

The Charger

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P.O. Box 444
Vermilion, Ohio 44089

SEPTEMBER, 1981

VOLUME 25 Number 2

208th MEETING

DATE: SEPTEMBER 8

PROGRAM: MR. CRAIG SCHERMER

SUBJECT: CORNWALLIS AT YORKTOWN

PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB

TIME: Cocktails and summer reminiscences at 6 P.M.

Dinner at 7 P.M.

Our speaker will examine the character and motivations of Lieutenant-General Charles, 2nd Earl, Lord Cornwallis and why this excellent officer was so placed as to be forced to surrender at Yorktown, on October 19, 1781.

The presentation will delve not only into Cornwallis' role, but also into the tortuous relationship between him and his Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Clinton. Mr. Schermer will explain Cornwallis' decision to invade Virginia and what made him march down to Yorktown. A little insight will be shed on the battles of Cowpens and Guilford Court House and the fighting in Virginia - all of which had an effect on the final outcome. The entire period from January through October, 1781, will be presented from the British point of view.



(Cornwallis, not Schermer)

Craig Schermer is a native Cleveland who holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in History from John Carroll University and an M.S.L. degree in Library Science from Case Western Reserve. His fields of research include Russian Imperial History from 1894-1917, the reign of Nicholas II; also the lives of Mary Todd Lincoln and President Franklin Pierce. He has also researched the British Monarchy and the British Army of the 18th Century, with emphasis on the role of British officers (particularly Cornwallis and Lieutenant-Colonel James Webster).

Our speaker is also an artist and has painted over 160 portraits of the British High Command in America 1775-1783. Likenesses of Lord Cornwallis, General Clinton, General Leslie, and General Charles O'Hara will be exhibited.

Mr. Schermer is a member of the 64th Regiment of Foot and has portrayed a British infantryman in numerous Bicentennial activities. Both he and John Harkness will be a part of the official observance of the 200th Anniversary of the surrender at Yorktown this coming October.

IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES THAT'S WHY OUR TREASURY IS SCRAPING THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL!! WE NEED YOUR \$17 (NON-RESIDENTS \$5).....



THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

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Callahan Meeting

On May 12th, our last meeting of the year, members gathered at the beautiful home of Ken Callahan for a memorable evening.

First they were met at their cars by Ken's son, in one of his horse-drawn carriages (from the downtown carriage service of the same name.) Entering under a giant Confederate flag, we were ushered down to a spacious lounge and barroom where the beer and ardent spirits flowed, as they say, most

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members:

Our 1981-82 program covers a broad range of topics which I am sure will be of interest to you.

In September we have Craig Schermer, who will commemorate the 200th Anniversary (Oct.) of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown with a talk on that historical person.

Ed. Note: As mentioned previously, Mr. Schermer and John Harkness are both members of the uniformed 64th Regiment of Foot, and will participate in the reenactment of the surrender, along with 6,000 expected, including the presidents of both the U.S.A. and France.

In October our speaker will be Mr. Jerry Coates, who will address the Club on the subject: "Quartermaster Support of the Atlanta Campaign."

In November we will hold our traditional Book/Artifacts Sale and Civil War Quizz. Consignments to the sale should be given to Bernie Drews or Don Heckaman. Tim Moran will chair the quizz show.

Ernie Peterson will address us in December on the exploration of the "Monitor" wreck.

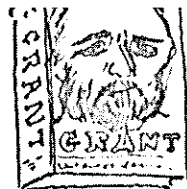
January's meeting is tentatively "Old Movie Night," and we hope to provide a top film on the Civil War or World War I. Certain members of the advisory board have threatened me with bodily harm if I try to show the Our Gang comedy "General Spanky."

Dan Moore will be the speaker in February. His topic will be Civil War artillery.

March is a very special meeting marking the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table. Bud Robertson will speak on a subject to be announced. If you have any ideas or suggestions for special observation of this event please let us know and we will try to incorporate them into our plans.

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FRED GILL'S BOOK REVIEW



GRANT by William S. McFeely, W.W.Norton Co., N.Y. 1981

A biography of a historical character should be more than a written account of the figure's life. At least a biography written by a history professor can be expected to reveal some new insights into the subject's life and his acts in his time, or at the very least some heretofore undiscovered facts about him.

