



CINCINNATI  
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE  
SERVING OHIO, KENTUCKY AND INDIANA SINCE 1956



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# THE CANISTER

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Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Cincinnati CWRT P. O. Box 621082 Cincinnati, Ohio 45262 <http://www.cincinnati-cwrt.org>

February, 2010 Issue

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Meeting Date: February 18, 2010

**Place: The Drake Center**

**(6:00) Sign-in and Social**  
**(7:15) Business Meeting**

**(6:30) Dinner**  
**(7:30) Speaker**

**Dinner Menu: Chicken Cordon Blue served with French Salad with Russian Dressing,  
Red Roasted Potatoes, Broccoli & Cheese, Dinner Rolls, Carmel Nut Apple Pie**  
**Vegetarian Option: Available upon request**

**Speaker: Kris Teters, Cincinnati Civil War Round Table**  
**A Contested Past: Alabama's Centennial Commemoration of the Civil War**

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**Reservations:** If you do not have an Automatic Reservation, please remember to email your meeting reservation to [reservations@cincinnati-cwrt.org](mailto:reservations@cincinnati-cwrt.org); call it in to Pat Homan at 513-861-2057 (h); or email: [homanfamily@fuse.net](mailto:homanfamily@fuse.net). If you are making a reservation for more than yourself, please provide the names of the others. Please note that **all reservations must be in no later than 8:00 pm Wednesday, February 10th, 2010.**

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## About our January Speaker:

It is an honor and a pleasure that Cincinnati Civil War Round Table member Kris Teters returns to the podium after being away from our group for several years. Kris's last presentation to the CCWRT occurred in 2003 when he spoke to us on Hood's Texas Brigade. Since then, he has been studying history at the University of Alabama and is now working on his PhD dissertation on the Union army and emancipation under the direction of Dr. George Rable. Kris received his M. A. in history from the University of Alabama in 2006, and his B. A. in history from Northern Kentucky University in 2003. He has co-authored an article with Dr. James Ramage entitled "Public Reaction to Ulysses S. Grant's Capture of Vicksburg" that is published in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*. He also has a publication with the History Press on Hood's Texas Brigade at the battle of Antietam.

As part of the nationwide effort to commemorate the Civil War Centennial (1961-1965), the Alabama Civil War Centennial Commission was created in 1959. With historian Albert B. Moore as its executive director, the Commission led numerous county commissions in organizing commemorative activities throughout the state during the centennial period. A distinctive rhetoric of romance and unity emerged in these commemorative exercises. During the course of the centennial, caucasian Alabamians constantly advanced a romantic version of their past, in which they could safely venerate the heroic virtues of their ancestors and the society that produced them. The historical issues of slavery and emancipation were shoved aside, for they did not fit into, and in fact, undermined this romantic Lost Cause narrative of the Southern past that white Alabamians were carefully constructing. Alongside this romance, there was a clear rhetoric of unity that called for North and South to rally together behind their common Civil War heritage.

Yet, just as Alabamians were observing the Civil War centennial, African-Americans were struggling to gain their civil rights. The Alabama Civil War centennial's rhetoric of romance was utilized as a weapon and defense mechanism against this struggle. As African-Americans challenged white Alabamians' social order in every way, the centennial allowed caucasian Alabamians to immerse themselves in a romantic past where the world seemed harmonious, perfect, and just. In short, romance allowed them to escape to an ideal past, in which they could better weather the storm of the present.

Mr. Teter's presentation investigates these and other aspects of the intriguing Civil War Centennial in Alabama. Perhaps the audience will see just how easily history can be used (or abused) to justify a political, economic, or social platform.



