

# THE COURIER

## Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



**February 2008 Meeting #88**

**Date: February 12, 2008**

**Place: Dino's 190 & Rte. 306 exit Mentor, Ohio**

**Canteen: 6PM Rations: 7PM**

**Speaker: Dr. Daniel Cudnick**

**Topic: "Civil War Medicine Update"**

**Reservations required please Call Steve Abbey phone 440 255 8375**

**e-mail: [abbeysr@webtv.net](mailto:abbeysr@webtv.net)**

### **Civil War Medicine**

**Dr. Daniel Cudnick** joined the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table in 1999 and has presented fascinating programs on the Lincoln Assassination and Civil War medicine. On Tuesday February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Doctor Cudnick will present an update on his studies of Civil War medicine with a power point and slide show that is sure to shock and awe his audience. Although Civil War statistics are always questionable, it has been estimated that of the nearly 3 million men in the Union Army, 110,070 were killed in battle while 224,586 died from disease! It has been further estimated that nearly 25,000 Union men lost their lives as the result of accidental death. The Confederate army had nearly 1,300,000 men under arms and lost 94,000 in battlefield deaths. More than 164,000 Confederate soldiers died from disease! Chronic diarrhea and typhoid fever claimed a large number of troops in both armies. The lack of adequate sanitation, fresh wholesome food and potable water contributed to the sickness and high death rates...Don't miss this special presentation by one of Northeast Ohio's leading physicians. **Make your reservations today!**

## **The Lost Cause: The Myth that Won't Die** by John Sandy

The South was economically devastated by its military defeat in the Civil War. Besides having more than 250,000 men killed in battle or from disease, another 200,000 Greybacks were wounded and many lost limbs to amputation. The eleven former Confederate States were ravaged by Union Armies, stripped of food, farm animals and the basics for human existence. In spite of these conditions, Southern writers and former military figures sought to “set the record straight” for future generations by presenting the causes for the Confederate defeat in a new light. Slavery was not the cause of the war but rather Northern aggression.

Historian, Edward Pollard published the book “**Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates**.” Published in 1866 with the memories of the Civil War still fresh in his mind, Pollard produced a well researched historical account on the creation of the United States and the legal basis for secession by the individual states. The Virginia delegation to the U.S. Constitution ratification convention specifically stated its right to suspend the agreement. {1} Pollard is the first to use the phrase Lost Cause but he would not be the last.

Former Confederate General **Jubal Early** writing in the **Southern Historical Society Journal** in 1870 stated that the Southern defeat was not the result of more skillful Federal leadership such as Grant,



Sherman and Sheridan, but rather the overwhelming number of military forces and resources of the North. Jubal Early was a serious critic of secession before the war. “Old Jube” changed his mind and his position on secession. After the Civil War, Jubal Early fled to Canada to escape Federal prosecution for burning Chambersburg, Pennsylvania in 1864. Early returned to the United States in 1869 and headed the Robert E. Lee Monument Association. General Lee had relieved Jubal Early from corps command in March of 1865 following his defeat at Cedar Creek the previous fall.

**Robert E. Lee** and **Stonewall Jackson** came to embody the virtues and ideals of Southern nobility. Northern generals and political leaders were characterized as dishonest and of low moral character. {2} Union General John Pope burned civilian houses and barns. Pope had individuals imprisoned and often shot without due process for aiding the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. William T. Sherman made Georgia howl while his army devastated a path from Atlanta to the sea. Phil Sheridan insured that the residents of the Shenandoah Valley would never forgive the Yankees after the “burning” in 1864. Is it any

wonder that Southern Confederate pride trumped national reconciliation and union?