This long book reveals neither of these. It sets forth nothing about Grant that has not been set forth before, and the author makes not the slightest attempt to penetrate the enormous mystery of Grant's life. He makes no effort to illuminate the great peaks and valleys of Grant's existence.

History, someone has said, is an illusion created by historians. In this work, however, the historian creates no illusions, or at least no illusions not created by deeper diggers into what made Grant run. Let us contrast Grant's sorry weakness and ineffectuality in his first four decades with the glittering mind of the war years. Further, contrast his strange and wavering presidency with those years of epic courage spent battling cancer and writing his glowing historical-and literary masterpiece. What was it in his mind and character that made the difference in these contrasting periods?

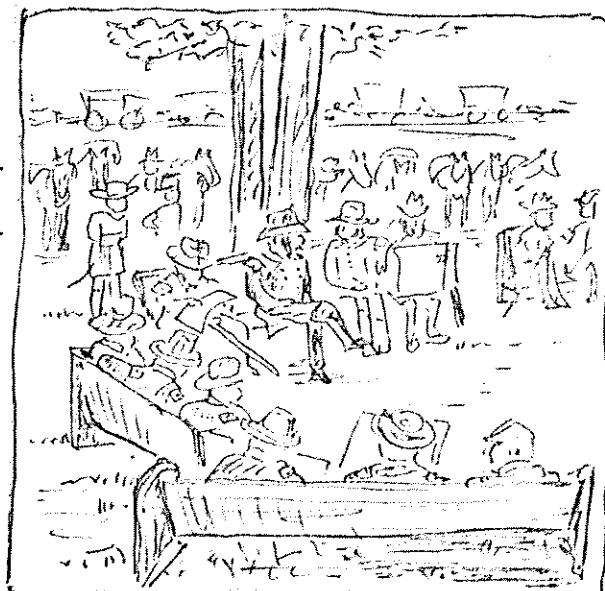
Grant was a twisted character. Lee, in comparison, was a clear and straightforward character, pointed ever onward to glory and greatness. Perhaps it wasn't hard for Freeman to write his magnificent work on the Confederate saint. If Freeman had been born in Chicago instead of Richmond, perhaps we would today have a definitive biography of Grant instead of such a flawed attempt as this book is. Waste not your time or money on it. There are plenty of good ones around.

On page 167 of this book is the familiar picture of Grant and others conferring before Cold Harbor, captioned as at the Bethesda Church. Members who were on the 1973 Field Trip to Virginia will remember stopping at Massaponax Baptist Church and the convincing evidence we saw proved that the picture really was taken there. Which is the illusion?
F.G.

* * * * *

Ed. Note: As a Grant enthusiast I added the above book to my Grant Collection. I agree with Fred's appraisal, except that I thought the author did a good job in presenting the almost insurmountable problems that confronted the general as president, and how he honestly tried to cope with them. I couldn't help but think that the author missed a good bet in not comparing the embarrassments heaped upon Grant by his young brother Orvis Grant, with the same kind of things that Billy Carter did to his brother in the White House in our time.

Still think that Meet General Grant, by W. E. Woodward - Literary Guild, 1928 is the best of them all.



Prez Letter *continued*

Our "Ladies' Night" will be in April. The program is still in the planning stages, but will hopefully be a revival of a well-remembered light-hearted presentation given some years back by two of our members.

The speaker, topic, and location of the May meeting will be announced at a later date.

Unless otherwise indicated, all of our meetings will be held at the Hermit Club.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at our meetings this year, and I encourage you to invite your interested friends and business associates to attend as your guests.

Regards,,

John C. Harkness

May Meeting continued

freely. It was, understandably, the best attended meeting of the year.

Following a delicious and varied buffet, the meeting was held in the livingroom, all 50 of us.

Jim Chapman did his usual scholarly job in presenting the importance of Admiral Farragut's contributions to the Union victory; Don Hamill lauded George B. McClellan, and Stu Cramer traced a tongue in cheek account of what might have happened had Albert Sidney Johnston lived.