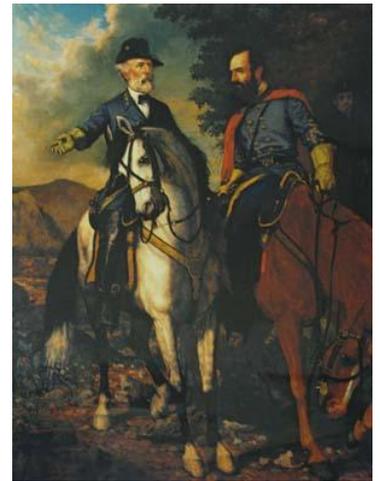
## Items of Interest:

**Winter Officer's Meeting:** The officer's and trustees of the Round Table met on Monday, January 25, 2010 to discuss the organization's business. Major items of business included the individual officer's reports, meeting and billing arrangements with the Drake Conference Center, and recent improvements in the General Fund's overall financial condition. A motion was made and passed to rescind the tabled motion that would have assessed a \$5.00 visitor fee to both the dinner price and the meeting only price on September 1, 2010 ( $\$27.00 + \$5.00 = \$32.00$  and  $\$5.00 + \$5.00 = \$10.00$ ). If concerns about our financial health reoccur in the future, this item will be revisited.

Other topics discussed included the upcoming Murfreesboro/Nashville Battlefield Trip, Patron or Lifetime Membership options, improving average attendance at the monthly meetings, bonding of the Treasurer will not be pursued because of the self-insurance option and requested operating restrictions, initial discussion on the possibility of developing a section of the CCWRT web site for members to share information on their Civil War relatives, what should be the Round Table's involvement in the upcoming Civil War Sesquicentennial, possibility of one major preservation project for the entire sesquicentennial period (2011-2015), and nominees for the open officer positions. If you would like additional information on any of the items discussed, please see one of the officers.

**Payment Due for Field Trip to Central Tennessee:** Reservations are now being accepted for a **May 1 - 3** CCWRT sponsored field trip to Central Tennessee. Tentative itinerary is as follows: May 1 - Morning drive to Nashville, afternoon guided tour of Fort Negley and surrounding area, and a three hour guided tour of the Dec 15-16, 1864 Battle of Nashville. May 2 - Guided tour of the Dec 31, 1862 - Jan 2, 1863 Battle of Stones River in Murfreesboro, TN and a visit to the Oaklands Historic House. May 3 - Explore points of interest involving the Nov. 30, 1864 Battle of Franklin including the Carter House and Carnton Plantation and then a mid-afternoon departure for return trip to Cincinnati. We will be staying both nights at the Smyrna, TN Hampton Inn. Cost of trip is \$80 and includes transportation and tours of Fort Negley, and Battles of Nashville and Stones River. Hotel accommodations, meals, entrance fees to Oaklands Historic House, Carter House, and Carnton Plantation are the responsibility of attendees. Contact Dan Bauer 513-759-4495 or e-mail at **DBauer002@cinci.rr.com** for reservations. Present checks to Dan Bauer at the February, March, or April meeting or mail them to Dan Bauer at 6581 Club Ln., West Chester, OH, 45069. Checks can be made out to The CCWRT. Checks will not be cashed until April.

**2009-2010 Dedicated Preservation Project:** The Cincinnati CWRT's preservation project for the 2009-2010 campaign year is to assist the Museum of the Confederacy. With this in mind, we ask that you strongly consider making a tax deductible gift to our Preservation Fund for the Museum's benefit. Your gift will not only be matched (up to \$500) by our Round Table's Preservation Fund but each donor will have 1 raffle ticket with his/her name on it dropped into a hat for every \$25 donated; thus a \$25 donation earns 1 ticket, a \$100 gift earns 4. The raffle prize is a beautiful 30 x 41 inch full color print of E. B. D. Julio's famous painting of the Lee/Jackson meeting preceding the Battle of Chancellorsville. The print is numbered, signed by the printer and framed. The original hangs in the Museum of the Confederacy. Your donation can be made at any of our meetings through May, 2010, and given to our treasurer, Jim Stewart, or mailed to the Cincinnati CWRT, c/o Preservation Project, P. O. Box 621082, Cincinnati, OH, 45262. Checks should be made out to CCWRT Preservation Fund. Any amount helps the cause and any gift of \$25 or more may win you a major conversation piece for your home.