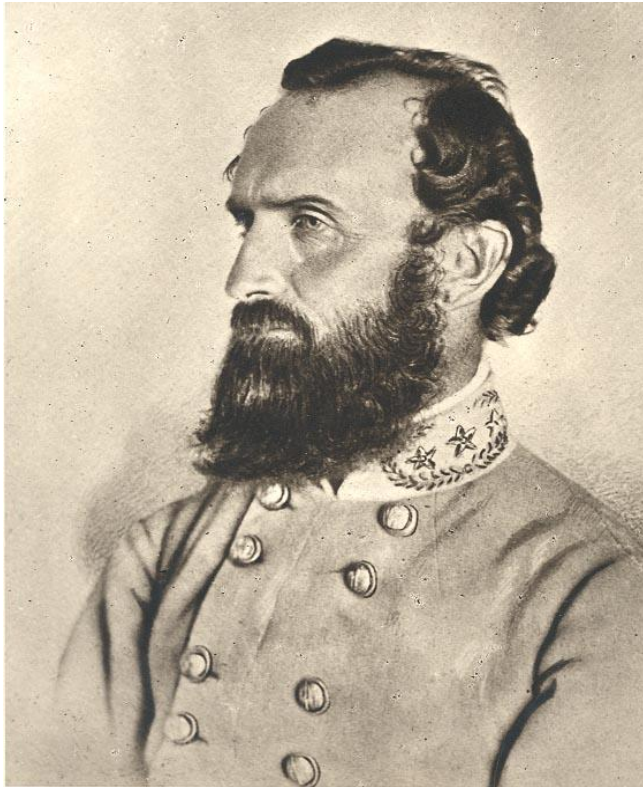
Douglas Southall Freeman published the definitive biography of General Robert E. Lee in 1934. **R.E. Lee**, a 4 volume work that took the author nearly 20 years to research and write. Freeman earned his Ph.D. at John Hopkins University in 1908; he was twenty-two years old! The amazing thing about Freeman’s books was that he worked as editor of the Richmond Times Dispatch while gathering all of

the information for R.E. Lee. {3} Historian, Gary Gallagher believes that much of Freeman's source material was provided by the Southern Historical Society's Journals.

Former Confederate generals and political officials began publishing the Southern Historical Society Papers after the Federal government decided to publish the "**War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.**" Many Southerners were fearful that the Federal version of events, [the OR], would be hopelessly biased against the South. They also suspected that many Confederate government documents would be altered from their original form.

**Clement Evans**, a former brigadier general from Georgia served for four years in the Army of Northern Virginia. Evans was wounded five times but survived the experience. Before the war Evans became an attorney at age 19. He was appointed a judge at the age of 22. After the war he studied and became a Methodist minister. In 1892 he retired from the ministry and published the **Military History of Georgia**. Evans also edited the 12 volume **Confederate Military History**. Evans wrote "If we cannot justify the South in the act of secession, we will go down in history solely as a brave impulsive, but rash people who attempted, in an illegal manner to overthrow the Union of our Country." {4}

**Douglas Southall Freeman** attributes the Confederate defeat at the Battle of Gettysburg to General Lee's incompetent subordinates such as James Longstreet, George Pickett, Richard Ewell and J.E.B. Stuart. These generals failed to provide the leadership that General Lee expected of them. If Stonewall Jackson



had not died of his wounds after the Battle of Chancellorsville then surely the South would have won independence from the Northern abolitionist government. The white Southern population viewed themselves as a people governed by the Christian ideals of honor, truth and purity. Northern society was a baser class consumed with the lust of money and power. James Longstreet was from Georgia hill country stock. He was not a Virginia Cavalier. That would explain his willingness to accept a job with the Republican Federal government after the war. A man of honor and noble virtue would never criticize General Lee and sell out to the hated Yankees.

In the years prior to the Civil War, the population of the Northern states and territories grew rapidly while the population of the Southern states remained constant. Industry prospered in the Northern cities with increased commerce and business activity. Roads, canals and railroads continued to grow in the North while little progress and development occurred in the South. Congressmen from the Northern

States enacted high tariffs on foreign manufactured goods in order to protect the developing iron and machine industry in the Middle Atlantic States. The South saw this as unfair taxation on its citizens. The revenue from the tariffs was used to promote commerce and infrastructure improvements in Northern towns and cities. Seldom was tax revenue used for improvements in the South. This only served to intensify the rift between the people of the North and the South.

