



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 P. O. Box 621082 Cincinnati, Ohio 45262 <http://www.cincinnati-cwrt.org>
May, 2009 Issue

Meeting Date: May 21, 2009

Place: The Drake Center

(6:00) Sign-in and Social

(6:30) Menu: Boneless Chicken Breast, stuffed with gravy and traditional bread stuffing; Glazed Baby Carrots; Whipped Potatoes; Caesar Salad; and cream filled Pastries topped with Chocolate Sauce; Coffee, Tea and Water

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

(7:15) Business Meeting

(7:30) Speaker

Speaker: Greg Biggs, Clarksville (TN) CWRT

Topic: Nashville: The Siren's Song of the Western Confederacy

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you do not have an Automatic Reservation, please remember to email your meeting reservation to reservations@cincinnati-cwrt.org; call it in to Pat Homan at 513-861-2057 (h); or email: 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, May 13, 2009.**

In May we welcome back Greg Biggs, the current President and Program Chair of the Clarksville (TN) Civil War Round Table, who will be making his 7th speaking appearance before the Cincinnati CWRT. Before moving to Tennessee several years ago, Greg had filled several different leadership roles within the Ohio Civil War community, including vice with the Western Ohio Civil War Round Table and the Ohio Civil War Association. He was also an Associate Editor of *Blue & Gray Magazine*, the most renowned publication for self-guided Civil War tours in the world. Greg has written and published articles for *Blue & Gray Magazine*, *Civil War Regiments*, *The Civil War News*, and *American Vexillum*, and he has been a research contributor to Civil War books written by such authors as Larry Daniel, Robert Maberry, Gordon Rhea, Russell Brown, John Coski, Wiley Sword, Eric Wittenberg, and Andrew Johnson. Greg is best known for his work on Civil War battle flags. He is the flag research consultant for artists Don



president and program director positions *Table* and the Ohio Civil War Association. *& Gray Magazine*, the most renowned tours in the world. Greg has written and *Magazine*, *Civil War Regiments*, *The Civil Magazine*, and he has been a research such authors as Larry Daniel, Robert Maberry, Gordon Rhea, Russell Brown, John Coski, Wiley Sword, Eric Wittenberg, and Andrew Johnson. Greg is best known for his work on Civil War battle flags. He is the flag research consultant for artists Don

Troiani, John Paul Strain, and Dale Gallon. Greg also serves as the Civil War flag consultant for several state museums, including Tennessee, Georgia, Texas, Alabama, North Carolina, and Ohio. Greg is presently authoring three books on flags. They are *Tattered Banners: Alabama's Civil War Flags* and *I Go to Illustrate Georgia: Civil War Flags of Georgia Troops*, forthcoming from Ironclad Publishing; and *Volunteer Banners: Tennessee's Civil War Flags*, a book he is writing for the Tennessee State Museum, to be published by the University of Tennessee Press.

Greg's presentation will take a deeper look at one of the Confederacy's most important cities: Nashville, Tennessee. At the beginning of the Civil War, the economic and political status of Nashville within the Confederacy rivaled that of New Orleans. Nashville's loss to the enemy would deal an unrecoverable blow to the South. In December, 1864, the Confederate Army of Tennessee laid siege to the massive Union fortifications and garrison of Nashville. In a two day fight, that army was all but destroyed. Their arrival at the city's door was the culmination of Confederate strategy that began when the city was captured by Union forces in February, 1862. Nashville, thereafter, became the "Siren's Song" for Confederate strategy in the west, luring Confederate offensives no less than five times. Greg will discuss in detail the city's importance and each of the five attempts to retake it.

Miscellaneous Announcements:

Reservations for the May 21, 2009 Meeting: **If you made a reservation to hear Harold Holzer speak at the May meeting, please note that it has been canceled due to the change in speakers!** You must follow our standing procedure for making a reservation as found on page one of this Newsletter. Standing Reservations will be the only reservations honored because they carry over from meeting to meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, and you have a Standing Reservation, you must let Pat Homan know you will not be in attendance.

