



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>

November, 2009 Issue

Meeting Date: November 19, 2009

Place: The Drake Center

(6:00) Sign-in and Social

(6:30) Dinner

(7:15) Business Meeting

(7:30) Speaker

**Dinner Menu: Stuffed Pork Chop, Gravy, Baked Potato, Vegetable Medley,
Hot Dinner Rolls, Caesar Salad, Cheese Cake with Fruit Topping
Vegetarian Option: Available upon request**

Speaker: Charles P. Roland, University of Kentucky

Topic: A Slave Owner Defends Slavery

Reservations: 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, November 11th, 2009.**

About our November Speaker:

Even though this will be his first appearance at the Cincinnati CWRT, Dr. Charles P. Roland's presentation to our Round Table will be one of many hundreds of Round Table talks he has delivered over the course of his long, distinguished career in the study of Civil War history. Often known by his peers as the "historian's historian," Roland's career in American military history has been unusual, if not unique. Roland had earned a B.A. degree from Vanderbilt University before he joined the Army after the outbreak of World War II. Roland experienced the military first-hand when he fought as an officer in the 99th U.S. Infantry Division in Europe, seeing heavy action at the Battle of The Bulge and at Remagen Bridge, where he was wounded. Following the war, he received his Ph.D. from Louisiana State University on the GI Bill. Afterwards, he

served on the faculties of Louisiana State University, Tulane University, and the University of Kentucky. He also served as Assistant to the Chief Historian of the United States Army, as the Harold Keith Johnson Visiting Professor of Military History at the United States Army Military History Institute and Army War College, as the Visiting Professor of Military History at the United States Military Academy, and as chairman of the Department of the Army Historical Advisory Committee. Professor Roland has been president of the Louisiana Historical Association and the Southern Historical Association.

He is currently an Alumni Professor Emeritus at the University of Kentucky. He is the author of numerous books and articles on the South and on the Civil War, including *The Confederacy* (1962), *Albert Sidney Johnston* (1964), *The Improbable* (1976), *The Life of Albert Sidney Johnston* (1997), *Louisiana Sugar Plantations During the Civil War* (1997), *Reflections on Lee: A Odyssey through History: Memoirs American Iliad: The Story of the Teaches Us to Hope: Reflections on* (2007), *My of War and Academe* (2003), *An Civil War* (2004), and *History the Civil War and Southern History*



Era: The South Since World War II (1997), *Reflections on Lee: A Odyssey through History: Memoirs American Iliad: The Story of the Teaches Us to Hope: Reflections on* (2007).

Dr. Roland's presentation will show the institution of slavery and toward War. Roland's talk is delivered in the a Louisiana sugar plantation owner affluent professional from Freeport, letter are fictitious, yet the plantation real. Dr. Roland obtained these

the attitude of slave owners toward secession on the eve of the Civil unusual format of a letter written by to his former college friend, an Illinois. The two persons and the owner's arguments and outlooks are arguments and outlooks after years

of studying countless diary entries, letters, newspapers, and publications of the antebellum era. Both fictitious persons in the talk had attended the College of New Jersey (present-day Princeton University), and both considered themselves to be politically and socially moderate. For example, the planter was not a secessionist, and his friend from Illinois was not an abolitionist. However, both found themselves swept into the whirlwind of an inevitable war over the institution of slavery.

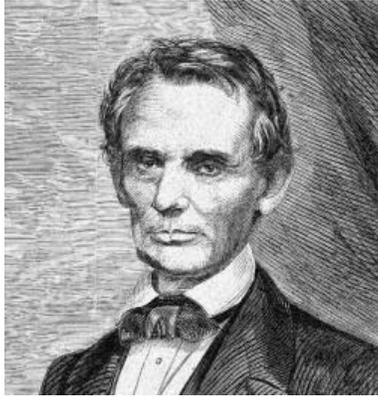


Abraham Lincoln in Cincinnati:

Long term CCWRT members are well versed in the lore of Lincoln's three documented trips to Cincinnati. It is the mystery of an alleged earlier trip to Cincinnati that put some of our membership in detective mode. During a recent CCWRT meeting, our president declared Abraham Lincoln had also visited Cincinnati on December 24, 1849. This announcement was based off an article which appeared in the April, 1951 Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio (Volume 9, Number 2) titled *Cincinnati Reminiscences of Lincoln* by Michael G. Heintz. This article and a similar reference in Daniel J. Ryan's *Lincoln and Ohio* (1923, Ohio Historical Society) reference a letter written by Lincoln to Judge Peter Hitchcock of the Ohio Supreme Court on the status of the Linus Logan and the Steamboat Clipper case which had been forwarded to the Supreme Court of Ohio for review.