In 1885, William Archibald Dunning, professor of history at Columbia University, published his doctoral dissertation entitled "**The Constitution of the United States in Civil War and Reconstruction, 1860 – 1867.**" Professor Dunning defended the planter class of the antebellum South and blamed the abolitionists for bringing on the Civil War. He further criticized the Radical

Republicans for using President Lincoln's murder as an excuse to promote their own political and economic desires. The Radical Republicans subjected the South to unreasonable laws and political policies. The Dunning School of historiography stressed that after the war the freedmen were themselves incapable of self government. This made segregation a necessary result. Dunning wrote that allowing blacks to vote and hold office was a serious mistake. William Dunning's theories on Reconstruction appeared in history textbooks until the 1960's. {5}

The Ku Klux Klan was formed in 1866 by former veterans of the Confederate Army and General Nathan Bedford Forrest became its first Imperial Wizard. The Klan was initially formed to resist the enforcement of Reconstruction policies in the South. The Klan intimidated Northern officials, "carpetbaggers", and the freed slaves. Violence and burning quickly became the standard method for dealing with the enemies of Southern society. Nathan Bedford Forrest would not condone the use of violence and resigned his leadership post. The Federal government had little success dealing with the Klan during Andrew Johnson's presidency because he vetoed every measure to stop the Klan's activities. Finally in 1871, President Grant, backed by the power of the Civil Rights Act, used military force against the Klan.

In 1915, William Simmons, a preacher influenced by the writings of Thomas Dixon and the movie "Birth of a Nation" was instrumental in reviving the Klu Klux Klan. {6} Simmons was also inspired by the lynching of the accused murderer Leo Frank. The new Klan evolved as a fraternal organization that preached racism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism and anti-foreign. The Klan actually boasted a membership of nearly 5 million red blooded American males at its peak in the 1920's. During World War II membership declined after the Klan's support of the Nazis.

In 1915, silent film maker D.W. Griffith released the epic movie "**Birth of a Nation.**" The film with a cast of thousands was based on the Thomas Dixon book "**The Clansmen.**" Griffith's



movie portrayed the South as victims of Yankee terror. The Confederate soldier is seen as a knight fighting for a noble cause and the Klan is portrayed as heroes. This was the first blockbuster motion picture and it was viewed by millions of Americans. President **Woodrow Wilson**, a close personal friend of D.W. Griffith, attended a private White House screening of the film. President Wilson remarked that "it is like writing history with lightning." "My only regret is that it is all so terribly true!" Later, Wilson would try to distance himself from his remarks but the damage had already been done. The NAACP boycotted the film. {7}

Novelist **Margaret Mitchell** wrote "**Gone with the Wind**" in 1936. The motion picture of the same name was released in 1939 starring Clark Gable and Vivian Leigh. The film and the book served to reinforce the notion of Southern nobility and virtue despite the hardships imposed on them by Yankee aggression. Margaret Mitchell's view of the old South came from listening to the stories told to her by her grandfather who was a Civil War veteran from South Carolina. The slaves in Margaret Mitchell's novel



are all passive, carefree and happy. There are no ill-treated slaves in Mitchell's South. This false portrait of the Southern blacks would be carried on in other films from Walt Disney. Field hands and plantation house workers are always happy and content caring for the master's family. {8}

"**Gods and Generals**," a Civil War film by Ron Maxwell presents a more current revisionist view of the relationship between

Southern white society and the black slave population. The slaves in Maxwell's South lived in quiet harmony with their masters. This movie was loosely based on the novel by Jeff Shara; however Maxwell's film bears no resemblance to the book! Film critics were merciless in their evaluation of "Gods and Generals," although it did play to large audiences in some Southern cities.

