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**DATE:** Monday, May 13, 2002  
**TIME:** 6:30 PM  
**LOCATION:** Antone's, 8578 Market Street, Boardman, Ohio  
**SPEAKER:** **Robert Chambers**  
**TOPIC:** "Nathan Bedford Forrest"

**Robert Chambers** has been interested in Civil War history for some thirty years, most of them researching the life of **Nathan Bedford Forrest**. The fruit of his labor was his book *The God of War – the Military Career of General Nathan Bedford Forrest*. Tonight he will entertain us with a talk on his favorite subject - Bedford Forrest, of course.

Robert Chambers was born and raised in Solon, Ohio and attended Bowling Green University where he earned a BA degree in English. For the last 17 years he has been manager of the Big Creek Reservation, which is part of the Cleveland parks system.

Robert is married with three children.

*Back in the fall of 1982 a visionary trio got together in Hugh Earnhart's basement to consider bringing together amateur historians from around the Youngstown-New Castle area for lively and informative discussion of the Civil War. From that meeting was born the **Mahoning Valley Civil War Round Table**, and one of the founders was **Byron Hartzell**. As per his wishes, following his death in 1996 Byron's family established the **Byron Hartzell Memorial Speaker Fund** to bring notable, outside speakers to our group. For this we gratefully and faithfully acknowledge him.*

**EXCITING NEWS!** *Recently, fellow MVCWRT members Glen and Carla McCartney and Frank Barrett contacted the principal of West Branch Jr. High with the idea of having students write short essays on a Civil War topic, with the promise of inviting the best two as our guests to the May round table meeting. As it happened, the idea really took off, with close to 400 students from four 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes submitting essays on their "Civil War Hero or Heroine." Each teacher chose the best five from their respective classes and gave them to Glen, Carla, and Frank to read. The winners are **Holly Mellinger and Amber Phillips**. They and their parents, teachers, and principal will be invited to join us for dinner and discussion at the next meeting. Congratulations to Holly and Amber. We look forward to seeing you both in May!*

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The **North-South Skirmish Association** will hold its 105<sup>th</sup> annual national competition this May 17 through 19. The competition features live-fire matches with muskets, carbines, repeating rifles, revolvers, and mortars and cannon. According to the N-SSA website, "Uniformed Union and Confederate teams compete in timed, rapid-fire events, shooting at breakable targets such as clay pigeons, ceramic tiles, and clay flower pots at ranges of 50 and 100 yards. The team with the lowest time wins." Admission is free and there are concessions for your convenience. For more information call **Bruce Miller at (248) 258-9007**, or see **G.L. Mears** at the next meeting. G.L. is a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia and has competed for several years. On the way back from our fact-finding mission at Cedar Creek we stopped at **Fort Shenandoah** just outside of Winchester where the competitions are held and got an informal tour of the place. You can use your mind's eye to visualize the columns of blue- and gray-clad shooters marching to their positions. I'm told it's quite a sight to see.

# The Ladies' Department

By Charen Fink

**PART II**--Having gathered all her equipment, the 1860's housewife would proceed with the following steps to complete her laundry chore.

*Mending*-- done before or after washing

*Sorting*--done according to fabric and color

*Stain removal*--done before washing

*Soaking*--done the day before doing the laundry;

Monday was a traditional wash day but could be done anytime clothes needed washing and the weather was favorable

*Washing*--cake soap had to be shaved and dissolved in hot water, soap added to water, clothes scrubbed on a washboard

*Rinsing*--three were customary

*Boiling*--killed insects and odors, boiled from 1/2 to one hour

*Bluing*--done to whiten clothes, the effect was an optical illusion as bluing does not bleach whites

*Bleaching*--the sun was most common, however, ammonia could be used and stale urine was inexpensive; chlorine & vitriol (sulfuric acid) were available

Some clothes needed to be taken apart completely before washing and then reassembled when clean. Ball gowns were seldom washed. There were special instructions for various kinds of fabrics. J.B. Jolly using highly flammable chemicals developed dry cleaning in 1855. The dry cleaners would take a garment apart, clean the individual pieces and then reassemble it.

*Starching*--wax or gum arabic were used with starch to help the iron glide over a starched item

*Drying clothes*--clothes were dried on lines, fences, grass, bushes (note: most yards were dirt because nice green lawns were too much work), in the wash-house, attic or kitchen

*Sprinkling*--clothes were sprinkled with water to dampen, rolled up until moist and then ironed

*Ironing*--it took 1-1/2 hours to heat a six-pound iron; an iron too cool will stick to the clothes while an iron too hot will scorch; to clean the bottom of an iron, keep a flat bag of salt nearby to rub the iron on.

*Airing*--to prevent creasing and mildew during warm weather

*Folding*--there were few closets so clothes were folded and put in drawers or on closet shelves, they were also hung on pegs along the wall; coat hangers were not used.

