THE CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

THE CHARGER

November 2010 | 472nd Meeting | Vol. 32, #3

Tonight's Program:

Belle Boyd and Mary Elizabeth Bowser

Belle Boyd, perhaps the most famous Confederate spy, served the Confederacy in the Shenandoah Valley. Born in Martinsburg, now part of West Virginia, she operated from her father's hotel in Front Royal, providing valuable information to Generals Turner Ashby and Stonewall Jackson during the 1862 Valley campaign. Jackson made her a captain and honorary aide-de-camp on his staff, allowing her to witness troop reviews. During the war, she was betrayed by her lover, arrested twice, and sent to England. The blockade runner she attempted to return on was captured. She fell in love with the prize master, Samuel Hardinge, who later married her in England after being dropped from the navy's rolls for neglect of duty in allowing her to proceed to Canada and then England. While in England Belle Boyd Hardinge had a stage career and published *Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison.* She died while touring the western United States.

Mary Elizabeth Bowser was born a slave to owner John Van Lew, a wealthy hardware merchant. Van Lew's wife and daughter Elizabeth freed his slaves after his death in 1843. The Van Lew women bought and freed members of their slaves' families when they learned they were going to be sold. Mary remained with the Van Lew family and worked as a paid servant. Elizabeth sent her to the Quaker School for Negroes in Philadelphia in the late 1850s. After graduating, Mary returned to Richmond and married William Bowser, a free black man, on April 16, 1861. Mary continued to work in the Van Lew house.

After the war began, Elizabeth asked Mary to help her in the elaborate spying system she had established in the Confederate capitol. Mary had considerable intelligence, as well as some acting skills. To get access to top secret information, Mary became "Ellen Bond," a dim-witted, slightly crazy, but able servant. Mary helped at functions held by Varina Davis, the wife of Jefferson Davis. Mary proved herself well and was eventually taken on full time, working in the Confederate White House until just before the end of the war. Of course, it was assumed she was an illiterate slave. Toward the end of the war, suspicion finally fell on Mary. She fled in January 1865, unsuccessfully attempting to burn down the Confederate Capitol before doing so.

Tonight's Speaker:

Women in History

Women In History was founded in Lakewood, Ohio in 1991 by women who felt a debt to their female ancestors and a responsibility to tell their stories. The character research is extensive and includes published material, visits to locales and interviews with family, friends, and biographers. WIH insists on authenticity in costuming. Authentic vintage clothing is used; pieces in poor condition are used as patterns for reproduction. Hairdos are replicated using the presenter's natural hair or wigs, styled by a specialist in historic hair design. The members of WIH are career minded, ranging from homemakers to corporate managers. Each is deeply concerned about family issues and is actively involved in community and non-profit organizations focusing on the betterment of their community.

Date: **Wednesday, November 10, 2010**

Place: **Judson Manor
1890 E. 107th Street
Cleveland, Ohio**

Time: **Drinks 6 PM
Dinner 6:45 PM**

Reservations: **Please Call Dan Zeiser (440) 449-9311 or email ccwrt1956@yahoo.com By 9 pm Sunday before meeting**

Meal choice: **Beef stew over noodles, mixed vegetable, salad, and dessert.**

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

Founded 1957

President:	**Lisa Kempfer**	(440) 526-1318
Vice President:	**Paul Burkholder**	(440) 918-0222
Secretary:	**Marge Wilson**	(216) 932-6558
Treasurer:	**Michael Wells**	(216) 371-8449
Historian:	**Mel Maurer**	(440) 808-1249

Directors:

Dennis Keating
Garry Regan
Jim Heflich
Jon Thompson
Syd Overall
Gordy Gates

website: clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com
email: pburkholder@ameritech.net