Civil War historian Gary Gallagher will release a new book in the spring of 2008 entitled **Viewing the Civil War: Interpretation in Recent Films and Art**. We can only hope that his new work will set the record straight and separate the facts from the fiction. James McPherson has stated "the Southerners were a proud people who staked all and lost all." {9}

Historiography attempts to present an objective account of those events that impact society and the individual. The public perception of those events can be influenced by individual bias and group affiliation. The Lost Cause will continue to be interpreted as fact until society rejects it for lack of true objective evidence. (Footnotes and references continued on page 9)

## **The Ohio Genealogical Society and The Civil War by Brent Morgan**

The Ohio Genealogical Society has in excess of 100 chapters. There is at least one for every county and then there are some out of state chapters as well. There's a Lake County chapter, and about four chapters in Cuyahoga county. Many of the members in these chapters have joined SCWFO (The Society of Civil War Families of Ohio) in order to honor their Civil War veteran(s).

An OGS member can enroll his/her veteran by providing proof of the veteran's service during the War. The veteran is not restricted to an Ohio unit. SCWFO also accepts service from other States, including the Confederacy, and will also recognize squirrel hunters and those involved in civilian service which helped in the war effort.

If the veteran falls into another category than there has to be an Ohio connection. The soldier had to have lived, worked, or served in Ohio. In addition to providing proof on the veteran's service the applicant must also prove their relationship, either direct or collateral, to the veteran. More information is available at the OGS website, [www.ogs.org](http://www.ogs.org). Although we now live out of State, I continue to serve as the chairperson of SCWFO. If you have an interest in the SCWFO program, please email me at [brentster1@comcast.net](mailto:brentster1@comcast.net). The SCWFO files fill several file cabinets at the OGS Library in Mansfield, Ohio. Soon OGS will be constructing a new facility in Bellville, Ohio which will give us the needed room to grow.

The other OGS item that I would draw your attention to is the OCWGJ (Ohio Civil War Genealogy Journal). One of the co-editors of this tremendous publication is Dan Reigle, past president of the Cincinnati Civil War Roundtable. Subscription to the journal is \$20 for an OGS member and \$25 for non members. It's an indispensable item for anyone researching Ohio Civil War soldiers. More info about it is also available at [www.ogs.org](http://www.ogs.org). Click on publications. Contents of the latest issue are outlined below.

I can wholeheartedly recommend either or both of these things to those interested in the study of the Civil War. Incidentally, see that Norton London is doing another course at the ILR (Institute for Learning in Retirement) at Baldwin-Wallace EAST in Beachwood starting in January. Ask Norty for information regarding his course regarding Slavery.

**Okay guys, if I don't catch you this spring, I will see you in Richmond, Virginia this fall. You might want to leave a couple of days either before or after the field trip to see other attractions including the Lee-Grant exhibit at the Virginia Historical Society.**

### ***In the November 4, 2007 OCWGJ:***

- ***Ohioans in the 59<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry***
- ***The Life of George Christian Ressinger, Co.E, 7<sup>th</sup> Ohio Cavalry***
- ***Information Sought: Three Ohio Citizens who died while Imprisoned at Andersonville***
- ***140 Citizens from Unknown States at Andersonville***
- ***Excerpts from "Our Acre and its Harvest," Soldiers Aid Society***
- ***Examples of War-Related Civilian Service***
- ***1883 Census of Pensioners of Williams County***
- ***2007 Index***

*Note: This Eulogy was given at Robert E. Battisti's Memorial Service on Feb. 17, 2004 by Joe Tirpak*

*A Tribute to Bob Battisti*

*Judy and I have been friends with Bob and Marge for 42 years.*

*Judy's friendship with Bob goes back even farther; 48 years to September 1956. Their friendship spanned parts of six different decades. They had birthdays one day apart, which we celebrated jointly. Bob was older by one day, and he never let Judy forget that he was senior to her. And Judy could always tell Bob exactly where to go and get away with it.*

