



THE CHARGER

THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

October 2025

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PROGRAM – “Hell by the Acre: The Battle of Stones River”

SPEAKER – Dan Masters, Civil War historian, the author of ten books on the conflict,

and the publisher of a popular blog, Dan Masters’ Civil War Chronicles. Masters’ latest book is *Hell by the Acre: A Narrative History of the Stones River Campaign*.

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 7:30 PM

For reservations email:

ccwrtreserve@gmail.com. To ensure a dinner is reserved for you, the reservation must be made by Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Website:

<http://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>

MEETING – October 8, 2025

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President's Message

Fellow Roundtable Members:

The presentation at our September meeting by Dr. Leonne M Hudson, a retired history Professor at Kent State University, explored the African American response to the Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. His speech and book delve into the emotional impact on the former slaves and how the tragic death of Abraham Lincoln led to a train ride home to Illinois and the Impact it had upon the African American community. Public mourning, and the historical significance of Lincoln's death caused Black Americans to be in Mourning during and after the Civil War era.

The first opportunity the public had to view the body was three days after President Lincoln's death. When the Presidential doors opened at the Executive Mansion on April 18th, the crowd poured in to see Abe Lincoln's body. A black woman with sweat dropping around her, held her grandchild above the crowd, she explained why she was lifting the girl above her head, she said, "I wants this child to see the man who made her free."

African Americans reacted to Lincoln's assassination in similar ways in both the North and the South. Mary Jackson of Indianapolis was a runaway slave who gained her freedom by way of the Underground Railroad. Mary Jackson said the death of the President was like an electric shock to her soul, she could not be convinced of his death until she gazed upon his remains, heard the last row of the muffled drum and the farewell boom of the cannon.

African Americans across the nation were deeply aggrieved by Lincoln's assassination. Maddie Jackson also wrote a memorial poem honoring Lincoln as the champion of freedom and a friend to the slave. Reflecting the

collective mourning of many Black Americans, Lincoln was seen as an evolving leader on race issues, who embraced equity of opportunity and understood that freedom required the abolition of slavery.

Lincoln was also often regarded by African Americans as an earthly Moses who struck a decisive blow against slavery. Though he would not live to see the full realization of freedom and equality for the former slaves, his final public speech on April 11, 1865, advocated for limited Black Male Suffrage, which was a pivotal moment in the history of our country.

That speech enraged John Wilkes Booth, leading to the assassination plot of Abraham Lincoln.

The Assassination and immediate aftermath was addressed by Professor Hudson. Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865 and died the following morning. The news shocked the Nation, with Black Washingtonians verbally and visibly mourning in the streets, unsure of their future without the Great Benefactor, Abraham Lincoln.

African American newspapers, such as the Black Republican, mourned the death of Lincoln as the greatest earthly friend of the colored race, who has paid the ultimate price for liberty.

The African American Methodist Episcopal Church, AME's, annual conference was meeting in Washington at the same time as Lincoln's assassination. The AME Church was the first group to formally express sorrow in a written proclamation, condemning the assassination as a cowardly act.

Professor Hudson also explained the African American perspective on Lincoln's Legacy

Following Lincoln's death, Black Americans ceased criticism of Lincoln's cautious approach to Emancipation and military enlistment of Black men, choosing instead to honor his legacy as a Liberator and friend. The Abolitionist William Wells Brown encapsulated this sentiment by acknowledging Lincoln's faults,

but emphasizing his magnificent work and the profound sense of loss felt by African Americans.

Martin Delaney, the prominent Black intellectual and Medical Doctor, met with Lincoln shortly before his death and was appointed a Major in the United States Colored Troops. Delaney responded to the assassination by calling on Black people to contribute one penny towards a monument honoring Lincoln, recognizing their financial hardships, but emphasizing collective remembrance.

Dr Hudson talked about public mourning and the funeral procession tracing the route Lincoln took to get to Washington five years earlier. The reverse trip was a herculean effort to do his sunset. The funeral was under control and supervision of Edwin Stanton and the War Department; the military was in charge. The orders called for the train to arrive in Springfield on May 3rd at 8:00 AM. The train arrived in Springfield at 8:40 AM. After 1,700 miles they were only 40 minutes late.

Abraham Lincoln's body was displayed for public viewing beginning on April 18, 1865, attracting large crowds including many African Americans determined to witness the man who had freed them. A newspaper reporter witnessed a black woman who paused at the open coffin in Washington gazing and sobbing until she was gently reminded, to move on, she stepped aside and continued to weep.

Doctor Hudson explained there was one person who did not have to worry about being rushed in the line at the capital, it was Elizabeth Keckley, a close confidant of Mary Todd Lincoln, her seamstress and a former slave. She was a key figure supporting the first lady during the mourning period and the train journey transporting Lincoln's body to Illinois.

The funeral train's 1,700-mile journey from Washington to Springfield, Illinois was an unprecedented event in America. With an estimated one million people viewing the body

and seven million witnessing the procession. African Americans including the 22nd United States Colored Troops, USCT, were uniquely positioned at both the front and rear of the procession in Washington DC. A rare exception to racial protocols of the time.

At stops such as Cleveland, elaborate arrangements were made to accommodate the large crowds, including the construction of a special Pagoda for viewing Lincoln's body outside on Public Square. Despite the challenges posed by the decaying conditions of the corpse, there was an open casket.

Professor Hudson told us about Abraham Lincoln's personal connections and reflections with longtime friends. Lincoln's close friendship with William Fleurville, a Haitian immigrant and Springfield Barber, highlights the personal relationships President Lincoln maintained with Black individuals. Abraham Lincoln, the lawyer, was a regular at the barber shop. He was famous for telling stories always with a good punchline. Fleurville was extended the honor of walking at the head of the Funeral Procession in Springfield, Fleurville refused to march at the head of the procession, choosing instead to march with his people. This illustrates the complex interplay of race and loyalty at the end of the Civil War.

Commemoration through the Freedman's Monument; one of the most enduring tributes to Lincoln from the Black community was the Freedmen's monument in Washington DC. Initiated by Charlotte Scott a former slave who contributed \$5 towards its construction. The monument was funded entirely by Black contributors and dedicated on the 11th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination, with Frederick Douglass delivering the keynote address.

