



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Tuesday September 9th, 2014 Meeting #146

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

Pine Ridge Country Club

30601 Ridge Road, Wickliffe, Ohio

Guest Speaker: George Deutsch

Topic: The Battle of Peebles Farm

Reservations required Guests are Welcome Please call Mike Sears

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



Civil War historian and author, George Deutsch co-founded several historical organizations related to the Civil War and the War of 1812 in his hometown of Erie, Pa. He has also published multiple articles on the 83rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry and Commodore Oliver H. Perry's Flagship *Niagara*, which played a critical role in the 1813 Battle of Lake Erie. Deutsch annually teaches history courses at the Chautauqua Institution in New York and for 25 years has given presentations on Civil War history across six states and DC. Additionally, he has led dozens of Civil War battlefield tours for roundtable and university groups. Deutsch designed the wayside marker about Strong Vincent and Joshua Chamberlain on Gettysburg's Little Round Top, worked to erect Vincent's statue in Erie, and led the effort to restore Erie County's Civil War monument. He also helped to lead the conservation of the 83rd and 145th Pennsylvania's battle flags now preserved in the Erie Library and served as an historical

consultant for *National Geographic's* Civil War issue. He has been honored twice by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and received the Local History Award in 2003 from the Erie County Historical Society. He was educated at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and Mercyhurst University, from where he earned a degree in history. He is writing a new book on the 83rd Pennsylvania, focusing on the untold history of its last year in the war. He now lives in Catonsville, Md., with his wife, Mary Fran.

The Battle of Peebles Farm

September 30 – October 2, 1864

This September marks the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Peebles Farm; part of US Grant's 5th Offensive against RE Lee's besieged army at Petersburg. The nearly ten month long siege of Petersburg is often misunderstood as WWI-style trench warfare punctuated by the Battle of the Crater. The reality was that the siege consisted of multiple battles involving tens of thousands of soldiers on a side; each would be easily recognized by name had they not been part of the longer campaign. What began with the promising capture of a fortified Confederate line by Warren's 5th Corps, ended in a botched follow up and bloody repulse of Parke's 9th Corps. Historian Dr. Richard Sommers called it neither a great nor a decisive battle, but "A *characteristic* battle which typified the combats by which Grant relentlessly tightened his clutch upon the Cockade City and by which Lee for so long fended off repeated danger." Mr. Deutsch's lecture will provide insight to this interesting battle as well as putting it in the context of the operations around Petersburg.

On September 15th, 2014, in a formal ceremony at the White House, President Barack



Obama will award the Medal of Honor posthumously to First Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing. On July 3rd, 1863, Union forces of the Army of the Potomac braced themselves for a massive attack by Confederate forces on the third and final day of fighting, during the Battle of Gettysburg. First Lieutenant Cushing commanded an artillery battery deployed near the "Angle," a position that would become infamous for the intensity of the fighting and the number of casualties that resulted. For nearly three hours, Robert E. Lee's artillery pounded the union positions on Cemetery Hill, hoping to inflict maximum damage to the Federal Army. Lt. Cushing, a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Class of 1861, lost four of his six canons and a number of his men. In the ensuing attack, Cushing was wounded in the shoulder and groin but refused to be evacuated from the battle field. With General Pickett's Confederate brigades less than 100 yards away, he remained with his guns and continued to direct fire on the attacking enemy until he was shot in the face and fell mortally wounded.

Above left photograph of Alonzo Cushing from the Wisconsin Historical Society



Alonzo Cushing was born in 1842, in Delafield, Wisconsin and was raised in Fredonia, New York. Lieutenant Cushing represents the first Civil War Veteran to be awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously. Civil War buffs and round table groups from across the country joined the residents of Wisconsin and New York in petitioning Congress to recognize the Valor and Heroism of Alonzo Cushing. The original legislation was scheduled to be part of the 2012 Defense Bill but was removed and tabled by Virginia Senator, James Webb. Finally, after 151 years, Alonzo Cushing will be officially recognized by a grateful nation.

