



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Tuesday October 14th, 2014 Meeting #147

Canteen: 6:00 pm Dinner: 7:00 pm

Pine Ridge Country Club

30601 Ridge Road, Wickliffe, Ohio

Guest Speaker: Robert G. Stabile

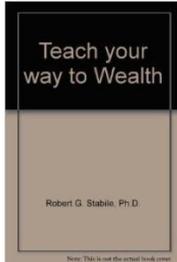
Topic: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain

Reservations required Guests are Welcome Please call Mike Sears

Phone 440 257 3956 e-Mail: mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com

Dr. Robert G. Stabile is a 1998 Charter Member of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table and has presented a number of talks to our club including: “The Cause was Just, “and “Bloody Kansas, the Little Civil War Before the Big Civil War.” Dr. Stabile was born in Rayland, Ohio and moved to Hubbard after the death of his father when he was just seven years old. He and his wife Rebecca spend their weekends and summers at their home at Lake Chautauqua, New York where they enjoy the many stimulating programs offered at the Chautauqua Institute. Dr. Stabile is a 1956 graduate of Hubbard High School and in 1960, earned his Undergraduate Degree at Miami of Ohio University. He received his **Masters Degree in 1965 and his Doctorate (Ph.D.) in 1968 from Kent State University**. His teaching career began at Bedford High School, where he taught Biology, typing and Science. Mr. Stabile was the head track & cross country coach and the assistant football coach at Bedford from 1960 – 1965. From 1965 – 1966, he joined the faculty at Kent State University as a research assistant in the Division of Academic Centers. His career path took him to the Cuyahoga Falls City Schools where he was Assistant to the Superintendent from 1966 -1968.

In 1968 Dr. Stabile was appointed Superintendent of the Manchester Local Schools and in 1971 he held the same position, as **head of the Mayfield City Schools**. From 1991 – 1993, Dr. Stabile was named Superintendent of the Berea City Schools. In 1993 – 1995, he was a Portfolio Manager for Star Bank and an Adjunct professor for Ashland University. He was a Professor of Graduate Education at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio from 1995 - 2005. He is a **past president of the Greater Cleveland Schools' Council of Governments**,



Greater Cleveland School Superintendents' Association and the Mid American Association of School Superintendents. He is the author of many books and publications including: ***Teach Your Way to Wealth***, Powerhouse Press, LLC, Cleveland; ***Ohio School Finance*** Blue Book 2006 – 2007 Edition; ***The Handbook of Collective Bargaining in Ohio Schools***. Dr. Robert Stabile is a gifted public speaker who is sure to provide a new and different perspective on "***Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain***".

Please call Mike Sears at **440-257-3956** for reservations to this special presentation.



The Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table will be holding all future monthly meetings, at the Pine Ridge Country Club located at 30601 Ridge Road in Wickliffe, Ohio. Please call Mike Sears at **440-257-3956** or e-mail mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com, to make your reservations for this meeting. You will be enjoying the same fine quality dining that you have become accustomed to because Dino's runs the food and banquet facilities at Pine Ridge. Hope to see you at Pine Ridge Country Club on October 14.

Civil War Journal of Franco M. Sperrazzo, Events Coordinator, 10-14-2014

September 9th, Meeting; George E. Deutsch: “The Battle of Peebles Farm”. NEOCWRT honorary member George Deutsch from Maryland was well informed, consistent and articulate in his presentation. George is our first presenter at our new club location Pine Ridge Country Club. George examined the battle which saw U.S. Grant’s 5th offensive strangle hold against R.E. Lee’s overwhelmed army. This pivotal battle area surrounding Petersburg VA can be easily convoluted. Mr. Deutsch used effective maps and power point diagrams for members better understanding of the many paradoxes of the ten month siege of Petersburg in the final year of the Civil War.

Mentor Public Library, Major Battles of the Civil War Lunchtime Speaker Series; 10-8-14: John Sandy stepped up admirably for NPS Historian Scott Longert and Ranger Todd Arrington to present “The Battle of Cedar Creek” which took place Oct .19, 1864. John described the topography that existed 150 years ago this month. The beautiful Shenandoah Valley stretches 140 miles long and averages 25 miles wide. Union General U.S. Grant devised a long term plan in Spring 1864 to be executed by field commanders like Lew Wallace (who he disliked for incompetence at Shiloh April 1862) George Custer, Phil Sheridan, and others. Problems occurred causing Grant to suffer 75,000 casualties. General R.E. Lee gave orders to promoted Corp Commander Jubal Early to torch the Chambersburg, PA area to speed up the southern effort in their advance to the North. On Oct 12, one week before the ultimate fight, General Sheridan engaged 31,610 soldiers and 90 artillery pieces. General Early deployed 21,000 soldiers and 40 artillery pieces. The Oct 19 battle was unfair and results proved the confederates would never again advance through PA and threaten Washington or the Union northward again. With one week to prepare, John Sandy was suburb in his knowledge, understanding of maps, and demonstrated a profound explanation of what took place in the Q & A session.

