

THE CHARGER



The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

February 2025

CCWRT Founded 1956

Vol. 49, No. 6

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PROGRAM –
“Stonewall Jackson at
Gettysburg” [600th
meeting of the CCWRT]

SPEAKER – Dr. Chris
Mackowski, editor-in-chief
and co-founder of Emerging
Civil War.

LOCATION: The Holiday Inn Independence at
6001 Rockside Road, Independence, Ohio
44131, off US Interstate 77

TIME: Social Hour at 6:00 PM and Presentation
at 7:00 PM

For reservations email:
ccwrtreserve@gmail.com. To ensure a dinner is
reserved for you, the reservation must be made
by Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Website:
<http://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>

MEETING – February 12, 2025

Like us on Facebook!

President's Message

Fellow Roundtable Members:

Now that winter has settled in, the landscape around us has transformed into a quiet, frost-kissed expanse. Snowflakes dance through the crisp air, and the chill in the wind invites us to slow down, gather close, and reflect. It is in this serene and still time of year that we find the perfect opportunity to reminisce and celebrate the bonds we share as members of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. I hope you are all staying warm and embracing the beauty that winter brings, whether it is through quiet moments by the fire or gathering with friends and family.

With that sense of winter's calm, I am excited to share some highlights from our January meeting—an evening filled with riveting debate and camaraderie.

Our January meeting marked the 68th Anniversary of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, and it did so in grand style with the annual Dick Crews Memorial Debate. This year's thought-provoking topic, "The Table Is Set, So Who Are You Bringing Along?" invited debaters to argue which Civil War figure they would most like to sit down with over dinner or a beverage. As always, our expert moderator, Judge William Vodrey, kept things running smoothly, and the debate itself was energetic and engaging. Since our Civil War Guests received their telegrams, they were able to "join" the meetings and "sit" at a table near the podium. Those in attendance at the meeting then voted for the "best Civil War guest," based on who had made the strongest case for an engaging and memorable conversation.

- John Syroney chose Dan Sickles (over Scotch): John argued that Sickles' controversial decision to

advance his III Corps at Gettysburg, despite orders to stay on Cemetery Ridge, was a tactical move that helped thwart Confederate General Longstreet's assault. He posited that this strategic shift played a significant role in the Union's eventual victory at Gettysburg.

- Emily Dickinson chose Ulysses S. Grant (over London Fogs): Emily explored how Grant's military experience in the Mexican-American War shaped his leadership style during the Civil War. She highlighted Grant's unpretentious nature, his pragmatism, and his lessons from war, particularly his understanding of the brutal realities of battle and his belief in the necessity of national unity.
- Terry McHale chose Thomas Francis Meagher (over 69th N.Y. Regimental Cocktails): Terry presented Meagher's fierce commitment to both the Irish cause and the Union, discussing how he envisioned Irish soldiers helping to expel the British from Ireland post-war. He also delved into Meagher's belief in using the Civil War as an opportunity to free Ireland from English oppression.
- Jonathan Collens chose Robert E. Lee (over Buttermilk): Jonathan focused on the contradictions in Lee's actions, questioning why Lee fought for the Confederacy despite his reservations about slavery and secession. He examined whether Lee might have had regrets and whether a more defensive strategy could have changed the outcome of the war.

- Paul Siedel chose Patrick Cleburne (over Irish Whiskey, neat): Paul highlighted Cleburne's progressive proposal to allow enslaved individuals to fight for the Confederacy in exchange for their freedom. This audacious idea, which was rejected by the Confederate leadership, underscored Cleburne's forward-thinking approach to the war and military manpower.

After each debater presented their arguments and answered questions from the audience, the lively "scrum" followed, where all five debaters exchanged ideas and challenged each other. In the end, the audience voted, and Emily Dickinson was chosen as the winner for her stimulating take on Ulysses S. Grant. Congratulations to Emily and thank you to all our debaters for a memorable and enlightening evening!

Looking ahead to next month, we are excited to welcome Dr. Chris Mackowski for his presentation on "Stonewall Jackson at Gettysburg." The question "What if Stonewall Jackson had been at Gettysburg?" is one of the most enduring "What Ifs" in Civil War history. While this scenario can never be fully answered, as Jackson died before the battle, it remains a compelling topic. Chris will explore why Jackson's presence at Gettysburg was unlikely and discuss the lessons we can learn from considering this intriguing possibility in the broader context of the war.

Our February 12th meeting promises to be one for the books. In addition to the intriguing presentation, this meeting will also serve as a celebration of President Lincoln's 216th Birthday. It also marks the 600th meeting of our Roundtable. Did you know? The first official Cleveland Civil War Roundtable meeting was held on January 8th,

1957, at Kiefer's Restaurant on Detroit Avenue and West 25th Street. This meeting included our ten founders including: John Cullen, Kenneth Grant, George Farr Jr., William Schlesinger, Gordon Tatum, William Hughes, William Gaul, Charles Clarke, Roy Smith Jr., and E. Preston Rutter. We have come a long way since then, and we are thrilled to reach this 600th meeting milestone! Whether you are a newcomer or a long-time member, this is an evening not to be missed. We will raise a glass to the past, present, and future of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, and we hope to see you there to celebrate with us!

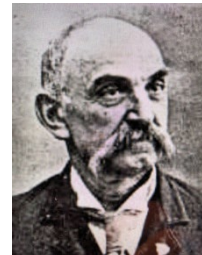
Wishing you all a wonderful February—stay warm, stay engaged, and I look forward to seeing you at our milestone meeting!

Your obedient servant,

Gene Claridge

NOT RELATED!

For those of you who saw Brian Kowell's article, "Are You Related," in the January issue of "The Charger:" no, Paul Siedel is not related to Charles B. Seidel, Company B, 3rd Ohio Cavalry.