Photograph on the left of First Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing's grave at West Point

CIVIL WAR JOURNAL of Franco M. Sperrazzo Events Coordinator

JAG/NEOCWRT July 18th 2014 Speaker Symposium: The third Chapter of our James A. Garfield annual joint effort was an overwhelming success. For our actual tenth meeting of the campaign, we asked duel member, historian and park guide Scott Longert to generate a speaker. He produced a highly genuine General Ulysses S. Grant (portrayed by Dr. Curt Fields who traveled up from Tennessee). Speaking in first person, the wise general spoke of his personal thoughts of the Overland Campaign and answered questions in the same manner. The second half of the program featured our ninth president Arlan Byrne and his daughter Rebecca. This magnificent duo effectively used multimedia and visual aids for their presentation engineered by John Sandy. Their topic was "The Eyes and Ears of Civil War Armies: The Cavalry". Suggestions were made to continue their interactive style with media approach on the Civil War tour circuit.

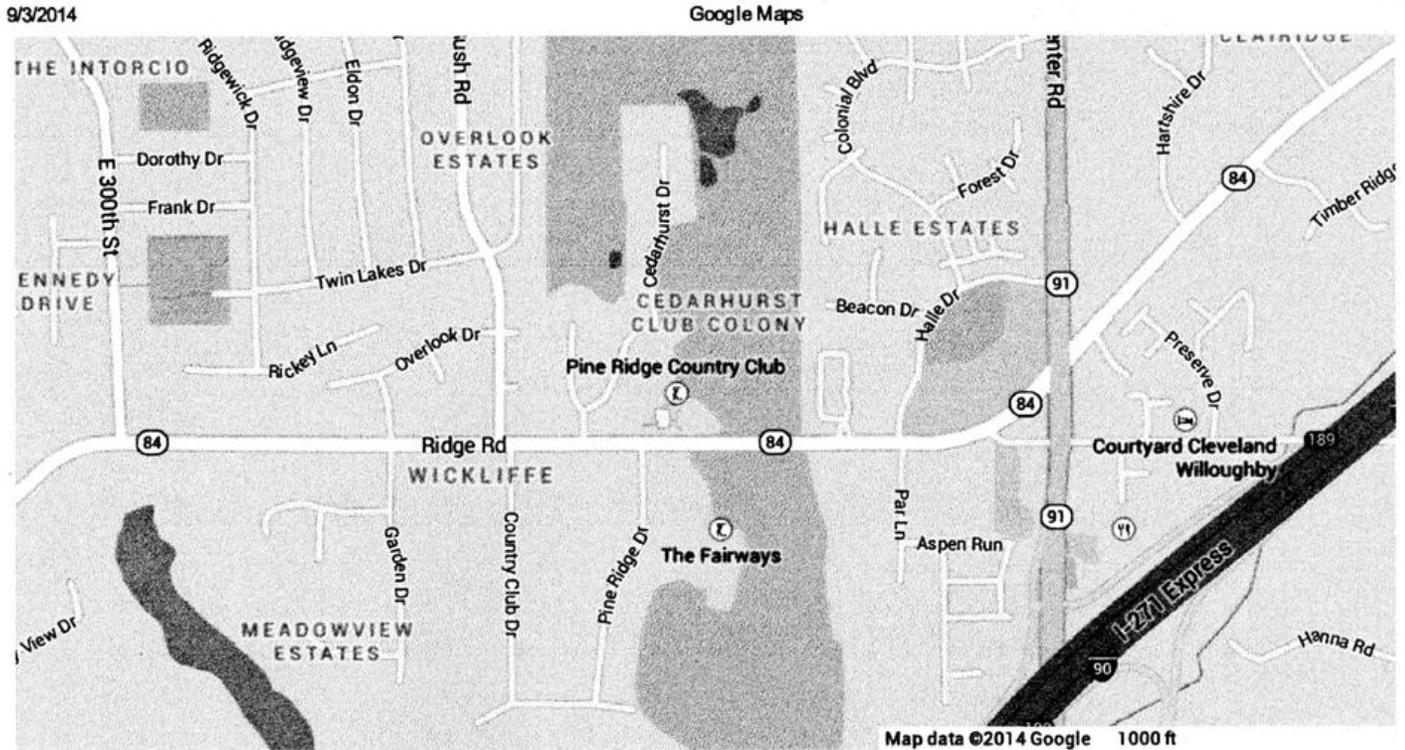
Mentor Public Library; Major Battles of the Civil War Lunch Time Speaker Series 9-10-14: The Fall series continues with a presentation by Todd Arrington from JAG National Historic Site. Dr. Arrington will express his scholarly views of "Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864". The free of charge program encourages you to bring a box lunch. The noon lecture convenes in the Garfield room until 1:15pm. Phone (440) 255-8811 for reservations. Location is 8215 Mentor Ave.