**CWPT'S 2010 Annual Conference:** Join CWPT members and staff along with some of the nation's best known historians for four days of camaraderie and Civil War touring at the 2010 *Battle in the Bluegrass – The Fight for Kentucky* conference in Lexington, Kentucky on June 3 – 6, 2010. Tours will include the: Battle of Mill Springs; Battle of Perryville; Battle of Richmond; Historic Homes...and more! Invited speakers and scholars include Edwin C. Bearss, Kent Masterson Brown, Christopher Kolakowski, Richard McMurray and Richard Sommers. Conference Registration Fee is \$540 before January 17, 2010 and \$585 after January 17, 2010 - a small discount is available for on-line registration. Conference fee includes tours, tour guides, coaches, conference welcome packet, name tags, etc. Fee does not include hotel accommodations; you must make your own reservation. A special conference room rate of \$129 is available at the Lexington Downtown Hotel and Conference Center - the conference location - until Tuesday, May 11, 2010. For the full ad and schedule or to register on-line visit their web site at: [www.civilwar.org/annualconference](http://www.civilwar.org/annualconference).

**Get to know Your Fellow Members:** Most of us talk to and sit with the same group every meeting. We look forward to seeing our Round Table buddies and catching up on the latest news. For a change, however, consider talking to and sitting with a different group. Help us make visitors and new members feel welcome by introducing yourself to a person who you do not know and, just maybe, you'll discover another member who has the same Civil War interests as you do. Remember the color of your name on your name badge helps identify you. Blue is a visitor, red a new member who has joined in the last year, and black is a veteran member.

**Inclement Weather Plan:** If the weather turns bad, and the streets are difficult to travel, you can check the following sources to determine if the meeting is still on or if it has been cancelled. Check the home page on our web site at [www.cincinnatiwrt.org](http://www.cincinnatiwrt.org). We will post a simple update informing the membership on the status of the meeting.

1. Check your email for an update. If the weather leaves you wondering whether we'll meet or not, the ListServ will be used to communicate the latest information to members who have provided us their email address.
2. Call the Drake Conference Center at 513.418.2500 and inquire about the status of the meeting. If we decide to cancel, they will be the first to know and their switchboard operators will be informed.
3. Call Bob Limoseth, President, at 513.777.2160 or Pat Homan, Vice President, at 513.861.2057

**New Members:** A hearty welcome to our newest members, Norm Breckel, Rod Earhart, Dana Herbert, and Tom Williams.

**Newsletter Deadlines:** To facilitate the printing and timely distribution of the monthly newsletter, items to be considered for inclusion in the March Canister should be submitted to the editor no later than February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Information may be emailed to: [Dan\\_Bauer@CINFIN.com](mailto:Dan_Bauer@CINFIN.com)



## January Presentation:

...submitted by Mike Rhein



**Gary Johnson**

Imagine peering out from the CSS Virginia in the early dawn hours of March 9, 1862 at Hampton Roads, Virginia to see a strange-looking vessel bearing down on you. So odd it was that one Confederate sailor thought it appeared to be a raft transporting a boiler to shore for repairs. A cannon shot from this “boiler” dispelled all doubts at that moment when the United States’ first ironclad ship, the USS Monitor, charged from the area of the grounded USS Minnesota to engage an iron-plated ship, the CSS Virginia (formerly the USS Merrimack, previously a traditional wooden battleship) which had been rebuilt by the Confederates the previous year.

Our January speaker, Gary Johnson, in his presentation entitled “The Monitor Class Ironclads at the Dawn of Industrialized Warfare,” delivered a well-researched program, highlighted by a detailed power-point illustration in which he emphasized the impact of iron ships changing traditional naval warfare forever on that fateful day of March 9, 1862. The Monitor’s inventor, John Ericsson, was described as “the engineer of the century,” credited with earlier inventions such as a screw propeller (1836) and a novelty steam engine (1829). The Swedish inventor from New York, in a meeting with Secretary Welles, Cornelius Bushnell (a friend of Ericsson’s) and President Abraham Lincoln in Sept. 1861, according to Mr. Johnson, proclaimed, “I can build this (a monitor) in 90 days.” The Monitor would be ready just in time to arrive at Hampton Roads on the evening of March 8, 1862, the day before the epic confrontation. Mr. Johnson described in great detail the dimensions of the Monitor: 179 feet long with a 41-foot-long beam, a 10-and-a-half foot draft with a displacement of 987 tons, its 120-ton turret being nine feet high at a 20-foot diameter, containing two Dahlgren guns. The chief disadvantage of the turret’s design, according to Mr. Johnson, was that, in the action of rotating, it “could not be stopped precisely.” The turret was covered with eight one-inch layers of rolled iron.