Paul Siedel and Charles B. Seidel

The Editor's Desk



THE DEBATE IS OVER! A winner has been declared! Reflecting on everything said at the January meeting about what person from the Civil War era you would like to have a meal with, I have concluded that I have several Civil War ancestors I would like to gather around the table. First, I would love to hear firsthand from my great-grandfather, Henry Jacobs, the blacksmith, about his suspicions that he played unknowing host to some of Morgan's Raiders seeking a route back south across the Mason-Dixon Line. I would like to question my great-grandfather, Frederick Fonner, about his decision to seek exemption from military conscription during the war. The family always said that being Pennsylvania Dutch, the Fonnors were pacifists and opposed to all military service. One of Fred's sisters even went so far as to hide out her drafted fiancé in the family's sheep shed that once stood on our family farm to keep him from being arrested as a deserter by Federal cavalry patrols in our county. Fred's father, James Fonner, known as "the Old Dutchman," was active in Democrat Party township and local politics during the war. It is possible, therefore, that

Fred was motivated as much by political as well as religious reasons.

Most of all, however, I would like to chat with my great-great-grandfather, William Silveus. Not a wealthy man, William Silveus made his living as a tenant-farmer not far from the home of his brother, Joseph Silveus, in Center Township, Greene County, Pennsylvania. William married Mary Campbell Mildred in his brother's home, a few years before the war. The young couple established their own household. William's parents went to live in Mercer County, PA, near his brother, Anthony Silveus. By August 1862, when William enlisted in Company I, 8th Regiment Pennsylvania Reserves Infantry, he and Mary had one two-year-old daughter (my great-grandmother) and Mary was pregnant with their second child. This child, also a girl, was born about a month after William marched off for the front. Captured at Fredericksburg, VA, in December, he died on January 12, 1863, as a paroled POW, at Camp Parole, MD, near Annapolis, from typhoid fever contracted while he was held in Libby Prison in Richmond. Back at home, Mary Silveus, dependent on her mother, Nancy Mildred, her brother-in-law, Joe Silveus, and eventually a small widow's pension, supplemented by work as a seamstress, did the best she could to raise two small daughters. Her oldest daughter, Martha Maria Silveus, married a local merchant, Jasper Dulaney, when she was about sixteen years old. They were my grandmother Jacobs' parents. Mary Silveus never remarried, and she died when she was only fifty-four years old. I often wonder what her life might have been if William had made it home.

My question for William-----WHY! Why did he enlist and leave his pregnant wife alone? He was about 29 years old at the time. I have not seen his name on any military draft lists from that period. Was he motivated by patriotism? Perhaps, but in one of his first letters home he tells Mary that she can collect the county bounty as soon as he gets a letter from the captain verifying his muster into the army. So, was he motivated by economics? The bounty at that time was only fifty dollars, but there may have also been a township bounty as well, plus thirteen solid dollars army pay per month. Was he just bored at home and looking for adventure? His brother, Joe, had enlisted in the summer of 1861 and returned to his family the next year. It is possible the two brothers made a pledge that one would stay home to care for their families while the other served in the military. In a letter to Joe, William admits that he likes soldiering better than he thought he would. Moreover, in the last letter I have, he berates Mary for not writing to him, suggesting that, rather than being bored with his wife, he still loved her and missed her very much. One of his army buddies in Company I, who was captured at the same time, in a letter home, said that while Silveus was delirious with fever in the Rebel prison, he carried on full conversations with his wife, Mary. I guess I will never have a satisfactory answer to my main question.

Perhaps some of the other members of CCWRT have similar questions for their Civil War ancestors. Think about it, and if you do, then why not share them here in a future issue of *The Charger*.

BY THE WAY—My drink of choice for the occasion would be clear, cold, spring water from the Fonner farm on Fonner Run. It

was the best water I have ever had. Dad always referred to it as “Good Old Adam’s Ale!”

Birthright Citizenship and the 14th Amendment:

President Donald Trump has announced that he will try to end birthright citizenship, presumably by Executive Order. This is guaranteed under the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a post-Civil War act primarily authored by Ohio Senator John A. Bingham. It says:

"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

Its adoption was intended to override the 1857 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, which denied African-Americans (whether born here and whether or not a slave) citizenship. Thus, the several million slaves emancipated in January, 1863 by President Lincoln's Proclamation and after the Civil War by the 13th Amendment became citizens. Unfortunately, their rights under the rest of the 14th Amendment were denied for many decades after the failure of Reconstruction in the South.

For an explanation of the Citizenship Clause, see a commentary by lawyers Cody Wofsy and Hannah Schoen Steinberg of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project (December 13, 2024): "Trump's Remarks on Birthright Citizenship Explained". Also, go to the November 8, 2018, podcast of the National Constitution Center (<https://constitutioncenter.org>): "Does the

Constitution Require Birthright
Citizenship?"

--Dennis Keating

2025 Dick Crews Memorial Debate Posted on the Roundtable's Website:

The annual Dick Crews Memorial Debate took place at the January 8, 2025, Roundtable meeting. This year's topic addressed the question, "Which individual from the Civil War would be the most interesting to sit down and speak with over dinner or a tasty beverage?" Five members of the Roundtable prepared arguments to present their opinion on this question: John Syrone (who chose Dan Sickles), Emily Dickinson (who chose Ulysses S. Grant), Terry McHale (who chose Thomas Francis Meagher), Jake Collens (who chose Robert E. Lee), and Paul Siedel (who chose Patrick Cleburne). William Vodrey again served as moderator. Each of the arguments was insightful and engaging, and each of the debaters made a compelling case. The arguments that each debater presented are now posted on the Roundtable's website and are well worth reading (<https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/the-great-debate-of-2025/>.)

--David A. Carrino

CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE CONGRESS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABILITY

CCWRT COMING OUT OF THE PANDEMIC: AUGUST, 2023 (JANUARY 2024 UPDATE)

The 2023-2024 campaign year has gone very well under the leadership of President Bob Pence. He appointed two standing committees,

Membership and social media, which meet regularly prior to the monthly Executive Committee meeting. He has led a vigorous outreach program to build membership. One of the things that we learned at the August conference was that many people don't know that Roundtables exist and that is why they don't join. One response is that we were able to get the donation of car magnets with our name and logo that have been distributed to all members. Bob led the outreach effort with a weekend at Hale Farm during their Civil War encampment in August with an information booth staffed by CWRT members and Bob himself. Other efforts have included the dispersal of over 1,500 Informational rack cards to libraries in our area. In addition, a CWRT display was set up at the Westlake Library for a month. We also established an "Ambassador" Program where guests and new members were assigned to a table hosted by existing members whose assignment was to make them feel welcome. We plan to be actively involved with National History Day by providing prizes related to Civil War era themes. The Membership Committee is also looking at ways to interact with other civil war and history related groups to increase our visibility. The visit by General Grant [Curt Fields] brought out the largest audience for a meeting since February 2020. We had a least 105 in attendance. Attendance at meetings has been more robust with an average of over 60 at recent meetings. The Membership Committee set a goal of increasing membership to over 90 by May 2024 and 100 by May 2025. As of the January meeting, we are at 95 dues paying members. While things are looking positive at this time, we know that we have to continue with outreach efforts to sustain the organization. We are an older group and attrition of members is an ongoing process due to inevitable aging so we will continue to think of new and innovative ways to reach out to the public and recruit new members.

