



# *THE CHARGER*

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE  
P.O. BOX 18900, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118

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OCTOBER, 1993

318TH MEETING

VOL. 15 #2

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**DATE:**

Wednesday, October 13, 1993

**PLACE:**

The Hermit Club

**SUBJECT:**

"The Battle of Shiloh"

**SPEAKER:**

Mr. George A. Reeves III. Mr. Reeves is a Supervisory Park Ranger at the Shiloh National Military Park. He is a native Texan and graduated from North Texas State University with a B.S. in Education & History. He taught high school in South Carolina and worked summers at Appomattox C.H. and Ft. Sumter. He became a full time Park Historian in 1966 at Vicksburg and has also worked in that capacity at Horseshoe Bend and Manassas National Military Parks before his current position at Shiloh in 1975.

**TIME:**

Drinks 6PM

Dinner 7PM

**RESERVATIONS:**

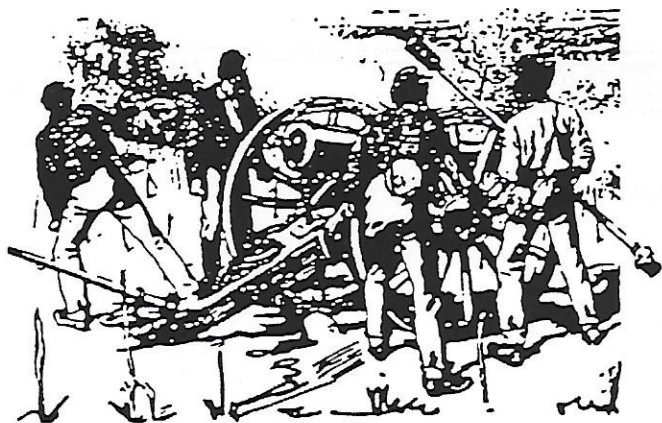
Please call Dr. Robert Battisti at 831-2700 and leave your reservation with the answering service. RESERVATIONS ARE A MUST!



Shiloh Church

# CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

1957 \* 1994



President - Bob Battisti  
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## Editorial Office

2389 Babcock Road  
Hinckley, Ohio 44233  
(216) 273-9780

Our thanks to Travel Services Unlimited of Chesterland and Patricia Safran for making the travel arrangements for our speakers who will arrive aboard Delta Air Lines, our exclusive partners in this venture. We are declaring Delta Air Lines as the official carrier of The Civil War Round-Table of Cleveland.

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# THIS YEAR'S SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS & SPEAKERS

November 10	Dr. G. L. Mears Antietam
December 8	Mr. Alan Kurnat Naval topic (TBA)
January 12	Annual Civil War Quiz
February 9	Dr. Hugh Ernhart Lincoln (TBA)
March 9	Dr. David Vantassel European View of the Civil War
April 13	Mr. Edwin Bearss TBA
May 11	Special Program Narrated by Mr. Joe Tirpak

Our thanks to Ms. Anne Caputo at J.A.C. Business Communications Inc. for the professionally looking letterheads and format for our newsletter and for all her valuable time and service in mailing "The Charger" to our membership. If you are in need of any office support services please call Anne or John Caputo.

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## *Office Support Services*

Phone: (216) 861-5588 Fax: (216) 861-0505

Playhouse Square  
358 Hanna Building  
1422 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44115

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 18900  
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MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT

# WILLIAM H. LYTLE

William H. Lytle was one of the finest and best loved generals in the Army of the Cumberland. He was not only loved and respected by the North but by the South as well.

Lytle was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 2, 1826. He was the only son of Robert Todd Lytle and Elizabeth Haines. His sisters, Lily and Roberta, completed the Lytle household.



The Lytle Family had a long history of military involvement. William's great-grandfather had fought first the French in 1750, then the British during the Revolutionary War. Still looking for a fight, he took his family to Kentucky in 1790 and chased Indians. The old man passed on his martial instincts to William's grandfather who commanded a company in Daniel Boone's division at the age of fifteen. Lytle's father had more urban tendencies as now the family was settled in Cincinnati. Robert became a well respected lawyer and became involved with politics. He was elected to Congress and through political appointment was named for a time as Surveyor General of the United States. Back in Ohio he remained active in law and politics and was even named commander of the Ohio State Militia.