Election of Officers: The election of officers for the 2009 – 2010 campaign season took place during the April business meeting. Elected to one year terms were the following individuals:

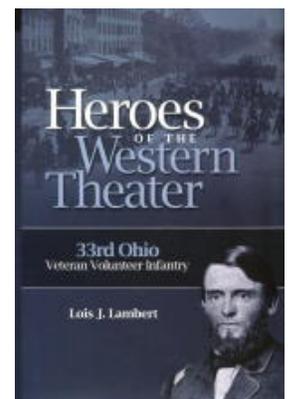
Bob Limoseth – President
Pat Homan - Vice President
Jim Stewart – Treasurer
Mike Rhein – Secretary

David Mowery - Program Chair
Dan Bauer - Newsletter Editor
Mike Rogers - Membership and Publicity
Dan Reigle - Trustee (2 year)

In addition to the officer positions listed above, Alan Berenson has agreed to continue on as Preservation Chair; Dan Reigle as Webmaster; John Steiner as ListServ Director; and Shane Gamble has accepted the assignment of club Photographer. John Linnenberg will continue on as one of our two trustees by fulfilling the second year of his two year term, a position to which he was elected at last year's Annual Meeting.

CCWRT Member Lois Lambert Wins 2nd OGS Book Award: At the annual conference of the Ohio Genealogical Society on April 4th, CCWRT member Lois Lambert became a two-time winner of OGS' "Oliver Hazard Perry Award for Ohio-related Military Historical Records," winning the 2009 award for her new book, *Heroes of the Western Theater: 33rd Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry*. It was published in 2008 by Little Miami Publishing Company, Milford. Dan Reigle's review of the book is available on our web site. The book is being stocked in the major Cincinnati-area bookstores, and is also available at <http://www.littlemiamibooks.com/>.

Last year, Lois won the award for *91st Ohio Volunteer Infantry With the Civil War Letters of Lt. Col. Benjamin Franklin Coates*. Congratulations to Lois!



Last Month for Silent Auction Items: As we head into our summer break, we will wrap-up our remaining Silent Auctions for this year. The May meeting will be your last chance to bid on the **two** Jay Ashurst prints of the CSS Alabama - compliments of Mike Rhein; and the recently released two set biography of: **Abraham Lincoln: A Life** by Lincoln scholar Michael Burlingame – compliments of Terry Borkenhagen. A portion of last month's review of the Burlingame books is reprinted here because of the long anticipated wait for this significant new addition to the field of Lincoln literature.

"Lincoln scholars have waited anxiously for this book for decades. Its triumphant publication proves it was well worth the wait. Few scholars have written with greater insight about the psychology of Lincoln. No one in recent history has uncovered more fresh sources than Michael Burlingame. This profound and masterful portrait will be read and studied for years to come." -- Doris Kearns Goodwin

Incorporating the field notes of earlier biographers, along with decades of research in multiple manuscript archives and long—neglected newspapers, this remarkable work will both alter and reinforce current understanding of America's sixteenth president.

The two-volume set retails for \$125.00. If interested in making a bid for this wonderful addition to the field of Lincoln literature, or the Ashurst prints, add your name and bid amount to the auction sheets found on the display table across from the check-in table...and remember...all proceeds benefit preservation.

Civil War Battlefield Preservation Donations Approved: Two Preservation Fund donations were approved by the membership at the April meeting. The first donation, in the amount of \$200, went to the Chickamauga Battlefield Preservation Association. The check was presented by Dan Bauer, our tour coordinator for the recently completed battlefield trip to Chickamauga. Receiving the contribution was Jim Ogden, Chief Historian of the Chickamauga National Military Park. Jim graciously volunteered his weekend to act as our tour guide for the May 1-3 visit to the Chickamauga and Lookout Mountain Battlefields. His knowledge, presentation and interaction with our group was greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

A second contribution in the amount of \$300 went to the Stones River National Military Park to help them clean-up and restore damaged areas resulting from the recent tornado that hit their area on April 10, 2009. Restoration of park services is expected to take some time and Round Tables in and around the Middle Tennessee area have been supporting their recovery efforts. Our May speaker, Greg Biggs, brought this idea to our attention, and he put us in contact with Ranger Jim Lewis who provided pictures of the damage and information for receiving our contribution. We thank both of these individuals for their commitment to helping us preserve our battlefield heritage.