Western Reserve Historical Society-New Exhibit: Starting Sept. 6, 2014, WRHS will feature an exhibit on "1964- When Brown's Town was Title Town". The '64 champion Browns beat the favorite Baltimore Colts 27-0 in front of almost 80 thousand fans on December 27th. Coincidentally it also marks the 50th anniversary of the last time any Cleveland major league team won a championship title. Featured are home movie clips and photos from a fans view point of the entire season. An array of memorabilia will be on display in the History Center's Norton Gallery. Details are highlighted in the "News" Quarterly Publication. Ph: 216-721-5722 or visit wrhs.org.

Lake County Speaker Bureau Programs: The formally named "Lake County Bar Association Literary Committee" has been cancelled for the remainder of the year. Judge Paul Mitrovich determined the interest from lawyers has dropped off. We will keep everyone informed if the Painesville Courthouse venue or somewhere else brings back these speaker presentations again.

2014 First Annual Garfield Symposium: This unique seminar will be conducted in two locations this fall. The official title is named **Get to Know Garfield: Building the Garfield Network**. The two locations are: Friday November 14, 2014 - 4:30 - 7:30 PM @ James A. Garfield National Historic Site - Mentor, Ohio. Saturday November 15, 2014 - 8:00AM - 4:30PM @ Lakeland Community College - Kirtland, Ohio. The seminar is sponsored by **The Friends of James A. Garfield** and over a dozen co-sponsors including **Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table**. We will have details of times for specific events; itineraries for presenters and pricing emailed to you. Separate fliers will also be handed out at our October 14th meeting. We may ask someone from our round table to be a presenter of a Garfield topic on the Saturday schedule at Lakeland Community College.

Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table Relocates to Pine Ridge Country Club September 9th: We will move to Dino's catering facility @ **Pine Ridge Country Club** for our regular meeting on September 9th, with honorary member and keynote speaker George E. Deutsch. George, a native of Erie, PA who now resides in Catonsville, MD will speak to Youngstown Frank Yannucci's Mahoning Valley CW RT the previous evening. The author and lecturer is regarded as one the most versatile historians to become associated with our club. It is imperative that you respond and RSVP when you receive the Courier ASAP if you plan to attend the meeting. Pine Ridge would like our total count early on Friday September 5th to properly prepare our food fare. 17th President Carl Dodaro's, executive staff thanks you for your cooperation during the transition.

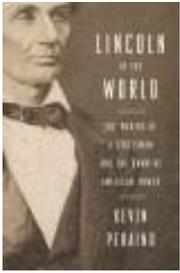


The Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table will be holding the September 9th, 2014 meeting at the Pine Ridge Country Club located at 30601 Ridge Road in Wickliffe, Ohio. The phone number is 440- 943- 1010. Please call Mike Sears at **440 257 3956** or e mail him at mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com, to make your reservations for this meeting. You will be enjoying the same fine quality dining that your all use to because Dino's runs the food and banquet facilities at Pine Ridge.



The Court Martial of Major General Fitz John Porter Trial from Harpers Weekly January 1863

Lincoln in the World by Kevin Peraino – a book review by Tom Horvath



Lincoln in the World is Mr. Peraino's view of Lincoln's foreign policy. There have been other volumes studying this aspect of his life and administration but, according to Mr. Peraino, they have problems that he has avoided by concentrating on six events where Lincoln had an active role. The volume, then, consists of six chapters and a prologue, each of which varies in importance and interest.