As a child, William had proven remarkably precocious, beginning school at the age of four and amazing his teachers with his gift for words. Academic achievement was matched by social success. Together with his sisters, he quickly rose to the top of Cincinnati society. Like his father and grandfather, he was a natural orator. Graduating first in his class from Cincinnati College, the sixteen year old Lytle delivered a well received address on "Law and the Legal Profession".

Young William was described as diminutive in size and "His head was covered with masses of long silken brown hair. His complexion was so fair as to be almost effeminate." As one of the city's most eligible bachelors, he courted a long line of beauties but never married.

Sometime after his graduation, both of Lytle's parents died. With the help of his uncle Ezekial Smith Haines, Lytle, for the next three years, put in 16 hour days studying Latin, law and politics. By the age of twenty, he had earned a law degree.

In 1847, Ohio called for volunteers in the war against Mexico. Lytle's fighting spirit was aroused and despite his sisters' protests he wrangled a lieutenant's commission and hurried to New Orleans to seek a position on the staff of General William O. Butler. There was none available. Lytle was then elected captain of Company L, 2nd Ohio Volunteers in December 1847 but the war ended before he could see any action. He returned to Cincinnati and developed a thriving practice in his uncle's law firm.



In 1851 Lytle was elected to a seat in the Ohio legislature. Contemporaries praised his "unaffected modesty" and "winning politeness". He was a rising star in the State's Democratic Party. In 1857 he was narrowly defeated in the election for lieutenant governor. This was probably due to his soft stand on slavery and his opposition to the abolitionists. He was then appointed major general in the Ohio militia, a largely ceremonial post previously held by both his father and grandfather.

It was during this time that Lytle became famous in both the North and South as the author of "Anthony and Cleopatra", a widely read poem about the death of Marc Anthony. He wrote poetry for his own amusement and that of his friends, without expecting to publish his work. In 1858 his friend William W. Fosdick found a copy of the poem on Lytle's desk. Without Lytle's knowledge, he took the poem and showed it to the editor of the Cincinnati Commercial who published it in the July 29 edition. The poem was an instant success and made Lytle famous overnight.

With the outbreak of the Civil War and Lincoln's call for volunteers, Lytle organized Camp Harrison, the first western camp. He was named Colonel of the 10th Ohio, a generally disreputable regiment recruited from Cincinnati's Irish community. Lytle rode off to war on a new charger named Faugh-a-Ballough (Gaelic for "Clear the Way"), in a new uniform with white gloves, and carrying an ornate sword and scabbard given him by his colleagues in the Cincinnati Bar Association.

At Carnifex Ferry on September 10, 1861, while serving under fellow Cincinnati William S. Rosecrans, Lytle was badly wounded leading his men in a charge. The ball passed through his leg, killing his horse. After his recovery, he commanded a recruit rendezvous at Bardstown, Kentucky, and subsequently, a brigade in Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio. At the Battle of Perryville he was severely wounded and left on the field for dead. Captured by the Confederates he was paroled, returned to Ohio, and restored his health.

On November 29, 1862 he was promoted to brigadier general. He was officially exchanged on February 4, 1863 and rejoined the army now under Rosecrans at Murfreesboro. He was given command of the first brigade in Sheridan's Division of McCook's XX Corps. His brigade participated in the Tullahoma Campaign and saw little action on the first days fighting at Chickamauga as it was posted near Lee & Gordon's Mill. Shifted closer to headquarters during the night Lytle occupied a strong position on Widow Glenn's hill. As the fighting escalated on the Union left on the second day, Lytle was ordered off his strong position and moved to aid General Thomas.

Lytle was not pleased to leave his hillside. When he marched off the hill the Ohioan seemed to know that he was marching to his death. Lieutenant Pirtle, his aide, early that morning remembered Lytle had troubled. He had been morose and quiet and when he finally talked to Pirtle he put his arm around him and asked: "My boy, do you know we are going to fight two to one today?" explaining that Bragg had been reinforced by Longstreet and that they would be fighting at a disadvantage. Never before had Lytle seemed so troubled on the eve of battle. He made Pirtle promise to "stick to him to the last." Pirtle gave his word and Lytle lapsed into silent reverie.