He added that the Monitor contained two boilers (25 psi) and two piston bilge pumps, noting that the “boiler tubes leaked often.” The ship’s galley could be as hot as 160 degrees; consequently meals usually were “cooked topside.” Crew berths were in a 25 X 40 foot space, 45 men in hammocks contending with 90 to 100 degree temperatures below the decks. Mr. Johnson quoted one Monitor sailor, William Keeler, describing the vessel as “our submarine cellar” and “Hell is an icehouse inside this ship.” The speaker referred to such other issues as “wet feet in water leaks, poor boiler draft, constant machinery noise.” He described a battle problem with the Monitor in terms of the commander in the pilot house (in front of the turret) not being able to communicate with the turret’s gun crew which “had no direction or bearing.”

Our speaker, a former submarine officer for five years, described that epic battle during which “they circle each other, point blank range.” The confrontation would last about three to four hours. The Monitor fired 41 shots of which 21 struck the CSS Virginia. The Virginia fired 100 shots, 21 hitting the Monitor. Mr. Johnson noted that none of the Monitor’s crew was killed, three being injured while two died and 19 sustained wounds. Both ships incurred numerous dents, the Merrimack’s ram having broken off from the previous day’s ramming of the USS Cumberland which sunk.

Mr. Johnson asked a pertinent question about that historic battle: “Who won?” His conclusion was that it was a “ship-to-ship draw.” Nevertheless, the Monitor, in the North’s view, became an “icon of success.” The Ironclad Board, established by the U.S. Navy in August, 1861 under the leadership of Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles pushed for more ironclad construction. Even inland river ports were utilized (besides the usual ocean-side navy yards) to construct ironclads, including sites such as Pittsburgh, Cincinnati (three were built here during the war) and Mound City, Illinois.

The monitor-style ship was not suitable for ocean sailing due to its low draft. Mr. Johnson said that there was “anxiety from lack of seaworthiness.” However, for all of its defects, there was still enough faith in the monitor type such that, as the war wore on, improvements were made. He described various classes of monitors built during the Civil War: the Passaic Class (1335 tons with 15-inch guns), Canonicus Class (2100 tons) and Casco Class (light draft), adding that the Swift-Niles Shipyard in Cincinnati produced three Canonicus Class monitors (the Catawba, Coneonta and Tippecanoe). There were even double-turreted monitors (2592 tons, 226 feet long with four Dahlgren guns). Monitors, Mr. Johnson noted, were utilized in the 1864-65 Mississippi River campaign, the Chesapeake Bay/James River operations and in the Mobile Bay, Alabama, Fort McAllister, Georgia battles of 1864, the Siege of Charleston in 1863-65, and the Fort Fisher, North Carolina battle in 1865.

The Monitor was sunk off Cape Hatteras on Dec. 31, 1862 during a fierce storm. Mr. Johnson said it sunk 240 feet to the ocean floor during which the turret was separated from the hull. It was first discovered in 1973, later the turret and engine parts to be raised in Aug., 2002. He said the recovered items are being “conserved in tanks of water” at the USS Monitor Center. Mr. Johnson, in detailing the postwar monitor development, emphasized that there was “no major iron ship construction until the 1880’s” and “not modernized until the 1890’s,” adding that the “last Civil War monitor was scrapped in 1908. A highlight after the excellent program was the viewing of the display of a wooden model version of the USS Monitor, constructed in exquisite detail by ship model builder Harry Schmidt, a guest at the CCWRT meeting.