Since the article contained no source footnoting the Lincoln visit other than referencing this letter, doubt was cast on the veracity of the letter by CCWRT member Dan Reigle who led a search effort to see if the letter to Judge Hitchcock could be found. Assistance came by way of Roger Billings, also a CCWRT member. Mr. Billings referenced Volume VIII, page 447 of *The Collected Works of Lincoln* indicating the letter sent to Judge Hitchcock is thought to be a forgery.

This finding has since been confirmed by The Lincoln Library in Springfield, IL. They referenced Bulletin No. 21 of the Abraham Lincoln Association from December, 1930. The second article of that publication is: *Four Spurious Lincoln Letters*. The article explains the letter sent to Hitchcock was not authored by Abraham Lincoln as was first thought but was instead written by Timothy D. Lincoln, a famous admiralty lawyer from Cincinnati. To view the bulletin from the Abraham Lincoln Association in digital form, go to Google/search engine and type Issue No. 21 of the Bulletin of the Abraham Lincoln Association.



This is the missing piece of the puzzle our sleuths were looking for to either embrace or discard the often told story of that fourth Lincoln visit to Cincinnati. A special thanks to Dan Reigle, Roger Billings, and Bob Limoseth for solving this mystery and putting this erroneous story to an end.

For the record, the only three visits Abraham Lincoln made to the Queen City, as documented by *The Lincoln Log: A Daily Chronology of the Life of Abraham Lincoln* (www.thelincolnlog.org) compiled by the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Commission with the cooperation and support of the Abraham Lincoln Association are as follows: September 20-26, 1855 for the McCormick v. Manny trial; September 17-18, 1859 for his Ohio Campaign speech following up on the Lincoln-Douglas debates; and February 12-13, 1861 on his way to Washington to be sworn in as the nation's 16th president.



Miscellaneous Announcements:

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.

Your Re-Enlistment Fee is Now Overdue: Last call before Membership Reminder Notices are sent out for the current campaign year. Payments can be made at the November meeting to Treasurer Jim Stewart or you can mail your dues payment directly to Jim's home at: 5510 Windridge View, Cincinnati, OH 45243. As you know, we have two levels of membership: **Sustaining** and **Regular**. The **Sustaining** level of membership is \$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 CCWRT. **Regular** memberships are \$25 (single) and \$35 (couple). If you are able to do so, we encourage you to become a Sustaining Member.

The Round Table's New Promotional Brochure: Membership and Publicity Chairperson Mike Rogers has created a new Tri-fold Pamphlet that will be used to help promote the benefits of joining the Round Table. Its targeted audience is individuals interested in the American Civil War and it introduces us via pictures and targeted messages that explain who we are and what it is that we do. We need member help to distribute quantities of about 10 to local libraries, museums, and other history focused organizations in the Greater Cincinnati area. If you would be willing to contact groups that are located near your home or work to seek permission to place the brochures, your assistance would be greatly appreciated. We will want to keep track of where they are placed, and the quantity left, since it is time dated material that will need to be replaced next year with updated copy. See Mike at the November meeting or email him at rogersmb1981@yahoo.com if you can give us a helping hand.

Mort Kunstler Collectible Christmas Ornament Raffle: The November meeting will be your last opportunity to purchase \$1.00 raffle tickets for a chance to win the 2009 Limited Edition issue of Kunstler's *Brief Encounter* ornament pictured here. This is the 14th in a series of ornaments, thirteen of which have been graced with artwork donated by Mr. Kunstler, which have been produced and issued exclusively by Timber Ridge School. The school located in Winchester, VA serves disabled male students between the ages of ten and nineteen. The ornament was donated by member George McIlveen who supported the effort. He has asked that all proceeds received from the raffle be given to our Preservation Fund. As with all collectibles there is a secondary market and some of the earlier issues have sold for hundreds of dollars. The winner of the ornament will be announced during the November business meeting.



The Museum of the Confederacy Selected as This Year's Dedicated Preservation Project: The Round Table is asking its membership to support The Museum of the Confederacy's relocation into three satellite museums as its 2009 – 2010 Dedicated Preservation Project. To encourage members to donate to this important fund raising effort, the Preservation Fund will match all monies donated up to a total of \$500. Contributions can be made at the check-in table during monthly meetings, or by mailing your gift to Treasurer Jim Stewart at Cincinnati CWRT, P. O. Box 621082, Cincinnati, OH 45262. Checks should be made out to the "Cincinnati CWRT" and the memo line should indicate "The Museum of the Confederacy." The May, 2010 meeting is the deadline for all donations. A receipt will be provided as all contributions are tax deductible under our status as a 501 C3 organization.

