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# THE CANISTER

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Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

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

OCTOBER, 2004 Issue

(Please note that this is a different mailing address than last year. See notice on Page 6.)

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## MEETING INFORMATION FOR OCTOBER, 2004

Meeting Date: October 21st, 2004

Meeting Place: Quality Hotel and Suites

Time: (6:00) Refreshments

(6:45) Dinner

Speaker: - Mike Rhein, Cincinnati CWRT, -

Topic: "William Haines Lytle at Chickamauga"

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**IMPORTANT NOTE: 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) or call it in to Dan Reigle at 513-777-9255.**

For Cincinnati's own General William Haines Lytle, he met his earthly end on a nondescript small hill at Chickamauga, Georgia on September 20, 1863.



Lytle was killed on a hill near the center of the Union line, directing his brigade of Gen. Phil Sheridan's division in attempting to help stem the onslaught led by Confederate General James Longstreet which eventually split the center of the Army of the Cumberland on the second day of the battle. Lytle, who had been previously wounded at the battles of Carnifex Ferry (Va.) and Perryville (Ky), was the only Federal general who met his demise at Chickamauga. The hill, which would bear his name, has a marker designating his place of death in addition to monuments honoring Lytle's regiments who fought heroically in a forlorn hope to stop the rebel attack.

This is the fourth and final presentation by Michael Rhein on Lytle, the series having commenced in February, 1997. Michael spent a day and a half this past April at the Chickamauga Battlefield National Park, studying particularly Lytle Hill. The speaker will present slides of Lytle Hill and other points of related interest and deliver a final appraisal of Lytle. Lytle's funeral in Cincinnati, reportedly the largest ever held in the history of the Queen City, and his growing legend in succeeding decades will also be covered.

Michael, a member of the Cincinnati CWRT since 1977, has delivered presentations in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Georgia. He has previously served as roundtable president twice, newsletter editor and chairman of the Midwest Conference in 1986 and 1996

**2004 STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD WINNERS:**  
**2004 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD**

IN HONOR OF OUR FOUNDING PRESIDENT (1956-1959),  
WILLIAM J. REARDON

**Jessica Rinsky, University of Cincinnati. “Memory of the Civil War as Presented by Reenacting”**

Jessica is a 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate at the University of Cincinnati. Her paper focuses on ways in which re-enacting might give us incorrect or inadequate impressions of the Civil War as it was experienced by the participants. In doing so, she reminds us, as Walt Whitman did long ago, that “the real war will never get in the books”, a continuing challenge for those of us who try to understand the war some 140 years later. Drawing most heavily on Professor Bell Wiley’s classics, *The Life of Billy Yank* and *The Life of Johnny Reb*, Tony Horwitz’s *Confederates in the Attic*, and her own internet research on reenacting, Jessica discusses the discrepancy in portrayals of Confederate and Union units, the difficulty of accurate uniforms and symbols, and the commercialization of reenactment events. We recognize Jessica’s creativity and courage in attempting to provide a critique of one of the methods we use today of remembering and understanding the war and its participants.

**2004 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD**

IN HONOR OF OUR FORMER PRESIDENT (1965-1966) AND EXEMPLARY CIVIL  
WAR SCHOLAR,  
JAMES BARNETT:

**Stephen Rockenbach, University of Cincinnati: “A Border City at War: Louisville and the 1862 Confederate Invasion of Kentucky”**



Dr. Ramage, Steve Rockenbach, Dan Reigle

Steve is a 4<sup>th</sup>-year graduate student at the University of Cincinnati, has just finished writing his dissertation, and will soon defend his dissertation for his Ph.D. His paper describes some of the aspects of Louisville’s experience during the 1862 Confederate movement into Kentucky that led to the Battle at Perryville on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Steve describes the mass exodus across the river into Indiana, the activities of Confederate sympathizers who welcomed Bragg’s arrival, the closure of businesses during the crisis, infiltration by cavalry and spies, behavior of some Federal soldiers, and the problems for both soldiers and civilians of having enough to eat. Steve’s use of local histories, newspapers and letters, in addition to military references, provides insight into the stress, fear, and pain of those few days in Louisville in 1862.