Tom Geshke, retiring president, was given a plaque in appreciation of his efforts last year, and he turned the gavel over to John Harkness. We all thank Ken and his fine family for a great evening.

Chatt-Chic Field Trip

There still may be time for you to sign up for the Field Trip on Sept. 17-20 (first and last days for travel).

This should be an OUTSTANDING trip, what with veteran trip-master Chuck Spiegle in charge, and the incredible Ed Bearss as the guide.

There is so much to see! At Chattanooga, with its Lookout Mountain and the breathtaking view of the winding Tennessee River...The "Battle Above the Clouds," Grant's headquarters at Orchard Knob, and Missionary Ridge.

Then eight miles away is the battlefield of Chickamauga, one of the few still uncommercialized battlefields of the Civil War. McLemore's Cove, where old beetle-browed Bragg could have bagged the Union army that blundered into a perfect trap...Dug Gap, Lee and Gordon's Mill, the Brotherton House, scene of Longstreet's breakthrough, the Widow Glenn's farm site, where the opposing forces shot at each other only yards apart...Snodgrass House and Horseshoe Ridge, where Thomas gained immortality, McFarland's Gap, and Rossville, where Rosey Rosecrans galloped back to Chattanooga in his haste to escape the Confederate tide that was rolling up his army.

Call Charlie Spiegle, make your reservations just as soon as possible.

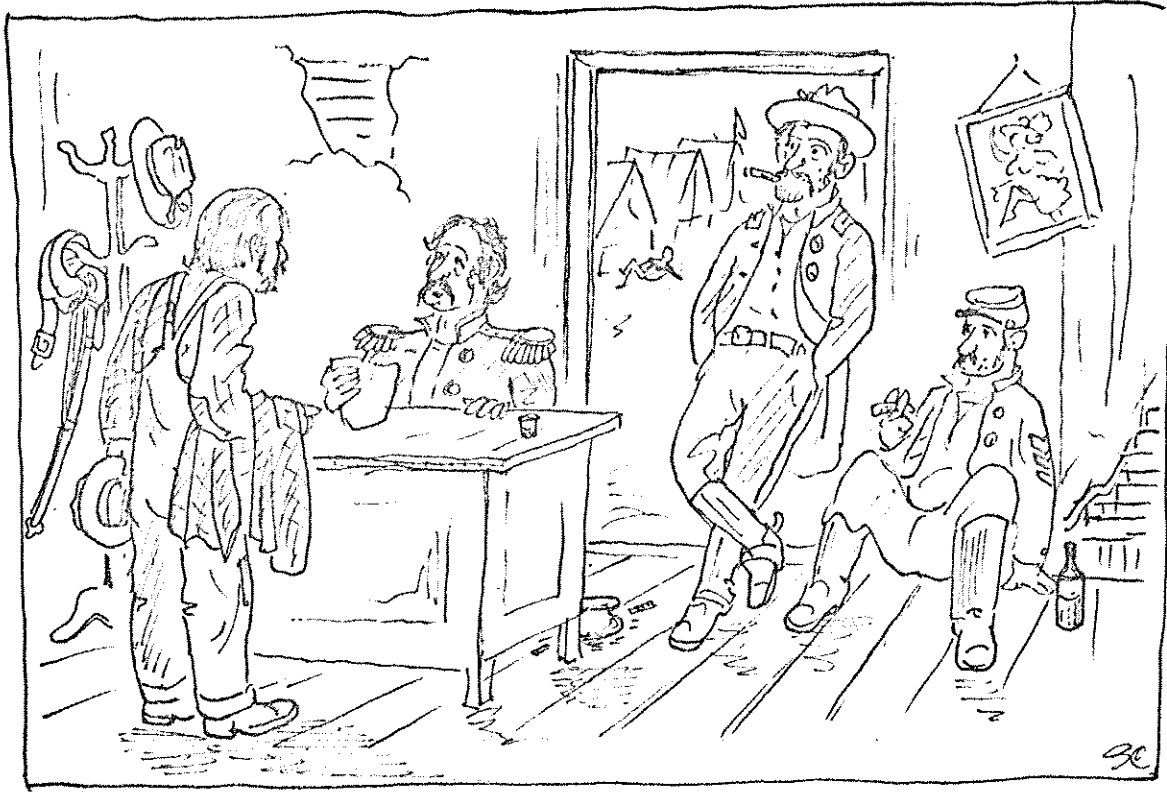
Call 464-5335 (office)

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They Deserved Each Other

Scenes I'd Like to Have Seen



In what publication currently read in Canada, Mexico, England, Scotland, No. Ireland, Belgium, Switzerland, West Germany, India, Japan, Netherlands Antilles, and U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as in 29 of our United States, has Cleveland Civil War Round Table's THE CHARGER recently been mentioned?

