

# The Charger

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5786 • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

NOVEMBER, 1981

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 4

210th Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10th  
PROGRAM: ANNUAL QUIZ CONTEST, BOOK & ARTIFACTS SALE  
PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB  
TIME: BOOZE AND BOOKS- 6:00 P.M. - DINNER 7:15

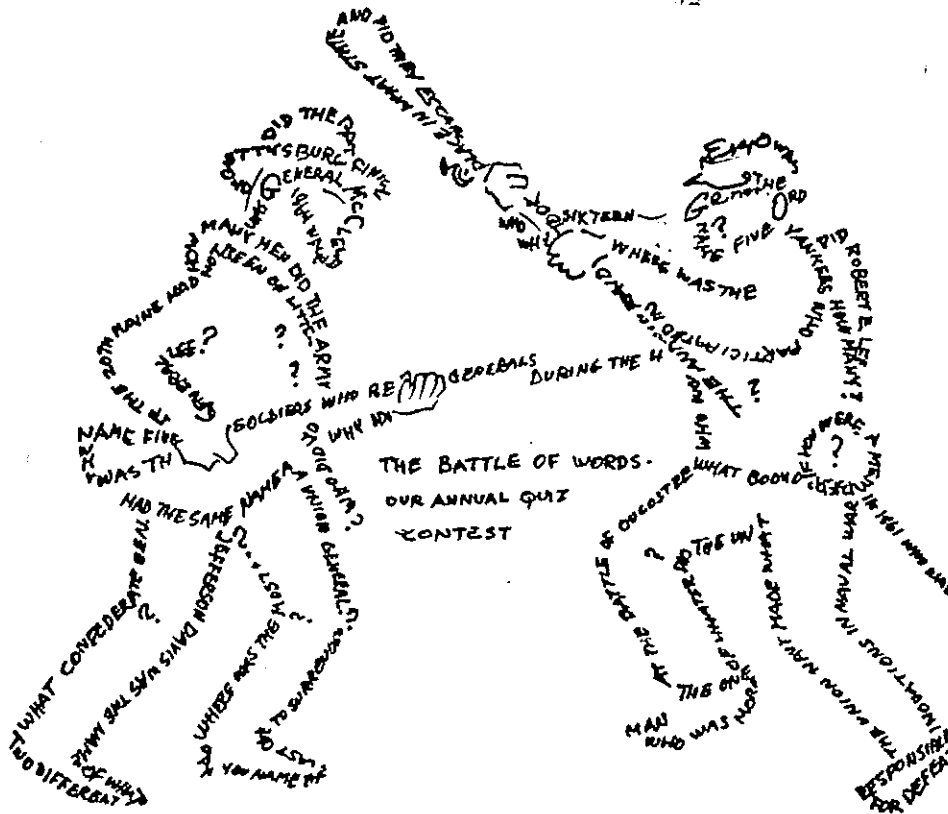
OUR QUIZ CONTEST  
IS ALWAYS ENTERTAIN-  
ING. THIS YEAR'S  
CAST:

Scorekeeper: Tom  
Geshke  
Quiz master: Tim  
Moran

"BLUES" \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Victory  
George Vourlojianis  
Dr. Callahan (Ken Sr.)  
"Greys" \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Kowell  
Bob Fricke  
Dr. Vansickle

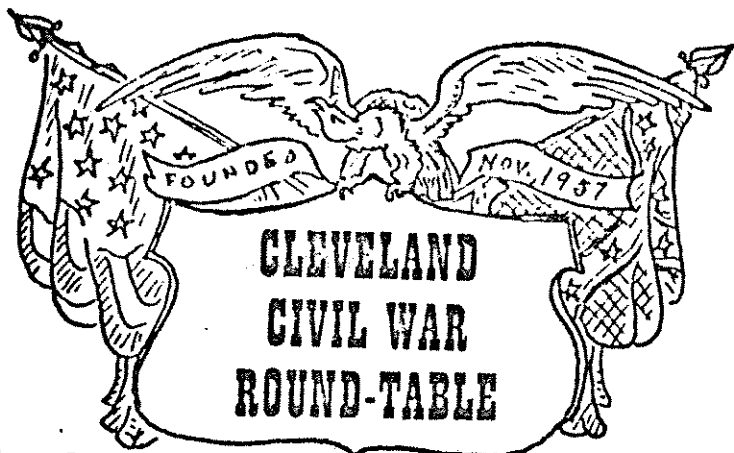
Back-up men:  
Bill Schlesinger  
Ken Callahan, Jr.