*While I did not know Bob at KSU, I knew of him, because he was the first Tennis player in Kent State history to receive a Tennis Scholarship. His high school tennis reputation and the championships he won preceded him to Kent State.*

*Bob began his career as Public School Teacher after graduating from college. The friendship that he and Judy had at Kent State was rekindled when Judy and I met Bob, quite by chance one evening, at the North Canton Public Library. Bob was delighted to see Judy. He asked if Judy would meet with Marge because she was pregnant with Bob Jr., new to the community, and did not know anyone. That chance meeting started our special 42-year relationship.*

*I could share many stories and laughs. We attended their first North Canton party during the Xmas Holidays. They were both excited about it and unfortunately I somehow managed to break all of Marge's new crystal glasses. The litany of words expressed to me by Marge, to this day, shocks my sensibilities! We shared many wonderful and precious moments together. Weekend get-a-ways, vacations, family gatherings, parties and Hoover Dances all blend together in special way for us.*

*However, what I wish to share with you this morning are three things that made Bob so very special.*

- *His Love of family;*
- *His love of American history; and*
- *His Legacy to each of us.*

*First and foremost--Bob loved his family; he shared his pride with me about growing up in Youngstown, Ohio. He talked at length about his Mom and Dad, his wonderful sister Dolores, his brother Billy, his Brother-in-Law Frank. He talked to me about his cousins Fred and John, whom I have come to know and appreciate. He told me about his many wonderful aunts and uncles. He talked to me about how he first met Marge at a DU Fraternity party at Kent State. Margie was invited to the party by one of Bob's Fraternity brothers. She noticed Bob and smiled at him. Bob noticed Margie too and smiled at her; it was love at first sight!"*

*He talked to me about Bob Jr., Doug and Barbara and his hopes and dreams for each of them. He shared with me his regret that he was unable to spend more time at home with his family.*

***His Psychology practice and large number of patients demanded long days and evenings six days a week.***

***2. Bob loved American History; he had heroes like Geo. Washington and Thomas Jefferson. He was so proud of the Document he received from his friends at the Mayfield School System when he retired after 18 years to enter private practice as a licensed Psychologist. This document had Thomas Jefferson's authenticated signature. He cherished that document and shared it with me many times. However, his greatest American hero, without question was Abe Lincoln. Bob read endlessly and developed quite a knowledge and expertise on our 16th president as well as on Mary Todd Lincoln. He spoke frequently to a variety of groups about the Lincolns, their life and times.***

***Bob joined the Cleveland CWRT in 1988 and was an active member for 11 years. He served as President in 1994. He subsequently became one of seven Founders of the NEOCWRT, a Civil War Round Table founded on December 12, 1997.***

***He was always thinking about how to make the group better, encouraging newer and younger members to create their own talks on subjects related to CW history. He served as President of the new group in 2002. Just last year we recognized him for his unique contributions with a plaque, which said:***

***"Founder's Award Presented to Robert E. Battisti, in grateful appreciation and gratitude for your devotion, dedication and special contributions as a founding member of this organization." He loved the Sons of the American Revolution Cleveland group, one of the largest in the Country, and was so very proud that his Mother's side of the family could trace their ancestry back to the Revolutionary War period of our Nation's history. Bob also served as president of that group. Bob was a leader in so many ways! In closing I would ask each of you this question: What is success? Webster's definition is: "The Attainment of Wealth, Favor or Eminence." In other words, we tend to judge an individual by what he does, rather than what he is. I believe we need to expand this definition as it relates to Bob because it would be incomplete! Bob's success should be measured by his achievements in relations to the obstacles he overcame. His success should be related to the esteem he had from family, friends and peers.***

**Finally, his legacy should be measured by what he gave to each person whose life he touched. Not just his patients, but also each of us gathered here this morning. He made each one of us a better person, "a priceless gift indeed."**

***Reminder: The dues for the 2008 calendar year are now due!***

***See Bill Wilson***



With everything that has been written about Abraham Lincoln, it is difficult to find a way to plow new ground. Julie Fenster decided to take one year of Lincoln's life and write more extensively about it. She chose the year 1856 – or most of it.