Editor - THE CHARGER - Dan Zeiser

Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Past Presidents

2010 Dennis Keating
2009 Jon Thompson
2008 Terry Koozer
2007 John Fazio
2006 Dave Carrino
2005 Mel Maurer
2004 Warren McClelland
2003 Maynard Bauer
2002 Bill McGrath
2001 William Vodrey
2000 Bob Boyda
1999 Dick Crews
1998 John Moore
1997 Dan Zeiser
1996 John Sutula
1995 Norton London
1994 Robert Battisti
1993 Kevin Callahan
1992 Bob Baucher
1991 Joe Tirpak
1990 Ken Callahan Jr.
1989 Neil Glaser
1988 Martin Graham
1987 George Vourlojianis
1986 Tim Beatty
1985 Brian Kowell
1984 Neil Evans
1983 William Victory
1982 John Harkness
1981 Thomas Geschke
1980 Charles Spiegle
1979 William Bates
1978 Richard McCrae
1977 James Chapman
1976 Milton Holmes
1975 Thomas Gretter
1974 Nolan Heidelbaugh
1973 Arthur Jordan
1972 Bernard Drews
1971 Kenneth Callahan
1970 Frank Schuhle
1969 Donald Heckaman
1968 Frank Moran
1967 William Schlesinger
1966 Donald Hamill
1965 Lester Swift
1964 Guy DiCarlo, Jr.
1963 Paul Guenther
1962 Edward Downer
1961 Charles Clarke
1960 Howard Preston
1959 John Cullen, Jr.
1958 George Farr, Jr.
1957 Kenneth Grant

President's Message

November 2010

Greetings,

Ladies Night. Women during the Civil War kept the home fires burning, managed farms and businesses, raised children, nursed ill and wounded soldiers, and chronicled the war in newspapers, letters, and journals. A few ladies even fought with the troops; others were spies!

Confederate spy Belle Boyd and Union spy Mary Elizabeth Bowser, portrayed by Charlene Connors and Sherrie Tolliver, members of Women In History, will reminisce about their exploits as spies at our November meeting. I am sure Belle will tell us about one of her more notable actions when she eavesdropped on General James Shields and his officers and rode through enemy lines to let General Stonewall Jackson know the Union was reducing its troops at Front Royal. Jackson successful attacked Front Royal on May 23, 1862. That evening, he sent her a note: "I thank you, for myself and for the army, for the immense service that you have rendered your country today." Jackson awarded her the Southern Cross of Honor and gave her captain and honorary aide-de-camp positions.

Mary Elizabeth Bowser, an educated, freed slave, was the suspected spy in Jefferson Davis's Confederate White House. Mary passed her information to either the daughter of her former owner or to Thomas McNiven, a reputable Richmond baker who made deliveries to the Confederate White House. According to McNiven, Mary was the source of the most crucial information available "...as she was working right in the Davis home and had a photographic mind. Everything she saw on the Rebel president's desk, she could repeat word for word." Toward the end of the war, suspicion finally fell on Mary, although it is not known how or why. She fled in January 1865, but she attempted one last act as a Union spy and sympathizer. She tried to burn down the Confederate Capitol, but was unsuccessful.

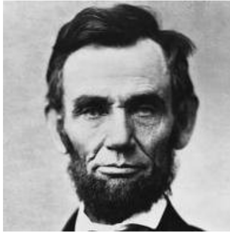
Remember the ladies! Please invite your wives, daughters, or significant others to our November meeting. They may be interested in learning about these courageous women who faced great danger spying for their chosen troops.

Respectfully,
Lisa Kempfer

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE 2010/2011 SCHEDULE

September 8, 2010

Abraham Lincoln's Effect on Constitutional Interpretation



Wilson Huhn

October 13, 2010

William Tecumseh Sherman

Frank Bullock

November 10, 2010

Dr. Mary Walker

Civil War Female Spies

December 8, 2010

General James A. and Lucretia Garfield Reading their Civil War Letters

January 12 2011

The Dick Crews Annual Debate

Would foreign intervention have won the war for the South?