Around 11:45am as Lytle's men were on the march, the Confederates charged through a gap in the Union line and cut the Federal army in two. As the terrified Union soldiers careened backward into Lytle's troops, closely followed by screaming Confederates, Lytle decided to stem the tide by counter-attacking. Lytle said quietly "that now they would die in their tracks, with their harnesses on." Pulling on his dark kid gloves he added laconically, "If I must die, I will die as a gentleman."



Turning to the men of the 88th Illinois he said, "All right men, we can but die once. This is the time and place. Let us charge." To the 24th Wisconsin he added, "Boys, if we can whip them today, we will eat our Christmas dinner at home."

The fighting was terrific but futile. Lytle's entire position was in jeopardy. The General had a wild look in his eye when he leaned over to Pirtle who was by his side. With a firm voice he said, "Pirtle, I am hit." A bullet had struck his spine and the only visible sign of pain was his chewing his tobacco faster than usual. Lytle refused to leave the field and Pirtle dashed off to find an ambulance. As the Rebel volleys rose in pitch, Lytle yelled: "For God's sake, bring up another regiment." As he turned to give another order a minie ball smashed his left cheek, passing through his head, and exiting near the right temple. Lytle was eased to the ground by his staff. They attempted to carry the general to the rear but the Confederate fire was murderous wounding or killing the orderlies. Lytle, still conscious but unable to speak, handed his sword to an orderly and motioned the others to leave.

The Confederates of Deas' brigade overran the position. Major Douglas West of Deas' staff was rounding up prisoners when an officer from the 24th Wisconsin came over and asked him to save his general. West found Lytle lying face up in a pile of leaves and recognized him immediately. "My first exclamation, on looking down at his graceful and manly form, so perfectly dressed and accoutered, was "I am dying, Egypt, dying" (the famous opening lines of Lytle's poem). West had the general's body moved to a more secure place and a guard placed over it to prevent its being robbed.

Lytle had many friends in the Southern ranks who he had known before the war. Many of them came to pay their final respects among them were General Patton Anderson, Major William Owen, and General William Preston. Upon learning whose body it was Preston said, "Ah, the son of my old friend Bob Lytle. I am sorry it is so."

Lytle's body was returned through the lines after the battle and along with all of his personal effects were sent back home to his sisters in Cincinnati. There the body lay in state at the courthouse rotunda before being buried with full military honors at Spring Grove Cemetery.

I Am Dying, Egypt, Dying by Roy Morris, Jr. CWTI Oct. '86  
The Battle of Chickamauga: This Terrible Sound by Peter Cozzens  
Generals in Blue by Ezra J. Warner

## LAST MONTH'S MEETING

For the twenty-two members that are scheduled for the fieldtrip to Chickamauga/Chattanooga, as well as the rest of those members in attendance, last month's speaker, Mr. James Ogden III, presented a perfect prelude for their impending excursion.

Mr. Ogden's talk centered around the importance of Chattanooga for both sides during the Civil War and the obstacles for both to either attack or defend that town. The importance of Chattanooga's rail lines, mineral resources, and its pathway through the Appalachian Mountains into the deep South made Chattanooga a primary target in the late summer of 1863. Mr. Ogden detailed the brilliance of General Rosecrans' Tullahoma campaign in out-manuvering Braxton Bragg to achieve that target. Unfortunately for Rosecrans, this feat was overshadowed by the Union successes at Gettysburg and Vicksburg that summer. He also pointed out the dangerous position that Union General had placed his army at McLemore's Cove. Those of you scheduled to meet with Mr. Ogden in Chattanooga will hear the continuation of that saga.





## OLLAPODRIDA

No officer in the Army of the Cumberland could possibly have had worse luck than Lieutenant Colonel Obadiah Maxwell of the Second Ohio Volunteer Infantry. At Perryville, a bullet had broken his leg. He recovered and was shot in the throat at Stones River. Again he recovered, only to be shot through the chest at Chickamauga. A third time he recovered and was appointed Colonel of a new Ohio regiment. He took a bullet in the groin in its first skirmish. After the war, Maxwell was appointed to a quiet job as an assessor of internal revenue. But fate found a way to wound him even then. While showing some friends a device that a peddler had sold him to prevent burglars from tampering with locks through the explosion of a percussion cap, the contrivance went off unexpectedly. A piece put out one of his eyes. Later while residing in Dayton, Ohio, Maxwell couldn't take it any more after losing all of his money. He was found dead in a hotel room with an empty revolver in his hand.

