



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Tuesday, October 12th, 2010 Meeting #110

Dino's Restaurant at I90 & State Rt. 306 Willoughby, Ohio

Guest Speaker: Robert Tribby

Topic: "The History of the Cleveland Browns 1946 - 1970"

Canteen at 6:00 pm Dinner at 7:00 pm Guests are welcome

Reservations required Please call Steve Abbey

Phone 440 255 8375 e-Mail: abbeyr@yahoo.com

Robert Tribby is a lifelong resident of Mayfield Heights and a NEOCWRT member. He and his wife Kathy met while attending high school. They are both graduates of Mayfield High School and they are blessed with two daughters, Kristin and Kimberly and a grandson, Tommy. Bob earned his BA in Political Science from Hiram College where he minored in History and Economics. He received a MS degree in Public Management from Case Western Reserve University. While in the masters program at Case, Bob Tribby served a one year internship with the City of Cleveland's Office of Budget and Management. In fact, he wrote his master's thesis on the implementation of the **Little Hoover Commission** recommendations during the Locker Administration. Mr. Tribby has worked in various financial positions with the City of Cleveland where he served under three mayors, Ralph Locker, Carl Stokes and Ralph Perk. He has been the Finance Director of Mayfield Heights since January of 1982 and was appointed by Mayor Ross DeJohn. He was also a member of the Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA) for 19 years and is currently the Vice President of the Ohio Municipal League.

Bob Tribby has been interested in history since his childhood. He has always had an interest in military history, especially the Civil War and World War II. Although he has not been able to attend any of our fall field trips, he has been able to visit many key battlefields during family vacations.

He has been a Cleveland Browns fan since the 1950's. Bob Tribby and his Dad (along with 85,000 fans) were present at the old Cleveland Municipal Stadium to see Jim Brown set a single game rushing record of 237 yards against the Los Angeles Rams in his rookie year of 1957. Of course being a graduate of Hiram College is another connection to the Browns. He was taking classes during the summer of 1964 and concentrating on the books. "Who would have thought that this would be the last year the Browns would win it all." Bob Tribby's interest in football began during his time at Mayfield High School. He never played the game, but he was a student writer for the *Sun Messenger* for 3 years reporting on the Wildcats. **Chick Beach** coached during that time and became head coach his senior year. *Please join us for this special History of the Cleveland Browns program.*

The History of the Cleveland Browns, Years of Glory, 1946 – 1964

In January of 1946, the Cleveland Rams professional football team, a member of the National Football League left the blistery cold shores of Lake Erie for the sunny skies of Los Angeles, California and never looked back. The Rams had just defeated the Washington Redskins to win the NFL Championship but the team continually lost money. The Rams failed to connect with the people of Northeast Ohio and their football game attendance was among the worst in the league. In 1946, Arthur McBride, a Cleveland area businessman, secured a franchise in the All American Football Conference. The first thing Mr. McBride did was to hire Paul Brown, the coach of the Ohio State Buckeyes to be his vice president, general manager as well as to coach his team. Brown had established himself as one of the finest football minds in the country.



Paul Brown was a graduate of Massillon Washington High School and later attended Miami University where he played quarterback. Brown was a Rhodes Scholar and he earned a masters degree in education at Ohio State University. At age 23, he returned to coach the Massillon High School Tigers football team to post 80 wins, 8 losses and 2 ties over a 9 year period. Brown moved on to coach Ohio State where his teams won 18 games, while losing 8 and had 2 ties from 1941 through 1943. Brown served in the U. S. Navy in 1944-1945 and was stationed at the Great Lakes Naval Station in Chicago where he coached the base football team among his other duties.

