



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



THE CANISTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Cincinnati CWRT PO Box 621082 Cincinnati, Ohio 45262 <http://www.cincinnatiwrt.org>
 March, 2008 Issue

Meeting Date: March 20, 2008

Place: Quality Hotel and Suites

Time: (6:00) Sign-in and Conversation

(6:45) Dinner: - Fresh Roasted Turkey Breast, Oasis Salad, Garlic Mashed Potatoes,
 Capri Vegetable Medley, Pumpkin Pie

(A vegetarian meal option is available, if requested prior to the reservations cut-off date)

(7:45): Meeting and Program

Speaker: Gary Q. Johnson, CCWRT:

Topic: *The CSS Hunley, A Weapon Ahead of Its Time*

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you do not have an Automatic Reservation, please remember to email your meeting reservation to reservations@cincinnatiwrt.org; call it in to Bob Limoseth at **513.777.2160** (h); or email: rlimo@fuse.net. If you are making a reservation for more than yourself please provide the names of the others.



CSS Hunley (U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph)

Cincinnati Civil War Round Table member Gary Johnson will speak for the first time to the organization at its March meeting. Gary is a chemical engineering graduate of the Ohio State University. He attended college on a Naval ROTC scholarship and served five years after graduation as an officer qualified in submarines and nuclear propulsion. His ships were home-ported in Charleston, South Carolina. After leaving the Navy, he worked for Procter & Gamble for 27 years in a variety of Health, Safety, and Environment roles to support manufacturing sites. About six years ago, he left P&G to become an Industrial Ventilation Consultant.

Gary stated that his desire to learn more about the Civil War probably started after he saw two famous Civil War classic movies, "The Great Locomotive Chase" and "The Horse Soldiers," and because two excellent history teachers in junior and senior high school taught him the Civil War subject the "right way." While Gary was stationed at Charleston with the U.S. Navy, he gained much exposure to Civil War history, which stirred up his childhood interests in the war. Then, author and oceanic archaeologist Clive Cussler discovered the sunken wreck of the Confederate CSS *Hunley* in Charleston harbor on May 3, 1995. The combination of submarines and Civil War was too much to resist for Gary. He eagerly joined the 501(c)(3) organization "*Friends of the Hunley*" to learn more about the world-famous vessel. Since that time, Gary has made multiple visits to the Charleston shipyard site where the *Hunley* is being restored for public display.



Mr. Johnson plans to share his deep knowledge of the CSS *Hunley* submarine using a submariner's perspective – a viewpoint that Gary is uniquely qualified to give. He first will review the general situation that led to the Confederacy's use of an unproven weapon like the *Hunley*, and then he will discuss the problem-solving and sacrifices made to develop a working submersible that could destroy an enemy ship. Gary will highlight the famous mission of the CSS *Hunley* on the night of February 17, 1864, when the vessel earned its rank in the annals of military history by becoming the first submarine to successfully sink an enemy ship (the USS *Housatonic*) in combat. Mysteriously, however, the CSS *Hunley* and its entire crew were lost minutes after the *Housatonic* went to the bottom of the harbor. Why? Gary will present some details surrounding the recovery of the *Hunley* wreck and, most importantly, what facts it has revealed about the *Hunley*, its operators, and that fateful evening in 1864.

Miscellaneous Announcements

New Member Search: As you know, we are always looking for new members. If you know of someone who has an interest in history, especially America's great Civil War, please invite them to attend one of our meetings. And, if you have a relative, neighbor, friend or work associate that you think might be interested in our group, forward them an email copy of the monthly *Canister* you receive for their review and enjoyment. Paper copies can also be provided for a three month period, if they are not an email user, by providing Membership and Publicity Chairman Jim Chaney their mailing address. Jim can also assist you on any and all questions regarding membership in one of the oldest, and we think the best, Round Tables in the region.

Announcement from the Hamilton Civil War Round Table

The Hamilton CWRT would like to invite our members to their April 9th meeting with author Jim Bissland. Some of our members will be familiar with Jim's new book, sited below, because he was one of the featured speakers at the recent Cincinnati Public Library's Civil War History Day they attended on Sunday, February 24, 2008. Note also that there will be a new meeting location for this meeting.

