

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. BOX 5028 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

MARCH, 1981

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 11

205th Meeting

DATE; March 10th

PROGRAM: Short Resumé of the Andrew's Raid - Tom Geshke

Film: "The General" Starring Buster Keaton

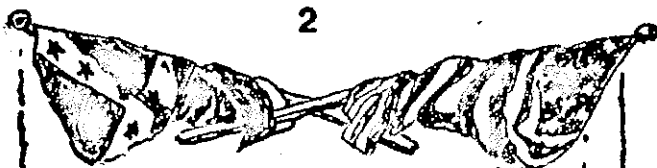
Subject: The Great Locomotive Chase (Refreshments will be served during the movie)

Canteen: 6:00 P.M. Chow: 7:00 P.M.



On April 12, 1862, twenty-two Union volunteers, under the leadership of James J. Andrews, made their way deep into Confederate territory to cut the

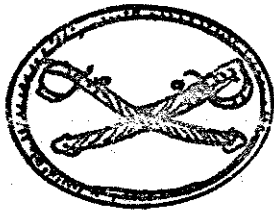
rail line that served as a vital link between Marietta, Ga., and Chattanooga, Tenn.. They headed north in an engine named "The General," stolen at Big Shanty. They were chased by the rebels in the engine "Texas," for 90 miles, and after many adventures were captured. Eight were hanged. This movie, made in 1927, has become a classic, and went a long way to making Buster Keaton a great star. This will be a TREAT!



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

FOUNDED 1957

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Vice Pres: John Harkness
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Treasurer: Tim Moran



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FEBRUARY MEETING

Our next president, John Harkness, outdid himself in his presentation at the last meeting on the materials and manufacture of Civil War arms. John is a metallurgical engineer, currently Senior Metallurgist with the Brush Wellman Co., and his hobby is antique firearms. Displaying a knowledge of the subject that electrified his audience, John's clear-cut talk gave our members an education in the metallurgy

of muskets, pistols and cannon. Metallurgy made plain! And furthermore, interesting! Our V.P. illustrated his talk with color slides (another hobby - photography, his expertise being known to all) and a beautiful Enfield rifle from his collection. A most enjoyable and instructive session. F.G.

UNIQUE C.W.R.T.

The Antietam Civil War Round Table is a Self-Help Group made up of inmates at the Maryland Correctional Training Center that meet every Thursday. During the struggle to secure more acreage for the Manassas Battlefield Park members wrote over 400 letters to various Senators and Representatives in the U.S. Government as well as many Delegates serving in the Virginia General Assembly. They serve causes sponsored by other Civil War Round Tables, such as the CWRT Association of Little Rock, Arkansas, the leading voice in battlefield preservation.

This is a non-profit organization, and need donations of books, stamps or money in the form of money orders or bank cheques.

Every year the membership has about an 80% turn-over; so books donated will be read over and over. The present club has 22 members.

If you care to support this worthwhile endeavor, send your donations to Mr. James T. Nolan, Program Director, The Antietam Civil War Round Table, Maryland Correctional Training Center, Route 3, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740



"What's a fortification?"
"Two twentyfications."

Fred Gill's Book Review

FOOTNOTES ON A BATTLE

Encounter at Hanover. Hanover Chamber of Commerce: Hanover, Pa., 1963

Here is a book unlikely ever to be seen except by the most ardent Civil War students and residents of Hanover, Pennsylvania. In no way is this to demean the book, for it is a captivating footnote on the happenings in the summer of 1863 in that lovely little town, happenings that changed it forever.

No new facts of high importance about that chancey "Prelude to Gettysburg" (as the book is sub-titled,) that took place around and in this placid village are revealed, but the little stories told in it in the words of Hanover people who saw and felt and heard the turmoil are human wrinkles to the events we have all read about in the more sophisticated prose of Catton and Freeman and others. Here are some of them:



- On the morning of the last day of June the errant and unsuspecting Jeb Stuart and his staff sang songs around a piano in a house on the road to his Hanover surprise.
- The next day villager Henry Winebrenner picked up an unexploded shell that penetrated his parlor and threw it out into the yard.

-Several Union flags flew undisturbed through the fight, one stretched across Frederick Street between the houses of Henry Long and John Rupp; flags too high to be cut down by Confederate sabers.