Paul Brown had connections to a number of gifted athletes. He manages to sign a number of his former players (and players that his teams played against) to contracts with the Browns. Among those gifted players were offensive tackle and kicker, Lou Groza, quarterback Otto Graham, full back Marion Motley, wide receiver Mac Speedie and nose guard Bill Willis. Paul Brown was a football coach who expected the very best from his players at all times. Brown developed a system that required his men to play as a team. Team was the essence of the Brown system. There were individual stars but no one was better or greater than the Team. Brown did not want prima donnas. If you played for Paul Brown you conducted yourself as a gentleman and scholar at all times. He did not want any drinkers or womanizers on his team. Big Ben and Santonio Holmes would not have played for Paul Brown.

The Paul Brown system produced 4 consecutive championships between 1946 and 1949. In 1948 the Cleveland Browns won 14 games in a row! The Browns joined the National Football league in 1950 and defeated the Philadelphia Eagles in the NFL Championship game by a score of 35 to 10. The Eagles thought that the Browns would be an easy win for them. They were wrong.

In 1956 the Cleveland Browns selected Jim Brown, a six foot two inch, 230 lb back from Syracuse University in the first round of the NFL Draft. Jim Brown rushed for 1863 yards in 1963 and amassed 12,312 rushing yards during his 9 years with the Cleveland Browns. There were only 12 games in the NFL season during Jim Brown's first 4 years and 14 games per season during his last 5 seasons. That only makes his accomplishments that much more amazing!

In January 1961, Art Modell, a New York City advertising and public relations executive purchased the Cleveland Browns for \$4 million dollars. Modell and Paul Brown soon discovered that they could not work together. Modell took an active role in managing his Browns football team and Paul Brown resented Modell's constant meddling in matters he knew little about.



The Browns traded halfback Bobby Mitchell to the Baltimore Colts in 1962 in order to get the 1st round draft pick, Ernie Davis, a gifted runner from Syracuse University. Davis would later be diagnosed with leukemia and never play for the Browns. On January 9, 1963, Art Modell fired Paul Brown and replaced him with Blanton Collier. The Browns went on to defeat the Baltimore Colts 27 - 0 and win the NFL Championship in 1964. In 1966 Jim Brown ended his football career to become a full time Hollywood film star and fullback Ernie Green teamed with Leroy Kelley to give the Browns an explosive running game. The Browns managed to make it to the playoffs in 1967, 1968 and 1969 only to fall short of another championship.

It is ironic that the City of Cleveland has endured so many disappointing Browns teams in the last ten years after achieving so much glory from 1946 through 1964. However, it should be noted that no NFL city has posted a better record or won more games than the Cleveland Browns of 1946 - 1964. Nor should we forget that a number of great NFL coaches learned their skills while under the leadership of Paul Brown. Chuck Noll, Don Shula, Lou Saban and Walt Michaels all attribute their success in coaching to the principles they learned from Paul Brown. In 1995, Art Modell stole away to Baltimore like a thief in the night. Modell was from New York and never understood the people of Northeast Ohio. Modell packed up his uniforms, his equipment and left town with his hired hands but he could never take the Browns. The Team is anchored on the shores of Lake Erie and sometime soon it will rise again and win another championship.

CIVIL WAR MINUTES by Franco M. Sperrazzo Events Coordinator/V. Pres.

September 14th Meeting: **Scott Mingus Sr.** obviously found his way in life early on. The Ohio native is not only successful in his professional life in the paper and printing industry, but he realized his passion for American History and specifically the Civil War Era at a young age. This was evident by the 7 books he brought for our members and guests to preview and purchase. His talk focused on his book “Flames Beyond Gettysburg, the Gordon Expedition, June 1863.” Judging by the amount of material this scientist, author and historian covered you would swear he was the reincarnation of a soldier or maybe a journalist from that time period, over 147 years ago. **Mr. Mingus** produced a provocative slide presentation that examined information from his other 6 books. The man is truly blessed with great recall and a wealth of knowledge. It would be beneficial to have the former Cleveland area resident back for a future meeting. He is a friend to some of our club members like **Dick Muny** and **Bob Baucher**. Great **Scott!**

Ohio Historical Society: On August 14th I visited this wonderful facility near Downtown Columbus. This spacious building houses numerous artifacts of Ohio’s evolution and rich history. **Brent Morgan** and **Theo Karle** among others have performed extensive research at the archival library. This museum will be an active participant in **Civil War 150 Ohio**, during the sesquicentennial (2011-2015). Last month I passed out souvenir book markers with the website www.ohiocivilwar.org, or call (800-686-1541) for a schedule of ongoing events. Perhaps we can arrange a Spring 1 day or overnight visit during one of the years of the anniversary celebration.