Field trip: The CCWRT will be sponsoring a field trip to a Tennessee battlefield sometime in the spring of 2010. Like last years trip, this will be a three day, two night trip. Details of this trip will be released in the January Newsletter. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact Dan Bauer at Dan_Bauer@cinfin.com

New Member: A hearty welcome to our newest member, Mary Fisher!

Newsletter Deadlines: To facilitate the printing and timely distribution of the monthly newsletter, items to be considered for inclusion in the January Canister should be submitted to the editor no later than **December 23rd**. Information may be emailed to: Dan_Bauer@CINFIN.com

We Who Study Must Also Strive to Save!

October Presentation:

...submitted by Mike Rhein

A letter is a personal missive that can also be a window into a period of a person's life.

This writer has in his possession a collection of letters written by his father, William Rhein, to his mother (my grandmother) during World War II when he served in the U.S. Merchant Marine. When I have read samples from that collection from time to time, I would be reading my father's words written by a man in his '20's, going through a multitude of experiences: sailing over many oceans, at times on dangerous convoy duty (including being on ship on the Thames River near London during a raid by Hitler's Luftwaffe), enduring ferocious storms at sea. My father's letters helped clarify my perspective of him as a young man in a critical period of his life, encompassing his thoughts and emotions.

So, too, our October speaker, John E. Haas, reference archivist for the Ohio Historical Society, has helped us clarify our perspective of a Civil War soldier through his letters to his wife. Emerson Opdycke, lieutenant colonel of the 125th Ohio Volunteer Regiment, wrote many letters to his wife, Lucy (nee) Stevens from 1861 to 1865. In fact, according to Mr. Haas, who co-edited Opdycke's letters with Glenn V. Longacre to put in book form (To Battle for God and the Right), there are 300 of them in the OHS collection. He said the title of the book was derived from the last paragraph of Opdycke's first letter to his wife in August, 1861.

In response to a question asked during a "Q and A" session after his presentation, Mr. Haas noted that the typical themes in the letters revolved around "war news" and comments on "other generals" such as his intense dislike of Union General Alexander McCook (corps commander at the Battle of Chickamauga, Sept. 19-20, 1863) during which Opdycke solidified his fine reputation as an officer in stand on Horseshoe Ridge as part of Gen. George Thomas's famous rearguard action during which repeated Confederate assaults were repelled, thus saving the shattered Union Army from complete destruction).

Being a father himself, Opdycke, lieutenant in Company A, 41st OVI would inquire about his son, quoted by Mr. Haas from a sample after sustaining wounds in battles (Ga.) would reassure Lucy that he Haas said that Opdycke wrote to okay." However, the speaker also writing about his horrific (Tenn.) in 1864, during which he House in fierce hand-to-hand combat, did not mention "breaking his pistol" in striking a Confederate. In other letters, Mr. Haas commented, Opdycke would describe "camp life" and his routine "throughout the day."



who began the war as a second (raised in the Cleveland area) Leonard: "how is the boy ?," letter. From time to time, Opdycke, such as Shiloh (Tenn.) and Resaca was all right. For example, Mr. Lucy, "I didn't lose the arm. It's experience at the Battle of Franklin led a counterattack near the Carter

Like many men who fought in that war, Opdycke held strong opinions. Mr. Haas emphasized that Opdycke early in the war "was not an emancipationist" but by 1864, in a letter to Lucy, he stressed that "the South has to be crushed so slavery can end."

The speaker gave a good background on Opdycke's distinguished service record, referring to his rising throughout the war with promotions to captain (Jan., 1862), lieutenant colonel (Oct., 1862), colonel (Jan.,

