General Orders



The Newsletter of the

Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. and The Iron Brigade Association



June 12, 2025

David Powell

Lost Opportunities in the Atlanta Campaign

"I've got Joe Johnston Dead!" Or so Sherman is said to have exclaimed upon hearing that James B. McPherson had seized Resaca. Famously, that turned out not to be true, one of the great "lost opportunities" of the entire war. But in fact, there were other such turning points in the first month of the campaign, each perhaps more significant than Resaca. On May 16, Sherman's armies stumbled crossing the Oostenaula River, offering Johnston a chance to damage one or more of the Federal corps; and at Dallas, McPherson hesitated again when facing just a single small Confederate division. What would have happened if either of these moments had gone differently?

David A. Powell is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute (1983) with a BA in history. He has published numerous articles in various magazines, and more than fifteen historical simulations of different battles. For many years David's focus has been on the epic battle of Chickamauga, and he is nationally recognized for his tours of that important battlefield and for publishing six books on that campaign, including The Chickamauga Campaign Trilogy completed in 2016. More recently, Dave has published a book on the battle of New Market, co-authored The Tullahoma Campaign with renowned historian Eric Wittenberg, and published The Impulse of Victory: Ulysses S. Grant at Chattanooga. Both the latter two books appeared in 2020. His current project is a five-volume study of the Atlanta Campaign. The Atlanta Campaign, Volume One: Dalton to Cassville, May 1-19, 1864 was published in July, 2024, while Volume Two will be published in the second half of 2025.



David, his wife Anne, and their three bloodhounds live and work in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. He is retired and writes full time.

Join us at our final meeting of this season as we welcome Dave to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.

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June Meeting at a Glance The Wisconsin Club 9th and Wisconsin Avenue Milwaukee, Wisconsin Jackets are required for dining room.

5:30 p.m. - Registration/Social Hour 6:30 p.m. - Dinner 7:30 p.m. - Program

Speaker and topic are subject to change. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN for meeting status.



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Civil War Round Table News

When Reservations are Cancelled

Please be aware that cancellations of dinner reservations within 48 hours of the meeting are subject to payment in full. The MCWRT is charged for these dinners whether they are used or not!

Your Cooperation is Appreciated

"Walk-in dinner" requests are sometimes difficult to honor. Remember, dinner reservations are to be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date. We are always happy to accommodate where possible, but we cannot always guarantee a dinner that evening if you have not called in or emailed your reservation. Thank you for your understanding.

Special Dietary Needs

We have quite a number of regular members who have opted for special entrees as options to the regular dinner being served. The Wisconsin Club and the Round Table will make every effort to meet any special dietary needs you may have. As a courtesy, please give a reminder when making your reservations, so we

don't forget to serve you what you're expecting!

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation. creed, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, gender identity or expression, veteran status, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities, or membership.

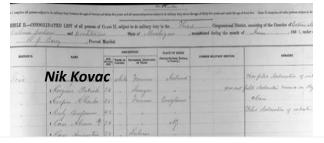
The 2024-2025 Round Table season comes to a close with the June meeting. It has again been a great one featuring excellent speakers, presentations and great fellowship.

Thank you to all who contributed time and effort to make this possible. Our speakers, our Board of Directors, our newsletter submitters, but, most of all, to the membership of this absolutely amazing organization.

Have a safe, wonderful summer. Write up the stories of your travels to Civil War sites. Read, read, read. Then, share what you have seen, read, and learned with us all.



The Muster Roll: NEW MEMBERS



MCWRT Annual Fund

The following members have made a generous commitment to the MCWRT by investing in that fund. This list reflects those donations made July 1, 2024 through September 14, 2024.

Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

Susan Anderson, Roman Blenski, Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch, Dawn and Van Harl, Charles and Rebecca Jarvis, Grant Johnson

Patron (\$200 - \$499)

Mike Deeken, Doug Haag, Gene and Jane Jamrozy, Dan Nettesheim, Laura Rinaldi

Associate (\$100 - \$199)

John Abbott, Tom and Terry Arliskas, Crain Bliwas, Dale Brasser, Robert Christie, Gary and Judy Ertel, Bill and Claudette Finke, Doug Haag, Jim Heinz, Peter and Jean Jacobsohn, Bruce Klem, Don Korte, Rod Malinowski, Kathy McNally, Brad and Kathy Schotanus, Dennis Slater, Dan Tanty, Justin and Stacy Tolomeo, Paul Zehren

Contributor (up to \$99)

George Affeldt, Mike Benton, Dale Bespalec, Jim Blake, Jim Cornelius, Gordon Dammann, Ellen DeMers, John Durr, George Geanon, Julian Gonzales, Brian Gunn, Leon and Margaret Harris, Paul Heaton, Christopher Johnson, Jerome Kowalski, John Lenchek, Steve Leopold, Paul and Susan Miller, Ed Newman, John Rodahl, Diane Smurawa, Sam Solberg

Speaker Enhancement Fund

John Abbott, George Affeldt, Mike Benton, Jim Blake, Jim Bolek, Dale Brasser, Gordon Dammann, Ellen DeMers, Lori Duginski, Gary and Judy Ertl, John Durr, Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch , Julian Gonzalez, Doug Haag, Jim Heinz, John Helmenstine, Tom Hesse, Peter and Jean Jacobsohn, Gene and Jane Jamrozy., Jerome Kowalski, John Kuhnmuench, John Lenchek, Steve Magnusen, Rod Malinowski, Tom and Robin Martin, Kathy McNally, Jim and Monica Millane, Dennis Mueller (in honor of Frank L. Klement), John and Susan Petty, Laura Rinaldi, Dennis Slater, Diane Smurawa, Dan Tanty, Paul Zehren



Previous June meetings of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table featured these speakers and topics.

- 2004 Mark Bradley: "I Rely Upon Your Good Judgment and Skill - R.E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston"
- 2010 Robert I. Girardi: "Railroad Defense in the Atlanta Campaign"
- 2011 Peter S. Carmichael: "Robert E. Lee and the Strategy of Annihilation"
- 2012 Dennis E. Frye: "September Suspense: Lincoln's Union in Peril"
- 2013 Timothy B. Smith: "Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle, Occupation"
- 2014 Kenneth E. Noe: "The War in Appalachia"
- 2015 Garry Adelman: "4D Civil War Photo Extravaganza"
- 2016 Dale Phillips: "Ben Butler and the Federal Occupation of New Orleans"
- 2017 David Wege: "When Johnny Came Marching Home"
- 2018 Dennis A. Rasbach: "Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain at Petersburg"
- 2019 Greg Biggs: "The Question was One of Supplies"
- 2020 Bruce Klem: "The 1st Wisconsin Cavalry"
- 2021 A. Wilson Greene: "The First Petersburg Offensive"
- 2023 Mark Zimmermann: "The Brutal Retreat from Nashville 1864"
- 2024 Timothy B. Smith: "The Real Horse Soldiers: Grierson's Raid"



The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee was established in 1947 and is the second oldest of the more than 200 Civil War Round Tables still in existence in the United States and abroad. Current membership of the MCWRT is approximately 200.

Kenosha Civil War Museum Second Friday Lecture Series

Sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and the Iron Brigade Association. Free and open to the public.

The Congdon Brothers and Significant Others: Their Civil War Times Friday, June 13 – 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm Presenter: Michael T. Sullivan

Eli, Hannibal, and Sylvester were brothers, farmers, soldiers, and friends from Palmyra, Wisconsin. They were respected for what they did and the Civil War made them forever friends of the country. While holding the rank of private, the brothers served honorably in Wisconsin military units of the Union army. They made it home, partially, but the home front presented its own family and personal struggles. Their story is gleaned from browned and fragile papers by Wisconsin author Michael T. Sullivan.

Spared and Shared: Saving History from the American Civil War

Friday, July 11 – 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm Presenter: William Griffing

When William Griffing ("Griff") retired 15 years ago, he dedicated himself to the preservation of American history. Griffing uncovered a substantial volume of historical content hidden within letters and diaries from the Civil War era, much of which remained unpublished and unknown to the public. Most of this material was held by descendants of collectors. Griff will elucidate how accessed these invaluable sources and made transcriptions accessible to the public through his Spared & Shared website. He will also discuss how the materials he unearthed culminated in a recently published book on Abraham Lincoln, featuring contemporaneous accounts of the 16th President that had never been published before. Copies of Griff's book, A Great and Good Man; Rare, First-Hand Accounts of Abraham Lincoln, will be available for purchase for those who are interested.