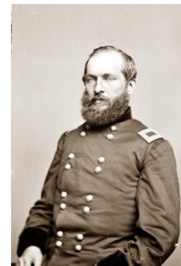
Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey

February 9, 2011

Lincoln's Commando: William Cushing

William Vodrey

March 9, 2011



Garfield's battles in Eastern Kentucky

Scott Longren

April 13, 2011

The Fight for Money: The Income Tax Laws Of the Civil War

Donald Korb

May 11, 2011

Ulysses Grant

John Marszalek

For membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, please visit our web site: http://clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com

A Lesson in Artillery

The terminology of 19th-century artillery can be very confusing. As in most bureaucracies, there were both official and unofficial terms for everything many of which were contradictory or had multiple meanings and frequently were misused even by artillerymen. This unintentional misuse continues today in reenacting and, indeed, may have become so pervasive as to render pointless any attempt at correcting it. The following glossary is offered in the hope that it will help to clarify proper Civil War terminology. The glossary is not meant to be an exhaustive dictionary of artillery terms, but merely to offer working definitions of those organizational and functional terms which are most commonly (mis)used. Unless otherwise specified, the information is based on Federal practice as this most closely approximates the pre-war usages from which the confusion comes. Generally, however, it applies to the Confederate service as well.

The United States army artillery in April 1861 consisted of four regiments of twelve companies each. A fifth regiment was hastily organized in May, making a total of 60 regular batteries around which the Union artillery was built. Those southern artillery who left the "Old Army" naturally took their expertise with them so, in that sense, the Confederate artillery also was built around the regular U.S. artillery establishment. Unlike an infantry regiment, which was the basic fighting unit of that branch of the service, an artillery regiment almost never operated as a whole, the batteries being scattered about with little apparent concern for proper command structure, logistics, firepower, or other matters. Both the Union and Confederate services improved considerably in this regard as the war progressed, though in different ways. The primary organizational unit, blue or gray, was the battery, with the Federals maintaining a 6-gun standard (until General Grant ordered a reduction to four guns per unit in May, 1864) and the Confederate using a 4-gun standard throughout the war.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Company: Official term for the component units of an artillery regiment; changed to "Battery" by special War Department order in July, 1866.

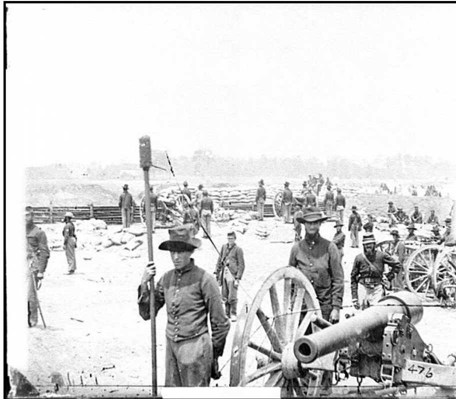
Battery: Unofficial but commonly accepted term for an artillery company. The word comes from the French verb "a battre" meaning "to beat or batter" and originated in artillery's earliest days when huge stone or iron balls were used literally to batter down castle walls. Curiously, "battery" was the official term for the units of the 5th U.S. Artillery from that regiment's creation in 1861. The 1866 order mentioned above merely brought the older regiments into line with this common usage. "Battery" also can be used to identify any group of artillery pieces, of whatever type, number, or size, operating together.

12 pound smoothbore cannon

Battalion: Confederate artillery organization usually consisting of three to five batteries, which may or

may not have been from the same state, grouped together into a kind of super-battery for greater firepower. Though the Federals also grouped batteries, they did not use them as the Confederates used their "battalions." Thus, there was no true battalion structure in the Union artillery. The artillery as a whole was divided into two groups by function: FOOT artillery and FIELD artillery. Any battery might be assigned to either group.

Foot Artillery: Official but seldom used term for what commonly was called "Heavy" artillery. Foot batteries generally manned coastal or river fortifications mounting large, immobile guns like Rodmans or the larger Parrotts. During the war, many Union "heavies" served in the defenses of Washington. Some foot batteries were equipped with medium-sized pieces known as "siege" guns, 30 pound Parrotts, for example. These were mounted on heavy, but relatively mobile, siege carriages that allowed them to follow in the wake of the army and be emplaced in temporary positions whenever the troops were likely to remain in one place for a while. The expression, "foot artillery," also has been used colloquially to mean artillerymen armed and serving as infantry.