Douglass praised Lincoln's legacy, while also criticizing the monuments depiction of a Black man kneeling at the feet of Lincoln. He called for a more dignified representation of Black adulthood / manhood.

In Doctor Hudson's Book he writes about legacy and responsibility during and after the civil war. Lincoln is portrayed as a symbol of American exceptionalism who preserved the Union during its most precarious times. His assassination catalyzed a commitment among Black Americans and future leaders to ensure that the revolution for freedom and equality would not be in vain.

The presentation concludes with a Biblical reference emphasizing Justice, Mercy and Humanity as the qualities embodied by Abraham Lincoln from the Bible, the Book of Micah.

During the question-and-answer portion of our meeting Professor Hudson explained research insights and sources. As usual there were questions from the CWRT members that allow for more understanding of the Battle and the situation.

In our subsequent question and answer session, Doctor Hudson shared his research methods where he relied heavily on Black and White newspapers such as the Christian Recorder, and slave narratives from the 19th century. He also used magazines and journals from the 1800s, which frequently mentioned Lincoln. He noted the importance and challenges of interpreting sources written by white observers and highlighted the rich archival material available online.

He also explained that each city allowed the funeral train route organizers their own memorial arrangements under Federal oversight. With notable exceptions such as New York City where racial tension surfaced.

Finally, Professor Hudson observed that no African American expressed happiness at Lincoln's assassination, within the archives he researched, with woman often expressing personal grief and men focusing on collective mourning, reflecting differing social roles and perspectives within the black community.

This comprehensive examination reveals the profound and multifaceted ways in which African Americans experienced, commiserated and interpreted the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, underscoring his enduring legacy as a Liberator and symbol of hope during a transformation period in American history.

Key Themes

Emotional Impact and Public Warning; African Americans across the nation involved deeply grieved Lincoln's assassination. Maddie Jackson a former slave expressed profound sorrow and wrote a memorial poem honoring Lincoln as the champion of freedom and friend to the slave.

Lincoln was seen as an evolving leader on race issues who embrace equality of opportunity and understood their freedom required the abolition of slavery the immediate aftermath Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's theater on April 14th 1865 and died the following morning the new shot the nation with black Washingtonians visibly morning in the streets African American newspapers mourned Lincoln as the greatest earthly friend of the colored race. The African Methodist Episcopal Church was the first group to formally express sorrow over Lincoln

-- Charles L. Patton

HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR OF OBERLIN, OHIO

The Roundtable's Local Field Trip Committee has arranged for a two-hour walking tour of Oberlin, Ohio, led by Amanda Manahan, an Oberlin Heritage Center guide. (Some of us know her through her service on the board of the Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island).

The tour will focus on how the Underground Railroad and Civil War affected the community. It will be on Sat. Oct. 18 from 2-4pm.

We can bring a maximum of 25 people. Please make your reservation with William Vodrey, wfbvodrey@aol.com, by noon on Thurs. Oct. 16 – first come, first served.

Cost: \$10 per person, payable by cash or check that day.

The Editor's Desk



MYTHS—often based on some grain of truth, myths serve as an oversimplification of facts that serve a deeper purpose of emphasizing the heroics of a human being, a culture, or, perhaps, a whole civilization. The trap is that there are usually just enough “true facts” included in the mythos to make it seem tenable as reality. Historians must constantly sift myths from TRUTH to describe a valid narrative of the past. It is a cliché that “history is written by the winners of wars.” Thus, CSA Major General Patrick Cleburne is reported to have lamented that surrender would mean that the history of the Civil War would be written by his enemies in the North. Southern youth “will be trained by Northern school teachers; will learn from Northern school books their version of the war.” He feared that Southern children “will be impressed by all the influences of history and education to regard our gallant dead as traitors and our maimed veterans as fit subjects for derision.”

We know, of course, that Cleburne need not have been worried. After 1865, former Confederate officers, soldiers, and civilians produced millions of pages of memoirs, articles, books, etc., which served to glorify the South’s fight and led to the creation of the “Myth of the Lost Cause.” Instead of learning about the war from Northern teachers and Northern

books, the children of the Confederacy read history as written by CSA General Jubal Early, Colonial John Mosby, CSA President Jefferson Davis and his Vice President Alexander Stephens. Northern historians had small audiences in the South. Besides, while southern-born historians dominated studies of the war, northern-born historians began celebrating the story of reconciliation between the warring parties. The Lost Cause Myth dominated American Civil War historiography for 150 years. The myth was created to soften the South’s tragic and self-destructive mistake. The victim of the myth has been history itself.

A member of the CCWRT recently asked about books on “the Lost Cause Myth.” Much has been written on the subject since the 1990s. Of the works I have read, I find three to be particularly enlightening. These are Gary Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*; Edward H. Bonekemper, *The Myth of the Lost Cause: Why the South Fought the Civil War and Why the North Won*; and William C. Davis, *The Lost Cause Myths and Realities of the Confederacy*. All three books are well-written and researched. If I only had time for one book, I would choose Gary Gallagher’s work. He presents a fine overview of the question. In addition, Gallagher taught Civil War history in schools both in the North (Pennsylvania State University) and in the South (University of Virginia), giving him an opportunity to review the Lost Cause Myth from both points of view. For all these writers, the Lost Cause is demonstrated as propaganda created by writers in the post-war South to soften the sting of overwhelming defeat, preserve Southern honor, and justify actions and laws passed by southern states in the Jim Crow Era following the end of Reconstruction in 1877.

In the July 2025 issue of *North & South Magazine* (Series II, Volume 4, Number 6) Past President Brian Kowell had an article published. The title is “Fighting Generals: Dodge that Left Hook” which tells the story of the fisticuffs between Union Brig. Gen. Thomas Sweeny and his corps commander Major Gen. Granville Dodge after the battle of Atlanta, July 22, 1864. Congratulations Brian on a well-written publication.



Relics found from Fight for Wilkinson Pike
Note position of 4th Indiana Light Artillery on Map

Brothers in Arms: Edgar and William Abbott at Stones River — In Their Own Words

By Thomas M. Cooper

This is a story of discovery, of happenstance, of survival, of collaboration — and of gratitude.