**2005 Student Research Awards**

The Cincinnati Civil War Round Table is pleased to announce its 2005 undergraduate student research award in honor of our founding president (1956-1959), William J. Reardon, and 2005 graduate student research award in honor of our former president (1965-1966) and exemplary Civil War scholar, James Barnett. A \$200 award will be granted to the author of the best undergraduate student research paper and a \$300 award will be granted to the author of the best graduate student research paper on any aspect of the American Civil War. Deadline for submission is June 15, 2005. See Program Description and Application Form for further details on the CCWRT website at <http://www.cincinnatiwrt.org/>.

#### **Quiz--May, 2004**

1. The feature article of the Spring, 2004, issue of *Blue & Gray Magazine* was "The Army is Moving: Lee Steals A March on Joe Hooker, June 1863". The issue was dedicated to the Army of Northern Virginia's division commander who led Lee's movement north, crossing the Potomac River at Williamsport on June 15. This commander had also recently led the attack after Stonewall Jackson's flank march at Chancellorsville, and had earned Jackson's compliment, "He is a soldier." Who was he?
2. If you were visiting a battlefield on which you passed the Dixville Crossroads, the Goodknight Farm, the Walker Farm, and the Dye Farm, what battlefield would you be visiting?
3. If George McClellan had been unsuccessful in his courtship of Ellen Marcy, John Hunt Morgan would have had a different brother-in-law. Who was the U.S. Army officer (future Confederate) whom Ellen nearly married, and who later married Morgan's widowed sister, Catherine (Kitty)?
4. The Ohio General Assembly elected Salmon P. Chase to the U.S. Senate in February, 1861. He resigned on March 6 to become Secretary of the Treasury. Who was elected to fulfill Chase's 1861-1866 Senate term?
5. In his May CCWRT talk, Dr. Chris Phillips described how the war changed the dividing line between north and south, with the Ohio River being the new boundary. With which region or section did Kentuckians tend to identify before the war?
6. On this date (September 16) in 1864, General Grant left the Petersburg area for a brief conference in West Virginia. With whom did he meet and why?

#### **September Presentation by Albert Hallenberg**

Northern Kentucky University regent history professor and Round Table lifetime member Dr. James A. Ramage honored us as the first speaker of our 2004/2005 season. Dr. Ramage possesses a keen expertise in the study of Confederate Partisan Guerilla raids, in particular those of John Hunt Morgan and John Singleton Mosby. In this talk, Dr. Ramage focused on John Hunt Morgan, but from a different angle. He posed a question unique to contemporary headlines: Was John Hunt Morgan a "terrorist?" What interested Dr. Ramage in this question was a recent editorial in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* stating that John Hunt Morgan's statue in front of the former Fayette County Court House (now the Lexington History Museum) should be destroyed since Morgan was a Confederate "terrorist."

Dr. Ramage felt this label was a bit overstated. In his view, a terrorist of today pursues the destruction of human lives whereas Confederate raiders, for the most part, concentrated solely on the destruction of property. Morgan's raids across Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana diverted more than 20,000 Union troops. He and his riders wanted to create an uncomfortable presence, but his actions were far from terrorist in nature. Dr. Ramage stated, aside from being an impressive, dashing figure (Morgan is sometimes referred to as the Francis Marion of the Confederacy), Morgan overall seemed to conduct himself in a gentlemanly manner. For example, Dr. Ramage told of how Morgan and his men captured a train on the L&N line. As the passengers were mostly women, Morgan essentially just sent the train back to its original departure point in Louisville. He did not rob the passengers or burn the train as other Confederate raiders might have done. Dr. Ramage also made effective comparisons to Union raiders, such as ones led by Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah, which Dr. Ramage found far more arbitrary in destruction.

It is always a pleasure to hear Dr. Ramage speak, and the audience showed great interest in the topic, since Morgan's raid had swept through this very region.

#### **Book Notice: Canadians in the Civil War**

I attend the Rockland County Civil War Round Table and thought you might want to give your members more information on the role Canadians and wives played during the American Civil War. Approximately 50,000 Canadians served in the American Civil War and my great great grandfather, was one of them. I found 150 Civil War letters in my mother's attic to and between my great-great grandparents Charles and Nancy McDowell. You are welcome to reprint the following article:

Submitted by: Lisa Saunders [saundersbooks@aol.com](mailto:saundersbooks@aol.com)

"Civil War Letters of a Canadian private and his wife" by Lisa Saunders

Photos of private Charles McDowell can be retrieved from [www.authorlisasaunders.com](http://www.authorlisasaunders.com)