WRHS: On September 22nd I attended the “State of the Western Reserve Historical Society.” It was good to hear they are starting to project they will be operating next year in a positive light and on the road to recovery. Our friend **John Grabowski** was present with **Dr. Ed Pershey**, our March 8, 2011 speaker. **Mr. Pershey** will discuss the opening of the 5 calendar year continuation of their Civil War exhibit, and the roles that Cleveland and Ohio played in the war effort. **President Gainor Davis** addressed a large crowd of over 100 guests during the gathering. She gave an overview of the past year of events and laid out the blue print of what lies ahead for the future success of WRHS.

Fall Field Trip: It was as usual a great experience had by all 12 members in attendance. Unfortunately more than a normal amount of our regulars were not able to attend this year’s festivities in the splendid Shenandoah Valley. **Frank Moore** and new member **Bill Koekert** did have some car troubles and had to alter their plans but thankfully they were able to rent another auto and eventually arrive safely. Our own on sight war correspondent **Bill Meissner** will provide a play-by-play itinerary of the places visited and daily events as they occurred.



Norty said the beer truck would be here at noon!

The Gunner and General Jet

The October 12, Meeting. We break the norm to go back in time and explore a video and oral presentation of “The History of the Cleveland Browns” by member **Robert Tribby**. I had the pleasure of meeting **Bob** a few years back while attending a Mayfield Hts. City Council meeting. He will orientate our group as they arrive during the social hour with a DVD I gave to **Carl Dodaro**. He duplicated the story of the glorious years of our beloved Browns from 1946-1970 and provided it to **Bob** for his presentation. Outside of the Kosar, Mack and Byner years 1984-1989 of Marty Shottenheimer, only the years of Sipe, Newsome, Logan of the Kardiac Kids 1979-1984 under Sam Rutigliano could equal the excitement, but no championships! Some memorabilia will be displayed and explained by our host. We anticipate a hearty crowd on hand so RSVP upon receipt of the “COURIER.” Our current Brownies are now 1 win and 3 losses.

Field Trip photography by Bill Meissner

The 2010 NEOCWRT Fall Field Trip September 23 – 26 by Bill and Gwen Meissner

Harrisonburg, Virginia was the headquarters for the members of the **NEOCWRT** on their visit to the Port Republic and Cross Keys Battlefields. Excellently led by Ben Foruy of James Madison University, the group visited the site where Confederate General Turner Ashby was killed. We also visited the house, now a museum, where Ashby's body was laid out.



Next was a visit to Cross Keys, Virginia where Stonewall Jackson narrowly escaped being killed or captured. Dr. Irwin Hess was our gracious host at the Widow Pence Farm on part of the Cross keys Battlefield. He and Nancy Hess opened the widow's house for us to visit and watch a video of the battle. Adjourning to the museum/barn for lunch, Dr. Hess used a model of the battlefield to discuss the step by step progress of the battle.

After lunch we visited the Port Republic Museum and drove through the village of Port Republic which is much the same as it was in 1863. We saw the site of the war- time covered bridge at which General Jackson narrowly escaped being shot by cannon fire through the bridge.

Our first day concluded with a visit to the Virginia Military Institute's Hall of Valor Museum in New Market. This was at the site of the courageous advance by the VMI cadets against a Union stronghold, braving artillery and rifle fire. This field, where ten cadets were killed and forty seven were wounded became known as the "field of lost shoes" due to many cadets losing their shoes in the soft muddy ground. As they charged the strong Federal position, the corps of cadets divided and passed on both sides of the Bushong House which our group was able to tour.