Meeting Location will change, and reservations will be required for the April 9th meeting with Jim Bissland. The meeting will begin at 6:00 PM, and will be held at the Symmes Tavern on the Green, 500 Wessel Drive, Fairfield OH 45014. The restaurant location is near the intersection of Nilles Road and Pleasant Avenue (US 127) in Fairfield. Members who need directions can get them off the [Cincinnati CWRT website](#) by first clicking on the "Go [here](#) for details" link at the top of the home page and then on the [Symmes Tavern on the Green](#) link. Dinner will be a buffet, with the choice of a beef or chicken entrée, and will cost \$25. Dinner reservations will be required by Sunday, April 6, to Glenn Purdy at 513-737-7377, or email to glennp@ix.netcom.com.

Jim is the author of *Blood, Tears, & Glory: How Ohioans Won the Civil War*. The book discusses "how Ohio men and women led the nation to victory. No State did more than Ohio to assure victory for the Union. While

Easterners were battling to a bloody stalemate, Midwestern farmers, shopkeepers, and country lawyers fighting elsewhere were shaping the war's outcome. Dismissed by haughty Easterners as 'armed rabble' or 'drunkards,' these citizen-soldiers, white and black, often were poorly trained and poorly equipped—but they were tough, confident, and supported by strong women who found their own ways to get into the fight." For more information on the book, see <http://www.orangefrazer.com/btg/>.

Cincinnati Civil War Round Table February Quiz

1. Why was "Old Capitol Prison", located in Washington D.C., where suspected Confederate sympathizers were held, called "Old Capitol Prison?"
2. In the official exchange of prisoners, a lieutenant was to be exchanged for 4 enlisted men. How many enlisted men were to be traded for a general?
3. There were 6 men who held the post of Confederate Secretary of War. Name 3. (bonus points will be awarded for each additional correct answer)
4. In stark contrast the Confederacy only had one Secretary of the Navy. He was appointed February 21, 1861. Name him.
5. What U.S. gunboat made a dramatic dash past Confederate batteries at Island No. 10 on April 4, 1862, undermining the Confederate defenses on the Mississippi?
6. What two Confederate forts did Admiral David G. Farragut's fleet have to pass under fire to capture New Orleans on April 24, 1862?

Answers to Quiz

1. The building had been the temporary National Capitol while The Capitol was rebuilt following its torching by the British in 1814.
2. 60
3. Leroy Walker, Judah Benjamin, George Randolph, Gustavus Smith, James Seddon, John C. Breckinridge
4. Stephen Mallory
5. The USS Carondelet
6. Fort Jackson and Fort Philip

February Presentation, Summarized by Pat Homan:

The hardy members who ventured forth into the Thursday night snow storm were privileged to hear an interesting presentation by our own Dr. Robert McLaurin, MD on the River Navies. The actual title was: *River Navies: The Forgotten Warriors*. Dr. McLaurin started by noting how few presentations had been done on the river navies or brown water sailors in the history of presentations to the Cincinnati Round Table.

The Union started the war with a total of 40 ships on the inland waters, which would have included the Great Lakes. Of these, only three were steam powered. A fleet was rapidly developed which included four types of gunboats and three types of auxiliaries. The Four Gunboats were: the Ironclad, the Tinclad, the Timberclad and the Cottonclad. The Auxiliaries were the Mortar boats, the Ram boats and the Torpedo boats. After discussing each type, greatly aided by excellent PowerPoint slides, Bob concentrated on the Eads built gunboats, which were also known as Pook's Turtles, after the designer, Samuel Pook. John Eads, the builder, constructed the first of the nine ships in 45 days. These boats were in two classes, the City Class, seven ships with a weight of 500 tons, and the two larger 1000-ton vessels. Their armament and construction were similar. Each had 13 guns, four on each side, three forward and two in the stern. The cannon were initially smoothbore Dahlgren's, which many preferred, as a round fired from a smoothbore would skip over the water and into the target. When many of these were replaced by rifled Parrott's, it was noted that the shot would bore into the water or land. It was noted that the first use of ironclads was not in our Civil War but by the French in the Crimean war.