I carefully unfolded the stiff yellowed paper, knowing I was touching a letter written during the American Civil War. It was one of many stuffed in a little wooden box, just discovered in my mother's attic. This particular letter, written by my great-great grandfather Charles McDowell to his wife Nancy, was written on a small, plain piece stationery--not at all fancy like some of the others in the batch that bore sketches of the White House and battle engagements. I gently smoothed it flat on the table, afraid I would tear it. The handwriting was strange, the ink somewhat faded, making it difficult to read. And then suddenly I came upon a word I recognized in an instant--Abe! It read, "We have Seward [the Secretary of State] down here about every other day, and sometimes he fetches Old Abe with him and [he] looks about like any old farmer." I couldn't believe it. Charles met Lincoln!

In addition to the letters was Nancy's obituary, which reads: "MRS. MCDOWELL IS DEAD - SHOOK HANDS WITH LINCOLN. With the death of Mrs. Nancy Wager McDowell...the town of Sodus probably loses the distinction of having a resident who could boast of having shaken hands and talked with the martyred Lincoln. She was married in 1860 to Charles McDowell, a native of Canada, who came to America when a young man. Mr. McDowell was a member of the Ninth New York Heavy Artillery in the Union Army and it was while stationed near Washington that his wife had an opportunity to speak with the President. Mrs. McDowell passed nearly a year in that vicinity and many were the pies she baked for the soldiers stationed at the capital. Typhoid Fever caused her to return to Alton to the home of her parents ("The Record," Sodus, Wayne County, N.Y. September 18, 1931)

I took the collection of approximately 150 letters back home to Maryland and began what was to become an exciting ten-year adventure. First I arranged the letters from Charles by date and began to read. Once I grew accustomed to his old style handwriting and run on sentences, I felt myself leaving the present and entering his past. I traveled back over 130 years and joined Charles in heart and mind. I felt his loneliness, his boredom, his fear. I laughed when he found a reason to laugh. He and his brother had enlisted despite his Canadian father's pleas to stay out of the war. As the months of his service turned into years, I hurt over his deep longing for his wife and home and for the life and family he left behind in Canada. During the Siege of Petersburg he wrote of former life in Canada:

"It's a- getting so cold. I don't know but we shall heft to set up tonight and keep a fire. It is a-freezing fast. But we had the good luck to make a haul on a couple of blankets the other night when we was guarding baggage. I find a man has to look out for himself here. If he don't, nobody else will look out for him. My cousin was over to see us the other day. He is pretty sick of the war. think I must write a letter to Canada before long. I haven't wrote to them since you left. Don't you think it is too bad it has been so long since I wrote? I feel most ashamed to write now. I shall heft to apologize pretty well. As soon as my time is out I think I shall go and see them. Sometimes when I get to thinking about my native land and what good times I have had there it makes a feeling come over me that makes me feel sad. Little did I think when I left home that I would be gone for seven years. Oh how I long to see my sister Margaret and all the rest, and if I get out of this alive it won't be long before I can see her. She thought [my likeness] an awful sight. She feels pretty bad about us. She is afraid we will never come home alive but I live in hopes that we will come out all right."

In other letters I was shocked to read of the desertions, hangings, amputations, and even theft and murder among Union troops. Charles wrote home about the battles of Cold Harbor, Jerusalem Plank Road, Monocacy, Opequon (Winchester), Cedar Creek, the Siege of Petersburg, an attack by Moseby's Men, and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign. I knew the letters told a valuable story, one that took me over ten years to research and compile.

"Ever True" is the customary way people signed off on the letters. I chose Ever True as the title for my book because it also holds another meaning: it speaks of the love that is ever true between Charles and Nancy and of Charles's ever true sense of duty towards his new country despite war's infidelities, scandals, and ever-present threat of death. Most letters begin with "I now take pen in hand to write a few lines letting you know that I am well at present and I hope these few lines will find you the same." My hope is that my readers will find themselves well and thoroughly enjoying their journey through Ever True!

To learn more about EVER TRUE (published by Heritage Books) or the New York 9th Heavy Artillery, please visit my website at [www.authorlisasaunders.com](http://www.authorlisasaunders.com)

Ever True: Civil War Letters of Seward's New York 9th Heavy Artillery of Wayne and Cayuga Counties Between a Soldier, His Wife and His Canadian Family. by Lisa Saunders. Published by Heritage Books. The transcribed letters of Charles McDowell and his wife, Nancy, display remarkable devotion, and offer readers a unique perspective of the Civil War. This story is cohesive and informative yet charming and romantic in a very personal way. Vintage photographs enhance the text. INCLUDES ERA AND FAMILY RECIPES \$19.50 ISBN: 0-7884-2526-9. Order at the online bookstore at the CCWRT website.