- Johnnie Catlin, the boy bugler of the 5th New York cavalry, returned to Hanover for the 50th reunion at Gettysburg, to see the girl who gave him pie and milk just before he had to sound the charge against Stuart's troopers. He met the girl, then a widow. "But," the old bugler said, "I'm married and that spoils everything."

You read about things hard to imagine happening in America: wounded and dying men in front of your house; hiding in your cellar and hearing gun fire just outside and the desperate enraged shouts of men fighting and sometimes trembling as cannon shot strikes your house, then coming out and seeing the harvest of death on your lawn.

The story of Lincoln's train stop at Hanover on his way to Gettysburg and the dedication of the National Cemetery in November 1863 perhaps reflects the flavor of the time better than the details of battle. Responding to the

cont'd. on pg. 4

Scenes I'd Like to Have Seen

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At 9:45 A.M., June 30th, 1863, the van of Stuart's cavalry struck the rear of Kilpatrick's column at Hanover, Pa.. The Confederates had spent 6 days foraging through Pennsylvania, picking up 128 Federal wagons loaded with valuable supplies and about 400 prisoners...all this while Lee's army was converging on Gettysburg...out of touch. The 2nd North Carolina scattered the Union troopers, but they reformed and countercharged, driving the Rebels out of Hanover, nearly capturing Stuart himself, with his aide, Capt. Blackford. The two were chased across a field of high grass. Suddenly they were confronted by a hidden 15-foot creek, but with their superb mounts cleared the embankment and escaped. Blackford wrote, "I shall never forget the glimpse I then saw of this beautiful animal (Stuart's "Virginia") away up in mid-air over the chasm and Stuart's fine figure sitting erect and firm in the saddle."

GILL BOOK REVIEW

clamor of the crowd at the Hanover station and to the cry of Pastor Alleman, "Father Abraham, your children want to hear you!" Lincoln came out on the platform of his car. People rushed to take his hand and Jackie Melsheimer, a small boy lifted to Lincoln by his father, handed him an apple.

The book was published as a part of the Civil War Bicentennial and its excellence is a tribute to those who conceived and executed it. No author's name attaches to it, and I can hardly believe a book so well done was prepared and published by, of all things, a committee. Let's hear it for the nine stalwarts of that committee!

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(This rewarding book came to me through the generosity of Mr. Neil Smith, a loyal Hanoverian and, of right, a Civil War student.)

SPURIOUS PELF - SOUTHERN STYLE

As soon as the Civil War Started, the public, both North and South, began to hoard gold, silver and copper coins. Within a week, change disappeared from places of business as people buried jars of coins or hid them in other "safe" places.

Some stores marked up their merchandise to the next highest dollar amount since they had no change. In the North shoppers began to use postage stamps for small change, and finally the U.S. Government issued fractional currency, paper money in denominations less than a dollar.

The Confederate Government had no great amount of gold or silver, other than that confiscated from the U.S. Mint in New Orleans; so it decided to have interest-bearing, unbacked paper money printed, hoping the people would have enough faith in the future to accept it. (How many millions of paper dollars do we print today - every day - on the same premise?)

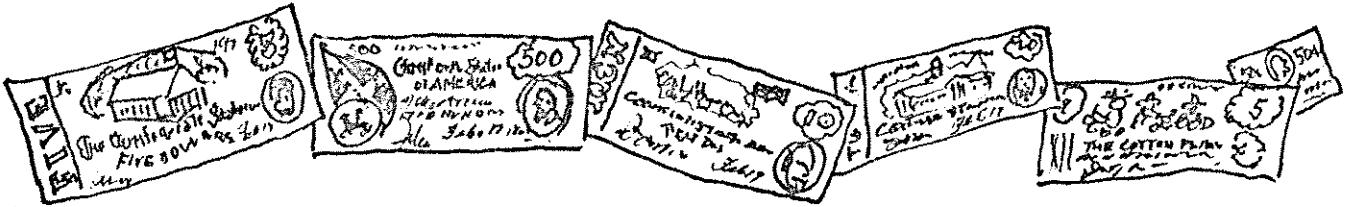
Ironically, the first Confederate Treasury notes, about a million dollars worth in varying denominations, were printed by the National Bank Note Company of New York. The Federal Government put a stop to such orders, but it must have given someone a bright idea, because soon Northern printers were printing unauthorized Confederate money by the millions. Eventually the flood of counterfeit money helped wreck the Confederate economy.

