

The Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

The Canister October 2018



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Serving the Tri-State area of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana since 1956

The Month's Round Table Date: October 18, 2018

Place: The Drake Center

6:00 Sign-in and Social

6:30 Dinner

7:15 Business Meeting

7:30 Speaker

Dinner Menu: Stuffed pork chops, apple pecan salad with vinaigrette dressing, broccoli & cheese, mashed potatoes, and German chocolate cake for desert .

The October Guest Lecturer

The Last Road North: A Guide to the Gettysburg Campaign by Dan Welch, Youngstown OH

A string of battlefield victories through 1862 had culminated in the spring of 1863 with Lee's greatest victory yet: the battle of Chancellorsville.

Propelled by the momentum of that supreme moment, confident in the abilities of his men, Lee decided to once more take the fight to the Yankees and launched this army on another invasion of the North. An appointment with destiny awaited in the little Pennsylvania college town of Gettysburg.

Historian Dan Welch follows in the footsteps of the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac as the two foes cat-and-mouse their way northward, ultimately clashing in the costliest battle in North American history.

Based on the Gettysburg Civil War Trails and packed with dozens of lesser-known sites related to the Gettysburg Campaign, *The Last Road North: A Guide to the Gettysburg Campaign* offers the



ultimate Civil War road trip. *Savas Beatie, 2016. (Co-authored with Robert Orrison)*

Dan Welch currently serves as a primary and secondary educator with a public-school district in northeast Ohio. Previously, Dan was the education programs coordinator for the Gettysburg Foundation, the non-profit partner of Gettysburg National Military Park, as well as a seasonal Park Ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park for six years. During that time, he led numerous programs on the campaign and battle for school groups, families, and visitors of all ages.

Welch received his B.A. in Instrumental Music Education from Youngstown State University where he studied under the famed French Hornist William Slocum and is currently finishing his MA in Military History with a Civil War Era concentration at American Military University. Welch has also studied under the tutelage of Dr. Allen C. Guelzo as part of the Gettysburg Semester at Gettysburg College. He currently resides with his wife, Sarah, in Boardman, Ohio.

President's Report

By David Stockdale

The Round table has gotten off to a great start with Greg Biggs's information-packed presentation on the logistics of William T. Sherman's Atlanta campaign. I was especially looking forward to his talk because my great-grandfather fought in the Atlanta campaign at Rocky Face Ridge, Resaca, Adairsville, New Hope Church, Kennesaw Mountain, Smyrna Camp Grounds, Peach Tree Creek, the siege of Atlanta, Jonesboro, and Lovejoy Station.

Often Round Table presentations are about battles like these. They are exciting stories, about courageous men and desperate efforts, of brilliant tactical decisions and disastrous blunders, with contending forces struggling to reach their objectives through the fog of war. But the "shock and awe" of battle is only part of the story. A successful campaign does not happen without careful attention to the mundane details of supply, to the logistics of the operation.

Sherman had assembled 115,000 men and some 60,000 animals to move on Atlanta. But to be successful, he had to provide both men and animals with food, and the troops with clothing, equipment, weapons and ammunition over a hundred mile route south from Chattanooga. To do that, he had to deal with four gauges of railroads and a lack of locomotives and rolling stock, bridges and tunnels that were chokepoints, rivers that had to be forded, and Confederate cavalry and guerillas who would strike his supply line at every opportunity.

As I looked at the photographs and listened to Greg talk about the miles of military wagons, my thoughts also drifted back to my grandfather, whose Army experience in France during the First World War was much different than my infantryman great-grandfather in the Civil War.

Grandpa was a truck driver and mechanic in the 308th Motor Supply Train. His war stories weren't about exciting battles. They were about hauling oats to the front to feed the mules that the Army still used to maneuver heavy ordnance and equipment; about driving trucks with open cabs

and solid tires; about dodging German artillery and travelling in convoys at night without headlights, straining to see, and to negotiate muddy, rutted roads pock-marked with shell-holes.



Those things which make up the Round Table's 2018-19 campaign: our monthly gathering at the Drake Center for dinner and a stimulating program, the monthly Canister, our informative website, etc., don't just happen on their own. Much like Sherman's Atlanta campaign, or the Meuse – Argonne Offensive of 1918, they have to be created, planned, constructed and organized. The campaign depends on attention to supply, to logistics. As with the more mundane work of the USMRR, the Quartermaster Corps and the Pioneer Corps that was vital to the success of Sherman's campaign, so the background work of the officers and committee members is vital to the success of the Round Table's campaign each year. It's not glamorous work, but it's necessary. And the good news is that unlike the work of sustaining an army on the offensive, it's not onerous or overly time consuming. We just need some volunteers to help with it.