On Saturday the group visited Virginia Military Institute and toured the VMI Museum and the General George C. Marshall Museum. Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff during the Second World War was a VMI graduate, not a West Pointer. One of the US's top military leaders, his Marshall Plan helped to rebuild Europe after the war and won him the Noble Peace Prize. Our group was given a tour of the VMI campus by 2nd Class Cadet, Joel Chapman, whose charisma, humor and personality were delightful. **Rod Morgan, Joe Tirpak and Brian Kowell check it out.**



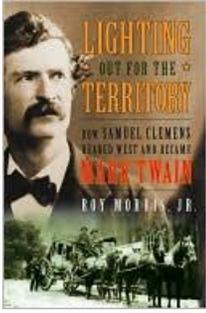
In Lexington we also visited the Stonewall Jackson House where Jackson and his wife lived for two years while he was an instructor at VMI. We concluded with a tour of Jackson's gravesite in Lexington. At the base of his statue we found lemons that people leave in memory of Jackson's fondness for the fruit.

The NEOCWRT group enjoyed a dinner at Bravo Italian Restaurant, located across the street from our hotel. We spent the evening talking, laughing and sharing stories about the trip.



The 2010 fall field trip was one of our best. **Norton London, Mike Sears** and all who helped planned this trip are to be **congratulated and commended for a job well done!**
Special thanks to Gwen Meissner

***Lighting Out for the Territory* by Roy Morris, Jr. Book Review by Tom Horvath**



The subject of this biography joined the Marion Rangers in Missouri near the beginning of the Civil War. His tenure was short and without a major, or even minor, battle. The Rangers disbanded and he lighted out for the territory, as much to stay out of the war as for any other reason. Both North and South wanted him to resume his career as a Mississippi riverboat pilot and transport soldiers and war materiel. He felt it would be dangerous. He preferred to leave behind that life, one he immensely enjoyed, and travel west. When he headed west, he was Samuel Clemens. By the time he returned east in 1854, he was Mark Twain.

The first chapter of this book covers Clemens's early life, including his brief stint with the Marion Rangers. The remainder of the biography picks up with his trip west and ends with his return east in 1854. This is pretty much the same period covered by Twain's book, *Roughing It*. But, as Mr. Morris reminds us, Twain was noted for not letting the truth get in the way of a good story. And, Twain himself said *Roughing It* was "mostly a true book ... with some stretchers".

Mr. Morris's goal is to recount Twain's life during that period, eliminating the stretchers. To do so, he relies on Twain's letters and the accounts of others. The result is a truer portrait of the young man.

During this period, Twain continued to work for newspapers, work that began at his older brother's paper. Primarily, he wrote news articles that often contained some elements of truth, and more often humorous or outlandish stretches thereof. More to his liking was inciting battles of words with reporters from other papers. It was his preferred method of waging war, and he was a master of it. And the battles not only amused him, they also generated reader interest in both newspapers.

During his time out west, Mark Twain began his career as an author, most successfully with the borrowed story of a jumping frog. Toward the end of his westward travels he took a trip to Hawaii, then called the Sandwich Islands, and spent several happy months exploring. That trip became the basis for his very successful career as a lecturer.

This relatively short (270 pages) book is an easy read. Mr. Morris's style is fluid and the book is amply sprinkled with humor. That should come as no surprise. Mark Twain is one of the primary sources, and Mark Twain is consistently funny. Additional humor comes from Mr. Morris or Twain's contemporaries, such as Lincoln's favorite author, Artemus Ward. This is far from a dry, deeply detailed story, though it is as factual as the author can make it. If Mark Twain interests you, you're likely to find this worth picking up.

