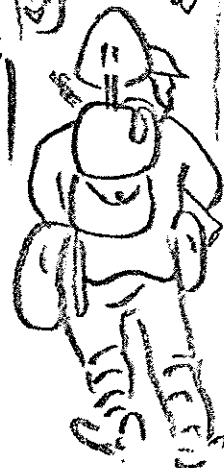
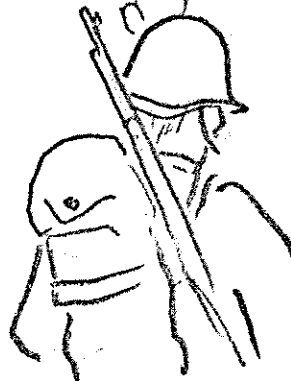
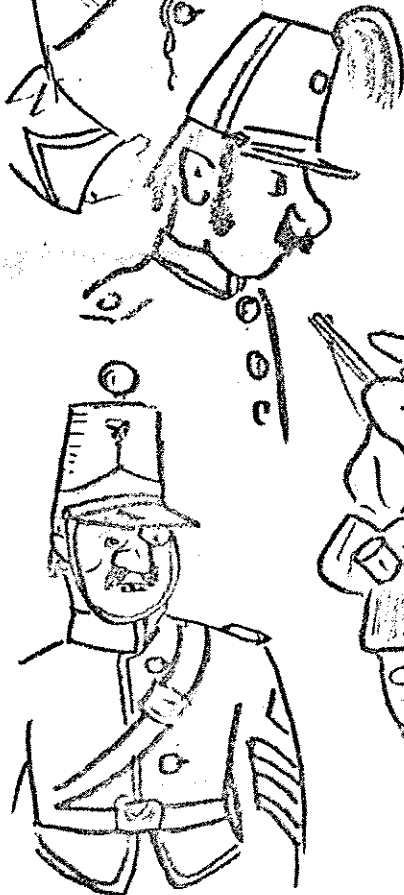
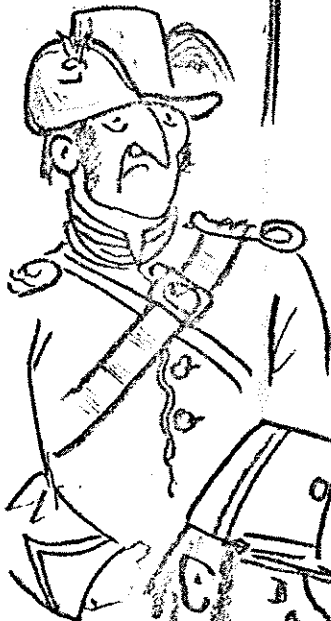
URGENT: Write to our Senators to contact Sen. Bumpers, to urge him to bring S.1857 and HR 5048 to immediate consideration of his subcommittee.

HECKAMAN ON UNIFORMS

Last month Don Heckaman presented a narrative color slide program showing the evolution of the uniforms and accouterments of the enlisted soldier of the U.S. Army from 1855 to 1955 (approx.)

The slide series was photographed from specimens of Don's extensive collection. As a matter of fact, it was an amazing series, moving fast and showing an infinite variety of detail. The question in everyone's mind, once they realized the expertise of the speaker and the extent of this collection: where in the world does he store all these things and keep them all straight?

A couple of days after the meeting I sat down and started to sketch some of the things I'd seen, but soon realized I could never do them justice, let alone cover even a small part of the area Don did. So this page of pencil scratchings is a mere kaleidoscope of my impressions. Some of the uniforms were downright natty, with colored facings and piping. Why is it that photographs of Civil War soldiers make them look like bums?

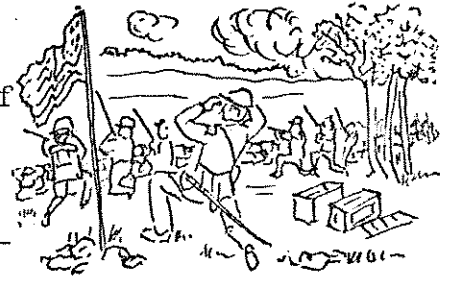


FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW

YOU ARE THERE

The Battle of Gettysburg by Frank Aretas Haskell: Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston: 1957

It is said of a hurricane the ideal place for a meteorologist to assess the monster storm properly is the calm, clear center - the eye. In the eye of the war storm at Gettysburg in July, 1863, was the author of this rarity among Civil War books.