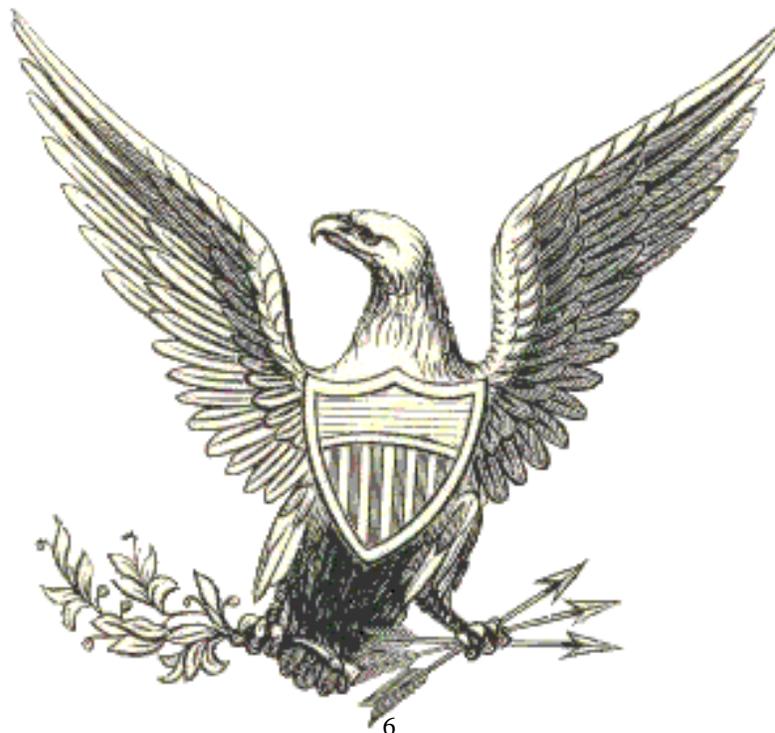
1863), brevet major general, and brigadier general (July, 1865). Mr. Haas referred to a monument that stands at Chickamauga in tribute to Opdycke's 125th Ohio, noting that the monument is crested by a tiger. Union General Thomas Wood (Opdycke's division commander), Mr. Haas said, witnessed Opdycke's heroic leadership of the 125th at Horseshoe Ridge, commenting, "I saw Opdycke's men fight like Tigers." The speaker added that Opdycke was on his horse the entire time during that famous stand. Mr. Haas said that Opdycke led a demi-brigade at the subsequent Battle of Missionary Ridge (Nov., 1864), leading the 125th to the top of that ridge. There is also a monument dedicated to that unit at Missionary Ridge, he added.

This writer, in looking up Opdycke's performance on that fateful day of Sept. 20, 1863 at Chickamauga, quotes from a description by Shelby Foote (The Civil War : A Narrative , Vol. II): "Thomas (Gen. George) rode on, and presently came to one of Harker's regimental commanders, Colonel Emerson Opdycke. 'This point must be held,' he told him. The Ohio colonel agreed. 'We will hold this ground,' he said, 'or go to heaven from it.'" Opdycke was true to his word. His 125th OVI held.

Opdycke was a sterling example of one, who had no previous military training before the Civil War, of the many volunteer officers who, through dedication, courage and hard work, provided outstanding leadership throughout that tragic conflict. In a cruel irony for Opdycke, his end did not come as a result of a rebel bullet (having survived wounds in several fierce battles) but his own after the war. Mr. Haas said that Opdycke ran a dry goods business in New York in his post-war life, "he died through cleaning his gun," which discharged accidentally, the bullet entering his stomach.

In conclusion, this writer cites from a sample letter in a handout provided by Mr. Haas which illustrates Opdycke's pride in his men, describing the 125th's charge in retaking the breastworks at Franklin: "First Brigade forward to the works" (bayonets had already been fixed).....and the bayonets glistened in the sunlight—as they came down to a charge---Thank God the First Brigade formed (?) irresistible, the breastworks were ours, and several hundreds prisoners, and ten rebel battle flags were their trophies."

So, we are too, proud of the many men like Opdycke who stood steadfast to the last, not only in our turbulent national war, but in all other wars in which our American veterans who earned that, as author Stephen Crane termed it, the "Red Badge of Courage."



September Quiz:

1. What is the “Gibraltar of the Chesapeake Bay?”

Answer: Fortress Monroe

2. The 125th OH (Opdycke’s Tigers) was part of the 21st Army Corps at Chickamauga. General _____ commanded their brigade and General _____ commanded their division.

Answer: Harker, Wood

3. Union attempts to take Vicksburg in late 1862 and early 1863 met with little success. U.S Grant was forced to suspend an 1862 offensive when his key supply base at Holly Springs, MS was captured in a raid led by which Confederate general?

Answer: Earl Van Dorn

4. Who administered the oath of office for Lincoln’s second inauguration?

Answer: Salmon P. Chase

5. How did General Emerson Opdycke die? (Describe what happened that led to his death?)

Answer: At age 54 in New York City, he shot himself while cleaning his gun

6. How did General Earl Van Dorn die? (Describe what happened that led to his death)

Answer: Shot by a jealous husband



Future Presentations:

January 21, 2010	Gary Q. Johnson, CCWRT <i>Monitor Class Ironclads – The Dawn of Industrialized Warfare</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>	Topic TBD
May 20, 2010	Peter Cozzens, Silver Springs, MD	Topic TBD
September 10, 2010	Robert E. L. Krick, Jr.	Topic TBD
October 10, 2010	Ron Blair	Topic TBD
November 18, 2010	Kris Teters, CCWRT “ <i>A Contested Past: Alabama’s Centennial Commemoration of the Civil War</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 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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Don't Forget to Bring a Friend!