## Prices

Soap--\$1.25/cake Nov.1862

Cost to have laundry done--\$3.00 per dozen pieces January 1863

Common soap--\$1.10/pound Early 1863

## Employment of Women

### Occupation

Manufacturers of starch & spongers of cloths

Bleachers of woven goods

Lithographic & copperplate printers

### Wage

\$.30 per day

\$.10 min and \$.55 max per day

\$.20 min and \$.60 max per day

## Spring cleaning advice

\*When you clean house, begin with the highest rooms first, so that clean rooms be not soiled when done.

\*Clean bed ticks and lay out in the sun.

\*Cover everything, take up carpet, toss out the window, shake until free from dust, lay in sun until heated & turn over to heat the other side (kills vermin).

\*Dust everything, whitewash walls (unless covered with varnish); scrub floors, windows, baseboards, blinds; wash curtains and bedding.

\*Finally, scatter camphor on floor before replacing carpet (to prevent moths) replace everything and proceed to the next room.

## References

Haskell, Mrs. E. F. *Civil War Cooking: The Housekeeper's Encyclopedia*. Mendocino: R.L. Shep, 1992. (Original 1861).

Mescher, Virginia. *Laundry Handbook: A Manual For Creating A Civilian Or Military Laundress Impression or Laundry Exhibit*. Burke, VA: Nature's Finest, 1999.

Mescher, Virginia. *Price Comparisons, Price Increases, and Salaries of Jobs in the South During The Civil War*. Burke, VA: Nature's Finest, 1994.

Penny, Virginia. *The Employments of Women: A Cyclopedia of Women's Work*. (Reprinted by: Martins Mercantile and Millinery 1996). Boston: Walker, Wise & Company, 1863.

## Special Events

**Grant Days** in Georgetown, OH on April 26-28, 2002

**Conference on Women & the Civil War** on June 21-23, 2002 in Frederick, MD

**Fourth Annual Civil War Soldiers Fair** on June 22-23, 2002 in the Park in front of the National Aviary on the North Side of Pittsburgh. Call: 412-321-4502 Ruth McCartan for the Allegheny City Society

**Ladies, what would you like to see in your column in the coming year? Call 330-544-2986 or e-mail [dcftandm@zoominternet.net](mailto:dcftandm@zoominternet.net)**

# VOLUNTEERS!

As I'm sure you all know we haven't been to Gettysburg for Adopt-a-Position in quite awhile. Because of conflicting directives from the NPS, we've found it difficult to continue our mission there. But the good news is we've found another battlefield that desperately needs what we can offer - a good, day's work.

The **Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation** recently purchased 135 acres of battlefield where trenches dug by the XIX corps of **Phil Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah** exist not far from the banks of Cedar Creek. Confederates under **Jubal Early** attacked the left flank of the trenchline in the pre-dawn mist of October 19, 1864. Preserving it is important to historians and preservationists because the use of earthwork fortifications in the Shenandoah Valley was not prevalent during the Civil War.

The weekend of **September 21<sup>st</sup>** is when we will descend on the town of **Middlefield, Virginia**, just south of Winchester (about a 5-hour drive from here) where the battle reached its climax about four miles north of Cedar Creek. Here General Sheridan met his retreating army following his famous ride from Winchester and like an "electric shock," rallied them. Inspired by Sheridan's presence, around 4:00 PM the VI Corps and remnants of the VIII and XIX Corps swept the Rebels back over the battlefield and past the trenches where Union cavalry picked up the chase. Call **Frank Schmidt** at (330) 799-7753 about reserving a room, he has a list of motels in the area.

The first phase of the project entails clearing an interpretive path of small- to medium-sized trees in front of the trench line, and piling the wood. Bring loppers, band saws, and heavy duty rakes if you have them, and wear good, sturdy shoes because the terrain is difficult. It may not look like much now, but we believe it's a true diamond in the rough. Find out more at [www.cedarcreekbattlefield.com](http://www.cedarcreekbattlefield.com)

Sadly, when the work detail meets at Cedar Creek it will do so without one of its faithful number, **Howard Stack**, who helped out on many-a Gettysburg trip. Howard passed away April 7<sup>th</sup> at his home. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

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*A tremendous amount of appreciation is due* several individuals who helped make my job as editor a lot easier by contributing material to the newsletter. First of all I'd like to thank book review writers **Dave Ducheck**, **Larry Winans**, **Hugh Earnhart**, **Ted Heinemann**, **Myra Wright**, **Rod Hosler**, **Charen Fink**, and **GL Mears**. Also, **Frank Piatek** made sense of a scatter-brained idea of mine by coming up with an excellent, light-hearted review of a journal article. The following members generously contributed items that enhanced our knowledge of the Civil War era. Thank you to **Ted Heinemann** and **Charles Ginn**. This season lady luck smiled on us when **Charen Fink** agreed to do a monthly piece for the *Drum and Bugle Call* dealing with women's issues of the Civil War era. **The Ladies Department** debuted in October of 2001 and has been providing insight into the daily lives of the Victorian woman ever since. Thank you, very much, Charen. As always thanks to **Ken Smith** and **Ken Chambers** for making everyone feel welcome the moment they walk through the door. Special thanks are due our fearless leaders through the 2001 – 2002 campaign, **Rod Hosler** and **Barry Walker** and to **Ken Smith** for accepting the post for next year. The newsletter would never get out without the indispensable help of **Myra Wright** (Circulation) and **Bill Buckley** (Membership) for which I'm greatly appreciative. And I believe I speak for everyone when I say "Thank you" to **Hugh Earnhart**, our program director. And most of all, thanks to all of you for your participation.