ANSWER: In the premier issue of THE JOURNAL OF MAGIC HISTORY (March, 1979)

Camp Yates, near Springfield, Illinois, early in 1861:

The shabby fellow who had been waiting for over an hour was finally called into the office of Colonel Goode, commandant of the camp. Goode was a young, bombastic, self-loving man, much more interested in using his position to insure a good time than trying to train an unruly bunch of recruits. He was known to call men off guard duty to join him on drunken sprees.

Goode was so incompetent that finally some of the officers of this state volunteer regiment had gone to see their governor to inform him that they would no longer serve under such a misfit. The result is the subject of this scene.

I'd like to have seen the look on the face of Colonel Goode when he read the order the seedy individual handed him. It relieved him of command and instructed him to turn it over to the newly appointed Colonel Ulysses S. Grant the little fellow standing before him.

Within a month Grant had whipped the 21st Illinois Volunteers into an almost model regiment. They were a rough and rowdy bunch, but Grant was rougher, meting out severe punishment to the ringleaders, but gaining the men's respect every day. He was so penniless at the time that he couldn't afford a uniform, his only badge of authority being a rusty old cavalry saber he'd found amongst some discarded articles at the state arsenal. For weeks he let his lieutenant colonel conduct regimental parades, until finally he was able to buy a uniform



OLLAPODRIDA



New England's Greatest Compliment to Confederate Navy

With the news that Confederate raiders were spreading terror throughout the world, sinking shipping and attacking shore installations, New England ports almost panicked. The ship-building industry in Bath, Maine, decided it should have protection. So, in 1861 Fort Popham was built (but never finished) at Popham Beach, at the mouth of the Kennebec River.

At the dedication of this fort, orators reminded their audience that on this same Peninsula of the Sabino, the first English colony in New England was built in 1607. These colonists at Sabino were building the first ship on the new continent - 13 years before the Mayflower set sail.



The colony lasted but one year, all the colonists returning to England save one, who died as a result of the rough climate.

No Confederate raider ever came near Fort Pophan. The remains are still there

* * * * *

Ohio was third in the states that supplied the most troops to the Union armies (New York and Pennsylvania were first and second.) These statistics* are interesting:

Killed in action (including officers).....	6,835
Died of wounds.....	4,753
Died of Disease.....	21,721
Drowned.....	784
Murdered.....	23
Suicides.....	34

There were 5,092 free Negroes from Ohio in the Union Army.

* Dyer's Compendium
Vol. 1, P. 16

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From member Leigh Tanger, now retired in Arkansas, comes an article from The Arkansas Democrat (Little Rock, August 15) stating that the most expensive motion picture ever made for Columbia Broadcasting will go into production in that state in September. The \$15 million film will be "The Blue and the Gray," based upon research by Bruce Catton. It will run eight hours, be directed by Andrew J. McLagen ("Gunsmoke" and John Wayne's last six movies) and will probably open the CBS 1982 season. It will start with John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry and end with the assassination of Lincoln. The story is woven around two families, North and South, the mothers being sisters. Let's hope they stick to the facts!

* * * * *

Robert E. Lee's last words were supposed to have been, "Strike the tent.. break up camp....move on." They were spoken on the morning of October 12, 1870, on the campus of Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia.

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John Barrymore's last words were a bit less serious. The dying actor asked his friend, Gene Fowler, to lean over because he wanted to ask a question. Barrymore whispered, "Is it true that you are the illegitimate son of Buffalo Bill?"

* * * * *

Buffalo Bill spent 18 months as a Union cavalryman during the Civil War....which has nothing to do with the above.

—A—