Civil War Sesquicentennial Meeting: A kickoff discussion was held at Museum Center on Friday, April 24 to identify preliminary planning in Southwest Ohio for the upcoming sesquicentennial of the American Civil War (2011-2015). Hosted by the Ohio Humanities Council and the Ohio Historical Society, the objective was to identify partnerships for the sharing of plans – especially those that focus on collections and traveling exhibits. Representing the Round Table was Bob Limoseth and Pat Homan. As information becomes available, they will share it with the membership.

Standing Reservations Reminder: If you currently have a Standing Dinner Reservation with the Round Table, this note is a reminder that **it will carry over to the September meeting.** If you want to remain on the list do nothing. If you want to be removed, you must contact Treasurer Jim Stewart and ask that your name be taken off the list. This format has worked well for a number of our members. If you are regular in your attendance, you too might want to consider this "only need to call if I'm not coming" format.

Welcome New Members: At the April meeting we welcomed Kari Stacy into membership.

Chickamauga & Chattanooga Battlefield Trip: From May 1 - 3, ten members of the Round Table journeyed to the greater Chattanooga area to partake in the first CCWRT battlefield tour conducted in many years. Like the fall of 1863 when it rained 19 out of 53 days to end a two year drought, the tour was impacted by rain, but it did not dampen the enthusiasm of those who attended.

The visit began in the group's hotel conference room with Chickamauga – Chattanooga Battlefield Park Chief Historian Jim Ogden providing an overview of the campaign and an explanation as to why Chattanooga was the "Gateway to the South". Understanding the geographical location of the southern military industrial complex, and the importance of the railroads to this campaign, help set the stage for this battlefield immersion. Using the maps provided by Jim, the group was ready to hit the battlefields.



Over the next two day period from late Friday afternoon until mid-day Sunday the group spent 18 + hours on the battlefields of Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. Even though rain fell each of the three days, there were more than enough breaks in the precipitation to get a full battlefield experience in. Participating in the tour were Dan Bauer, Becky Burket & Randy Donohue, Jim Chaney, Jim Dempsey, Jerry Karl, Bob Limoseth, John McGee, Chuck Reeves and Ken Anderson, a friend of Dan Bauer.

At the end of the tour the group presented a check to Ranger Ogden to help support the battlefield's preservation activities. They asked that it be used to help re-establish a fund for rebuilding/enhancing the William H. Lytle memorial to the status of the other markers in the park that honor generals killed in the battle.

The group would like to extend its thanks to our guide, Chief Historian Jim Ogden, for sharing his reservoir of knowledge on these important battles with us as well as his willingness to answer every Civil War question we asked him. During the rain interludes, with Jim in our van, these question and answer sessions were especially appreciated. This more than made up for the inconvenience caused. Thanks also goes to Dan Bauer for making all the arrangements, and doing most of the driving, and to Jerry Karl for providing driver relief on the trek down to Chattanooga and back from the battlefields. Jim Chaney acted as our designated tour photographer and we are indebted to him for providing a pictorial record of our visit.

If you think you might be interested in a future battlefield trip, be sure to direct your questions to any of the members who made the trip. More information will be shared at the May meeting and additional pictures will soon be posted on the web site.

Col. Weddle drew upon his background as a professor of military theory and strategy to give a superb assessment of Samuel Francis DuPont and his naval career. Hearing one career military officer talk about another career military officer proved most interesting. Judging from DuPont's prewar experiences, one would have expected DuPont to have the greatest impact of a naval officer. Yet his name remains obscure to many current students of the Civil War. Col. Weddle gave his reasons to explain why this is the case. His talk included a slide show of approximately 25 images.

Samuel DuPont, born in 1803, was first of the famed DuPont family born in the United States. His uncle was the founder of the DuPont gunpowder and chemical company. Samuel's family lived on a property across the Brandywine Creek from his uncle's home in Delaware. Although his grandfather's connections enabled Francis to gain acceptance to West Point, he instead chose to join the navy at only 12 years old. He quickly learned the ropes, making quite a name for himself. DuPont went on to serve 50 years on active duty, half of which were spent at sea.