Directly after Dan Masters' March 13, 2024 presentation to our Cleveland Civil War Roundtable on the Battle of Stones River, I approached him about my having had two great-great grandfathers involved in that engagement — one from Ohio and one from Indiana. He asked which Indiana unit and I recalled the 4th Battery, Light Artillery. Dan said in fact he had posted information about Capt Asahel Bush's 4th Indiana Battery on his website just the day before his CCWRT presentation (see reference and website: "Reminders of the 4th Indiana Battery's Fight along the Wilkinson Pike," Mar 12, 2024).

As Dan was in the final stages of writing his new book *Hell by the Acre* on the Stones River Campaign, he asked if my ancestor William Abbott was "Bill" the brother of Edgar (Ed) Abbott, both of the 4th Indiana Battery and who were described in his book related to their having been wounded — within minutes and yards of each other — on the battlefield on December 31, 1862. When I returned home, I checked my files; we were able to confirm the relationship, and Dan offered to send me Edgar Abbott's postwar account of the events, published in Ed's hometown newspaper the *Coshocton (Ohio) Daily Age* in 1906, obtained through Dan's meticulous research for his book. When I received the packet containing the long article ("Ed Abbott's Recollections of Southern Battlefields"), the first person account and quotes of the exchange between the brothers lying on the field and in the hospital afterwards provided an astounding moment of reflection along with gratitude to Dan for his commitment to Civil War research through the stories and words of the men and women who lived it, and to CCWRT for inviting him to speak, on an evening when by happenstance I was able to attend.

Prior to talking with Dan, I had only limited information about William Abbott's service, including his medical discharge certification describing a major gunshot or shell wound to his

hip. I knew from a letter kept by the family that he had a brother Ed, but knew nothing about Ed's service or postwar life, let alone the battlefield account.

Born in Cleveland in 1841 and 1843, **William Hampton Abbott and Edgar Gillespie Abbott** were young boys when their mother died, and they were raised by relatives. By ages 20 and 18 they were working as farm laborers near Valparaiso, Indiana when they answered Lincoln's 1861 first call for troops, enlisting in Capt. Asahel Bush's 4th Indiana, Light Artillery for a three-year term. "Well, we bade farewell to our friends, put on the blue clothes, got our equipment and started for the front, fully expecting to clean everything up and be back home in about three months...we just happened to butt in just in time to be in about all the hard fought land battles that the armies of the Cumberland and Tennessee were engaged in."

On December 30, 1862, the 4th Indiana Battery, which had been ordered to push forward from Nashville to Murfreesboro, encountered Braxton Bragg's army, and were surprised by fire from an eight-gun masked Confederate battery. "Our battery was a six gun battery, brass pieces, two rifle guns, two smooth bores and two howitzers...A piece of shell struck one of our lead horses at the root of the ear...but the horse did not go off his feet. Number 1 is the man that handles the rammer. Number 3 thumbs the vent and stands directly behind Number 1 while on duty at the gun. A solid six pound shot struck Number 1 under the arm while he was in the act of loading and struck Number 3 just waist high and I believe they were both in Heaven in less than two minutes...both good fellows." (quoted in Edgar Abbott's *Recollections* and in Dan Masters' *Hell by the Acre*, p. 197)

The next day, December 31, "A division of (William) Hardee's Corps swung a heavy force around (Richard) Johnson's Division, (Philip) Sheridan's Division, (Joshua) Sill's Brigade, (Alexander) McCook's Corps, and we were forced to retire while firing in order to extricate ourselves from that position which movement was a fine piece of artillery work. Well, the battery got out but plenty of men and horses were left on the field, **my brother Bill and myself** among the number...in the mixup I went down but did not realize that I was hurt until I attempted to spring up. I fell behind the wheel of the gun with a hole through my left thigh between the knee and hip made by a rebel bullet. A broken thigh was the result. **My brother Bill** and George Jackson who saw my condition, took hold and carried me back about fifteen feet when **my brother fell sprawling across me**. I shall never forget the apparently foolish remark I made when he fell. I said 'Bill, are you killed?' Bill was alive enough to answer 'Not by a damned sight.' We told Jack to leave us and go back to the gun, for he could do us no good. Our boys continued to fall back and the field was lost for a time." (See 1st newspaper clipping. Also quoted in *Hell by the Acre*, p. 333.) "Sill, the Brigade Commander, was shot and killed not over ten feet from where I lay."

"I could not fight, neither could I run...I thought of my father and mother. I thought of the girl I kissed and bade goodbye with a promise to return...Aye, I thought of my mother's last words on her death bed, to be a good boy and meet her in a better place...even of the little prayer she taught me to pray... My brother said to me, 'Ed, can you crawl?' I answered, 'not on my back.' He said he would crawl down toward a fence that was not far away. I said 'go on, we can do each other no good here. **Good bye, Bill, keep a stiff upper lip and we will come out all right.** If not, you know the rest.' I saw him crawl away."

Ed Abbott lay on the muddy field for nine days, at times watching wounded men undergo field amputations. “By the way, the board of doctors were mixed - two Federal and two Confederates. They often went over the field in that manner attending to Federal and Confederate alike.” At one point he was given a red flannel flag saturated with chloroform to hold to his nose to prepare for amputation of his leg, but by some miracle a Dr. Mitchell of the 36th Illinois — whom he had known from a previous battle, recognized him and intervened to prevent the surgery, saying he was young and strong. “Gentlemen, I know this man...If you will lay him off and trust to me I will see to it that he is properly cared for.” Mitchell promised to return shortly but for unknown reasons never was able. In the next few days some stragglers wandered by with scraps of food and water. He could hear the last gasps of the wounded lying nearby, and **supposed brother Bill was dead**, as he could see the burying squad down the hill with bodies in blankets. After nine days an ambulance came and he was removed to what was once the city hotel in Murfreesboro, then to a makeshift field hospital.