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\* The first meeting of the World War II Round Table we told you about last month was quite a success, attracting 38 people. **Dave Frank** tells me this month's meeting will be held at **Antone's Banquet Center** and had to be moved to a Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> to be exact, at 6:30 P.M. The May speaker will be **Thomas Motosko**, who survived the **Bataan Death March** and was transported on the "Hell Ships" to Japan where he was used as a forced laborer for the duration of the war. Mr. Motosko was a member of the **192<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion** stationed in the Philippines prior to Pearl Harbor. Dinner is \$14.50 and reservations need to be in to Dave Frank at PO Box 6, Canfield, OH 44406 by May 15<sup>th</sup>. I failed to mention last month that checks should be made payable to David Frank; it makes his job a whole lot easier.

\* **Ulli Baumann** of the **Greater Pittsburgh CWRT** informs me that there are still seats available for their bus trip to the **National Civil War Museum** in Harrisburg, PA August 24. She has extended an invitation to anyone in our round table who would like to join them. The cost is \$50.00, which includes lunch. Call either Ulli at (412) 364-1246 (provided she's not at a Pirate's game) or **Darlene Abel** at (412) 366-3854.

**Dick Gregg** will be selling MVCWRT logo T-shirts, sweatshirts, and ball caps again this month. It's your last chance to get them before the summer season. Remember that others see you.

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**Company B, 19<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Regiment** of re-enactors will be active again this year, one of the highlights of the campaign being a trip to Tennessee for the re-enactment of the **Battle of Shiloh** the weekend of **April 6 and 7**. Events closer to home include the **Memorial Day Parade in Canfield on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May**, **The Battle of the Bridge** at Lanterman's Mill in **Mill Creek Park July 13 and 14**, and the annual re-enactment in **Lisbon, Ohio August 24 and 25**. The season closes with **Veteran's Day ceremonies** at the **War Vet's Museum** in Canfield on **November 9 and Tod Cemetery** on the south side of Youngstown **November 10<sup>th</sup>**.

*The Burning: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, John L. Heatwole*

Howell Press, Inc., Charlottesville Va., 1998, 266 pages

Reviewed by *G.L. Mears*

Most people with an interest in the Civil War have at least a vague awareness that the War was the first in which civilian populations were specifically targeted. *The Burning: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley* gives an account of the targeting of civilian homes, barns, mills, and other assets that could be used in the service of the Confederate Government.

In August 1864, Sheridan was sent to the Shenandoah Valley to lay waste to it so as to deprive the Confederate Government of the farm products and other resources that had been so critical to the prosecution of the war. In late September and early October, Sheridan's army, particularly the cavalry commanded by Custer and Torbert laid waste to four counties in the lower (northern) end of the Valley. This destruction took place just as one of the most abundant crop years in over a decade was being put into the barns or brought to the mills. In all, 630 barns, 47 flour mills, 4 sawmills, 1 woolen mill, and 48 houses went up in flames along with 3,982 tons of hay, 400,000 bushels of wheat, 515 acres of corn, 750 bushels of oats, 3,000 head of livestock, 2 tanneries, 1 railroad depot, 1 locomotive, 3 boxcars, a forge, and an iron furnace. In addition, over 3,500 people were displaced from their homes.

While the destruction of private property was horrific, deaths among both the civilian population as well as the military were light. However, the death of Lt. John Rogers Meigs, son of Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, led to a long-standing attempt by the father to have the Confederate scouts who killed young Meigs when he did not promptly surrender, tried for murder. (They never stood trial, but did leave the area for several years.)

Obviously, this is a specialized book intended for those with a good general knowledge of the war. It is well written and very readable and includes abundant footnotes that are almost as informative as the text. It is one of those books that you can open to almost any page and read easily. The maps are well done but due to the page size are not very useful for following the text except in a general way. The text provides personal details that make the reading all the more interesting and the use of war-time as well as later period pictures adds to the usefulness of the book. A book well worth the time for the more detail minded Civil War buff.



"I want Sheridan put in command of all the troops in the field, with instructions to put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes let our troops go also. Once started up the Valley they ought to be followed until we get possession of the Virginia Central Railroad."

Ulysses S. Grant in a telegram to Henry W. Halleck placing Philip Sheridan in command of Union forces in the Shenandoah Valley, August 1864.