Published in 2010 by Simon & Schuster, the volume contains a section of footnotes, a bibliography, an index, and a section of photographs. Amazon has a hard cover edition available from \$17.81 and the Kindle version for \$12.99; while B&N has the hardcover available for \$18.72, a paperback edition available for \$10.80, and the ebook for \$12.99. Mentor Library has one copy and the Clevnet system has 13.

The Courier is the monthly newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table

John A. Sandy, editor

Staff writers: Franco Sperrazzo Carl Dodaro Ted Karle Tom Horvath Norton London

Arlan Byrne Bill Meissner Dr. R. Stabile Joseph Tirpak Frank Moore II

Richmond Virginia Correspondent: Brent Morgan

THE “NUTS AND BOLTS” OF THE CIVIL WAR BY CARL DODARO

FROM THE ARTICLE

THE GREAT GUN MERCHANT

By JOSEPH E. PERSICO

Copied in part from “AMERICAN HERITAGE MAGAZINE”, August, 1974 Vol. 25, Issue 5

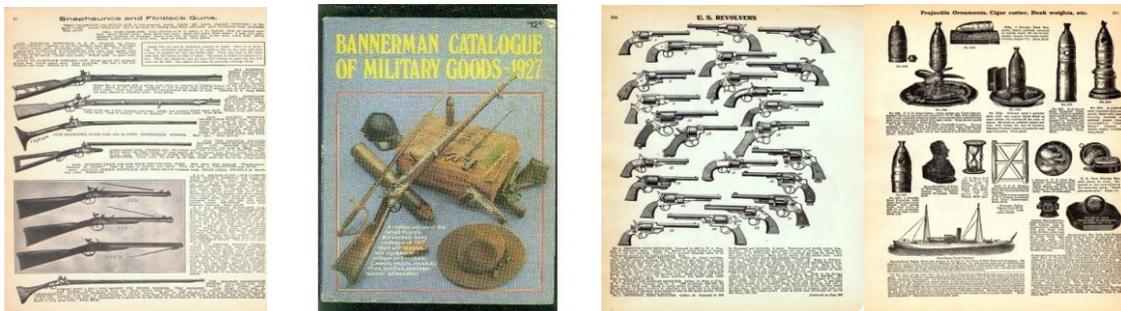
For years passengers travelling the railroad between New York City and Albany were stirred from their reveries by a Scottish castle looming suddenly from the Hudson River. An outpost of nearby West Point? The domain of an *émigré* laird? No, this island fortress was once the private arsenal of the world’s largest arms dealer.

Frank Bannerman saw himself as a sincere Christian. Critics branded him a secondhand merchant of death. Whatever else, he was a paragon of nineteenth-century capitalism. Bannerman was a child of three when the family emigrated from Scotland and settled in Brooklyn. When the Civil War broke out soon after, his father left for the Union navy, and Frank, then ten, quit school to help support the family. By the war’s end young Frank was carrying on his father’s earlier livelihood, buying government surplus equipment at the nearby Brooklyn Navy Yard.

After Appomattox huge stocks of surplus arms came onto the federal auction block. Frank Bannerman bought up unwanted weapons for their resale value as junk. Before long the young entrepreneur found that the old guns, bullets, swords, and cannonballs he was selling as scrap would command far higher prices in their original form and for their original purposes. By the age of twenty Frank Bannerman, junk dealer, had become Francis Bannerman, secondhand munitions merchant. When Bannerman went to California to bid on government cartridge boxes, he avoided heavy rail-freight charges by chartering an entire clipper ship to take his purchases back to New York via Cape Horn. He acquired a huge store of army belt-plates and smelted them down in his front yard, separating the lead from the brass in the process; the salvaged metals were then sold, in what was deemed a profitable undertaking. He converted a peaceful passenger ship into a well-armed man-of-war for a South American government in one week, “a record for speed that could scarcely be duplicated,” he boasted; and in one quick turnaround he bought up thousands of Civil War carbines and sold them in bulk to a New York store that retailed the guns for sixty-nine cents apiece. If they yielded a profit at this retail price, one can only imagine what Bannerman paid for them.