(See 2nd newspaper clipping - “Finds His Brother”). “A man was laid down at my feet. I took a look at him and thought he would look like Bill if he were not so poor. I thought I would speak to him and if it was not Bill, he would pay no attention to it. **I said, ‘Bill,’ and his face turned my way and I saw my only brother. I cannot describe the meeting.** You may perhaps have an idea about what it was like. We were human. He was placed beside me on my left, when it was learned we were brothers...I asked my brother how he happened to get there. He said the day he crawled away from me on the field that a squad of rebels took him to be a commissioned officer and carried him to town expecting to take him to Libby Prison or some other prison but they found out their mistake and they put him in a shanty in the suburbs of the town where he had stayed up to this time. A ball pretty well spent had struck him between the hip and ribs and buried itself fracturing the hip bone.”

According to Muster Roll cards, by April, 1863 the brothers had been released or exchanged, and William was transferred to the USA General Hospital at Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio, where he received a disability discharge (see insert for certificate) that same month. They both lived for a time in Newark, Licking County, Ohio (the writer’s hometown) where they appear in a military listing (see insert) in June, 1863. William and Edgar were the fathers of 14 children between them. William became a railroad yardmaster and died in Memphis, TN in 1897. Edgar relocated to Coshocton, Ohio where he operated general merchandise stores and later became a justice of the peace and county commissioner, dying in 1924.

In 2022 I had visited Stones River Battlefield — highly recommended to all — to track down the field locations of the units of William Abbott and another great-great grandfather James W. Cooper of the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry (see Dec 2024 *The Charger* for his story involving Chickamauga and release from prison). Thus by March, 2024 I was particularly tuned into the details of the battle and Dan Masters’ research and writing. As it turns out, his work on the 4th Indiana Battery at Stones River and detailed knowledge of the many narratives and names from that battle and period of the Civil War had by then come into sharp focus, “aligning the planets” to allow this rich history of these Brothers in Arms (literally) to be witnessed through previously unopened doors.

Ed Abbott's Recollections of Southern Battlefields

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES
CERTIFICATE
OF DISABILITY FOR DISCHARGE.

Wm. H. Abbott Private of Captain *Bush's* Company, () of the *4th* Battery, Regiment of United States Artillery, was enlisted by *Capt. Bush* of the *4th* Battery, Regiment of *Indiana* at *Indianapolis* on the *13* day of *Sept* 1861, to serve *3* years; he was born in *Cleveland* in the State of *Ohio* is *32* years of age, *5* feet *8* inches high, *Light* complexion, *Blue* eyes, *Light* hair, and by occupation when enlisted a *Farmer*. During the last two months said soldier has been unfit for duty *days*.

He is this day discharged by reason of Injury at Ft. Harrison Mo 30 of 1862

STATION : _____
 DATE : _____

Capt W. H. S.
 Commanding Company

I CERTIFY, that I have carefully examined the said *William H. Abbott* of Captain *Bush's* Company, and find him incapable of performing the duties of a soldier because of *A gunshot wound of the left hip causing off the great transverse of the femur resulting in adhesion of muscles after extensive suppuration, wound occurred at the battle of "Stone River" June 30th 1862 while in line of duty.*

Mackenzie
 Assistant Surgeon, i.e.

DISCHARGED, this *13th* day of *April* 1862, at *Columbus*

Capt W. H. S.
 Commanding the Regt

The soldier desired to be addressed at _____
 Town *Newark* County *Dickinson* State *Mo.*

References:

Daniel A. Masters. Civil War Chronicles, March 12, 2024.

“Reminders of the 4th Indiana Battery's Fight along the Wilkinson Pike”

<https://dan-masters-civil-war.blogspot.com/2024/03/reminders-of-4th-indiana-batterys-fight.html>

Daniel A. Masters. (2025) *Hell by the Acre*. Savas Beatie (El Dorado Hills, CA)

Recollections of Corporal Edgar Abbott, 4th Indiana Battery, James C. Haddock Papers, Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society; OR 20/1:355.

Also published as:

“Ed Abbott’s Recollections of Southern Battlefields.”

Coshocton Daily Age, Nov 24 and Dec 1, 1906.

“E.G. Abbott Answers His Last Call: Widely Known Justice Dies from Infirmities of Age; Was Civil War Veteran,” *Coshocton Tribune*, Nov 28, 1924.



Ohio at Stones River

By Dennis Keating

Ohio was well represented at the battle of Stones River. The Union army of 41,000 included from Ohio: 36 infantry regiments, 3 cavalry regiments, the Ohio Light Artillery (8 batteries) commanded by Cleveland James Barnett, and the Sixth Ohio Light Artillery.

Ohio Commanders (Infantry and Cavalry)

The Army of the Cumberland (formerly the XIVth Corps) was commanded by William Rosecrans, who had recently replaced Don Carlos Buell after the battle of Perryville. Rosecrans had first commanded the 23rd OVI and had served under McClellan in (West) Virginia. before coming West. Prodded by his superiors to engage Braxton Bragg's army south of Nashville, Rosecrans finally advanced on December 26, 1862.

INFANTRY

One of his corps commanders and head of the Right wing of the army was Alexander McCook, one of the 15 Ohio fighting McCooks (several of whom were generals).

Phil Sheridan commanded the Third Division in the Right wing. In the battle, all three of his brigade commanders were killed.

William Hazen commanded the Second Brigade of the Second Division in the Left wing. It included the 41st Ohio, which he had previously commanded.

August Willich commanded the First Brigade of the Second Division in the Right wing. He was a political radical German soldier who emigrated to Cincinnati. He enlisted in the 9th OVI but became commander of the 32nd Indiana. At Stones River, his brigade included the 15th and 49th OVI. Willich had his horse shot from under him and was captured by Texans. He spent four months in captivity in Richmond's Libby Prison before being released in an exchange. During the Atlanta campaign, he was severely wounded at the battle of Resaca, Georgia in May, 1864, and could not serve again in the field.

Samuel Beatty served in the 3rd OVI in the Mexican War and was the elected Sheriff of Stark County at the outbreak of the Civil War. He was elected commander of the 19th Ohio. He was commander of the First Brigade of the Third Division in the Left wing at Stones River.