See more exceptional offerings from the Kenosha Civil War Museum on page 13 of this issue of <u>General Orders</u>.

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Fort Sumter The Fortifications

It is apparent that if these forts were actually in the hands of the citizens of South Carolina, their only value would be to protect the shipping in their own harbor. Four United States ships could completely blockade the approaches without aid from the forts. Fort Moultrie, at the entrance, could not relieve that condition, whether in the hands of South Carolina or the United States, and no ship could enter or depart without seizure.

In a reliable chart of the harbor by the U.S. Coast Survey, it will be found that there are four channels entering the harbor. The Main Ship channel having from 31/2 to 7 fathoms of water, running south six miles from the entrance. "Swash" channel, having from 2 to 3 1/2 fathoms, running southeast between the three and four miles. "North" channel runs a half-mile north of "Swash," and parallel to it for two and a half miles, and with about the same depth of water, and "Maffit's" or "Sullivan's Island" channel, which runs from two to three miles due east from Moultrie. Now, forming a range from that fort on the entrance, with a radius of four miles, which would pretty nearly cover the entrance to all these channels with one ship of war on each of these entrances, the whole four ships could be made simultaneously serviceable to each other, and so render the Blockade impenetrable by any force South Carolina could command, as the extreme distance of these ships from each other could be effectually reduced to about four miles and still be sale from the fire of Ft. Moultrie.

It is true that if the United States should wait until the South Carolinians erect sea-coast batteries along the margin of the harbor, they might annoy them with their fire, but they will be no less exposed to the fire from the ships, if it was deemed necessary to do so to accomplish their object. A few ships of war could silence every one of these forts, even if they were in the hands of the secessionists for the State troops are in but poor condition to successfully manage the attack or defense of any of these forts when opposed by experience, science, and above all, discipline.

Fort Sumter

The plan of this fort is a truncated pentagon, with one side parallel to the adjoining shore, thus presenting an angle to the channel. Of the truncated angles, the eastern, western, and northern are formed into defensive projections, while the other two are formed of two small faces, making a single angle of about 15 degrees with the sides of the Pentagon. At each intersection of the small faces is a sallyport. The height of the parapet above the water line is sixty feet. On the eastern and western sides are the barracks for the private's mess hall, Kitchen &c. On the southern side are officers' quarters, which are finished in a very handsome style.

The fort is now mounted with the heaviest guns of the United States service, arranged in three tiers, the two lower being casemates and the upper barbette guns.

The casemate guns are those which are fired from an embrasure in the scarp walls, and are protected from the enemy's shell by an arched, bomb-proof covering overhead; the barbette guns are those which fire over the parapet, which exposes the Cannoniers to the fire of the enemy, although, in this instance, the height of the ramparts is so great that there is comparatively no danger from the shot of an enemy a fleet. The armament consists of 140 pieces, placed in the following order: The heaviest guns, which are the 82 and 64-pounders on the first tier, 24 and 32-pounders on the second tier, columbiads (8 and 10 inch), and heavy sea coast mortars on the top of the ramparts.

The heaviest pieces are turned towards the harbor, the lighter towards the land side, which is further protected by musketry, for which loops are cut in the scrap wall. Two furnaces for heating shot are situated on the terra-parade plain. The magazines are located on the inner slides of the sally port and contain, at present, 40,000 pounds of powder and a proportionate quantity of shot and shell.

An abundant supply of fresh water, using a well sunk to a great depth. About three weeks since, it is understood that six months' provisions arrived by vessel, designed for Fort Moultrie, the greater portion of which are supposed to have found their way into Fort Sumter.

Officers stationed there: Maj. Robert Anderson. 1st Regiment Artillery, Commanding officer; Assistant Surgeon S. W Crawford, Medical staff, Capt. Abner Doubleday, Commanding Company E and others.