The most famous of the craft was the "Carondelet" named for a suburb of St. Louis, where the shipyard was

located. This ship participated in the battles at Forts Henry and Donelson, Island No. 10, Fort Pillow and Vicksburg. At Donelson, the Carondelet was hit once by a round from the 124-pound Columbiad mounted at the fort, but suffered more severe damage from one of her own guns exploding. After repair, she went on to Island No. 10. When Capt. Foote could not bring the Island to submission, the Carondelet ran by the island at night. After being joined by several other ironclads, the island was forced to surrender. The next action was at Plum Point, where the Confederates successfully used several ramboats, which sank the Cincinnati and the Mound City, sister ships of the Carondelet.

Dr. McLaurin briefly discussed the other types of vessels. The tinclad was named as its armor plating was one inch of iron. The Wood and Cotton clad ships are self-explanatory. The Mortar boat was actually a barge that mounted one mortar and carried riflemen for defense. The Ramboats had an ironclad wooden spar which projected below the waterline from a steam-power craft and only carried armor on the front. The Torpedo boats were similar but they mounted a torpedo or mine on the spar.

The Confederates had the only successful use of rams but they did develop one ironclad, the Arkansas, which had a short but spectacular career. The Confederates had started the war with no ships and did well to develop what they did. The first Ironclad, in this hemisphere, was the Manassas, which predated the Eads ships and was built in New Orleans. The Confederates also developed the submarine, the Hunley, which is a topic of next month's presentation. They also developed a very successful "torpedo" which would be termed a mine today. These weapons gave Admiral Farragut some problems at Mobile Bay.

The Arkansas had been at Plum Point and escaped to the Yazoo River after the battle. When falling water threatened to trap the vessel, a dam was built above the ship which held back water so that when the water was released the Arkansas could ride the crest back to the Mississippi. Her arrival was greeted by the Union fleet that took her under fire. During the ensuing battle the Arkansas rammed the Carondelet and put the ship out of action before the skipper of the Arkansas, Isaac Brown, managed to escape with the ship to Vicksburg. She was repaired there and sent further down river to Baton Rouge. During this trip, her boiler's failed and the Arkansas was burned to prevent her capture by Union forces.

The Carondelet was kept by the Navy until 1870; it then became a wharf boat in Gallipolis. During one of the Ohio's spring floods, the vessel was washed downriver and sank near the town of Manchester. Her hull is still there, in the mud.

A book review which appeared in the February, 2008 issue of the

Civil War
ROUNDTABLE
Of
Arkansas
P.O. Box 7217 • Little Rock, Arkansas 72217



God Help the Irish! The History of the Irish Brigade

by Phillip Thomas Tucker

THE CIVIL WAR CONTINUES TO FASCINATE HISTORIANS AND GENERAL READERS.

Contemporary Civil War scholarship has brought to light the important roles certain ethnic groups played during that tumultuous time in our nation's history. Two new books, focusing on the participation of Irish immigrants in both the Union and Confederate armies, add to this growing area of knowledge. While the famed fighting prowess of the Irish Brigade at Antietam and Gettysburg is well known, in *God Help the Irish!*, historian Phillip T. Tucker emphasizes the lives and experiences of the individual Irish soldiers fighting in the ranks of the Brigade, supplying a better understanding of the Irish Brigade and why it became one of the elite combat units of the Civil War. The axiom that the winners of wars write the histories is especially valid in regard to the story of the Irish who fought for the Confederacy from 1861–1865. Throughout the course of the Civil War, Irish

Confederates made invaluable contributions to all aspects of the war effort. Yet, the Irish have largely been the forgotten soldiers of the South. In *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers*, Tucker illuminates these overlooked participants. Together, the two books provide a full picture of the roles Irish soldiers played in the Civil War.