Arms meant more to Frank Bannerman than profits alone. The federal government had a practice of smashing surplus arms under heavy hammers before auctioning them. This destruction scandalized Bannerman: We remember at the close of the Civil War, making the highest bid at Government sale, on a lot of 11,000 old guns, “veterans of many wars,” part of the lot surrendered by General Lee, classified “Rebel.” The U.S. Ordnance Officer refused to accept our bid for the guns, alleging “that Bannerman would repair the guns and put them into serviceable order, and they would then enter into competition with the now obsolete guns that the Government had for sale.” So this lot of “Rebel” guns, which contained many heirlooms of patriots who had fought with Washington and Jackson, was consigned to the fire, and the old burnt locks and barrels sold to us later as scrap iron. The government’s concern was not entirely unfounded. David, one of Bannerman’s two sons who eventually went into the business, told how the boys were sent to rummage through barrels of broken-up guns stored in the family’s cellar. For every part found in perfect working order—a firing pin, perhaps, or a tumbler—they were paid a bonus.

Bannerman’s greatest coup was the Spanish acquisition. He bought up ninety per cent of all captured guns, ammunition, and other equipment auctioned off after the Spanish-American War. He also bought weapons directly from the Spanish government before it evacuated Cuba. These purchases vastly exceeded the firm’s capacity at its store in Manhattan and filled three huge Brooklyn warehouses with munitions, including thirty million cartridges.



Francis Bannerman Sons now billed itself—correctly, no doubt—as “the largest dealer in the world in military goods.” The firm advertised its wares in a profusely illustrated catalogue that military men the world over valued as a standard reference

work. The catalogue spelled out the terms of sale in what Bannerman called The Golden Rule in Action; “First you pay your money, then you get your goods.” In short, cash on the gun barrel and no questions asked.

Cannon? Bannerman offered them with twenty-four hundred rounds of shot “at bargain prices,” ready to be shipped within five minutes of the receipt of an order (“no red tape with our quick deliveries”).

Gatling guns? The firm stocked two hundred, with eight million rounds of ball cartridges “for any government War Department desiring to equip their army with a first-class outfit.”

A machine that could cast over a hundred thousand bullets a day? Bannerman could give you a price.

Bannerman’s ability to deliver the goods was best demonstrated during the 1905 Russo-Japanese War. He submitted samples to the Japanese war department for 100,000 rifles, 10,000 army saddles, 100,000 knapsacks, 150,000 gunslings, 100,000 khaki uniforms, 150,000 white summer uniforms, and 20 million cartridges—an offer, it appears, that the Japanese let pass. But Bannerman would not sell to just anyone. The firm had an iron rule: “No firearms are ever sold in our store to any minor.”

Bannerman also conducted a lively trade in less lethal wares. He sold surplus military uniforms to bands, fire departments, and patriotic organizations. Seventy-five years after the Civil War the firm was still offering Union army uniforms “in the original cases, free from moths and in perfect condition.” Buffalo Bill used Bannerman supplies in his act. The cast of *My Maryland*, a 1927 musical with a Civil War theme, was outfitted in original blue and gray uniforms from Bannerman’s.

The firm also did a brisk business in martial antiques, supplying the veterans’ post wanting front-lawn cannon, the museum seeking a suit of armor, the collector looking for a seventeenth-century blunderbuss, or the schoolboy dreaming of crossed sabers hanging in his room.

The company even had links from the famous iron chain that had been strung across the Hudson River during the American Revolution as a device to snag British ships. The links were cut into cross sections a quarter of an inch thick, polished bright, stamped “Section of chain used by General George Washington, West Point, New York, 1778.” The last of these links to the Revolution were sold in the 1940’s for \$2.75 apiece.

Although the identity of its major munitions customers was a tightly held secret, the firm hotly denied that it ever armed revolutionaries for profit. Yet when Panamanian rebels broke away from Colombia in 1903, presumably conspiring with a United States government bent on building a canal through Panama, the insurgents were armed with Mausers suspiciously like those captured from the Spanish in Cuba.