We hope there will  
be no coaching from  
the cognoscenti.



### Books and Artifacts Sale - 6:00 to 7:15

THOSE BRINGING BOOKS,  
MEMORABILIA OR ARTIFACTS  
TO THIS MEETING BE SURE  
YOU HAVE YOUR NAME AND  
THE PRICE MARKED CLEARLY.



President John Harkness  
228-3091  
Vice Pres. Bill Victory  
Secretary Tim Moran  
671-1328  
Treasurer Neil Evans  
752-2296  
Sgt.-at-Arms Brian Kowell  
Executive Committee:  
Jim Chapman 991-1286  
Tom Koehl 486-3867  
Don Hamill 777-3139  
Immediate Past Pres. Tom Geshke  
Immediate Past V.P. Jim Englehart

**Advisors:**

Bernie Drews  
• Bill Schlesinger  
Charlie Spiegle  
Neville Bayless  
Don Heckaman  
Bill Chamberlin

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Dues: \$17.00 from Sept. to Sept.  
Non-resident members, \$5.00

*Hey - Pay! Dues, Ya'know...*

Enclosed with this issue are individual bills for dues owed by 47 of our regular members, plus ten out of the 15 out-of-towners. If you have already paid, please disregard; if not, please be reminded of the fact that we cannot

## Quartermaster Operations

Our speaker at the October meeting, Earle J. Coates of Baltimore, a personable, earnest young historian gave a very erudite talk on the. Union Quartermaster operations. To some it was like the little girl who wrote, "This book tells more about birds than I ever wanted to know."

He presented reams of documented material culled from the National Archives records about various officers, quantities of materials supplied, how it was wrapped, where it was stored; with pictures of buildings in Cincinnati, Philadelphia and others, along with floor plans, railroad cars and steamboats. A most thorough coverage of every facet concerned.

It was obvious that the speaker "knew his muttons," quoting numbers, amounts, and specifics. Members realized from the talk what a tremendous undertaking this must have been - the biggest operation of its kind the world had ever known.

As one member commented, he could see why few have ever dug that deeply into the Quartermaster records. The subject was vast, almost overwhelming, and we must thank Earl Coates for a most thorough exposition on this difficult but all-important subject.

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continue functioning as a club or providing you with THE CHARGER without adequate means.

Send in your check NOW, or pay our treasurer at this upcoming meeting. It is so easy to overlook this, but it is so essential to keeping things going. Why put the burden on those who want to hold the club together?

Postal rates go up again Nov. 1st. Sending out 125 CHARGERS now costs about \$50 per issue. It's up to you whether you want to continue the status quo.

Several Civil War Round Tables announce their meetings via post cards. (Ed. Note: What could be easier!!)



# Fred Gill's Book Review



3.

WHAT?...READ A POEM?

"JOHN BROWN'S BODY" by Stephen Vincent Benét. Published 1928

Here is a poem, an epic poem, an American epic poem. Do not, however, let this vital information throw you, for it is not like the older epic poems vaguely remembered from school days. In this work of genius you will not have to wrestle with the sonorous hexameters dimly and not fondly remembered from the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." You won't have to struggle with fretful characters and windy complaining against the gods. Here you'll be reading about Americans, and every day ones of the Civil War time and the military and political heroes and villains of those days about whom we seem to know so much.