James B. Steedman lost both parents when he was 15 years old and worked as a printer to support his siblings. In 1835, he joined Sam Houston's army in the Texas War of Independence. In 1849, he joined the California Gold Rush but returned to Ohio in 1850 to become a lawyer and journalist in Toledo. He was elected colonel of the 14th OVI. At Stones River, he commanded the Third Brigade of the Third Division in the Center wing. It included the 9th and 35th OVI. At the battle of Chickamauga, he became a hero leading his troops to join General George Thomas in his defense of the rearguard of Rosecrans' defeated army.

Joshua Sill commanded the 33rd OVI. At Stones River he commanded the First Brigade of Sheridan's Third Division in the Right wing. He was killed on the first day.

James P. Fyffe served in the 1st OVI in the Mexican War, participated in the California Gold Rush, and returned to become a lawyer and journalist in Georgetown, Ohio. He was the Colonel of the 59th OVI. At Stones River, he commanded the Second Brigade of the Third Division in the Left wing. It included the 13th and 59th OVI.

John Beatty was a banker who volunteered in the 3rd OVI. At Stones River he commanded the Second Brigade (which included the 3rd OVI) of the First Division in the Right wing.

Moses B. Walker was appointed colonel of the 31st OVI. At Stones River, he commanded the First Brigade of the Third Division in the Center wing. It included the 17th, 31st, and 38th OVI.

William B. Cassily commanded the 69th OVI in the Second Brigade of the Second Division in the Center wing. He was relieved during the battle for drunkenness and later dismissed from the service.

CAVALRY

David S. Stanley commanded the Cavalry Division.

Lewis Zahm was another German immigrant to Ohio. He organized the 3rd Ohio cavalry. At Stones River, he commanded the Second Brigade of the Cavalry Division, composed of the 1st, 3rd and 4th OVC regiments.

Minor Milliken was a wealthy lawyer and Hamilton newspaper owner. His appointment to lead the 1st OVC was controversial. He was killed at Stones River leading a charge to protect the Right wing's ammunition wagons.

Units

The actions, both positive and negative, of many of the Ohio units are cited throughout Peter Cozzens' book on the battle.

Rout and Retreat, Defense, and Destruction

Most (but not all) of the Ohio infantry in McCook's Right wing were routed by Bragg's army's morning surprise attack on December 31 and retreated. McCook's troops at the battle of Chickamauga were also routed and he was court martialed, then relieved of duty with the Army of the Cumberland. Phil Sheridan had warned McCook about a possible Confederate attack but was ignored by McCook. Much of his division led a retreating fighting defense that eventually was critical to stopping the Rebel attack. The other major Ohio hero among Rosecrans' commanders that day was William Hazen and his brigade of John Palmer's division that defended the Round Forest. Cozzens wrote:

"Hazen at Stones River was among the most experienced and capable commanders in the army. The battle would only add to his reputation, as it fell to him to defend what was to become the most fiercely contested spot on the entire field—a copse of cedar and oak known as the Round Forest" (pp. 151, 163)

On January 2nd, an ill-advised attack by Bragg against the Left flank of Rosecrans' army was destroyed and Bragg retreated South.

Despite the near defeat of his army on December 31 and his at times erratic behavior, Rosecrans received Lincoln's thanks:

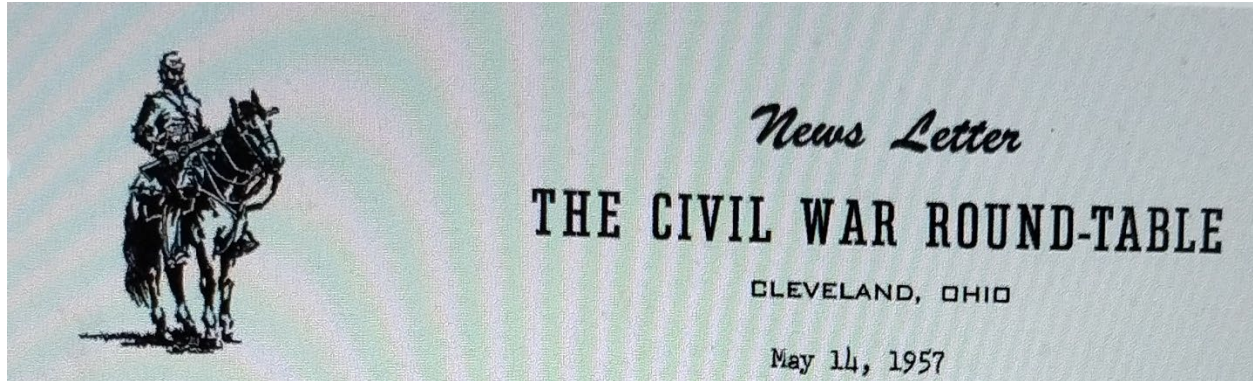
"God bless you and all with you. Please render to all, and accept for yourself, the nation's gratitude for your and their skill, endurance, and dauntless courage." (Cozzens, p. 206)

References

Battle of Stones River (Ohio Civil War)

Peter Cozzens. *The Battle of Stones River: No Better Place to Die* (University of Illinois Press, 1990)

Dan Masters. *Hell by the Acre: A Narrative History of the Stones River Campaign, November 1862-January 1863* (Savas Beatie, 2024)



Masthead for CCWRT "News Letter" 1957

Tidbits from Old Issues of The Charger: Insights into Roundtable History

Part 1

By David A. Carrino

The May 2025 issue of *The Charger* includes a notice announcing that issues of the Roundtable's newsletter going back to the first year of the organization's existence were uploaded onto the Roundtable's website. As that notice explains, this came about because Bob Pence obtained hard copies of these issues, which span the years 1956 to 2000, and scanned those hard copies into PDFs. I then uploaded all of those PDFs onto the website and integrated them into the archive that contains PDFs of all of the previously uploaded issues, which span the years 2001 to present. I should note that the Roundtable's newsletter was not always called *The Charger*, but for simplicity, throughout this article I refer to the newsletter as *The Charger*, even when the Roundtable's newsletter went by a different name.

While I was uploading the old issues of *The Charger*, I noticed some items that I found interesting. These items, which I refer to as tidbits from old issues of *The Charger*, give some insight into the Roundtable's history and its operation in the past, and I think members of the Roundtable will find these items interesting. Part 1 of this article describes some of these tidbits.