Currently we are looking for volunteers for the positions of newsletter editor, secretary, preservation co-chair, and activities chair. The newsletter that you are reading now was put out by our treasurer, Tom Williams, and yours truly. That we can do it is proof that it's not too difficult. The secretary keeps the minutes of our regular and board meetings, and provides a recap of our guest speaker's presentation for the newsletter. The preservation committee keeps the members up to date on preservation issues and recommends preservation projects that merit our support. And the activities chair coordinates extracurricular activities such as our recent tour of Morgan's Raid through Greater Cincinnati.

If you would like to lend a hand, please contact one of the officers on the last page of this newsletter. Your Round Table needs you.

Review of Greg Biggs' Presentation

by Don Vogel

Greg Biggs from Clarksville, Tenn., brought an absolutely fantastic description of what it takes to put an army on the ground, and keep it supplied before, during and after battles. How do you keep supplies flowing from manufacture, to warehouses, to distribution to the soldiers scattered over hundreds of miles, through all kinds of weather, and all the while dealing with the enemy, whose goal it is to interrupt well-conceived plans. Well, Greg neatly and dramatically explained it all. His presentation was complete with more Power Point pages and pictures than I have ever seen in a previous offering by a speaker.

So, let's talk about Sherman. There was so much material presented, I will only touch on some of the high points. All references will be from Greg's detailed Power Point presentation.

Just how was Sherman able to push into the heart of the South and stop the rebel's from continuing the war? Historian James Cooke explains "Sherman was able to bring mountains of supplies deep into Georgia because he had won the logistics battle, before his troops faced the Confederate Army of Tennessee in the field." Now that would seem a very simple statement, but just a minute, we are talking about thousands of rifles, cannon, ammunition for all the assorted ordnance, uniforms and shoes for many thousands, food for the soldiers until they started to live off the forage from that area, feed for horses and mules, wagons, medical supplies, and there's a lot more that must be ready at hand to achieve the assault that would see the war begin to wind down. Wow, it staggers the imagination.

I have not mentioned the railroads as yet. Col. Daniel C. McCallum, USMRR, was part of the team keeping the railroads operating and in repair which at times was a great task, as the rebels did their best to destroy vital tracks to slow the advance of the Union. In his report on July 1st, 1865, McCallum listed the following which had been necessary to keep the rails open:

- 777,879 cross ties
- 104,100 switch timber
- 7833 tons of new rail iron
- 8000 ft. trestle bridges
- 425 ft. bridges
- 115 miles of new ties, rails and ballast
- 54 water tanks
- And the trains kept running.

Sherman is my favorite Union general as I study the war. Why? Because he eliminated the ability of the Rebels to wage war. He had his share of quirks, but he was, in the final analysis, a general, and a soldier among soldiers.

September Quiz

by Alan Berenson

'In contrast with this dissipation, this smallness, this indiscipline and this selfishness stand gloriously the character and fortitude of Lee and of other morally unshakable leaders. In case after case, Lee patiently assuaged the victims of hurt pride, stimulated the discouraged, appealed to the better nature of wavering men, and by force of his own righteousness more than by the exercise of his authority, reconciled bitter differences or induced personal enemies to work together. The seeming absence from the Army of Northern Virginia of such rivalries and animosities as hampered nearly all the other large forces, Confederate and Union, was not in reality absence but control. In the hearts of Lee's subordinates were all the explosive qualities that existed elsewhere, but the General himself possessed the combination of tact, understanding, prestige, firmness and personal character necessary to prevent the explosion.'

From Lee's Lieutenants, Freeman, Vol. I, p.xxv

1 & 2. Its historical name was "Camp Drum" but over time it has been shrunk considerably from its original size. It is currently known as "Drum Barracks" and is located in the state of _____ and in the city of _____.

3 & 4. After completing the regional mop up following his victory at Vicksburg, U.S. Grant suggested that the successful Federal army should continue its work while important points could be captured without major bloodshed. He suggested a campaign to capture _____. His suggestion was disapproved by General _____ not only initially but on two subsequent occasions.

5. Born in 1818 in N.C., died in 1903, he invented agricultural implements including mechanical planter that fed seeds from a hopper. Using parallel technology he invented a military device which was used by the soldiers and sailors of Ben Butler's, David Porter's and Winfield Scott Hancock's commands. His name was _____.

6. What battle, a Union defeat, led to the establishment of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War?

7. A skirmish between Union and Confederate troops occurred 15 April 1862 in the immediate vicinity of this mountain. Name it and you'll name the skirmish.

[The answers to the quiz are on the next page.]



Book Review

By Thomas L. Breiner

Challenges of Command in the Civil War: Generalship, Leadership and Strategy at Gettysburg, Petersburg, and Beyond by Richard J. Sommers, Savas Beatie, LLC, El Dorado Hills, CA 2018, 268 pages, Hardcover \$29.95.