**Harry Schmidt**

# Book Review

...submitted by Thomas L. Breiner

The State of Jones: The Small Southern County That Seceded from the Confederacy by Sally Jenkins and John Stauffer is a truly intriguing tale of Jones County Mississippi during the Civil War. It is also the tale purported to be a biography of the infamous Newton Knight, a very controversial figure in story of Mississippi, the Civil War and Reconstruction. Newton Knight and with him Jones County Mississippi seceded from the Confederacy in 1863 after the fall of Vicksburg. Knight and 69 fellow Jones County residents were forced into Company F 7<sup>th</sup> Mississippi Battalion after General P.T.G. Beauregard evacuated Corinth in May of 1862. Newton was present at the Battle of Corinth in October 1862. He quickly deserted in November. Unfortunately, he was captured and agreed to return to his unit rather than face a firing squad, probably a good decision. The 7<sup>th</sup> Mississippi was attached to the forces defending Vicksburg. Newton deserted for a second time after the surrender of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. This time he successfully returned to Jones County and formed an unofficial company, the Jones County Scouts, in which he was elected captain.

Jones County was strongly Unionist. Newton Knight was elected the county's delegate at the secession conference, but never got to vote against secession. He was an uneducated, antislavery farmer in a poor Mississippi county. He had two families that over time became intertwined due to their being isolated from the rest of Mississippi. He had one white and one black family. His relationship with a slave name Rachel developed during his years avoiding Confederate attempts to end his control over Jones County during 1863 through 1865. The end result of this relationship is that Newton Jones ended up enslaving both of his families.

This work is a very interesting and compelling story that purports to be the history of Jones County and the life of Newton Jones; however, to me it is more fiction than history. The authors do a fantastic job of collecting the minimal amount of date available and have created a very interesting, but largely unsubstantiated tale of the events that transpired in Jones County during the last years of the Civil War. Newton Knight did not write reports and for the majority of his life refused to discuss the Civil War and his participation in it. The unofficial unit that he commanded supposedly tried to join the Union Army, but never succeeded in being officially enlisted. Newton finally agreed to talk with a newspaper reporter in 1921, shortly before his death. He was 92 years old. The information he provided can hardly be called reliable at that stage in his life; fifty-six years after the war. There were no diaries, letters or reports to help him recall accurately of the events that transpired and definitely identify places and persons involved.

The problem with this type of history is that there are insufficient first hand accounts and time has a tendency to make events larger than life or less significant. While I admit that this is a very well written book and I found it extremely interesting, I cannot state that it represents the true story of Jones County or for that matter the life of Newton Knight. I recommend this work for anyone interested in a truly remarkable piece of historical fiction. The authors fail to adequately footnote statements and instead use endnotes to hide the lack of supporting documentation. The endnotes are weak and the bibliography is slim with no way to substantiate events. The authors do not even give you a good map of where Jones County is located in the state or where these events supposedly occurred. Just like in the 1948 trial of Davis Knight for polluting a white woman, the verdict was overturned on appeal because, just like the history of Jones County, the court could not tell the difference between black and white. It is said that history is written by the victors and in this case the Confederates won. The tale of these Unionists is more myth and folklore rather than hard history. Unfortunately, the real history of Jones County and the Civil War will never be known.

# January Quiz:

1. What general was born 186 years ago today, January 21<sup>st</sup> 1824? **A. Stonewall Jackson**
2. Who did Commodore Smith, the senior member of the Ironclad Board, appoint to command the USS Monitor? **A. John Lorimer Worden**
3. On March 8, 1862 the Battle of Hampton Roads began. On that day the CSS Virginia destroyed two US Navy ships and three transports. Name the two federal warships. **A. USS Congress and USS Cumberland**
4. The USS \_\_\_\_\_ was towing the USS Monitor when she went down near Cape Hatteras on December 30, 1862. **A. Rhode Island**
5. Why did would be spectators begin to arrive at the Capitol before sunrise on January 21, 1861? By 9:00a.m. all the senate gallery seats were taken and late arrivers “frantically attempted to enter the already crowded cloakrooms and lobby adjacent to the chamber.” **A. Jefferson Davis’ resignation and farewell address to the Senate**
6. One of the 40 Union generals buried at Spring Grove Cemetery was appointed commandant of Camp Dennison on January 15, 1863. Name him. **A. George Neff**