Tidbit 1: The name of the Roundtable's newsletter

As mentioned above, the Roundtable's newsletter was not always called *The Charger*. This tidbit is a

timeline of the names that were used for the Roundtable's newsletter. In 1957 and thereafter, the masthead on page one reads simply News Letter of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. Starting in 1961 and until 1964, the masthead has no name for the newsletter, just the heading The Civil War Roundtable of Cleveland, Ohio. Beginning in 1964, the name *The Courier* appears in the masthead. Thus, the first actual name for the Roundtable's newsletter is *The Courier*. In the November 1978 issue, there is a notice which indicates that the newsletter's name would thenceforth be *The Charger*. Beginning the following month (i.e., the December 1978 issue) and from that time until the present, the name *The Charger* appears in the masthead along with the logo that we have become familiar with. It does not seem that there was any official action by the leadership of the Roundtable to give that name to the newsletter. Rather, it seems from the notice in the November 1978 issue that the editor at that time (Stuart Cramer) simply made this decision on his own, so we evidently have him to thank for the name of the Roundtable's newsletter. Cramer's notice gives some indication of why he chose that name, and anyone who is interested in this can take a look at his notice, which has the title "Our Hobby Horse" and is at the top of page two in the November 1978 issue (https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/charger-nov_1978.pdf.)

Tidbit 2: Poor attendance at meetings

An article on page two of the November 1979 issue with the title "Truant Members Not Lacking" discusses the poor attendance at meetings (https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/charger-nov_1979.pdf.) An unambiguously worded statement in the article reads, "Our attendance, to put it subtly, STINKS." The article further indicates that attendance at meetings "has been going down" and notes that the attendance at the previous month's meeting "was at a low ebb." No numbers are given for the attendance at meetings, but evidently there was an ongoing problem at that time with attendance. This problem with low attendance was occurring when the Roundtable had been in existence for only a bit more than two decades and makes it seem as though enthusiasm for the Roundtable was declining, which was an ominous sign for the long-term health and survival of the organization. Clearly (and fortunately for us), the Roundtable overcame this problem, because the organization is not just still here in 2025, but is thriving, with very good attendance at meetings.

Tidbit 3: Membership limit

The president's message on page two of the March 1964 issue points out that the Roundtable was limited by its constitution to 75 members (https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/charger-mar_1964.pdf.) The president's message further indicates that there was a formal process for becoming a member. This process involved nomination of a person for membership by a current member followed by a vote of the executive committee. The president's message goes on to state that at that time the number of applications for membership had grown so large that the waiting list for membership had become extremely long. The president's message also includes a plea to reduce the nominations for membership because of the long waiting list. If the membership limit that existed in 1964 were in force in 2025, then the extensive and worthwhile efforts over the past few

years that have increased membership to its current number would have, because of the membership limit, not been allowed. Moreover, the membership system consisting of nomination and then a vote no longer exists, which makes it much easier for people to become Roundtable members.

Tidbit 4: History of Roundtable field trips

On the website, there is a list of the locations of the Roundtable's past field trips. This list was originally compiled from memory and extended back to only 1997. On page four of the September 1977 *Charger* is an item with the title "The First Twenty Field Trips" (https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/charger-sep_1977.pdf.) This item consists of a list of the locations of the Roundtable's field trips from 1957 to 1976. In subsequent years there often was an issue of *The Charger* that contained a report about the field trip, and these reports included the location. With all of this information, I was able to make a nearly complete list of all the field trip locations for the entire history of the Roundtable. Because some of the hard copy issues *The Charger* were not saved, there are some years for which the issue containing the field trip report is not available. Consequently, there are some years for which the field trip location is not known. The list of field trips that is now on the website is as complete as currently possible (<https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/list-of-roundtable-field-trips/>).

Two noteworthy years are 1972 and 1995, when the field trip was to Vicksburg. In recent years, this location has been considered too challenging for a field trip, but Roundtable President Charles Patton made the decision to have the 2025 field trip in Vicksburg, and thanks to his efforts and the efforts of Bob Pence, who helped with the planning of this year's field trip, the Roundtable once again visited Vicksburg. Charles indicated in his President's Message in the September 2025 *Charger* that one location he considered for the 2025 field trip is Shiloh, but Charles noted that there are logistical challenges associated with Shiloh. However, Shiloh was the location of the field trip in 2003, so the Roundtable has had a field trip there in the not-too-distant past. This means that a field trip to Shiloh is feasible, if the Roundtable wants to go there again, and Shiloh is a very pristine battlefield. Two field trip locations (1968 and 1975) are particularly interesting, because these locations are unexpected for a field trip by a Civil War group. In 1968 the field trip was to West Point Academy and Saratoga, and in 1975 the field trip was to Saratoga and Ticonderoga. Perhaps those locations should be kept in mind if in the future the Roundtable wants to have a field trip at a location that is out of the ordinary.

Tidbit 5: Errors in the official list of Roundtable presidents

As a result of the uploading of the old issues of *The Charger*, I discovered three errors in the official list of Roundtable presidents. This list can be found at the end of the web page on which appears an article written by Dale Thomas about the Roundtable's history (<https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/cleveland-civil-war-roundtable-1956-2006-2/>.) The list of Roundtable presidents first appeared in the September 1996 *Charger*, and the list, updated each year as new presidents were elected, continued to appear in *The Charger* up to and including the May 2014 issue, where it appears in its most complete form (page two of

https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/charger-may_2014.pdf.) I assume that the list in *The Charger* is what was used when the list of Roundtable presidents first appeared on the website in the mid-2000s (which was before the time that I began working on the website). I have been updating that list of Roundtable presidents ever since I began to handle website tasks. If Bob Pence had not scanned the old issues of *The Charger* and I had not uploaded the PDFs, I (and, for that matter, everyone else in the Roundtable) would have never known about these errors.