After serving in the Navy for 30 years, Francis is given his first big command in 1845 as commodore of the USS Congress, the flagship of the Pacific. Why would it take so long for such a competent officer to get his first big command? Promotions were based on the seniority system, a system which DuPont resented. While sailing the Congress around Cape Horn to take the ship to the Pacific, the Mexican War breaks out. DuPont is given the mission to blockade the entire west coast of Mexico. During this three year assignment, he learns the logistical and operational aspects of how to and how not to conduct a successful blockade. He also learns how to conduct joint operations with the Army.

DuPont served the next nine years ashore. In 1850 he wrote a 50 page pamphlet on what he thinks should be the naval strategy of the United States. The report is widely disseminated among lawmakers and served as the basis for a new ship building program the Navy undertakes in the 1850s. In 1855 DuPont heads up the Efficiency Board. This was intended to reform the promotion system in the Navy. He writes the legislation and then finds congressional sponsors. Of the 710 officers in the Navy, 200 get kicked out. This weeding out of deadweight officers creates resentment against DuPont. DuPont is also instrumental in getting the Naval Academy founded.

In 1857, DuPont is given command of the USS Minnesota and takes it out on its maiden voyage to China. This is the first time he ever served on a steam ship. He learns about coal, and the efficiency and supply needed for operating a steam ship. After he returns, DuPont is given command of the Philadelphia Naval Yard. When the Civil War breaks out, Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, taps DuPont based on his experiences during the Mexican War to assist in the planning of a blockade of the South.

To kick off the blockade effort in November of 1861, DuPont is given command of a joint Navy and Army force with the objective of seizing Port Royal Sound which is located just north of Hilton Head, SC. Even though much of the fighting capacity of this task force was diminished when many of the ships were disabled in a tropical storm, DuPont went on to attack the forts with a half dozen battleships. The attack is successful. Port Royal would stay in Union hands for the remainder of the war and would serve as a base of Union operations. The port was a source of fresh water, supplies and shelter.

After Gustavus Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, witnesses the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac, Fox becomes convinced that the North needs to build more Monitor type boats. Fox along with Welles wants to give DuPont some Monitor type ships so he can take control of Charleston harbor. Knowing about Charleston's extensive fortifications, DuPont is apprehensive about Welles' and Fox's plan. Charleston would be a tough nut to crack. There was an exchange of letters between Fox, Welles, and DuPont over the next six months regarding the plan to attack Charleston. What do you do when your civilian

boss tells you to do something you do not agree with? This is a great study in civil/military relations. Despite the controversy, later that summer, DuPont is named only the third Admiral in US Naval history.

Over the next several months, DuPont is given 7 newly built monitor class ships. These are the most technologically advanced machines in the world. However, in the haste to attack, the crews were not trained, the ships were not tested, and the guns were not fired. The Monitors were designed to take 11 inch Dahlgren smoothbores. For the battle of Charleston, each turret was also supplied with a 15 inch smoothbore. The 15 inch smoothbores did not fit out of the gun port because the ships were not designed to accommodate the 15 inch smoothbores. Inclusion of the 15 inch smoothbores made for a very inefficient operation of the firings. This slowed down the rate of fire from 3 to 4 shots per minute to 1 shot every 4 to 5 minutes.

After being goaded by Welles and Fox to attack, DuPont reluctantly agrees to do so. Even though there was no plan as to what would happen once DuPont got into the harbor, the attack occurs on April 7, 1863. Weddle compared DuPont's attack on Charleston to Longstreet's ill fated attack during the battle of Gettysburg. 150 Confederate guns were able to fire onto the Union ships. Each ship was hit over a hundred times. The battle ends after two hours with DuPont retreating. Although considered a Union defeat, a dozen Confederates die while only one Union sailor loses his life. The low loss of Union life was testament to the sturdiness of the Union ironclads.