--Steve Pettyjohn

A Musical Historical First

by David A. Carrino

A recent addition to the monthly meetings of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable is to conclude each meeting with the playing of "Taps" accompanied by the showing of photographs of military cemeteries. This practice was introduced to the meetings by Bob Pence during his time as president of the Roundtable, and the practice has been continued by Gene Claridge, the current president of the Roundtable. Many if not most Roundtable members know that Union General Daniel Butterfield is credited with composing the bugle call "Taps." But there is another historical first associated with "Taps" that is not as well known. In light of the recent practice of concluding Roundtable meetings with "Taps," Roundtable members may find this other historical first interesting.

Historical firsts have a distinction that confer upon the people who accomplished them a special place in history. For example, what do the following historical figures have in common: Ferdinand Magellan, Roger Bannister, Yuri Gagarin, and Louise Brown? The answer is that each one earned a place in history primarily by being the first person to do something: Magellan for leading the first circumnavigation of the Earth, Bannister for running the first sub-four-minute mile, Gagarin for being the first human to go into outer space, and Brown for being the first person born through *in vitro* fertilization. Not that these people did nothing else of consequence, but their place in history came really from being the first person to do something. The same is true for Oliver W. Norton. Oliver Norton's historical first is associated with the bugle call "Taps," because the first time that this haunting, wistful melody emanated from a bugle, it was Oliver Norton who was on the business end of the instrument.



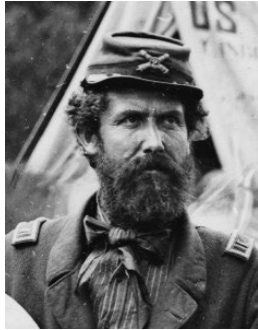
The bugle call "Taps" is attributed to Union General Daniel Butterfield. Butterfield [pictured here] felt that the army's official call to extinguish lights was too formal. This call, known as "Tattoo," had been adopted from the French army and was Napoleon's favorite bugle call. Oliver Norton described the origin of "Taps" in an 1898 letter to a magazine which had published an erroneous identification of its composer.

Norton [pictured below] wrote in his letter, "During the early part of the Civil War I was bugler at the Headquarters of Butterfield's Brigade...Up to July, 1862, the Infantry call for Taps was that set down in Casey's Tactics, which...was borrowed from the French. One day, soon after the seven days battles on the Peninsular, when the Army of the Potomac was lying in camp at Harrison's Landing, General Daniel Butterfield, then commanding our Brigade, sent for me, and showing me some notes on a staff written in pencil on the back of an envelope, asked me to sound them on my bugle. I did this several times, playing the music as written. He changed it somewhat, lengthening some notes and shortening others, but retaining the melody as he first gave it to me. After getting it to his satisfaction, he directed me to sound that call for Taps thereafter in place of the regulation call.

"The music was beautiful on that still summer night, and was heard far beyond the limits of our Brigade. The next day I was visited by several buglers from neighboring Brigades, asking for copies of the music which I gladly furnished. I think no general



order was issued from army headquarters authorizing the substitution of this for the regulation call, but as each brigade commander exercised his own discretion in such minor matters, the call was gradually taken up through the Army of the Potomac. I have been told that it was carried to the Western Armies by the 11th and 12th Corps, when they went to Chattanooga in the fall of 1863, and rapidly made its way through those armies." "Taps" also came to be used by quite a few Confederate units and gained official recognition by the U.S. Army in 1874.



"Taps" was first used at a military funeral during the Peninsula Campaign after a member of an Army of the Potomac artillery unit was killed. It was customary at military burials to fire a three-shot volley to honor the dead soldier. But the artillery unit, Battery A, 2nd Artillery, was in an advanced position, and the commander of the unit, John Tidball [pictured], was concerned that firing the volley would provoke enemy fire on his position. In place of the volley, Tidball ordered the playing of "Taps," and this practice spread throughout the army. "Taps" was made standard at military funerals in 1891, and, fittingly, it was played at the 1901 funeral of Daniel Butterfield.

Oliver Norton came to be Butterfield's bugler after he enlisted in 1861 and became a member of the 83rd Pennsylvania Regiment. Norton was the bugler of his regiment and later was appointed bugler of the brigade. He was not a Pennsylvanian by birth, but was born in Angelica, New York in 1839. The oldest of 13 children, Norton was well educated and was working as a teacher when the Civil War began. His 83rd Pennsylvania Regiment became part of a brigade that eventually included the 20th Maine of Little Round Top fame. Daniel Butterfield was in command of this brigade from its formation through the Battle of Antietam. It was this brigade, commanded at the Battle of Gettysburg by Strong Vincent, that was hustled up Little Round Top in response to Gouverneur K. Warren's timely warning. In fact, Norton's 1913 book, *The Attack and Defense of Little Round Top*, is considered one of the most accurate accounts of that fight.



Oliver Norton in 1890

After Gettysburg, Norton received a commission as a first lieutenant in the 8th U.S. Colored Regiment. He remained in this unit until his discharge on November 10, 1865. He maintained his connection to the army as a member of the Grand Army of the Republic and by attending reunions. In 1870 he married Lucy Fanning, with the presiding minister Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe. The couple moved to Chicago, where they had five children. Norton and his business associates formed a company that produced tin cans and sheet metal products, which seems appropriate for someone whose military career was closely connected to a piece of metal. Norton died on October 1, 1920, and his wife Lucy died in 1933. No monument to Oliver Norton exists anywhere.