The prologue is long and not really worth the effort to read. It provides the rationale for Mr. Peraino's approach, which is of nominal interest and would have been an appropriate prologue by itself. Unfortunately, the prologue includes much more, is far too long, and includes matter that is covered in more detail in the volume.

The first chapter, entitled "Lincoln vs. Herndon", examines Lincoln's position on the Mexican-American War primarily through his communications with Billy Herndon. Herndon was wholeheartedly for the war, while Lincoln, who was in Congress at the time, questioned the justification of the war. Though Lincoln supported the troops on every vote for supplies, he strongly questioned the events that led to the war.

The second chapter examines the development of the relationship between Secretary of State Seward and President Lincoln. The opinions and positions of the two key players in foreign policy are compared and found to be fairly closely aligned. In order to make the point that they are similar, the author seems to pay less attention to Seward's peace overtures to the Confederacy than other authors. At any rate, I feel this relationship is examined more closely in *Team of Rivals* than in this single chapter.

The third chapter examines Lincoln and Seward's foreign policy and the actions and reactions of Lord Palmerston, England's prime minister at the time. This is a much more interesting, meatier chapter as it includes an examination of the situation from Palmerston's viewpoint and details his reactions to the events of the war. A decision on his part to recognize the Confederacy would certainly have had an impact on the progress of the war. Britain's industrial leaders were willing to support the Confederacy as much as the law allowed or they could get away with, but formal recognition of the Confederacy as a sovereign nation would have provided much more support, both from Britain and from other nations that would have followed Britain's lead.

An interesting point made in this chapter was the effect of the ironclads on Britain. Great Britain prided herself on being the master of the seas. Yet, with the invention of the monitor class of ironclads, Britain's ships were suddenly extremely vulnerable. No wooden ship could stand up to this new style of fighting machine so, despite an overwhelming superiority in numbers, Britain's fleet no longer seemed invincible – a fact that rattled Britain.

The next chapter stretches the definition of a relationship beyond general acceptance. Titled "Lincoln vs. Marx", the author contrasts the opinions of Karl Marx with the actions of President Lincoln. This "relationship" stemmed from Marx working as a European columnist for Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*. The chapter primarily revolves around the Emancipation Proclamation, which was developed and proclaimed after Marx was relieved of his duties with the *Tribune*. Lincoln was known to read the *Tribune* and probably would have read some of Marx's articles, but whether Lincoln was in any way influenced by him is strictly a matter of conjecture.

"Lincoln vs. Napoleon" focuses on the incursion of France into Mexico during the Civil War. Napoleon III took advantage of the Civil War to invade Mexico and set up a puppet government. It provided me with more information about Napoleon's thoughts and the military actions. As the Union's fortunes turned for the better and the end of the war became inevitable, many people encouraged Lincoln to react militarily to the incursion. Lincoln was set against beginning a concurrent war and held the line. He felt that Napoleon had problems on the continent and could not sustain his military presence in Mexico. He was correct.

The final chapter is entitled "Lincoln vs. Lincoln" and is really about the later experiences John Hay. The author's contention is that Hay was Lincoln's protégé and shows us how Lincoln would have reacted later in the 19th century when Hay was ambassador to Britain and, later, Secretary of State for William McKinley. The problem is that Hay changed his position on significant issues and couldn't even be considered a representative of himself. To say Hay was a good representative of Lincoln's thinking is a stretch.

In summary, there are some bits of information and insight in the volume, but there are much larger sections that do not add to the stated topic of the volume.

Published in 2013 by Crown Publishers, the volume contains 419 pages, an index, expansive notes, a selected bibliography, and a section of photos. Barnes & Noble has a hardcover edition available for \$19.90. Amazon's electronic version is available for \$10.99, while Barnes & Noble's Nook version is available for \$11.49. Mentor Public Library has two copies. The ClevNet System has sixteen copies and the electronic book.