When a story about the firm, headlined FITTING OUT REVOLUTIONS, appeared in the old New York *Herald*, the company angrily objected. “We have plenty of honorable business without stirring up or aiding strife,” a spokesman said. “If revolutionists purchase our goods, they do so secretly through others.” No doubt true. But the Bannermans asked no questions. They took the money and delivered the goods to a pier or freight yard. Where the material went after that was not their concern. They could honestly say they did not know.

As Bannerman’s business prospered the firm outgrew one larger location after another, finally occupying an entire block at 501 Broadway in lower Manhattan. This property became the main salesroom and the site of Bannerman’s Military Museum, a superb exhibition of weaponry from harque-buses to artillery, which the owner proudly displayed to the public. But this space could not hold the massive Bannerman purchases from the Spanish-American War, and New York ordinances prohibited the storage of live ammunition in the city. Bannerman now needed an arsenal.

NEXT ARTICLE – BANNERMAN’S CASTLE & ARSENAL ON THE HUDSON

THIS ARTICLE IS ONLY PART OF A LARGER ARTICLE IN

AMERICAN HERITAGE MAGAZINE – AUGUST, 1974, VOL. 25, ISSUE 5

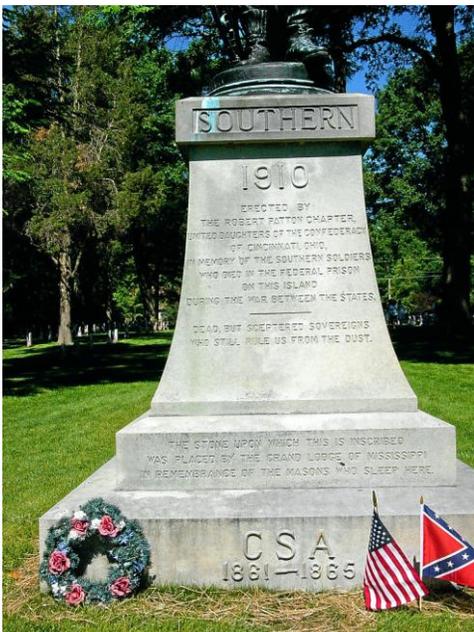
“THE GREAT GUN MERCHANT” By JOSEPH E. PERSICO

THE PICTURES ARE ON E-BAY SALES PAGES WHERE YOU CAN FIND REPRINTS

AND ORIGINALS OF BANNERMAN’S CATALOGS.

The Masons of Johnson Island by Frank Moore II

Johnson's Island, located on Lake Erie near Sandusky, Ohio was established as a prisoner of war camp for the Confederate soldiers captured during the Civil War. At first it housed both officers and enlisted men but it soon became apparent that the war was going to last much longer than anyone imagined and it was decided that only Confederate officers would be imprisoned there. The Johnson's Island location was selected for the prisoner of war camp because Lake Erie provided a natural barrier against escape. The Confederate lines were hundreds of miles to the south and an escapee would have to avoid detection by the civilian authorities in Ohio.



Many of the Confederate officers imprisoned at Johnson's Island were Masons, as were many of the Union troops guarding the prison. For more than five years, the Confederate officers would give their solemn pledge not to try to escape. The prison guards would loan the prisoners civilian clothes and accompany them to the shore. Masons from Sandusky would row over to the camp and transport everyone to Sandusky. They would walk to the Masonic Lodge for the meeting and perhaps a meal. Then all would return to Johnson's Island as usual. No one tried to escape while attending the Masonic meetings. Masons from Ohio would send blankets, clothing, food and ultimately enough money that the prisoners opened a general store at the camp.

Every year, Masons gather on Memorial Day at Johnson's Island to decorate their statue and hold a memorial service. Afterwards, a free picnic lunch is offered to everyone that attends the ceremony.

Photography by Frank Moore II