From now on when attendees at Roundtable meetings hear "Taps," they should remember that Oliver Norton was the first person to play that plaintive melody. By all accounts, Norton was a good man who lived an honorable life. Nevertheless, Norton's life was by no means historic, and if he had not been the bugler of Daniel Butterfield's brigade, and if Norton's brigade commander had not been the person who composed "Taps," Norton would be just one more good man who lived an honorable life, who never ascended into the annals of history. There is an axiom of history that in order to make history, you don't necessarily need to be the best; you just need to be the first. Another axiom of history is that sometimes making history is a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Oliver W. Norton is historical proof of both of those axioms.

Sources

A number of sources were used for this article. The most useful sources are as follows.

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An Excerpt from Twenty-Four Notes That Tap Deep Emotions: The Story of America's Most Famous Bugle Call by Jari Villanueva, 2001
(<https://www.tapsbugler.com/an-excerpt-from-twenty-four-notes-that-tap-deep-emotions-the-story-of-americas-most-famous-bugle-call/>)

Historian Explains the Origin of "Taps," National Public Radio, 2011
(<https://www.npr.org/2011/05/30/136721508/historian-explains-the-origin-of-taps>)

Oliver Willcox Norton by Jari Villanueva, 2010
(<https://www.tapsbugler.com/oliver-willcox-norton/>)

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Leggett as Colonel of the 78th OVI

Mortimer Leggett and the 78th OVI

By Dennis Keating

In the December 2024 issue of *The Charger* Paul Siedel mentioned Ohio's Mortimer Leggett from *Generals in Blue*. This is a fuller portrait of him and the 78th OVI which he commanded.

Leggett was born in 1821 in Ithaca, New York, one of eleven children in a Quaker farm family. When he was 16, the family moved to Montville in Geauga County. He became both an educator (creator and superintendent of Akron's public school system), a lawyer, and a law professor. From 1858 to the outbreak of the civil war, Leggett was superintendent of the public schools in Zanesville.

Forsaking Quaker pacifism, Leggett enlisted in the 78th OVI, formed in Zanesville. He became its Colonel and led it at Shiloh (in Lew Wallace's division), where he was first wounded, and Fort Donelson and at the siege of Corinth (where he was injured when his horse was shot) in 1862. After minor engagements at Jackson and Bolivar (where Leggett was again wounded), Tennessee, Leggett was promoted to Brigadier General in November 1862, to command the second brigade, third division, 17th Corps, the army of Tennessee in Grant's army's campaigns to capture the Confederate stronghold of Vicksburg. After Grant crossed the Mississippi, the

78th OVI fought in the battle of Raymond, suffering 80 casualties. In the Union victory at the Battle of Champion's Hill (where Leggett was again wounded), it suffered 116 casualties. From the diary of private (and farmer) James P. Hartzell of the 78th:

"We formed in an open field, marched across to narrow woods down throughout that woods to an open & the rebels rose up on the other side & gave us one deadly volley, which killed and wounded 97 of our rgmt. One poor boy Jake Busiker, one of my schoolmates, was shot by my side. I remember how jovial he was that morning. We had captured some flour the day before, & we sat up nearly all night & baked flapjacks, & we had our haversacks full of flapjacks as we go marching on. So that day he was shot down, but we didn't stop at that, we charged them up the hill and captured a battery of eight pieces and turned on as they ran towards the Blac[k] river. I remember well, it was here Gen Logan came along & took off his hat & said, 'God bless Ohio.' That ended the battle of Champion Hill Miss."

At the battle of the Crater of Fort Hill on May 22nd, 1863, at Vicksburg, Leggett was twice wounded, making Leggett wounded six times during the civil war. After the surrender of Vicksburg, Leggett's division became part of the blocking force against a possible attack by Joe Johnston's force.

From 1863 through 1865, Leggett and his division served in Sherman's 1864 Meridian Expedition, the Atlanta Campaign, the March to the Sea, and the Carolinas Campaign. During the Atlanta campaign, the 78th OVI fought in the battles of Bushy Mountain, Kennesaw Mountain, the Chattahoochee River, the Battle of Atlanta, and Jonesborough.

At the Battle of Atlanta on July 21 and 22, 1863, the division captured and defended Bald Hill, which later was renamed for Leggett, against Pat Cleburne's Confederates. From the diary of private Francis R. Baker, Company C:

"After driving the enemy from their works [on Bald Hill] ... we occupied them with our Brigade - 20th, 68th and 78th Ohio and 30th Illinois. During the afternoon of the 21st, we could plainly see the rebel army marching in the direction of our rear. We counted forty regimental flags... The 16th Corps failed to join onto our [17th] Corps, leaving a space of half a mile between the two Corps without any protection, and it was in this vast vacant space that the rebel army entered in their endeavor to surround and capture the 17th Army Corps on the morning of the 22nd General McPherson and staff rode out to the front to personally inspect our lines and it was his fate to ride into the space between the two Corps and he rode right into the advance of the rebel army, who were entering this vacant space. The enemy fired a volley into the General and staff and McPherson was shot and killed. His staff officers secured and brought the body back with them.

It was about noon when general Leggett came riding along our breastworks at breakneck speed and ordered the batteries to limber up and get back to the rear as quick as possible. The batteries were on the move at once. Away they went through the woods, the horses on a full gallop... In a short time after the batteries left, the enemy came up on us from the direction of Atlanta. We had to change to the other side of our works and drive them back. We realized then that we were hemmed in between two lines of the enemy. They charged us repeatedly from both front and rear, but we succeeded in driving them back.

To protect ourselves from front and rear attacks, it was necessary for us to change the sides of our own works five or six times during the afternoon. In one of their charges they got within about one hundred feet of our breastworks, when we poured such a volley it halted them and while they were wavering, appearing to be undecided whether to advance or fall back, I saw one of our boys spring over the breast works run down to the enemy's ranks, wrest a flag from their color bearer and bring it back to our side. The enemy fell back into the woods out of our sight, but before they fell back one of our color bearers peeped over the works to see what they were doing and the instant his head appeared over the works a bullet struck him in the head...