The shores of the harbor are low and flat. The surface of the dry land is only a few feet above the water. Charleston itself, seen from Fort Moultrie, looks as if it is rising from the sea. There are no hills except the sand drifts. There is no tilled land anywhere in the vicinity of the forts. There is nothing but sand and swamp. Sullivan's and Morris Islands are separated from the mainland by extensive marshes. The shores of the harbor are, with the exception of Montarville and a few hovels near Fort Johnson and the light-house, uninhabited. Seen from the deck of a steamer in the harbor, the shores are mere green lines, framing the mirror-like waters.

This article from January 1861, the Madison State Journal, describes the Fort as it existed in 1861. Today, the Fort is a shadow of the 1861 building, having endured the shelling of the Confederates later that year and later by the US Navy.

Thank you, Jim Johnson, for these monthly *From the Field* features!



James K. Newton Co. F 14th Wisconsin

Through the Looking Glass features are intended to tell the stories of common folks of the Civil War, whether they are civilians or military personnel. If you have access to the story of an ordinary citizen of this war-torn era and are willing to share it with our members, please consider submitting it to the <u>General Orders</u>. Thank you!

A Wisconsin Story from Shiloh The 14th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment

The 14th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry was a Union regiment during the American Civil War, and it played a notable role at Shiloh on April 6-7, 1862. Here's an overview based on historical records.

James Tyler, first Sgt and great uncle (James Johnson) with company E of the 14th, described in diary that they left the boats above the landing, the river, because of the overcrowding at Pittsburgh Landing, and had to climb the ledge at the river edge and wait in the rain along the shore. James Tyler, my great-uncle and First Sergeant of Company E, 14th Wisconsin Infantry, left a vivid

CO. F Here Wisconsin firsthand account in his diary that adds a personal layer to the regiment's experience at the Battle of Shiloh. His description aligns with the broader historical narrative but offers specific details about Company E's movements and the weather's impact on April 7, 1862. Tyler notes that the 14th Wisconsin disembarked from their steamers "above the landing" due to overcrowding at Pittsburg Landing. This makes sense given the chaos at the main landing on the Tennessee River. By the evening of April 6, thousands of Union reinforcements from General Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio were arriving to bolster Ulysses S. Grant's battered forces. The landing was a bottleneck—clogged with boats unloading troops, supplies, and artillery, and further complicated by panicked stragglers from the first day's fighting. To avoid this mess, Tyler's unit, likely along with others from Crittenden's 5th Division, was dropped off upstream, requiring them to navigate the riverbank to reach the battlefield.

He mentions the steep, bluff-like bank along parts of the Tennessee River near Pittsburg Landing. This was no gentle slope accounts describe it as a muddy, slippery climb, especially treacherous after the heavy rain that began overnight. For Company E, fresh off the boats and carrying their gear, scaling this ledge in the dark hours of April 7 would have been a grueling start. The rain Tyler describes "along the shore" matches the torrential downpour reported across the area, turning the soil into a slick, clinging mud that stuck to boots and soaked through uniforms. As First Sergeant, Tyler would have been responsible for keeping his men organized during this chaotic ascent, no small task for a unit with less than three months of service.

The 14th Wisconsin waited in the rain along the shore through the night after climbing the bank. The regiment didn't engage until the morning of April 7, so this pause exposed the men to the elements for hours. The rain would have chilled the men, weighing down their wool clothing and making their muskets harder to manage. Tyler's diary captures the misery of this moment: green troops, already fatigued from travel, now drenched and cold, steeling themselves for their first combat. The muddy, waterlogged shore offered little shelter, and the wait likely heightened the tension as distant gunfire signaled the ongoing battle.

Once they moved out, Company E, as part of the 14th Wisconsin, joined the Union counterattack under Crittenden's division. The rain and mud continued to plague them on the battlefield, slowing their advance and complicating their efforts against Confederate lines. Tyler, as First Sergeant, would have been at the forefront of maintaining order in Company E, which suffered its share of the regiment's 93 casualties that day. His leadership in such conditions—rain-soaked, muddy, and under fire—helps explain the unit's commended performance.

My great-uncle's diary entry paints a gritty picture of Company E's entry into Shiloh: a disordered landing, a tough climb, and a rain-drenched wait before marching into battle. It's a testament to their endurance and his role in steadying the men.