It is our good fortune that Haskell wrote this account of Gettysburg only two weeks after the battle and that he was a staff officer of Gibbon's Brigade of the Second Corps, for from near the end of the first day this brigade was the exact center of Meade's superb battle line. This point was also the precise place from which both to observe personally or be told what was happening. Haskell's position, as we all know, was also the fiery focus of the climactic Pickett-Pettigrew charge on the third day. And we are doubly fortunate that Haskell could write.

This is not an historical account of the epic battle. Haskell makes no claim that it is. He rightly leaves the history of Gettysburg to the Cattons and Coddingtons of another century. But he tells you grippingly what it was like to be there. Poets and novelists have described battles in great ways - Stephen Vincent Benet, Stephen Crane, John Pullen, even Cleveland's Don Robertson - but Haskell was right there. He saw it with his own eyes, heard it with his own ears, smelled it with his own nose, felt it in his own guts. All of this makes a difference. It is probably the closest any of us can get to a Civil War battle, even to feeling vicariously the sting of a minie ball as Haskell did.

When you come to read this classic, ignore Catton's foreword and his footnotes at first. Start directly with Haskell's words to get the real hard, hot, acid, stinking feel of the battle. Read the foreword and footnotes later. They add only facts, no feelings.

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Incident (*Not from the above*)

During the confusion and noise of the Battle of Gettysburg, a dusty ghost appeared in the ranks of the 13th Vermont. His name was Lt. Stephen Brown from Company D.

Brown had been arrested on the march to Pennsylvania for permitting his thirsty men to fall out and fill their canteens from a cool spring along the way. Sulking under arrest, deprived of his sidearms three miles away from the battle, he was suddenly reprieved. Grabbing a large hatchet from a wagon, he rushed to join and help his mates. Furiously, he waded into a Confederate assault. While the Green Mountain boys cheered, Brown flattened a rebel officer with his hatchet, grabbed the astounded victim by the collar and began to drag him up the ridge.

There was a sudden explosion, and Brown fell with his prize on Cemetery Ridge. Later, a captain then, Brown explained it all: "It was only the concussion that knocked me down. I got up and gave him a kick in the ass before he surrendered."

Today, on Hancock Avenue, on the same ridge, Stephen Brown still stands in Vermont marble. Unfortunately, the sculptor armed the statue with a sword instead of a hatchet.

(From a newspaper series by Frank Nash)

SCENES I'D LIKE TO HAVE SEEN

During the second day at Gettysburg, at the time he was talking heatedly to General Dan Sickles, who had erroneously marched his two divisions a half a mile beyond the Federal line, General Meade suffered an embarrassing incident. His horse reared in terror at the roar of a nearby gun and suddenly bolted, the bit in his teeth. Meade could not stop the fear-crazed animal that started to carry him first toward the enemy lines and then veered off to the Union rear.



If you have never had a horse run away with you, let me tell you how it feels. Back in the salad days of my youth I spent most of my summers riding horseback around the environs of Madison, Ohio, which, at the time had mostly unpaved roads running through the farmlands and woods. One time with a group of friends, I turned into a long dirt road that led straight back to our barn, about two miles distant, and I started at a slow canter. It was then that my horse, a rather unruly character anyway, took it into his head to return home in a hurry.

Before I could check him, he clamped his teeth down on the bit and with ears back and neck stretched out shot off at a dead run. No amount of sawing and jerking of the reins could restrain him. I can still remember the exhilaration of the wild ride, and the great anxiety I experienced when I realized we would have to cross a double railroad track a mile ahead.... a rough crossing with loose boards between the rails. At that speed there was no doubt that the fool cayuse would stumble over the tracks, probably breaking his legs and my neck.

The only thing to do was to try and tire him before we reached the crossing, so I pounded his ribs with my heels, flayed him with the reins and yelled bloody murder. With this urging, he raced even faster. When finally the run-away began to slow down, he responded to a sudden yanking back, and we pulled up just short of the tracks, his sides heaving and my heart pounding. When my friends caught up they thought I'd been showing off, little knowing that I'd been scared stiff.

Stories of the incident do not tell just where General Meade ended his unexpected whirlwind jaunt, but he did return to the field of action to send reserves in to check a furious Confederate assault on Sickles' line.

'Thumprints'

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daylight top to bottom. A hole six feet in diameter extended throughout the structure, clean through roof, second floor, first floor, and down into the basement, where a large mass of metal was buried in the basement floor.