Southern leaders were aware of the danger of counterfeiting in the beginning, and in 1862 the Confederate Treasury moved its money production to Columbia, South Carolina, where the printing was done by private printers under government contracts. But the facilities were not as advanced as in the North, and paper was hard to come by, so that Union-produced bills were more sophisticated and artistic in appearance than the genuine ones.

At first Treasurer Memminger and his Register tried to authenticate the Confederate notes by personally signing them, but of course this soon became an impossible task. He wanted to have his name printed (they did later) but the Confederate Congress came to the incredible decision that it would be better to hire the wives and widows of soldiers to do the signing. Naturally this meant that the handwriting would vary from bill to bill, so that no merchant could tell an authorized clerk's signature from a counterfeit!

One Northern counterfeiter, Samuel Upton, advertised his product in the newspapers as souvenirs, and sold Rebel notes in various denominat-





ions for a penny apiece. He figured that he printed one million five hundred of these in a two-year period. Another firm, in New York, supplied the trade with Confederate money at fifty cents a hundred. "The trade," of course, were the rascals who made their way through the lines and bought cotton with the bogus bills.

The Union Government never openly encouraged this counterfeiting, but it did nothing whatsoever to stop it.

WHY *February 17th 1864* ?

In preparing the above article, I dug out my collection of six different Confederate bills that I have picked up over the years at different times and in different places. Two are \$5 notes with Memminger's portrait, one a \$20 with Stevens' picture; another a facsimile of a \$500 note bearing a portrait of Stonewall Jackson; a \$10 (picture unidentified) and last, a small script for 50¢ with a profile bust of Jefferson Davis. I've gone into this detail because there is a mystery about them which I hope some of you more knowledgeable fellows can solve.

EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THE ABOVE BILLS IS DATED FEBRUARY 17th, 1864! WHY? The only significant event that occurred on that date was the sinking of the "U.S.S. Housatonic" by the "C.S.S. Hunley," the first time in history that a warship had been sunk by a submarine.

They may all be counterfeit bills, but what is the significance of February 17th? Please send in your answers to this mystery!

HIGH FINANCE AFTER GETTYSBURG

In 1863, the Confederacy issued \$15 million in bonds "redeemable in cotton" at 7% interest. The loan was immediately oversubscribed, much of it from English sympathizers for the South, and within a week the demand reached \$80 million.

CONT'D ON PG 7

CARNIVAL AT ELMIRA

Being a prisoner in either a Northern or Southern prison camp was, at best, degrading and debilitating. We have all read the records of men treated like herds of animals, fed sparse rations or starved, and housed in unhealthy quarters. Confederate prisoners confined in the prison camp at Elmira, New York, were subjected to an additional indignity. In late 1864 two towers were built across the street from the camp enclosure and advertisements appeared: "observation towers for watching prisoners - admission 15¢ - refreshments served below." They did a rushing business, and continued as long as the camp was in operation.

HIGH FINANCE CONT'D.

The bonds were issued at 90 by a Parisian banker, and they soon rose to 95½ and then the price began to fall. The banker blamed Union propagandists for the slump and persuaded John Slidell, Confederate envoy to France, to spend \$6 million of Confederate funds to buy the bonds to keep the price up.

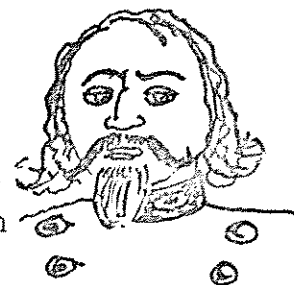
End result: the \$6 million was wasted - the French banker got rich - the Confederate Government only realized a pittance from the issue - and many an English and French supporter of the Southern Cause lost his shirt!

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WAR CRIME?

Dashing, romantic, perfumed, curly-haired General George Pickett, the only major officer in his division who was not killed or wounded in his famous charge at Gettysburg (he stayed behind), narrowly escaped being tried as a war criminal after the war.