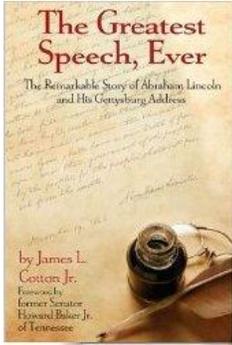
Programs at James A. Garfield NHS & Lakeland Community College: JAG NHS and Mentor Public Library have joined forces to produce a new book discussion group session. The program entitled “Mentor Reads James A. Garfield” will meet on the second Thursday of each month and begin at 6:30 pm. The first meeting will convene Thursday, Oct 9th. “James A. Garfield- by Ira Rutkow” will be the first book discussed. Those who would like to attend may call Mentor Library at (440) 255- 8811 to reserve a borrowed copy of the book of the month. The program will run through April 9, 2015. These sessions are free of charge. For information on future dates and other events at JAG/ NHS visit www.nps.gov/jag . Find them on Face book at www.Facebook.com/GarfieldNPS . On April 7th a six week curriculum started at Lakeland Community College. JAG Friends of Group director Andrew C. M. Mizsak, will facilitate the Tuesday night class lectures. Phone Lakeland CC at 440-525-7000 for details on the individual segments. Cost is \$29.

2014 First Annual Garfield Symposium: The second notice of this special seminar will be introduced and conducted at two locations this fall. “Get to Know Garfield- Building the Garfield Network” will be held Friday, Nov. 14th at James A. Garfield NHS, Mentor OH from 4:30-7:30 pm. On Saturday, Nov. 15th the seminar schedule continues from 8:00am registration to 4:30 pm at Lakeland Community College, Kirkland, OH. Numerous co-sponsors include the NEOCWRT. Members Scott Longert and David Lintern who will be the keynote speakers. Cost for the two day event is \$50 per person and \$25 for students. For an itinerary and list of presenters visit www.facebook.com/Friendsofjamesagarfieldnhs. For twitter visit JAGNHSfriends. For questions email: friendsofjamesagarfieldnhs@gmail.com

Other Topics of Interest: Our Western Reserve Historical Society organizational membership is officially renewed. The Cleveland Browns 50th anniversary championship season has been unveiled for the last month. Passes are available to view these splendid historical artifacts. For more info visit: www.wrhs.org or reach an operator for details at 216-721-5722.

Thanks to Our Concerned Members: regarding the recent vote to change our club constitution policy for membership. President Carl Dodaro is quoted stating “ We have received 54 ballots from our 56 active members”. The ballots will be opened and the results will be revealed Tuesday Oct. 14th. Hope our Cleveland Browns will notch another victory this Sunday in what can be a competitive, entertaining comeback season
Regards, Franco

***The Greatest Speech, Ever* by James L. Cotton, Jr. – a book review by Tom Horvath**



Ostensibly, this book is about the Gettysburg Address. In reality, it is an introduction to Lincoln, with the Gettysburg address being the centerpiece. The book begins shortly before November 19, 1863, but moves around in time to tell its story of Lincoln. It is apparent from the beginning that the author is, to put it mildly, an admirer of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln’s only fault, if you believe the author, is that he sometimes made serious gaffs when speaking extemporaneously.

A little more than half the book revolves around the trip to Gettysburg, the dedication ceremony, the reactions to the address, and the few days afterwards. When Mr. Cotton goes into depth on this period, it provides a level of detail that I did not previously know. Understand, however, that some general background information on Lincoln is also included because there is not enough information about that period to fill half a volume.

To me, the most moving chapter is *Why Gettysburg*, which describes the Gettysburg area following the battle. If anyone still believes that the time of the Civil War was a wistful, golden age of chivalry, read this description of what was left for the citizens of Gettysburg – livestock and property destroyed, the threat of disease and epidemic, rotting corpses of animals, thinly covered graves, scavengers feeding on corpses – in volume and numbers that overwhelmed the tiny town. It took a Herculean effort and many months to recover from the devastation and properly bury the dead.

The remainder of the book is a biography of Lincoln, a chapter on the author’s journey to know and understand the man, and an appendix describing the creation and history of the five known copies of the Gettysburg Address written by Lincoln, himself.

One rule that I have imposed on myself is to never review a book I have not read in its entirety. In this instance, I almost broke that rule. This volume is probably the most poorly written and edited text I have reviewed. It grated. I have come to expect some editorial mistakes, but this volume is rife with them. Some basic grammatical errors that I first took for poor editing were repeated, which makes me believe that they are the result of the author’s lack of education. That is further backed up by the use of words in ways that I believe are not correct. (I did not take the time to verify my belief.) At the same time, the author seems to want to impress by using unusual polysyllabic words where he should have taken a lesson from Lincoln and written so readers can easily understand.