About the author: Lisa Saunders resides in New York's Historic Hudson Valley with her husband and two daughters. A Cornell University graduate, Lisa has published a children's novel, Ride a Horse, Not an Elevator, several short stories, and has written a book about life with her second daughter Elizabeth, born with severe disabilities. She is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. To learn more about Lisa's work, visit her website at [www.authorlisasaunders.com](http://www.authorlisasaunders.com)

### 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:

November newsletter, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004  
January newsletter, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004  
February newsletter, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005  
March newsletter, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
April newsletter, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
May newsletter, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005

**Information may be emailed to [waldbill@xavier.edu](mailto:waldbill@xavier.edu)**

### Quiz answers:

1. General Robert E. Rodes, VMI Class of 1848, later killed in action at 3<sup>rd</sup> Winchester on 19 September 1864. (*Blue & Gray Magazine*, Spring 2004, pp. 14, Tour Maps.)
2. Perryville. (CCWRT tour with Kurt Holman, 19 June 2004).
3. A. P. Hill. (Ramage, *Rebel Raider*, pp. 14, 102-103, 275 note 33; Sears, *McClellan*, pp. 60-63.)
4. John Sherman, brother of General William Sherman. (Heidler, *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History*. Vol. V, p. 2488.)
5. The west, not either the north or south, as exemplified by Henry Clay's advocacy of nationalism and his position as the "Great Compromiser" between the northern and southern sections in the U.S. Senate. (Phillips, CCWRT, 20 May 2004; Foner & Garraty, *The Reader's Companion to American History*, p. 190-191.)
6. He met with General Sheridan in Charles Town, WV, prior to offensive action in the Shenandoah Valley. (Long, *The Civil War Day by Day: An Almanac, 1861-1865*, p. 569-570.)



### FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

November 18, 2004 - Larry Emley, Cinti CWRT, "Turner Ashby"  
January 20, 2005 - Tom Breiner, Cinti CWRT, "The C.S.S. Shenandoah"  
February 17, 2005: Dave Smith, Cincinnati CWRT, "Stranger Than Braxton Bragg – Henry Halleck"  
March 17, 2005, Jim Epperson, Ann Arbor CWRT, "Sheridan, Warren and the Battle of Five Forks"  
April 21, 2005, Dr. George Rable, University of Alabama, "Religion and the Civil War"  
May 19, 2005, Dr. Brooks Simpson, Arizona State; "Enemies to the Rear: Ulysses S. Grant, 1861-1863."  
September 15, 2005, Dr. Stephen Engle, Florida Atlantic University, "Don Carlos Buell and the Western Theater"  
October 20, 2005, Mike Grimes, Berea, Kentucky, "Music and its Impact on the Civil War"

### 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, and help cover operating costs including this newsletter, as well as speaker expenses. If you are joining for the first time, there is a one-time

initiation fee of \$20.

**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 Ohio 562 (The Norwood Lateral) and travel east to the Montgomery Road exit. Exit south, and the Quality is on the right. If coming from Interstate 71, also exit at Ohio 562 (The Norwood Lateral) and go west. As before, exit at Montgomery Road and go south. There is plenty of free parking.

**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*). **Late reservations** (after Sunday prior to the meeting) will be accepted, but will cause an adjustment of arrangements with the Quality, and may require an alternate meal selection, depending on total attendance. **Walk-ins without a reservation** will be able to have dinner if available based on total attendance. **Late cancellations** may be made by email or phone. Since a cancellation after the Sunday deadline means that CCWRT has guaranteed payment to the Quality 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 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 or cancel will be expected to pay for the dinner. **Meals** currently cost \$20. Menu selection will change with each meeting.

**CINCINNATI CWRT OFFICERS:**

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***Important Message:***

*To all members, Round Tables and friends of the CCWRT who receive this Newsletter!  
Effective immediately we have a new mailing address.*

***Cincinnati Civil War Round Table  
P. O. Box 621082  
Cincinnati, OH 45262***

**Please change your records to reflect this change**