In a short time after this the rebels planted a battery at the upper or southern end of our works and opened on us with grape and canister. They attempted to rake the ditch we were occupying behind the breastworks, but by lying flat on the ground the charges of grape shot went over us, but too close for comfort, the branches of the trees were cut off and were falling on us...

Our orderly Sergeant, William McLaughlin and our color bearer, Bro Jim and I and eight others sprang up and charged in the direction of the flag which was protected by the battery and the brigade of infantry. We had gone forward probably one hundred feet more or less, when the color bearer, the orderly Sergeant and one private were shot dead. We were so near to the enemy's lines that when our flags went down they made a dash to get the flags, but one of our boys grabbed them and took them back. Seeing the futility of any further attempt to advance in the face of the battery and infantry, we scattered, every fellow for himself...

Soon after I got back we had orders to fall back and reform our lines. The grape and canister from the rebel battery and the bullets from the rebel infantry were still coming at us in a perfect storm of death dealing missiles... After getting out of the direct range of the enemy, we sprang to our feet and marched back stepping over the dead and wounded rebels, which gave us evidence that we had been completely surrounded. We were soon out of the woods and halted and reformed our line on the edge of the field facing South. Just after our battle line was formed, we witnessed the rebels charging and completely overwhelming the 20th Illinois, which was just outside our fort on the edge of our fort of Bald Knob, later known as Leggett's hill... Then the rebels charged the fort which was so full of soldiers who had become separated from their regiments that there was hardly room to fight but they did put up a good fight. The Rebels climbed up the walls of the fort only to be shot, bayoneted or clubbed with the butts of the guns. It was hand to hand, but the rebels were finally driven off. That left a great many of their dead and wounded in front of the fort. While the fight at the fort was going on we were watching it; the enemy came out of the woods and attacked us... Each side stood its ground and fought about two hours or more until sundown."

Baker then described having a rebel bullet hit his tin cup, only bruising his hip and then having a bullet passing through the breastworks hit his arm and also a bullet passing through his shirt. He survived.

The 78th suffered 203 casualties during this ferocious battle. Among the captured was private Hartzell, who was imprisoned in Andersonville with twenty others from the 78th OVI. Hartzell wrote:

“[after upon arrival unsuccessfully attempting to keep his blanket from the guards] We were then turned in like cattle, without tents or blankets. While looking in the scene with anxious wonder, I was accosted by G. W. Spankle, a member of our regiment who had for some time been a boarder. He was an intimate friend, and his assistance and instructions were a great benefit to me. Twenty men of our regiment together occupied a spot of ground 10 feet square appropriate for our use and this was our home.”

Private Hartzell survived captivity in Andersonville.

After Atlanta's capture, the 78th guarded Sherman's supply line to Chattanooga until it joined his March to the Sea through Georgia. The 78th OVI's last combat came at the Battle of Bentonville, North Carolina, on March 19-21, 1865, before Johnston surrendered to Sherman. During the war, the 78th OVI suffered a total of 355 casualties, including 73 killed or mortally wounded. It participated in the Grand March in Washington city on May 24, 1865.

After the war, Leggett practiced law in Ohio, including Cleveland, and served as President Grant's Commissioner of Patents, 1871-1874. He owned a company that would become a part of General Electric. Published a novel in 1890 entitled *Dreams of a Modest Prophet*, which described a Christian utopia on Mars. Leggett was a member of the Cuyahoga County Soldiers and Sailors Monument Commission. He served as the Grand Marshall of the parade prior to its dedication in 1894. On New Year's Day, 1896, Leggett became ill, and he died of apoplexy on January 6, 1896. He is buried in Cleveland's Lakeview cemetery near the Garfield Memorial. Leggett had two wives and six children.

In 2014, state route 78 which passes through four Southeast Ohio counties was designated as the 78th Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry Memorial Highway.

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Mortimer Dormer Leggett. Encyclopedia of Cleveland history.

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Officers of The Nancy Harts Militia, LaGrange, GA

The Nancy Harts

By Al Fonner

On April 17, 1865, fresh off the capture of Fort Tyler, Union Col. Oscar H. La Grange led a force of 3000 cavalry to LaGrange, GA. Did the Colonel find it curious that the town bore his name, or vice versa? Still more curious, I am sure, was that initially there was no Confederate opposition to prevent his entry into the town until the Colonel came face to face with some 40 women in line formation just outside of the town at the LaGrange Female College. The women were bedecked in ruffled skirts and floral hats and armed with a variety of old muskets and flintlocks that likely saw better days during the American Revolution and the War of 1812. So befuddled was Col. La Grange that he was quoted to remark that the women arrayed before him "...might use their eyes with better effect upon the Federal soldiers than their rusty guns." (Horton, 14) It looked as if the Colonel had a fight on his hands, after all. So, who were these stalwart southern bells standing valiantly against the Yankee invaders?

The women who stood before Col. La Grange dubbed themselves the "Nancy Harts," or "Nancies" as they were also known. The name was in homage to a Revolutionary War era heroine, Ann Morgan Hart, better known as Nancy. Nancy Hart was a cousin to American General Daniel Morgan and a patriot in the truest sense, a notorious female spy and rebel. She was a tall, redheaded, imposing figure who the Cherokee referred to as "Wahatche," meaning "War Woman." Hart was well versed in frontier survival skills and an expert shot as well. When the Revolutionary War conflict migrated south, her husband left to fight the British with the Georgia militia. Nancy, for her part, became a spy for the Rebel forces and would often wander through British camps disguised as a crazy man. She was also present at the Battle of Kettle Creek, Georgia, in 1779. However, the greatest story of her legendary exploits was her encounter with six British soldiers who had entered her home looking for information concerning Patriot activities and then demanding that she feed them. Through guile and intrigue, Nancy managed to capture five of the soldiers after killing one and wounding a second. Nancy Hart died at the age of 90 while living with her son in Kentucky. She is remembered as one of Georgia's most famous female patriots.

When civil war between the North and the South began in 1861, the women of LaGrange formed the Nancy Harts out of necessity. Along with other southern communities, LaGrange had sent most of their able-bodied men to fight for the cause. In the first year of the war alone, 1300 men left LaGrange. Notable among LaGrange's contribution to the Confederate's cause was the 130 volunteers of the LaGrange Light Guards of the Fourth Georgia Infantry, which left Troup County, GA, to fight for the South on April 26. The town's contribution left LaGrange vulnerable to a Union attack, especially given the town's location midway between Atlanta and Mobile, AL. Finding themselves without the patronage of white males to defend them, two of LaGrange's women decided to form this female militia.