One of the errors is that the order for two presidents was incorrect. Specifically, Milton Holmes was listed as the president for 1975-1976 and James Chapman for 1976-1977. However, it is clear in the issues of *The Charger* from 1975 to 1977 that the correct order is the reverse, that is, James Chapman was the president in 1975-1976, and Milton Holmes was the president in 1976-1977. Two other errors involve misspellings of names. Guy Di Carlo's surname (president in 1963-1964) was misspelled as DiCarlo, and Nolan Heidlebaugh's surname (president in 1973-1974) was misspelled as Heidelbaugh. It may seem like a trivial exercise to look for and correct errors in the names of past Roundtable presidents. But to me it was worth the time and effort to find and rectify these errors and make the official list of Roundtable presidents correct. As anyone who has been the president of the Roundtable can attest, the people who serve as president spend a lot of time and effort carrying out that office, and they deserve to have their names recorded correctly in the official list of Roundtable presidents.

Tidbit 6: Civil War enthusiast

This tidbit involves a short article in the February 1968 *Charger*. The article consists of an amusing and insightful discussion of why some people are Civil War enthusiasts. The article in the February 1968 *Charger* refers to an article in the September 8, 1958 *Cleveland News*. The *Cleveland News* article discusses the fervid and enigmatic fascination for the Civil War that takes hold of some people (such as people like us).

Among the passages from the *Cleveland News* article are the following.

"Yet there are enthusiasms that – for some of us, at least – will never fade. Take, for example, the Civil War...It is the Great American Drama, filled with more legends, more untruths, more heroism, more gallant humanitarianism, more stupidity, and more villains than any other epoch in our history."

"And most of all, it is the men who fought the war...Men who advanced into the mist and confusion of the great combat and didn't really know why they fought, who cheered their generals and jeered their generals but who fought."

"This wasn't a case of fighting foreigners. These men were all Americans...They were gallant and they were cowardly and they were ridiculous and they died not pleasantly. And they all were Americans."

This article is not long, and it is a fun read. It can be found on page three of the February 1968 issue

(https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/charger-feb_1968.pdf.)

Tidbit 7: Europe's artistic ambassador to the post-Civil War U.S.

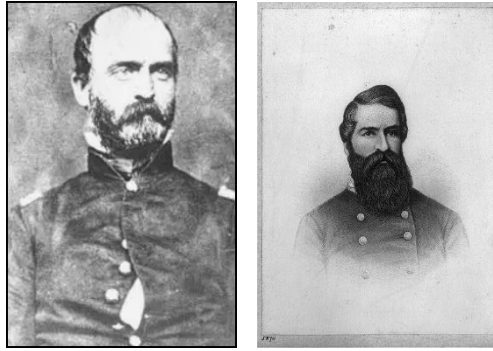
This tidbit is something of a personal one, but it is interesting, if only because of the unusual and amusing nature of this story. Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the Swiss government commissioned a Swiss painter named Frank Buchser to go to the U.S. and do a painting to commemorate the American Civil War. The plan was for Buchser's painting to hang in the Swiss Parliament. As it turned out, Buchser, who was the epitome of a free spirit and an ardent practitioner of *joie de vivre*, had other ideas, in part because he was enjoying his time in America so much. Rather than the grandiose painting the Swiss government expected, Buchser did a series of portraits of prominent Civil War figures, including William Tecumseh Sherman, William Seward, and Robert E. Lee. In fact, Buchser's portrait of Lee was the last painting in life ever done of Lee. Buchser also wanted to do a portrait of Ulysses S. Grant, but Grant steadfastly refused.

The September 1976 *Charger* has, at the bottom of page 6 (the last page), a notice that two of Buchser's paintings (the Lee portrait and the Seward portrait) were part of an exhibit at the Cleveland Museum of Art (https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/charger-sep_1976.pdf.) This was almost 25 years before I joined the Roundtable, so I did not read this notice when it was published, but I would have loved to have seen these paintings. The notice in *The Charger* also includes two short comments by Buchser, in which he expressed his opinions of Seward and Lee. Regarding Lee, Buchser said, "What a fine noble soul, good and lovable the old warrior is." In contrast, Buchser had a far less favorable opinion of Seward and labeled him one of "the intriguing wire pullers who are called politicians in this country."

I did a history brief about Buchser in 2012, and that history brief is on the website, if anyone is interested (<https://www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com/europes-artistic-ambassador-to-the-post-civil-war-united-states/>.) The history brief has images of Buchser's portraits of Sherman, Lee, and Seward, so if nothing else you can take a look at those, as well as some of Buchser's paintings that depict scenes of American life. There is something about the Sherman portrait that I find interesting. In this painting Sherman is shown in a heroic pose. In the background is an officer sitting at a table doing some paperwork. The officer is looking up from his paperwork at Sherman and has a perturbed look on his face as if he is thinking, "Come, come, General. You look dashing, but if you are finished playing the conquering hero, can we get back to business?"

The history brief also explains why Switzerland wanted a painting to commemorate the American Civil War, and it explains why Buchser did not paint Lee in his military uniform, which is on a table behind Lee in the painting. Buchser was quite an interesting character, and his life story is worth a read. As evidence of how much Buchser enjoyed his time in America, for the rest of his life afterward, he went by an Americanized version of his first name (Frank) rather than his given first name (Franz).

Part 2 of this article, which will be included in an upcoming issue of *The Charger*, describes the last (and most controversial) of the old *Charger* tidbits.



Lewis Armistead and Turner Ashby

Armistead, Ashby, and the “Star-Spangled Banner”

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On September 14, 1814, lawyer Francis Scott Key stood aboard a truce ship outside Baltimore Harbor and watched through the night as the British bombarded American-held Fort McHenry. As the sky lightened and he glimpsed the American flag still waving above the ramparts, the inspired Key removed a letter from his pocket and began to write verses upon the back. The finished poem was later titled “Defense of Fort McHenry” and put to music as the “Star-Spangled Banner.”¹

The “Star-Spangled Banner” became a powerful symbol of the Union cause during the Civil War. While not the most popular Civil War song among Union troops, it gained special significance during the war to express the soldiers’ feelings for the flag and the ideals and values it represented. The song was used to inspire patriotism and was performed at military events, and public gatherings to promote enlistments.²