PHILLIP THOMAS TUCKER, winner of the Douglas Southall Freeman Award in 1993, has written fifteen books on Civil War, Irish, and African American history including *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers* (McWhiney Foundation Press, 2007). He is an historian for the United States Air Force in Washington, D.C., and lives in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Article regarding the USSC in Kentucky from 1862:



LOUISVILLE DAILY JOURNAL, December 7, 1862. The following is a memorandum of sanitary stores sent by the Kentucky Branch, United States Sanitary Commission, Louisville, to the sick and wounded soldiers at Perryville, Danville, Harrodsburg, and Lebanon, from October 11th to November 11th: 1,132 comforts and blankets, 221 bed ticks, 486 pillows, 352 pillow-cases, 25 pillow-ticks, 2,210 sheets, 2,262 shirts, 2,341 pairs drawers, 725 handkerchiefs, 1,402 towels, 324 coats, 12 vests, 39 pairs pants, 791 pairs socks, 80 cushions, 6 pairs slippers, 1,397 lbs bandages, 525 abdominal bandages and pads, 72 pincushions, 1,167 lbs rags and lint, 32 dressing gowns, 2 bolts calico, 1 bolt jeans, 20 eyeshades, 61 pairs crutches, 20 canes, 260 cans fruit, 1,628 lbs dried fruit, 1,073 lbs butter, 40 lbs cheese, 160 lbs crackers, 234 lbs groceries, 130 lbs farina, 121 ½ lbs tea, 575 lbs white sugar, 40 lbs ground flaxseed, 50 lbs rice, 72 lbs chocolate, 111 lbs dried beef, 150 lbs canvassed hams, 675 bottles liquor, wine, and cordials, 16 bushels green apples, 103 bushels Irish potatoes, 21 bushels onions, 2 bushels sweet potatoes, 220 loaves of bread, 157 fowls, 4 kegs pickles, 2 kegs sirups, 3 boxes lemons, 50 lbs chewing tobacco, 1 box ink, 298 dozen eggs, 1 kit mackerel, 5 hhds ice, 40 sponges, 39 lbs cornstarch, 43 packs envelopes, 45 quires of paper, 1 box sardines, 69 lbs castile soap, 400 lbs German soap, 200 lbs candles, 120 cans concentrated milk, 99 cans beef tea, 287 books, magazines, and papers, 1 gross matches, 36 medicine cups, 2 boxes medicines, 18 pairs mittens, 81 combs, 24 buckets, 100 tin plates, 100 tin cups, 34 wash-bowles [sic], 24 spittoons, 12 brooms, 5 coffee pots, 6 lanterns, 6 cotton mops, 12 chambers, and 3 boxes tin ware

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

To facilitate the printing and timely distribution of the monthly newsletter, information for it should be submitted to the editor no later than the following dates:

March 28th, 2008

April 25th, 2008

Information may be emailed to waldbill@xavier.edu

FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

2008 Programs

April 17, 2008

Raymond Mulesky: *Thunder From a Clear Sky: Stovepipe Johnson's Confederate Raid on Newburgh, Indiana*

May 15, 2008

Joseph Reinhart: *August Willich's Gallant Dutchmen: Bullets, Bayonets and Beer"*

September 18, 2008

John F. Marszalek: *Topic TBD*

October 16, 2008

Roger Billings, CCWRT: *Lincoln at the Civil War Battlefields*

November 20, 2008

Edwin C. Bearss: *Arlington, VA - Topic TBD*

We Who Study Must Also Strive To Save!

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 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 \$25. 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 caterer will not be preparing food in the hotel kitchen, but will be transporting food from their facility to the hotel. Therefore, **Late Reservations** (after Sunday prior to 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 Sunday deadline means that CCWRT has guaranteed payment to the caterer 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 CCWRT's 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 at the Quality Hotel and Suites, 4747 Montgomery Road, Norwood, Ohio (**telephone 513-351-6000**). If traveling Interstate 75, exit at Exit #7, Ohio 562 (The Norwood Lateral) and travel east to the Montgomery Road exit. After exiting, "double-back" by turning left across the bridge, turning left again after the bridge and turning left at the light onto Montgomery. If coming from Interstate 71, also exit at Exit #7, Ohio 562 (The Norwood Lateral) and go west to the Montgomery Road exit. After exiting, continue straight to the light and turn left onto Montgomery. The Quality is on the right, and there is plenty of free parking.

CINCINNATI CWRT OFFICERS:

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Don't Forget to Bring a Friend!