Capt. Nancy Hill Morgan of the Nancy Harts and Col. Oscar H. La Grange
Who met the Nancies with his cavalry on the field outside LaGrange, GA

Nancy Hill Morgan, a founder of the Nancy Harts, recalled the Nancies' beginnings in an interview with Mrs. Thaddeus Horton, for the November 1904 *Ladies' Home Journal*, on page 14. Morgan remembered that the idea of forming a women's militia came to her one stormy night in early summer. The next morning while on her way to breakfast, Morgan met Mary Alfred Heard and she remembered their conversation as follows:

"Do you realize," I said, "that we are defenseless?"

"I do," said Mrs. Heard.

"This city of women and children is absolutely at the mercy of Heaven?" I said.

"Absolutely," said Mrs. Heard

We looked helplessly into each other's eyes.

"Suppose army stragglers or escaped prisoners should come along. They could murder us all."

"They certainly could."

"Not a woman in town can shoot a gun," I said.

"Not one," she said.

Again, we looked into each other's eyes.

"It's a dreadful state of affairs!"

Mrs. Heard agreed with me.

“What shall we do?” said I.
“What *can* we do?” said she.
“We might form a military company of women.”
“Did you ever hear of a military company of women?” said she.
“No, but that doesn’t matter,” said I.
“No, I suppose not,” said she.
“I’ve got my grandfather’s old flintlock fowling-piece,” said I.
“I’ve got an old rifle,” said she.
“We’ll issue a call,” said I, “and we’ll organize a company. At least we can defend our homes, and if they want us at the front – well, we’ll be ready.”

So, the ladies sent out the call. The first meeting of the women’s militia was held at a schoolhouse located on the property of LaGrange Lawyer and then-Confederate Senator Benjamin Hill. Nearly 40 women attended this first meeting. Morgan was elected as the company’s captain and Heard its first lieutenant.

Despite their proud name and their determination, the women of Nancy Harts militia remained proper Southern ladies who prided themselves on femininity and pursuits of the fairer sex, such as overseeing the household and caring for the children. Realizing that they lacked the skills in soldiering and use of firearms, the Nancy Harts enlisted the help of LaGrange physician A.C. Ware and a copy of Willam J. Hardee’s *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*, published in 1861. The Nancy Harts drilled dutifully twice a week throughout the war. Their training included target shooting with firearms that were so old and rusty that the women often wondered which end of the rifle was the more lethal. Target practice occurred in nearby woods known as Harris’ Grove where targets were set up and prizes offered for the best shots. At first, the women found it nearly impossible to keep their eyes open and not to flinch when firing the gun; but they eventually overcame this hurdle. Humorously, at least one hornets’ nest and one cow fell victim to the cause. The Nancy Harts would march through town as part of the drills, practicing infantry maneuvers such as marching in column and forming lines for combat, as well as the manual of arms. Such displays delighted the townsfolk, particularly the children who cheered and marveled at the guns and other military gear sported by the women. Over time, the Nancy Harts would mold themselves into a competent militia company.

LaGrange eventually became a medical and refugee center as the war continued, with wounded soldiers and displaced citizens streaming into town. While the Nancy Harts continued their preparation to defend their town throughout the war, the women added nursing to their duties. LaGrange had four hospitals, which were often full. To alleviate this situation, each Nancy Hart took one or more patients into her home. They provided food and clothing for those in their care and ensured that the wounded’s dressings were changed as necessary. The Nancy Harts also read to those in their care, wrote letters for them, and provided much needed diversion from boredom and suffering possible.

The Nancy Harts had been a fixture in Lagrange for four years. Finally, on April 17, 1865, when Federal cavalry approached as previously discussed, the Nancy Harts would show their metal. So, let us revisit events of that day. As told by Horton in the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, November 1904, upon their return to LaGrange after their target practice, the Nancy Harts encountered a group of Confederate riders. As the Nancy Harts and the Confederates chatted,

Federal troops were spotted in the distance. The Confederate soldiers recognized that resistance would be hopeless and spurred their mounts on. Before leaving, though, a Lt. Perkins who led the riders told the Nancy Harts, “Young ladies, go in your houses and bar your doors, we beseech you.” (Horton, 14) But the Nancy Harts refused the Lieutenant’s plea and resolved to stand their ground. The Federals advanced and stopped in front of the Nancy Harts. Union Col. La Grange led the Federals; and Confederate Major Parkham, who had been captured at Fort Tyler where he served as Confederate General Tyler’s Adjutant, was beside the Colonel.

The initial meeting between the Nancy Harts and Union Col. La Grange was recalled by the Nancy Harts’ First Corporal, Leila Pullen Morris, on page 14 of the November 1904 *Ladies’ Home Journal*:

Major Parkham, on horseback, was very near to me, so I advanced to speak to him.

“Major Parkham,” I said, my gun on my shoulder, “I regret to see you in this plight.”

Colonel La Grange heard my words.

“Is this your sweetheart, Miss?” he inquired kindly.

I considered a moment.

“Yes, he is,” I said, believing it a diplomatic answer.

“Such honesty deserves a reward,” said Col. La Grange said, “I will put him on parole and allow him to spend the evening with you.”

At this Major Parkham went through the form of an introduction.

“Colonel La Grange,” he said, “I have the honor of introducing to you a regularly commissioned officer of the Nancy Harts.”

“I have heard of the Nancy Harts,” said Colonel La Grange. “I should think, however, they might use their eyes with better effect on the Federal soldiers than their rusty old guns.”

Major Parkham dismounted and tied his horse.

“If it would meet your mother’s approval,” he said as we stood to one side, “I would be glad for you to invite Colonel La Grange to tea.”

I therefore invited Colonel La Grange to tea.

Morris went on to note that the Federals and the Nancy Harts had been carrying on a “fire of repartee all along the line” and observed that “They came (the Federals), they saw, but we conquered. The engagement was brief but decisive.”