That this is one of the truly great books about the Civil War I submit as evidence Douglas Southall Freeman in his introduction to the Heritage Press edition which I have before me: (Benét).. "presented so justly, so accurately and so sympathetically the viewpoints of the North and South, that, if misunderstanding on the reader's part persisted, it had to be deliberate." Freeman also says, "A line-by-line critical reading left one convinced that Benét was as accurate in his history as he was skilful in his art." No more can be said.

In his R. E. Lee, published a decade later, Freeman produced over 2,500 pages on the man. Benét, in 176 lines, distills the man, his essence, his perfect being with such clarity and purity you are dazzled by the picture. Read these lines and you will never forget them.

And then there are Benét's quick pictures of other heroes that snap at you from his pages. Like these: "Dutch Longstreet.....



Hard to beat and just as hard to convince,  
But dangerous when he tries to think for himself,  
He thinks too much for himself at Gettysburg."



"Ewell goes by,  
The little woodpecker, bold and quaint of speech."

"Bold quiet Joe Johnson, the little  
precise  
Scotch-dominie of a general."

Jackson. "... and the plain  
Presbyterian figure in the flat cap,  
Cromwell-eyed and ready with Cromwell's  
short  
Bleak remedy for doubters and fools and enemies."



And then there are the stories of the plain men shooting at one another and the shining cavaliers of the gentry with their armor tarnishing as the grim work of war goes on.

The book is long and not easy to read. Most editions are pages and pages unrelieved by sensible typography. If possible put your hands on a copy of the Heritage Press edition. Here the typographer must have read the book, and saw the need for guide posts, for he inserted margin notes outside the text identifying the stories and tying them together. This, and generous type size and spacing, add to the joy of reading this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# Another Scene I'd Like to Have Seen

4.



In the summer of 1883, for the first time, a President of the United States visited Western Indians on their own soil. Heretofore the chiefs had traveled to Washington to visit "the great White Fathers" and be primed for abrogated treaties.

In this case it was Chester Arthur who visited the Shoshoni reservation in Wyoming and exchanged gifts with Chief Washakie in his lodge. This ceremonial exchange was typical of the inept Arthur. The Chief presented the President with a pinto pony, intended for his daughter Nell; the President responded by grandly designating Washakie as an Army scout. This to a warrior who had led regiment-sized Shoshoni forces into battle against the enemies of the United States! This tribe had been "friendly" for seventy years.

The whole visit was just a convenient way-stop anyway. The President, accompanied by a dozen or so cronies, including General Phil Sheridan, who arranged the hunting party with a seventy-five-man cavalry escort and 175 pack animals. This party continued on to a sportsmen's holiday in Yellowstone National Park.

They bagged three antelope, a harvest of trout, a bear and a bevy of small game.

A photograph was taken of Fat Phil and Chester in their camp. Both were sporting Scotch tams. The above picture has added Washakie (copied from another photograph) with some of the tribe in the background. The umbrellas were the sign of minor chieftains.

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## *Fred Gill's Book Review continued.*

great American poem.

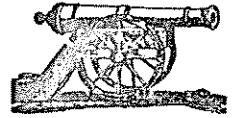
No matter what edition, however, every Civil War student should read the poem. It is a virtual guarantee that you will have an enhanced feeling about events when reading other books about this traumatic event in our history.

# Historic Cannon Being Restored by Members

Member George Vourlojianis, Curator of the Cleveland Grays' Museum, reports the restoration of a Civil War cannon which is displayed on the Grays' Armory drill floor.

The project is being undertaken by Cleveland Civil War Round Table members who are also members of the Grays: Bernie Drews, Frank Gillan, Don Heckaman, Frank Tesch and George Vourlojianis.

Research has revealed that the gun, which stood on the Public Square for many years, was brought as a trophy of war by Barnett's Light Artillery. The gun was captured at the Battle of Currick's Ford in Western Virginia. George will keep us posted as the work continues and more information is documented.