1856 was pivotal in Lincoln's political life. As the year began, his political prospects were uncertain. He was an acknowledged leader of the Whig party in Illinois, but the Whig party was disintegrating. Where should he go, and what would the change bring? 1856 was the year of decision and answers.

Interleaved with his political life, is the practice of law. Lincoln's law practice and reputation as a lawyer were doing quite well by 1856. He was involved in interesting and high-profile (in Illinois) cases and a large portion of the book deals with some of those.

Meanwhile, Springfield citizens were even more interested in the murder of George Anderson, owner of a blacksmith shop. The circumstances of the murder, especially the rumor of adultery involving the murdered man's wife, shocked and concerned many of the residents as much as the murder. Ms. Fenster spends a significant portion of the book dealing with the murder and the legal proceedings, even though the time Lincoln spent with this particular case is relatively short. (From this incident comes the sub-title, *A Story of Adultery, Murder, and the Making of a Great President.*)

Of Lincoln's personal life, that beyond politics and the law, there is very little. However, the story of the murder reveals some interesting aspects of everyday life in Springfield at that time.

For one, like me, who has not read extensively about Lincoln, much of the information in this book is new and well worth reading. I suspect that there is new material here even for those who have read a great deal about Mr. Lincoln.

Ms. Fenster has written several histories. This, her latest (copyright 2007), is her first about Lincoln. At 228 pages, it reads quickly and fairly easily. It is well footnoted. Two maps, one of Illinois highlighting the important locations of 1856, and one of downtown Springfield (to better understand the circumstances of the murder case), as well as photos of some lesser known Lincoln acquaintances, are included. Its list price is \$24.95 and costs \$16.47 on Amazon.com. CLEVNET libraries have 20 copies and 2 copies of the book on tape. Mentor Library has four copies.

### **Notes and References for the Lost Cause**

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Edward Pollard, "A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates," New York, {1} p.40                                                          | E.B. Treat & Co.1866             |
| Gary Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, "The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History" {2} p.13                                                        | Indiana University Press. 1997   |
| Douglas Southall Freeman, "Lee's Lieutenants, A Study in Command" edited by Stephen Sears {3} p.13                                                   | Simon & Schuster Inc. 1998       |
| Gary Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, "The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History" {4} p.13                                                        | Indiana University Press. 1997   |
| Charles Archibald Dunning, "The Constitution of the United States in Civil War and Reconstruction1860-1867." Columbia University, New York, 1885 {5} |                                  |
| Robert Brent Topin, Screening the Civil War: From the Lost Cause to the Cause of Emancipation {6}p.3 {7} p.4 {8}p.4                                  | University of North Carolina     |
| James McPherson, "Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction" Alfred Knopps                                                                    | New York, 1964 {9} p.494         |
| Gary Gallagher, "Jubal Early, the Lost Cause and Civil War History, a Persistent Legacy"                                                             | Marquette University Press. 1995 |

## Notes from the editor

This edition of the Courier contains articles from **Joe Tirpak**, **Tom Horvath** and our Richmond Correspondent-**Brent Morgan**, who is helping to coordinate our Fall Field trip. Future articles in the Courier pipeline include: " A History of the Irish Brigade " by **Ted Karle**; more book reviews by Tom Horvath and a personal interview with some of our new members submitted by **Arlan Byrne**. **Franco Sperrazzo** is putting the finishing touches on an article about our Tenth Anniversary Meeting that will appear in the next edition. I want to thank all our members for your continued support and I want to encourage everyone interested in writing an article for the Courier to please contact me. My e-mail address is [jschez47@yahoo.com](mailto:jschez47@yahoo.com)

**John Sandy**  
**Editor**

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## The Officers of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table for 2008

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