The Nancy Harts surrendered the town to the Col. La Grange without firing a shot but on the condition that the Federals not burn down their homes. Legend also has it that the Nancy Harts, as part of the conditions of surrender, agreed to cook supper for the Union troops and their prisoners in tow, many of whom were from LaGrange. Horton in her *Ladies Home Journal* piece wrote that “Grandmothers, mothers, young girls and little sisters were busy all night cooking substantials and delicacies for the Confederate soldiers and the Federals to carry with them on their way to Macon, which was to be resumed the coming day.” Brackett (para. 6) merely states that the women, “... organized an effort to feed both the Union and Confederate soldiers.” So, whatever the exact circumstance may be, the women clearly provided the ranks passing through their town with some sort of refreshments in good Southern style.

The Colonel stayed true to their conditions and posted guards throughout the town to protect the people's residences. Public buildings, businesses, and warehouses, however, were not so fortunate, being torched and left to burn down. Nonetheless, the Nancy Harts had achieved their principal objective: to protect their homes. As the Federals later marched on to Macon, it must have been a bittersweet triumph for the Nancy Harts as they watched the prisoners, many of whom they knew as a friend, a brother, or a husband, marching along with their captors. Horton in her article noted, "Morning came all too soon; farewells were said, good-by kisses were given; the regiment mounted, the prisoners fell into line; the first command was uttered: 'March!' Wives, mothers and daughters with dewy eyes and sorrowing hearts watched the procession as it moved away in the distance."

After the war, the women returned to their normal way of life, although adjustments had to be made considering that a quarter of the men did not return from the war. Despite the hardships and tragedy that they endured during and even after the war, Nancy Harts could be proud of their service and are celebrated even to this day in LaGrange, Georgia. Although other women militias had been formed in the South, most of them were fleeting efforts; the Nancy Harts remained true to their conviction from their inception right through to the war's end. The Nancy Harts were also the only women's militia in the South to actually face their foe on the field, ready to lay down their lives for what they believed. They are an uplifting example of the human spirit in trying times.

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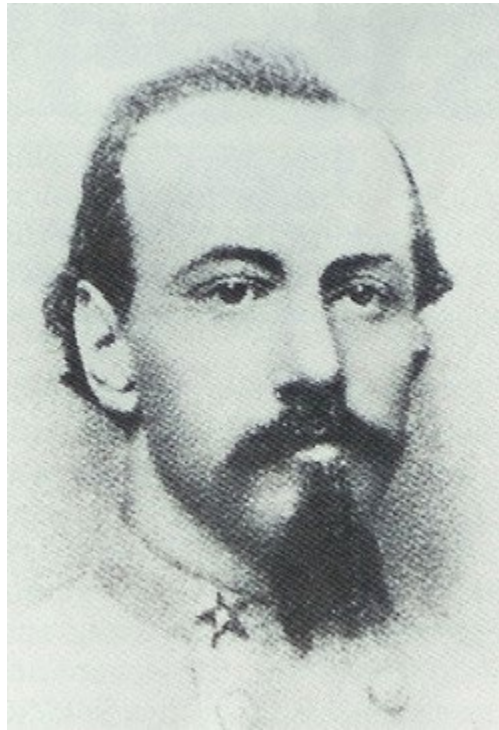
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Major James Breathed, CSA

A Hair-breathed Escape

© Brian D. Kowell November 9, 2024

The Civil War was costly for humans. It is estimated that anywhere between 650,000 and 850,000 men died in the war. For horses it was even more devastating as their numbers killed was over 1.5 million.ⁱ Artillery horse were a prime target during the Civil War. Killing the horses immobilized the battery and left them vulnerable to capture.

Helping Maj. Gen. Fitz Lee's cavalry troopers holding back the advance of the Union V Corps on the Brock Road in May, 1864, was two guns of Maj. James Breathed's battery. The Confederates hopscotched from ridge line to ridge line, putting up a bold front in anticipation of the arrival of their infantry to control the strategic crossroads of the Brock Road and the Block House Road.

As the overwhelming Yankee force approached, Breathed sent one of his guns to the next ridge line along with the cavalry skirmishers while he stayed with the second piece and continued to

fire. As the Yankees closed in and fire grew hotter, the gun's captain was hit. Breathed ordered the crew to limber up. As he did so, Breathed's horse was killed under him.

"Extricating himself from beneath his dead mount, [Breathed] lept upon the lead horse of the team pulling the gun from the field. That horse, too, was killed under him."ⁱⁱ Breathed cut the dead horse's traces and lept upon the middle horse, but that too was killed in a hail of bullets. Again cutting the traces, this time he mounted one of the wheel horses and galloped off, bringing the gun to safety and miraculously escaping unharmed. It was a hair-breathed escape for the Major.

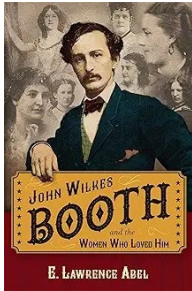
ⁱ Miller, Keith, "Southern Horse," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Vol. XLV, #1, p.31

ⁱⁱ Mackowski, Chris, *A Tempest of Iron and Lead: Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864*, Savas Beatie, California, 2024, p. 19



Captain Joseph Knap's Battery, Independent Battery E, Penna Light Artillery
On the field at Antietam with one of the estimated 1.5 million Civil War horse casualties in the foreground

BOOK REVIEWS



Abel, E. Lawrence, *John Wilkes Booth and the Women Who Loved Him*, Regnery Publishing, A Division of Salem Media Group: Washington D.C. (2018)

ISBN # 978-1-62157-619-8

It was while I was walking through the “Index” bookstore in Cleveland’s Ohio City neighborhood that I spied this book on the shelf containing historical type romances. I’m not usually attracted to this genre so I passed it up and went on. Coming back through the stacks I decided to pick it up take a look and see what it was all about. I am so glad I did. “John Wilkes Booth and the Women Who Loved Him” by E. Lawrence Abel is a unique, well researched book on the life and times of Booth and the theatrical world in which he lived. The book is comprised of forty chapters and is divided into two parts, The first having to do with Booth’s relationship with members of his family and the second part going into the relationships he developed with actors and actresses he met during his career. The opening chapter discusses the early life of the actor; how his father left a wife in England and came to the U.S. and married again without the benefit of divorce. This nullified the second marriage and subsequently made all of the Booth children of the second marriage illegitimate. Unbeknownst to them they nevertheless had to live with this stigma for the rest of their lives. When the only child of the first marriage showed up in Baltimore twenty years later and brought the first wife to confront the elder Booth, it was quite turmoil in the Booth family. The elder Booth was quite an accomplished actor, and his sons followed him into the theater. John and his brother Edwin were very adept at their craft and traveled around the country performing. John played Cleveland many times at the Academy of Music which stood at the corner of West sixth and St. Clair Ave. The author goes into the relationship between John and his sister India, who were very close in their youth and whose close relationship lasted until the death of John at the hands of the Sixteenth New York Cavalry in April of 1865. John’s relationship with his mother Mary Ann was also very close, he was her “golden boy” and it was her name he spoke in his death throes there at the Garrett farm.