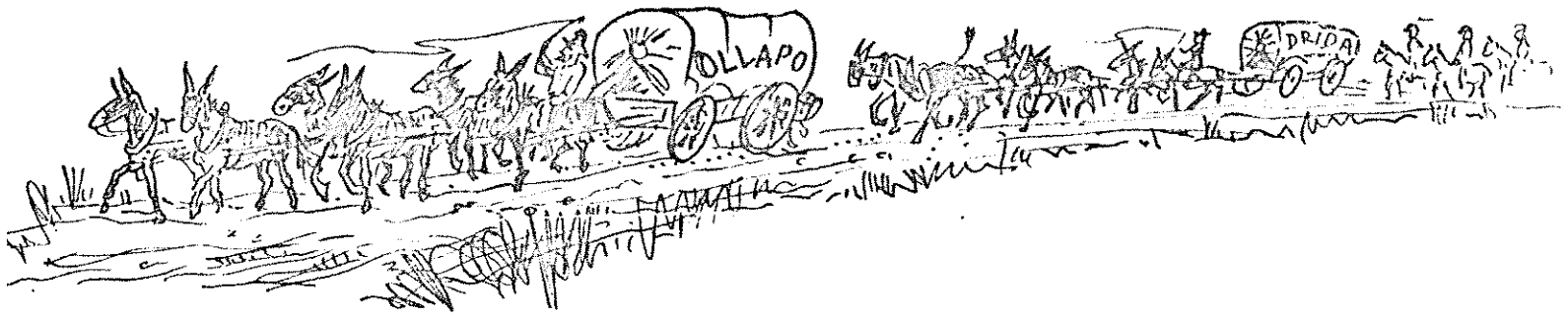
During the action at New Bern, near Kinston, in Feb., 1864, Pickett's men captured a bunch of Federal soldiers, twenty-one of whom were recognized deserters from the Confederate army. Pickett was responsible for hanging all of them, knowing that they were all locals from that section of North Carolina. It was only Grant's endorsement for not trying him that saved his neck. President Andrew Johnson tucked the papers away where even Stanton could not further the case against Pickett. It will be recalled that after Five Forks Lee would have nothing to do with Pickett, and the enmity between the two lasted the rest of their lives.



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Federal General Francis Barlow was one of the founders of the American Bar Association and as Attorney General of New York prosecuted Boss Tweed and sent him to prison. (From Cleveland Civil War Round Table's Courier, Nov., 1964 - Ted Adams, Editor)

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Mason and Slidell, with their wives, were sailing to England on the British ship "Trent" to further the Confederate Cause with the Government of Queen Victoria. The two officials were taken off the ship, which was boarded by Union sailors. Confederate documents were saved by Mrs. Slidell by disposing of them inside her crinoline. Queen Victoria described the Federalists as "ruffians."

* * * * *

Did General Bernard Bee's remark at Bull Run that General Jackson was standing "like a stone wall" give the latter his nickname, or was it because his brigade, "The Stonewall Brigade," came from the "stone wall" counties of Virginia?

* * * * *

While marching through Georgia, General Sherman traveled with the left wing under General Slocum. After a long and wearisome march, he one day crossed over to the right wing under General Howard. While in Gen. Howard's tent, the Medical Director came in, well-acquainted with the habits and customs of both. General Sherman usually took a "nip" while Gen. Howard was strongly opposed to the indulgence. Knowing this, the medical gentleman, after a short time, wishing to serve his chief without offense to Howard said:

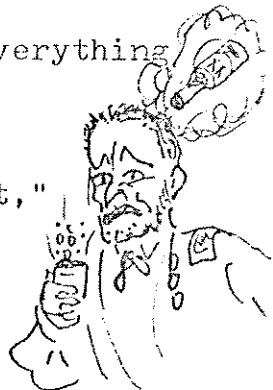
"General Sherman, you look weary and ill. If you will come over to my tent, I will give you a Seidlitz powder, which I think will do you some good."

"Thank you," readily responded the general, "I think I will."

The man of physic departed, and General Howard, who took everything literally, ran to his valise and got a powder, which he mixed and handed to Sherman:

"There is no need to go away for one, if that is what you want," he said, and Sherman, inwardly chagrined, but highly amused, drank the cup manfully, to the mirth of the by-standers, who comprehended the whole magnitude of the joke at a glance.

Above thanks to Member Ray Swanson.



LADIES' NIGHT APRIL 14th