# Future Presentations:

March 18	Lois J. Lambert, CCWRT <i>Heroes of the Western Theater: 33rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry</i>
April 15	John Fazio, Cleveland CWRT <i>Francis and Arabella Barlow; John and Fanny Gordon: Love and War</i>
May 20	Dale Phillips, George Rogers Clark NHP <i>The Real First Day of Chickamauga: September 18, 1863</i>
September 10	Robert E. L. Krick, Jr., Richmond Nat’l Battlefield <i>“Bombproof Officers” or Backbone of the Army?: A Look at Staff Officers in the Army of Northern Virginia</i>
October 10	Ron Blair, CCWRT <i>Colonel Frank Wolford, 1<sup>st</sup> Kentucky (US) Cavalry</i>
November 18	Eric J. Wittenberg, The Ohio State University <i>Plenty of Blame to Go Around: Jeb Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg</i>
January, 2011	Ralph Arnold, CCWRT <i>Civil War Military Railroads</i>
February, 2011	Pat Homan, CCWRT <i>Paved with Good Intentions: The Road to War</i>
March 2011	David Mowery, CCWRT and OCWTC <i>America’s Longest Cavalry Ride: Morgan’s 1863 Raid Around Cincinnati</i>

## ABOUT THE CINCINNATI CWRT:

**Membership** in the Cincinnati CWRT is open to anyone with an active interest in the American Civil War. Annual dues (prorated throughout the year to new members) are \$25 for a Regular Membership. This fee helps cover operating costs which include this newsletter, as well as speaker expenses. A Sustaining Member level of membership is also available for \$50 (single) and \$85 (couple). The purpose of this membership category is to encourage and recognize members who make additional contributions of \$25 or more, in addition to their annual dues in any fiscal year, to the objectives and programs of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table. If you are joining for the first time, there is a one-time, lifetime, initiation fee of \$20.

**Dinner reservations** are required, and can be made prior to the reservations deadline either by an email to [reservations@cincinnatiwrt.org](mailto:reservations@cincinnatiwrt.org) or by a phone call to the officer taking reservations for the meeting (whose name and number is listed on the header of the current *Canister*). **Meals** currently cost \$27. Menu selection will change with each meeting. A vegetarian meal option is available, if requested prior to the reservations cut-off date.

**A Meeting Only Fee** of \$5.00 is assessed to members, visitors and guests who arrive after dinner to hear the speaker. The monies collected are used to help offset the expenses of the evening's activities.

**Late Reservations and Walk-ins without a reservation:** Our ability to be flexible for late reservations or walk-ins is now restricted by the fact that the Drake Center only prepares meals according to the reservation count called in. Therefore, **Late Reservations** (after the Wednesday by 8:00 pm which is eight days before the meeting) will be accepted conditionally, subject to the caterer's ability to honor a change in dinner count if received close to the meeting date. **Late Reservations and Walk-ins without a reservation** will only be able to have dinner if offset by cancellations or no-shows, or if the caterer determines that sufficient food is available.

**Late cancellations** may be made by email or phone. Since a cancellation after the Wednesday 8:00 pm deadline which is eight days before the meeting means that CCWRT has guaranteed payment to The Drake Center for the reserved number of meals, the Treasurer will review the number of late cancellations and late reservations for every meeting. If a late cancellation results in the CCWRT being required to pay for an extra meal, the person making the late cancellation will be expected to pay for the dinner. **No-shows** who have a dinner reservation but do not attend will be billed for the meal. **Meetings** are held the third Thursday of the month, September – November and January – May at The Drake Center, 151 West Galbraith Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45216 (**Phone: 513-418-2500**). If traveling Interstate 75, exit at Galbraith Road (Exit 10) and go west one mile. If coming across the Ronald Reagan Cross County Highway, take the Galbraith Road exit and go west two miles. Or, take the Galbraith/Winton exit and go east one mile. **Free parking** is available in the WEST PAVILION parking lot. The West Pavilion entrance will take you to the meeting rooms. To get to our meeting room enter the West Pavilion and take the elevators to your right to level A, go to your right and Motivation Meeting Room G is located at the end of the hallway.

## CINCINNATI CWRT OFFICERS:

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**Don't Forget to Bring a Friend!**