Being an actor John traveled throughout the country and consequently met many of the actresses who graced the American stage in the antebellum years. Such names as Fanny Brown, Helen Western, Grace Mitchell, Alice Gray and the woman he was supposedly engaged to at the time of his death twenty-two-year-old Lucy Hale daughter of U.S. Senator John Parker Hale. During his career he evidently told many women that worked with him that he had fallen in love with them but never married. It is while reading about the lives and careers of these women that one forms a good picture of life in the antebellum theatrical world. Booth was a big part of the emotion charged, tipsy turvy life that those folks led. It was while reading through the lives of these women that I began to appreciate the tremendous amount of research the author has done bringing out these individuals who are probably remembered by few if anyone but nevertheless played an important role in American History.

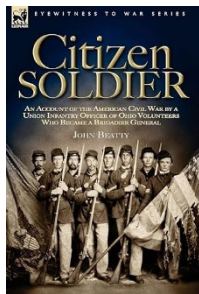
How John developed his rabidly pro secessionist and white supremacist philosophy is really a mystery. He played many theaters in the south and it was while playing theaters in Richmond,

Virginia that he skipped out on a contracted engagement hopped aboard a train with the Virginia State Militia and arrived in Harpers Ferry to witness the execution of John Brown. While listening to one of Lincoln's last speeches he turned to Lewis Powell and made his sentiments known, that America was formed for the white man. However, as a counterpoint none of the women he became familiar with later talked about his extremist ideas. They described him as very intelligent, polite and generally a very "high class" individual. Most historians believe his extreme philosophies were formed early on in life but when and why no-one really knows. It was these ideas which led him into his fantasy charged dream world and provided his motivation for killing Lincoln.

The book itself, is as I said, is very well researched, easy to read and full of little known facts. It covers Booth's loving relationships with both the women in his family and the women he met as part of the theatrical world of the nineteenth century. It is not in any way a romance oriented novel type book as I at first thought but a fantastic account of the life of one of America's most notorious figures. I would highly recommend it.

I purchased my copy at the "Index" bookstore on West 25 St. in the Ohio City neighborhood of Cleveland. One can always find it on Amazon Books, or Abe Books or just order it from one's favorite bookstore.

--Paul Siedel



John Beatty, *The Citizen Soldier or, Memoirs of a Volunteer* (Wilstach, Baldwin, and Co., Publishers: Cincinnati, OH), 1879. Pictured is a hardcover reprint available on Amazon.com.

John Beatty's diary/memoir is a classic account of daily life in the Federal army of the Civil War era from 1861 to 1863. Beatty, a banker from Columbus, served as Lt. Colonel and then Colonel of the 3rd OVI. He eventually was given brigade command in a division of Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland and promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. Beatty participated in McClellan's invasion of western Virginia in the summer of 1861. He saw action in Kentucky and commanded the 3rd Ohio OVI at Perryville. At the Battle of Stones River, he commanded a brigade. From that point, Beatty continued his service as a brigade commander in General Thomas' Corps of the Army of the Cumberland until he resigned in early 1864.

Born in Sandusky, Ohio, in 1828, he moved to Columbus before the war. Here, he and his brother, William, started a banking business that thrived as the war approached. During his military career, Beatty participated in almost every major battle fought by the Army of the Ohio and the Army of the Cumberland through 1863. At Stones River, he had two horses shot from under him. His book well deserves its reputation of being "natural enough and honest enough and humanly penetrating enough to belong to all time." Beatty was a sensitive observer and a

good writer. One of the parts of the book I particularly enjoyed was his description of the mountains and people of western Virginia, northern Alabama, and Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Beatty made some penetrating comments about his fellow officers. He described General Buell as “cold, smooth-toned, silent, the opposite of Nelson, who is ardent, loud-mouthed, and violent.” A warning we should all heed when reading official reports and records from the war is his observation that too many officers were “more selfish, dishonest, and grasping for notoriety than the miser for gold . . . I know absolutely that many of their reports are base exaggerations.” Beatty seems to have had a good impression of both George Thomas, his Corps commander, and General Rosecrans.

Beatty himself admits that he decided to write about “the camp gossip, rumors, trifling incidents, idle speculations, and the numberless items, small and great, which, in one way or another, enter into and affect the life of a soldier, leaving to other more competent hands the weightier matters of the great civil war.” His book is, therefore, filled with vignettes of camp life and tedious marches, as well as interactions between officers, enlisted men, and civilians. All-in-all, he records a view of the war from the bottom or, better yet, the middle up. One thing that may grate on the nerves of a 21st Century reader is his love of recording conversations with southern Blacks in stereotypical slave dialect.

After he resigned from service in January 1864, Beatty returned to the bank in Columbus so his brother William could experience military service. In 1868, he was elected to Congress to fill an unexpired term. He was then reelected to two more terms. Following his time in Congress, he returned to Columbus in 1873 to establish Citizen’s Savings Bank, serving as bank president for thirty years. In addition to banking, Beatty remained active in other pursuits, including an unsuccessful run for governor of Ohio on the Republican ticket in 1884. He wrote at least three novels, several pamphlets on the economy, and articles on local history and the Civil War. Beatty died in Columbus in 1914 and was buried in Sandusky.

I enjoyed this book immensely and recommend that it be added to everyone’s Civil War library.

--Kent Fonner



Battle of Fort Henry, 6 February 1862