Thanking his lucky stars that this had occurred on Sunday and not when he and his staff had been laboring at their weekly tasks, he had summoned the police to report the destruction of his place of business. Police were baffled by the incident and had duly

turned over the matter to other authorities. The bureaucracy of such affairs slowly ground its course and eventually military intelligence had entered the picture.

The offending metallic mass that had hurtled through the roof of the structure apparently seemed military in nature, and after due deliberation some genius had ascertained that perhaps the military branch upon which this crime could be pinned was one that operated from above—ergo, either Navy Air or the Air Force. After a number of months on the track

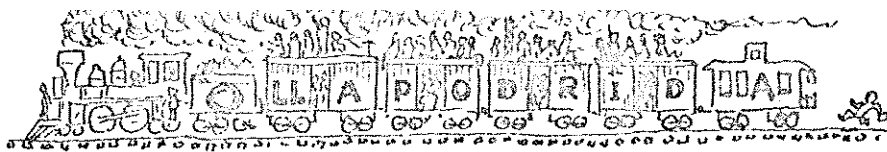
of the culprit, the scent was hot, and they had found an Air National Guard outfit that had lost part of one of its machines over the nation's capitol. The agent dramatically finished his tale and pointed a long accusing finger at me. "Lieutenant," he exclaimed, "it was your airplane that caused this damage."

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WELL DEAR READERS, I must confess that all worked out well. I had duly reported the separation of nose door from my airplane's body and was backed up in my staunch denial of any malfeasance by the good

word of the trusty master sergeant. The agent was overcome with joy to have come to the end of his quest. He could report to his superior "mission accomplished." And the colonel was thirsty. He and the agent repaired to the Airway Cafe, and I went out to my airplane, making doubly sure in my preflight walkaround that all parts of the airplane were securely fastened on.

I never heard who paid for the damage to the poor man's place of business. As the colonel and agent walked out arm in arm, I heard one mutter to the other, "Act of God, I think they call it."



George Meade was born in Spain of U.S. parents and was considered an officer of great merit. The reason why he did not reach greater heights is sometimes attributed to his uncontrollable temper, which caused him to quarrel with "Baldy" Smith, Sheridan, Wright, Warren and James Smith. When, years after the War Sherman retired as Lieutenant General of the Army, Meade was bitterly disappointed when his junior in rank, Sheridan, was given the position and rank. Meade died at the age of 57, his system never having recovered from the wound he received at White Oak Swamp, in 1862.

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The Whitworth gun was an English rifled cannon that fired a solid shot five miles. They cost \$50,000 each, and the Confederates had 5 of them. Lee had four of these at Gettysburg. The Federals imported a whole battery of

Whitworths which were taken on the Peninsular Campaign but never used. It spent the rest of the war in the Washington defenses.

-Downey, Gettysburg

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There was also a Whitworth rifle, an English muzzle-loader used by Confederate snipers. With a 14½" telescope mounted on the left side of the stock, it had an effective range of 1800 yards. Generals Sedgwick and W. H. Lytle were killed with this rifle.

Albaugh & Simmons, Confederate Arms

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Peppery Confederate General D. H. Hill once endorsed an official application of a soldier to be transferred from the infantry to the band. "Respectfully forwarded, disapproved. Shooters are more needed than tooters."

E.P. Alexander, Military Memoirs of a Confederate

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Paul Ambrose Oliver, breveted Brigadier General in the Union Army, was born in the English Channel aboard his father's boat. He is credited as having invented dynamite, and after the War his Pennsylvania factory was purchased by Du Pont, and he died a very wealthy man.

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Ben Butler had 200 gold medals made by Tiffany's and presented them to Negro soldiers of the XXV Corps.

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CORRECTION:

In last month's Charger it was stated that the Confederate dead at the Battle of Big Bethel, June 10, 1861, numbered only one. This should have been 11. The Federals lost 76, including Major Theodore Winthrop of Butler's staff "shot while standing on a fence flourishing his sword."

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The Gibraltar of Chesapeake Bay (Fort Monroe, Virginia) was the staging area for five important Federal amphibious expeditions: Hatteras Inlet (1861,) Port Royal (1861,) Roanoke Island (1862,) New Orleans (1862,) and Fort Fisher (1864 and 1865.)

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Stonewall Jackson wore the old blue uniform he had used at VMI before the War, until May 5, 1862, during the Shenandoah Valley campaign. On that day he got a haircut in Staunton and put on a full new uniform of Confederate gray for the first time. The fancy uniform was a gift from Gen. Stuart