Then, there is the constant use of colloquialisms, perhaps in an attempt to make the book more entertaining. They did not. He also liberally sprinkles the volume with out-of-place analogies that add to the disruption of thought and the flow of the reading.

Finally, the author expresses what Lincoln is thinking and feeling – something a true non-fiction work should avoid.

All of this left me pondering whether the volume was self-published because no reputable publisher should accept a work this shoddy.

If you are deeply interested in the details surrounding Lincoln’s trip to Gettysburg and what little is known about the creation of the speech, you can probably glean some new information from this volume. But I cannot recommend it. There has to be a better source.

Published in 2013 by the History Publishing Company, the volume contains 482 pages, an index, an extensive notes section, and a section of photographs and illustrations. Amazon has a paperback edition available for \$12.57 and Barnes & Noble has the same for \$12.48. Both electronic versions are \$8.49. Mentor Public Library has one copy and the Clevnet system also has one at the Cleveland Public Library.

**“A BRILLIANT NAVAL EXPLOIT:
DESTRUCTION OF THE PRIVATEER JUDAH”**

Published in ‘THE NEW YORK TIMES’ September 30, 1861 (author not listed)

FROM THE U.S. STEAM-FRIGATE COLORADO, OFF PENSACOLA HARBOR SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 1861.

The monotony of the "Blockade," so far as this ship is concerned, was broken, last night, by a most brilliant achievement; and, while I cannot avoid a feeling of sadness, at the fate of the poor fellows who lost their lives in the undertaking, it affords me much pleasure to communicate to you the details of an action that reflects so much credit upon all who were engaged in it.

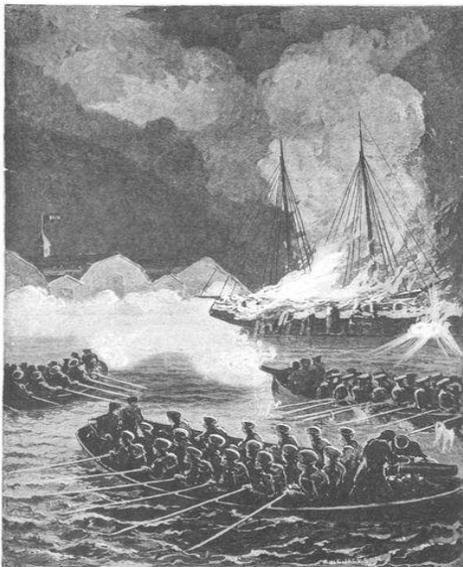
Some days ago, a large schooner was observed in the harbor, in the vicinity of the Navy-Yard, and her appearance and motions, led to the suspicion that she had been fitted up for a privateer, and had intentions of trying to run the blockade. By some deserters who escaped from the secession camp and came to Fort Pickens, these suspicions were confirmed, and further information obtained that the schooner was moored near the Stone Wharf at the southeast corner of the Navy-yard, and also, that upon the wharf near where the schooner was moored, a battery was being erected, and that one large Columbiad was already mounted.

For several nights past, boats from this ship have been kept "rowing guard" in the mouth of the harbor, on the look-out for this schooner, should she attempt to run the blockade yesterday. Capt. BAILEY went ashore on Santa Rosa Island, for the purpose of "takin' notes" in regard to the schooner and the reported battery, with the view of getting up an expedition against them. After obtaining all the information he could from the deserters, and corroborating their evidence by his own observations with the spyglass, he decided that an attack might be made with reasonable chances for success, and by the time he reached the frigate in the evening, he had the plans for an expedition matured. Acting upon these, Flag Officer MERVINE decided at once on sending a boat expedition to the Navy-yard, for the purpose of spiking the mounted gun, spoken of above, and burning the embryo privateer.

About 8 o'clock P.M., (yesterday,) the detail of men and officers was announced; the boats hoisted out; the men armed and supplied with ammunition. The expedition was placed under the command of Lieut. JOHN H. RUSSELL. The other officers detailed were: Lieutenants, John G. Proston and Francis B. Blake; Assistant Surgeon, S. D. Kennedy; Midshipmen, Tecumsey Steece, Moreau Forrest, F.J. Higginson; Gunner, James Borton; Third Assistant Engineer, G.H. White. Capt. ED. MCD. REYNOLDS, of the Marine Corps, accompanied the party with a force of twenty marines under his command.

The force employed was divided as follows:

First Launch -- Lieut. RUSSELL, Capt. REYNOLDS, (Marine Corps,) Dr. KENNEDY, Midshipman HIGGINSON, Third Assistant Engineer WHITE, twenty-two seamen and one fireman, (with material for firing the schooner.)