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## Reasons For Invasion

As a result of Lee's triumph at Chancellorsville, Southern leaders began to consider all of the reasons why an invasion of the North would be the best way to bring the war to a successful conclusion. These were the factors considered:

There was still hope of help from Europe; England still made a pretense of neutrality, but the aristocracy and ruling classes sided with the South. English guns and war material still poured in via the blockade runners. The French Government was hostile to the north. Overseas Confederate agents stated in their official dispatches that if General Lee could establish his army firmly on Northern soil England would acknowledge the independence of the South; in which case ample loans could not only be obtained on Southern securities, but a foreign alliance might be formed.

While thus elated by hopes of foreign intervention, the Confederate spies and sympathizers who thronged the North greatly encouraged the Davis Government by glowing accounts of disaffection there, in consequence of the heavy taxation made necessary by the war, and the unpopularity of the draft. They overrated the influence of the Copperhead movement and anti-war party.

These reasons, while erroneous, might have been sufficient to induce Lee to make the movement, but he had his own reasons. The Army of the Potomac, despite its set-back at Chancellorsville was still strong, and in a formidable position. Lee hoped by a northern invasion to draw Hooker out, and strike him a decisive blow...he knew that prolonged defensive warfare would ultimately be ruinous. Having been reinforced after Chancellorsville, his force amounting to 68,350, he was determined to act. Such a move might even draw Union forces away from the impending disaster at Vicksburg. One more potent reason: the Confederate commissariat - it is said that the commissariat general, upon being requisitioned for a supply of rations suggested the only way to fill them was to seek them in Pennsylvania.

And so the invasion was undertaken, and ended at Gettysburg.





Several new members have asked the meaning of "ollapodrida." Broken down in its Spanish translation it means "rotten stew," but its literal usage has come to mean "any assortment, medley or miscellany." It is this latter interpretation that we use as the title for these odds and ends of information gleaned from reading here-there-and-everywhere.

Another usage, and this might possibly have some connection: in the old vaudeville days, "the olio" meant the acts on stage in front of the first curtain, "in number one"; stand-up comics, magicians, jugglers, song-and-dance teams, singers, etc. - a great variety of acts. These were put in the olio to hold forth while stage sets were being changed backstage for the more elaborate presentations.

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A private in the 20th Vermont on the line the first day at Gettysburg, who, when asked by his Colonel why he was chewing hardtack in the ranks, replied, "For the juice, sir, I'm very fond of the juice."

\* — \* — \* — \* — \* — \* — \*

A Confederate prisoner at Spottsylvania Court House, who, led back among Grant's profusion of guns, said, "You fellers got almost as many of them guns marked "U.S." as we'uns have."

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We don't know whether it is still there or not, but a trip to Washington, D.C. last January (1981) revealed an unique memorial to General "Fighting Joe Hooker." It is called "The Red Light Museum and Gift Shop," located in two rooms on the second floor of a cocktail lounge just off Connecticut Avenue.

The museum houses memorabilia dating back to the time when prostitution was legal. Its owner, one Dennis Sobin, claims that the word "hooker" was derived from the camp followers who set up shop near the encampment of General Joseph Hooker, in downtown Washington. (We've heard other explanations involving the General.) Hooker's soldiers were camped on Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and the Capitol.

Ladies of the evening were housed nearby in an area of the city that was known as "Hooker's Division." It remained as a red light district for nearly a century until leveled in a post World War II urban renewal project.

Hooker's portrait is featured in the museum in its red-draped rooms along with such erotica as a Victorian-era slide show, 19th century photographs, daguerreotypes, and lithographs of favorite "doves"; and a map of the District of Columbia locating the bordellos, a great many of which were found near the White House and Capitol Hill.

Adorning the walls are reproductions of posters with such sayings as: "Sailors registering with street girls must pay in advance.," and "Commit no nuisance. This is a clean and moral establishment. Scoundrels will be dealt with severely."

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A little song dedicated to the postal increase: "Let Me Call You, Sweetheart, I Can't Afford to Write."