The flag that inspired the song was retained by Maj. (later Lt. Col.) George Armistead, the commander of Ft. McHenry during the bombardment. At his death in 1818, the flag went to his daughter, Georgiana Armistead Appelton. When people wrote to Mrs. Appelton requesting a piece of the flag as a souvenir, she graciously complied leaving the flag in a tattered condition. The flag was inherited by her son, Eben Appelton, in 1878. He lent it to the Smithsonian Institute. Appelton eventually gifted it to the Smithsonian, which refurbished the flag, adding it to their permanent collection, where it remains on public display today.³

Future Confederate General Lewis A. Armistead was the nephew of George Armistead. Born in North Carolina, Lewis moved with his family to Upperville, Virginia in Fauquier County where he grew up. With his father and three uncles, all veterans of the War of 1812, Lewis easily received an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Due to academic difficulties and poor conduct – supposedly breaking a plate over the head of fellow cadet Jubal A. Early in the mess hall – Lewis resigned from the academy.⁴

Through the fame of his family and political connections, Lewis Armistead was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the 6th U.S. Infantry and served in the West and decorated for bravery in the American-Mexican War. Married twice and widowed twice, he was known as “Lo” to his friends which was short for Lothario. This nickname was “a joke on the shy, quiet-spoken widower who was known to admire the ladies.”⁵

In 1860, Lewis Armistead, now a 43-year-old major, was back in Fauquier County on leave visiting his family and friends. One of those friends was Turner Ashby, a 32-year-old bachelor who lived near Markham Station on the Manassas Gap Railroad. The two sat in Ashby’s home, Wolf’s Craig, catching up on each other’s lives.⁶

The discussion eventually turned to the impending crisis. Ashby told Armistead that the Civil War really began with John Brown’s insurrection at Harper’s Ferry, and that those behind Brown would keep on until they forced the South to secede. He told of leading his militia company, the Mountain Rangers, to Harper’s Ferry, but arriving too late to participate in Brown’s capture. He and his company later patrolled the Potomac River for other insurrectionists and witnessed Brown’s hanging in Charles Town.⁷

The two discussed the upcoming 1860 Presidential election and the respective candidates running for office. Ashby, “a strong Union man and fundamentally opposed to the concept of secession,” preferred the Bell/Everett ticket “over the out-and-out secessionist candidate John C. Breckenridge.”. Armistead’s choice is unknown. Ashby spoke of the danger that the election of the Republican candidate would have. He believed that it would disrupt the Union, tear the country apart, and result in a bloody Civil War.⁸

Armistead listened in silence until Ashby finished. He could see the gloom in Ashby’s eyes. Armistead didn’t “believe that such was the case. He told Ashby he didn’t believe they would force a dissolution of the Union. He said he couldn’t think of such a thing, and that he was all for the Union and that he had given the best years of his life in its military service.” After a few moments, Armistead suddenly started up and exclaimed. “Turner, do not talk so; I know but one country and one flag. Let me sing you a song and drive away your gloom.” With that Armistead started singing “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Ashby, touched by his friends attempt to console him, soon joined in heartily.⁹

Here were two future Confederate generals singing together about the nation’s flag, saved by one of the participant’s relatives whose act inspired the words written by Francis Scott Key forty-six years before. It is ironic, these two bachelors were cheering themselves up by remembering the flag and the Union. In a year both would turn their backs on that flag and fight to divide the country it represented. Each would be killed leading charges in that cause – Ashby at Harrisonburg and Armistead at Gettysburg a year later. They never would see the Stars and Stripes wave once more over a united nation or join their voices in singing the “Star-Spangled Banner.”

¹ [Short History of The Star Spangled Banner | American Battlefield Trust](#)

² [The Problem and Potential of "The Star-Spangled Banner" | Chorus America](#) Clague, Mark, "O Say Can You Hear: A Cultural Biography of the Star-Spangled Banner" September 9, 2022. The Star-Spangled Banner officially became the National Anthem of the United States by an act of Congress and signed into law on March 3, 1931 by then-President Herbert Hoover. [Music of the 1860's | American Battlefield Trust](#)

³ [Star-Spangled Banner | Smithsonian Institution](#)

⁴ [Lewis A. Armistead \(1817–1863\) - Encyclopedia Virginia](#) Eicher, John H., and Eicher, David J., *Civil War High Commands*, Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, 2001, p. 107. Krick, Robert K., "The Parallel Lives of Two Virginia Soldiers: Armistead and Garnett," *The Third Day at Gettysburg & Beyond*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher, Chapel Hill, NC, The University of North Carolina Press, 1994, pp. 99-100. Wet, Jeffery D., "Lewis Addison Armistead," *The Confederate General*, Volume 1, ed. William C. Davis, National Historical Society, 1991, pp. 40-41.

⁵ Krick, "Parallel Lives," p. 101. Foote, Shelby, *The Civil War: A Narrative, Fredericksburg to Meridian*, Vol. 2, New York, Random House, 1963, pp. 533-534. Wright, John D., *The Language of the Civil War*, Westport, CT, Oryx Press, 2001, p. 179.

⁶ Thomas, Clarence, *General Turner Ashby: The Centaur of the South*, Winchester, VA, Eddy Press Corporation, 1907, p. 15. Krick, "Parallel Lives," p. 111. "Returns From Regular Army Infantry Regiments, June 1821-January 1901, September 1859-June 1861," M665, Roll 68, National Archives.

⁷ Ramey, Emily G., and Gott, John K., editors, *The Years of Anguish: Fauquier County, Virginia, 1861-1865*, Fauquier County Civil War Centennial Committee, 1965, reprint, Heritage Books, Westminster, MD, 2008, pp. 158, 162.

⁸ Avirett, James B. *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers*, Baltimore, Selby & Dulany, 1867, reprinted Lucy B. Roper, 2013, p. 49. Dufour, Charles L., *Nine Men in Gray*, Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1993, p. 46.

⁹ Ramey & Gott, *The Years of Anguish*, p. 158. Avirett, *The Memoirs*, p. 46.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *By all accounts it seems the members who made the trip to Vicksburg in September had a great time. We understand that a more complete account of the trip will be available for publication in a later issue of "The Charger." In the meantime, here are some pictures submitted by our President, Judge Charles L. Patton.*



FINIS!