Welles wants DuPont to attack again. DuPont refuses and offers to resign. DuPont, in turn, is relieved of command. The Welles/DuPont feud will continue throughout the remainder of the war. DuPont receives some measure of vindication when DuPont's replacement, Dahlgren, is not able to take Charleston either. DuPont dies June 23, 1865. The Navy does not give DuPont an official Navy funeral.

DuPont Circle in Washington DC, complete with fountain, commemorates the life of Samuel Francis DuPont. Weddle told us DuPont should be remembered for bringing professionalization to the Navy officer corps, promotion by merit, and a qualitatively better US Navy.

Cincinnati Civil War Round Table March Quiz:

1. Buck, who had many connections with political movers and shakers, became a limited partner in a brokerage firm investing \$200,000, almost all of his assets, with Ferdinand Ward, who, using Buck's renown and goodwill, took in the public's money to be invested in firms that would obtain contracts based upon his partner's influence. The promised large dividends Ward issued came not from investments, most of which were spectacular failures, but from new investors' ala Messr's Ponzi and Madoff. Soon the firm had \$150,000 in debt which had to be paid. Buck got a personal loan from a wealthy railroad capitalist, gave it to Ward to pay off the debt only to learn of the money's and Ward's disappearance the next day. Within two months Buck had only \$200 to his name and had to accept gifts from the public to survive. Buck is better known to us as _____?

Ans: Ulysses S. Grant. Pyramid schemes are as American as apple pie, John S. Gordon. Ref: *Wall Street Journal*, Section A, p. 21, 17 Dec., 2008

2. What was Abe Lincoln's salary during his first term in office as president?

Ans: \$25,000. Ref: *With Malice Toward None*, Oates, p. 29

3. What member of the Confederate cabinet in 1861 was the only member to vote against attacking Fort Sumter, predicting that such an act would unite the north and prove fatal to the Confederacy?

Ans: Robert Toombs, Secretary of State. Ref: *A Diary from Dixie*, Chesnut, Williams (ED), p. 5

4. The Tecumseh, Union ironclad sunk by a mine directly west of Fort Morgan, Alabama, weighs 2,100 tons and is buried in 146 years of accumulated mud. What is the current estimated cost of recovering and restoring this relic?

Ans: \$80,000,000. Ref: *Raising a Mobile Bay Ironclad, Hallowed Ground*, Vol. 9, # 4, p. 25

5. What is meant by the term “Impartial Suffrage?”

Ans: Suffrage based upon a citizen being a property owner and demonstrating a measure of intelligence. Ref: *The Virginia Magazine*, Memoranda of Conversations between General R. E. Lee and William Preston Johnston, Bean, p. 479-480

6. Lincoln’s tragic Admiral, Samuel DuPont, and his flagship may have had their luckiest day on 7 April, 1863 when they both were involved in the Battle of Charleston Harbor. What was that good fortune?

Ans: The failure of the detonating mechanism to explode a mine directly under the ship. Ref: *The Civil War*, Foote, Vol. 3, p. 228-229

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:

August 21, 2009

Information may be emailed to: Dan_Bauer@CINFIN.com

Future Presentations:

September 17, 2009	Brian Steel Wills, University of Virginia at Wise <i>Nathan Bedford Forrest: Common Sense Soldier</i>
October 15, 2009	John Fisher, University of Cincinnati, Clermont <i>Combined Operations on the Texas Coast, 1863-1864</i>
November 19, 2009	Charles P. Roland, University of Kentucky <i>A Slave Owner Defends Slavery</i>
January 21, 2010	Gary Q. Johnson, CCWRT <i>USS Monitor</i>
February 18, 2010	Michael Stevens, CCWRT <i>The Handsome Spaniard: Ambrosio Gonzales, Cuban Patriot & Confederate Officer</i>
March 18, 2010	Lois J. Lambert, CCWRT <i>Heroes of the Western Theater: 33rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry</i>
April 15, 2010	John Fazio, Cleveland CWRT <i>Francis and Arabella Barlow; John and Fanny Gordon: Love and War</i>
May 20, 2010	Peter Cozzens, Silver Springs, MD 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 \$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.

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Enjoy Your Summer - Read a Civil War Book or Visit a Battlefield!