10 pound Parrot Rifle cannon

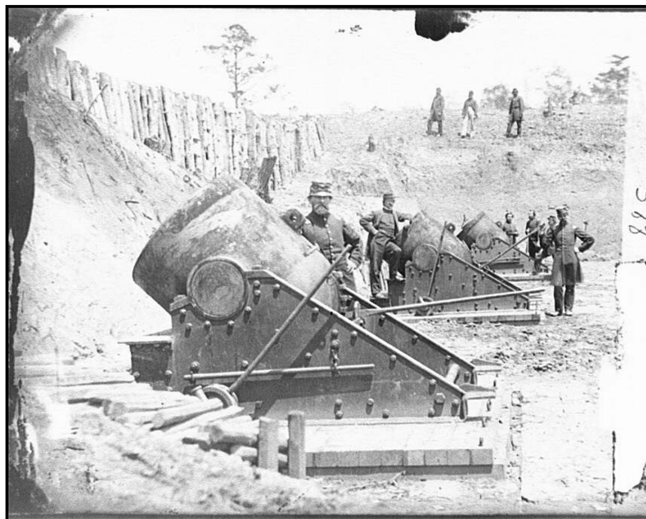
Field Artillery: Official term for those batteries assigned to operate in the field with either infantry or cavalry; commonly, but incorrectly, called "Light" artillery. Standard field pieces included the Model 1841 6 and 12 pound, 10 pound Parrot Rifles, 3 inch Ordnance (not Ordinance) Rifles, and the Model 1857 light 12 pound gun-howitzer or "Napoleon." Early on, the Union artillery eased its logistics burden by eliminating the older pieces almost entirely and relying on the rifled guns and Napoleons. By war's end, the Parrotts were themselves being phased out in favor of the lighter, safer, and more accurate Ordnance Rifles. The Confederates, of course, were forced to use whatever they could get, so that even the obsolete little 6 pounders remained in the Southern inventory. The Field Artillery was itself subdivided into two functional groups called MOUNTED and HORSE artillery. Again, a given unit could be assigned to either.

Model 1841 12 pound field howitzer

Mounted Artillery: Official and extremely confusing term for those field batteries assigned to operate with infantry. It was and is confusing because "Mounted" artillery was NOT mounted. The drivers, of course, rode and the rest of the men occasionally would mount the limbers whenever speed was required. But generally, like the infantrymen with whom they worked, the "mounted" artillerymen walked. This sometimes results in the added confusion of having them referred to as "foot" artillery. This somewhat strange usage originated with the structure of the artillery as of 1838. Before that date, the men of an artillery company were divided into distinct groups of drivers and cannoneers. These men wore different uniforms, received different rates of pay, and were not cross-trained in each other's duties. Drivers, moreover, doubled as cavalry

and were considered "mounted" troops, while cannoneers doubled as infantry and were considered "foot" soldiers. In 1838, however, these distinctions were eliminated. No longer was there a separate class of drivers who rode while the cannoneers walked. Henceforth, the men were cross-trained and each would ride whenever assigned to be a driver. Thus, all of the men occasionally were mounted. This branch of the artillery kept the "Mounted" designation simply to distinguish itself from the "Foot" artillery. Less frequently, but more accurately, the term “Harnessed" artillery also was used to identify the "Mounted" artillerymen.