First Cutter -- Lieut. SPROSTON, Gunner BORTON, and seventeen seamen.
Second Cutter -- Lieut. BLAKE, Midshipman FORREST, thirteen seamen and one fireman. Third Cutter -- Midshipman STEECE and thirteen seamen. The marines were divided between the first launch and second cutter.

The boats, with oars muffled, left the side of the ship at about 11 P.M., and pulled into the harbor, keeping far enough from the rebel side to avoid observation. They continued on up the harbor to a point a little above the Navy-yard. Here the course was changed, and each boat was headed for its especial object. From this moment every thought and every effort of, both officers and men were directed to the successful accomplishment of this most dangerous enterprise. The parties in the launch and second cutter were to board and burn the schooner; those in the first and third cutters were to charge the battery and spike the recently mounted "big gun."

Lieut. SPROSTON, heading the crews of the first and third cutters, landed at the northern face of the stone wharf, and made directly for the newly-erected battery. Whether this battery was not manned at all, or whether the men at it had been drawn from their stations by the noise of the strife which had already commenced at the schooner, or whether they had "traveled," is not known. However that may be, but one man was found near the gun. True courage, whenever found, will command respect, but the brave man sometimes loses his life where his light-heeled comrades save theirs. This solitary soldier stood his ground, in the face of thirty men, and discharged his musket at Lieut. SPROSTON, but simultaneously with the discharge of his musket, was that of Gunner BORTON's pistol. The lone defender of that battery missed his own aim, but fell under that of the more fortunate gunner.

In a few moments the "Columbiad" was spiked, and Lieut. SPROSTON having accomplished the duty assigned him, according to previous orders, recalled his men to their boats. The other division of the party, in the launch and second cutter, on approaching the schooner, found that instead of being moored in the stream, she had been hauled into the dry dock slip, and was tied up to the wharf. Nothing daunted, however, at this unpleasant change in the programme, our gallant fellows dashed ahead in the slip alongside the schooner. As they were approaching the vessel they were hailed from her decks five or six times, and were thus prepared to expect a hand-to-hand encounter. The cutter -- being much the lighter boat -- shot ahead of the launch as she approached the enemy's vessel, and as she passed under her bows was greeted by a galling fire, but in a moment she had grappled the schooner about midships, and Lieut. BLAKE and his men were on the rebel deck. In another moment the launch was under the schooner's guns, and, like the cutter, was received by a deadly salute.

Before the enemy had time to reload, Lieut. RUSSELL was upon her decks, followed by the brave fellows of his boat, who had escaped the murderous discharge of musketry with which they were greeted. Forty or more of our officers, seamen and marines, precipitating themselves so unceremoniously upon the enemy's, deck, produced a stampede among them and nearly all of them fled from the deck to the shore. One only attempted to stand his ground against the "boarders," and he was instantly shot by Lieut. RUSSELL. As soon as the decks, were cleared of the rebels, our men proceeded to set the schooner on fire, and when this was effectually accomplished, they took to their boats and succeeded in getting off with but a few straggling shots, from the rebels, who had begun to rally upon the wharf.

When the boats had got beyond the range of musketry, the first and second cutters were both ordered to give a parting salute to the enemy that were collecting upon the wharf, which they did in the shape of five or six rounds of "canister" from their twelve-pound howitzers. What execution was done by this is not known, but, having the light of the burning schooner upon their mark, it is reasonable to suppose that we more than balanced accounts for the fire received by our boats.

So small a force as this, under the command of Lieut. RUSSELL, on this occasion, entering into the very stronghold of an enemy, spiking his guns and burning an armed vessel, is an exploit not often surpassed, even in the history of a Navy, many of whose members have been distinguished for gallantry.

It was not done, however, without loss -- three killed and fifteen wounded; two fatally, five severely and the others slightly. None of the officers were severely wounded, but among the slightly wounded are Lieuts. RUSSELL and BLAKE, Capt. REYNOLDS, Marine corps, and Midshipman HIGGINSON. The killed -- CHAS. H. LAMPLIER, coxswain; JOHN R. HERRING, seaman, and JOHN SMITH, Marine. The fatally wounded -- ROBT. CLARK, coxswain; E. R. OSBORNE, seaman.

The others wounded more or less severely are Terence O'Down, Tevillan Coburn and Chas. Carbury, marines; John Hennessey, Henry Ward, Peter Cating, Wm. Fish, S.O. Austin and James Wareham, seamen. The schooner that was destroyed was about 200 tons, with four broadside guns, and one pivot-gun on the forecastle, fully equipped for sea, and named the "Judah". Yours, &c., W.

For more information on the NorthEast Ohio Civil War Round Table, go to neocwrt.org on the internet or contact the NEOCWRT 2014 president Carl Dodaro @ 440-254-0806.