Challenges of Command in the Civil War: Generalship, Leadership, and Strategy at Gettysburg, Petersburg, and Beyond Volume 1: Generals and Generalship by Richard Sommers is the first part of a two-volume series on the challenges of command. The work is a collection of articles written by the author. Volume 1 has two parts: the first part concerns Grant and Lee and the second part looks at the generals who served as subordinates to Grant and Lee.

Part one on Grant and Lee consists of five chapters on their generalship primarily in the Petersburg Campaign with a brief look at their military history and the Overland Campaign of 1864. The author is basically providing the reader with his opinions and analysis without sufficient detail to support his conclusions. I found the material to be very repetitious and boring. All that can be said is that the author admires the generalship of both Grant and Lee.

Part Two looks at the generals at the corps command level who served under Grant and Lee during selected periods of the 1864-65 campaigns. Again, the material lacks sufficient detail to justify the author's opinions. The chapters are basically just brief biographies of each general listing the various commands they held, the dates, and their postwar careers, either in the regular army or in civilian endeavors. Whether you agree or disagree with his assessment of the generalship of these men, I do not feel that the author has provided the reader with the support needed to make any type of informed decision. Richard Sommers certainly does not like the term political general because he refuses to use the term. He favors the title citizen-soldier. The author is fascinated by average ages, length of time in command positions, and the average length of their lives.

The final chapter looks at the ties of participants in the Civil War to the country's Founding Fathers. Again, the information covers lineage, dates, and useless information on average ages. I found this chapter totally irrelevant.

I cannot recommend this work to anyone. If you are a novice the data is over simplified and if you have a solid knowledge of the Civil War you will find the information to be very basic. I am not looking forward to volume two if it is as uninformative as this one. I could not have been more disappointed in a book.

Future Lecturers and Speakers

November through May 2019

November 15, 2018 Ted Savas, El Dorado Hills, CA
The War Outside My Window: The Civil War Diary of LeRoy Gresham, 1860 – 1865

January 17, 2019 Gary Johnson, Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

A Sailor's Life for Me: How Sailing Differs from Soldiering

February 21, 2019 Wayne K. Durrill, University of Cincinnati

War of Another Kind: A Southern Community in the Great Rebellion

March 21, 2019 Eric Wittenburg, Central Ohio Civil War Round Table

Second Winchester

April 18, 2019 Gary Dyson, Mt. Airy, MD

The Ambush of the Isaac P. Smith and the Battle on the Stono River

May 16, 2019 Wayne Motts, Harrisburg, PA

Pickett's Charge: A Battlefield Guide

Upcomming Events of Interest

Go to our website at:

<http://cincinnatiwrt.org/wordpress/events>

for details and a listing of events in our extended area that would be of interest to a civil war buff.

Answers to the September Quiz

1. California
2. Los Angeles (Wilmington)
3. Mobile, Alabama
4. Henry Halleck
5. Richard Gatling
6. Ball's Bluff
7. Picacho Peak, Pinal County, AZ (Battle of Picacho Pass)

About the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Reservations: If you do not have an Automatic Reservation, please remember to submit your meeting reservation to the web site at <http://cincinnatiwrt.org/wordpress/contact/rsvp/> or call it in to Esly Caldwell at 513-607-6598. Leave a message, if necessary. 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 of the Wednesday of the week before the Round Table Meeting.

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 (single) and \$35 (couple) for a **Regular Membership**. This fee helps cover operating costs which include our meeting location 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. Students enrolled full time in any recognized secondary or higher institute of learning can use a **Student Membership**, which applies a discount of \$10 to each of the above dues rates.

Dinner reservations are required, and can be made prior to the reservations deadline either by the web site <http://cincinnatiwrt.org/wordpress/contact/rsvp/> or by a phone call to the officer taking reservations for the meeting. Meals currently cost \$20. 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. *No reservation is necessary.* 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.

Late Reservations, that is those reservations made by using either the website or by phone after the Wednesday, that is eight days before the meeting, will be accepted conditionally, subject to the caterer's ability to honor a change to dinner count that 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 available is available.

Cancellations can be made via email to the Vice President or by phone. 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 The Drake's 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 Road exit and go back 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 main entrance and go to the left side of the gift shop found opposite the entryway; the meeting room is located at the far end of the cafeteria hallway.

Current Officers

President: David Stockdale	513-310-9553 (c)	djrtstockdale@aol.com
Vice-President: Esly Caldwell, II	513-607-6598 (c)	ecaldwel2@gmail.com
Treasurer: Tom Williams	513-608-4391 (c)	t.williams@outlook.com
Program Chair: Dan Bauer	513-759-4495 (h)	dbauer002@cinci.rr.com
Membership & Publicity: Wanda Langdon	513-505-6871 (h)	Wanda@TeamLangdon.com
Trustee: Tom Breiner	513-984-3101 (h)	tbreiner@fuse.net
Trustee: Dawn Mowery	513-774-9544 (h)	dmowery11@fuse.net