Horse Artillery: Official term for those field batteries assigned to work with cavalry. To keep up with the troopers, each horse artilleryman rode his own horse, a practice devised by Frederick the Great in the mid-18th century and formally adopted by the U.S. Army shortly before the Mexican War. Thus, the "horse" artillery was mounted and the "mounted" artillery was not, leading to frequent but understandable confusion of the terms. Today, when someone refers to "mounted" artillery, it is a safe bet that he means "horse" artillery. In the Army of the Potomac, for example, the number of horse artillery batteries (often called simply "horse batteries") varied during the war, but never exceeded twelve. These were organized into formal "Horse Artillery Brigades," similar in some ways to the Confederate "battalions," and assigned to the cavalry as needed. Except for short periods of service by the 6th New York Independent Battery and the 9th Michigan Battery, the Horse Artillery Brigades consisted exclusively of regulars. All other field batteries were "mounted" artillery. A further distinction between horse batteries and their mounted counterparts was in the use of sidearms. As a general rule, mounted artillerymen carried neither pistol nor saber, while horse artillerymen almost always carried revolvers and, frequently, sabers as well (though, of course, they did not wear the sabers while working their guns). Moreover, horse artillerymen often were cross-trained as cavalry (many of them, in fact, being transfers from the cavalry) and those men not actually serving the guns might be out on the flanks as battery supports to free up the troopers for other duties. The reader should take care not to confuse "horse" artillery with "horse-drawn" artillery. The terms are unrelated. Naturally, ALL artillery was horse-drawn (or, in a few cases, mule or ox-drawn), there being no other way to move the pieces around when necessary. Only those batteries so designated, however were "Horse Artillery."



13 inch seacoast mortar

© Jack W. Melton, Jr.

The Hotchkiss shell, the most common projectile fired from the Model 1861 3 inch rifled cannon. It was 2.94 inches in diameter, 6 and 7/8 inches long, and weighed 8.3 pounds. The Schenkl was another projectile fired from the same fieldpiece.

Light Artillery: In artillery, "light" is NOT the opposite of "heavy." "Foot" equals "Heavy," but "Field" does not equal "Light," even though "light artillery" is almost universally used as a synonym for "field artillery." Historically and technically, the term is more limited and means only "horse artillery." Numerous Union and Confederate batteries had the word "Light" in their names. But unless they were formally assigned to and regularly operated with cavalry, each cannoneer being individually mounted, they were not light batteries regardless of that they called themselves. "Light," in this context, has nothing to do with the size or weight of the guns used, but refers only to speed. With the cannoneers individually mounted, a battery could travel much faster - was, so to speak, lighter on its feet - than when the men had to walk or hang precariously from a limber. In short, "light" artillery is "horse" artillery. In the Federal service, light batteries, it is true, were usually equipped with the relatively lightweight (800 lbs.) Ordnance Rifles to make it easier for them to keep up with the cavalry (for the same reason their limber chests did not carry as many rounds as the chests of a mounted Ordnance Rifle battery). Several light batteries, however, were armed with the much heavier (1200 lbs.) Napoleons. For these units, speed and mobility were achieved through the use of 8 horse, rather than the normal 6 horse, teams. Mounted Napoleon batteries naturally used the standard-sized team.

Flying Artillery: Occasionally used during the Civil War, this unofficial and rather romantic term was popularized during the Mexican War and also means "light" or "horse" artillery. It is a reference to the comparatively high maneuvering speeds of these batteries and was used admiringly, much as we might comment on the speed of a runner by saying, "He can really fly!" Like the term "light," however, it sometimes is misapplied to field artillery in general.

Consolidated Batteries: From time to time, because of the loss of men or guns, two batteries would be merged. This happened with some frequency but usually was a temporary arrangement as, for example, with batteries H & I of the 1st U.S. and C & E of the 4th which were consolidated for periods of several months. An unusual triple consolidation occurred when C F & K of the 3rd U.S. were merged for the war's final year. Sometimes, as with consolidated B & L of the 2nd U.S., the merger occurred early and lasted the entire war. Historians sometimes will mistake a consolidated battery for two separate units, thereby overestimating the number of guns and the firepower of a given force.

Artillery terminology, understood in its historical context, is not as senseless as it first appears. Nor should it be a mystery to the reader who ought to be familiar with the proper military terminology of the time. It must be admitted that the obscure origins and contemporary misuse of terms such as "light" and "mounted" will likely continue to cause confusion in our own day, especially since the incorrect usages tend to be more logical than the correct ones. Still, it is to be hoped that the information presented herein will lessen this confusion and, perhaps, contribute to more accurate impressions.