--- The Battle of Chickamauga: This Terrible Sound by  
Peter Cozzens ppl44-145

During the Battle of Chickamauga, the charge of Brigadier General Henry L. "Old Rock" Benning's Georgia brigade across the LaFayette Road toward Dyer's Field was momentarily stopped by a "volcano of fire" from Colonel John Croxton's Union brigade posted in the woods. Benning angrily confronted a squad cowering in the timber. "God damn you, men, get from behind those trees and rocks and give 'em hell!" A shell exploded a few feet away, killing his horse. Benning tumbled to the ground. When he stood up, dazed but unhurt, Benning's perspective had changed. "God damn you, men, stay behind those trees and give 'em hell," he yelled.

--- The Battle of Chickamauga: This Terrible Sound by  
Peter Cozzens pp373

After a battle, Confederates usually scoured the field for ordnance, food, and clothes. The chances to upgrade some items proved irresistible. One Confederate officer who observed a personal rule throughout the war against even the simplest pilaging on battlefields broke his own rule at Cedar Mountain. The officer needed a hat, and a nice one lay next to a dead man. When he picked it up and put it on he described the results with the ghoulish humor of a man inured to blood and death by the horrors of many battlefields: "At once [I] threw it away as the poor fellow had left his brains in it and while I needed brains, I did not want them on the outside of my head."

--- Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain by Robert K. Krick  
pp 338-339



# *From The President's Desk*

President's Comments-October 11, 1993

A history organization must not neglect its own history. In keeping with this belief, The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable has declared 1993-94 "The Year of the Founders." May 11, 1994 has been designated "Founders Night," the night when we recognize and give thanks to the class of '57. Dr. William Schlesinger, Mr. Charles Clarke, and Mr. Stu Cramer were recently interviewed by three of our past presidents, "Charger" editor Brian Kowell, Major Baucher and General "JET". Editor Kowell has gone into some depth about the thinking and recollections of the founders in his article. What struck me when I watched the videotape was that these men really cared about what they were doing and took a great deal of time to think through exactly what they wanted. Almost all of our traditions, activities, and procedures are the same today as they were at the beginning. And as they talked you can see that they have keen insight as to the future direction of the Roundtable. Charlie Clarke talked about the constitution he wrote; Dr. Schlesinger emphasized the good friendships that can be formed around our mutual interest of the Civil War; and there was Stu Cramer quietly presenting the first raffle gift of a hand-painted soldier to the Roundtable. Thanks to Ernie Safran, our official videographer, we have a permanent record of this discussion. More thoughts of the founders will be shared later.

Gerry Porter, secretary, will be contacting other founding members to get their recollections. Gerry is also doing another important job, that of having all of the members fill out the survey of ideas for future programming. An initial look at the responses suggests that local fieldtrips (in addition to the out of town) could be very popular. Another person who is working hard for the RT is treasurer John Sutula, who has done an excellent job collecting dues and developing a budget. Already almost half the members have paid! Major Baucher and General "JET" have launched the raffle/auction in a big way by inspiring the members to donate gifts and buy raffle tickets. The January meeting should really be a fun night for the raffle/auction/quiz.

James Ogden made a fine presentation on Chickamauga/Chattanooga at the Sept. meeting. A videotape of the fieldtrip will be made available for those who want more in depth history of CC. My hat's off to Norton London for the thorough planning that has gone into the trip. It promises to be educational and fun. The October meeting should be equally interesting with a presentation by George Reaves from Shiloh National Park. It is interesting when you think of what Shiloh means, "place of peace" in Hebrew, and compare it to what happened on April 6, 1862. It was a massive battle, so massive that "the petals fell off the blossoming peach trees like rain during the shooting, and the boys were green, mostly untrained, who probably never shot a gun to kill someone before this battle." One Union private, a veteran of Fort Donelson, had walked up and down behind the firing line, showing the recruits how to load and fire, telling them, "It's just like shooting squirrels, only these squirrels have guns, that's all."

Once again, I have to end on a sad note. Mr. Ed Pendergast, a member since 1958, died recently. He lived in Canton yet still made most of the meetings and was going on the fieldtrip. REB