The text of this article was adapted from civilwarhome.com/artilleryterms.htm. Graphics are from civilwarartillery.com.

10 inch Columbiad smoothbore, rifled and banded by J. M. Eason Brothers.

Civil War Female Spies

Elizabeth Van Lew

Van Lew was educated in a Philadelphia Quaker school, where she became an abolitionist. When she returned to her family's home in Richmond – where they were among the wealthiest and most socially prominent families – she convinced her mother to free the family's slaves. After the war started, Elizabeth Van Lew openly supported the Union. She took items of clothing and food and medicine to prisoners at the Confederate Libby Prison and passed information to General Grant, spending much of her fortune to support her espionage. She may also have helped prisoners escape from Libby Prison. To cover her activities, she took on a persona of "Crazy Bet," dressing oddly; she was never arrested for her spying. One of the Van Lew freed slaves, Mary Elizabeth Bowser, whose education in Philadelphia was financed by Van Lew, returned to Richmond and Elizabeth Van Lew helped get her employment in the Confederate White House. As a maid, Bowser was ignored as she served meals and overheard conversations. She was also able to read documents she found. Bowser passed what she learned to fellow slaves and, with Van Lew's aid, this valuable information eventually made its way to General Grant. After the war, Grant appointed Elizabeth Van Lew as postmistress of Richmond and she was largely shunned by her neighbors. She had spent most of her money in her pro-Union activities and, although she stayed in the family mansion until her death in 1900, Elizabeth Van Lew died in poverty, living only on an annuity from the family of a Union soldier she had helped.

Emma S. Edmonds

Edmonds was a Canadian-born woman who successfully operated behind Confederate lines as a Union spy during the American Civil War. She was probably the only spy in history who was both transvestite and transracial. Edmonds came to the United States from New Brunswick, Canada, in 1856. When the Civil War began in 1861, she adopted the name Frank Thompson and volunteered to serve as a male nurse for the Union Army and was present at the first Battle of Bull Run. After serving as a male nurse for two years, Edmonds volunteered to serve as a spy behind Confederate lines. Disguising herself as a young black man by dyeing her skin and wearing a wig, she managed to cross the front lines near Yorktown, VA. Although claiming to be a free black when confronted by an overseer, Edmonds was put to work on Confederate fortifications. After a day of backbreaking work, she was able to make a sketch of the fortifications and an accounting of the ordnance being installed. The next day, she carried water for the workers and food to the troops. Although reportedly impressed as a sentry at one point, she was able to defect back to Union lines during a rainy night – carrying her Confederate rifle as a trophy. Although behind Confederate lines for only three days, Edmonds is said to have brought back useful military information. During the coming months she successfully accomplished eleven more missions behind Confederate lines without being detected. On one occasion she went as an Irish peddler woman, other times she posed as a dry goods clerk, and once she claimed to be the grieving friend of a dead soldier. Eventually contracting malaria while on a spy mission, she deserted after returning to Union lines, fearing that if she received medical treatment her sex would be discovered.

From lincolnparkboe.org/WebQuests/civilwar_spies.htm

FEELING ARGUMENTATIVE?

William Vodrey, moderator of the Annual Dick Crews Debate, is putting together two teams of two debaters each, who will take opposite sides on the question, "Would foreign intervention have won the war for the South?" The debate will be at our January 12, 2011 meeting. If you would like to be considered as a debater, and have not already been one in the past five years, tell William of your interest no later than noon on Thurs. Dec. 9. He can be reached at wfbvodrey@aol.com, or by calling (216) 664-3643 weekdays.

The winner, voted upon by the membership, will receive amazing prizes. No previous debating experience is necessary, no particular historical expertise is required, and no salesman will come to your door.

Next Month
General James A. and Lucretia Garfield
Reading Their Civil War Letters