I was in Savannah, Tennessee, for the 135th reenactment of the first day of the battle. There were a couple of hundred cannons that day you could hear the sound of, as James mentions in his diary, and the regiment wanted transportation to the battle, and were upset they were not able to find transportation with the sound of the conflict in the distance, as I stood there people that had driven to savannah that morning said you could hear the battle at least 100 miles away.

The 135th reenactment of the Battle of Shiloh's first day in Savannah, Tennessee, brings an incredible connection to James Tyler's diary and the 14th Wisconsin's story. The event likely around April 4-5, 1997 (135 years after 1862), aimed to recreate the atmosphere of that chaotic opening day. With a couple hundred cannons firing, the sound must have been deafening— a visceral echo of what my great-uncle described hearing from Savannah on April 6, 1862.

James Tyler's diary, mentions the regiment hearing the distant sound of conflict while in Savannah, about 9 miles north of Pittsburg Landing. On April 6, the battle began with a Confederate surprise attack at dawn, and by mid-morning, the roar of artillery and musketry would have carried across the rolling terrain and along the Tennessee River valley. Cannons, especially massed batteries, produce a low-frequency rumble that can travel miles, amplified by the open landscape and water. Historically, soldiers and civilians reported hearing Shiloh's gunfire from surprising distances—some accounts claim up to 20-30 miles under the right conditions. My reenactment companions claimed of hearing it "at least 100 miles away" that morning, but it underscores how the sound left an impression, much as it did on the 14th Wisconsin in 1862.

For James and his regiment, stationed as provost guard in Savannah on April 6, that distant thunder was a call to action and a source of frustration. Tyler's diary noting their upset at not finding transportation reflects the unit's eagerness to join the fight. The 14th Wisconsin, still raw with only a few months of service, was itching to prove itself. Savannah was a staging point for Union reinforcements, but logistical chaos reigned. Steamboats were prioritized for moving troops and supplies to Pittsburg Landing, and overland routes were limited—wagons and horses were scarce, and the roads were turning muddy with the threat of rain. The regiment's irritation at being stuck, hearing the battle but unable to reach it, mirrors account from other units delayed that day. They wouldn't get their chance until evening, when steamers finally took them upriver.

Standing in Savannah during the reenactment, I got a taste of that tension. The booming cannons – hundreds - would have rolled across the same landscape James knew, though the reenactment's scale was estimated 200+ guns in action. The sound bouncing off the river and hills likely gave one a sense of what drove the 14th's urgency. People driving in that morning and claiming they heard it from afar adds a modern twist—perhaps they caught the sound from 10-20 miles out, not 100, but it shows how the reenactment captured the battle's haunting reach.

James's perspective as First Sergeant of Company E adds depth: he'd have felt the weight of keeping his men steady amid that distant roar, knowing they were missing the fight. When they finally moved out that evening, arriving at Pittsburg Landing by April 7, the cannons they'd heard became all too real in the muddy, rain-soaked combat that followed. The reenactment bridges then and now—those cannons were a living echo of James's words.

At the reenactment— held April 4-5, 1997, for the 135th anniversary—having over 200 cannons firing was an extraordinary effort to recreate the soundscape of Shiloh's opening day. Historically, the actual battle involved around 100-120 artillery pieces total (Union and Confederate combined), with estimates varying by source. The Confederates brought about 50-60 guns, while Grant's army had roughly 50-70, though not all were engaged simultaneously on April 6. A reenactment with 200+ cannons exceeds the original scale,. Either way, the sound was overwhelming—a rolling, earth-shaking barrage echoing across the Tennessee River valley, much like what James and the 14th Wisconsin heard from Savannah, 9 miles north of Pittsburg Landing.

James Tyler's diary, captures the regiment's reaction to hearing the distant conflict while stuck in Savannah on April 6. The real battle's artillery—firing solid shot, canister, and explosive shells—produced a deep, resonant boom that could carry far, especially with a favorable wind or along the river. Soldiers' accounts from Shiloh note the sound reaching 10-20 miles, with some exaggerated claims stretching further. The reenactment's 200+ cannons, even if with smaller charges, would have multiplied that effect, creating a wall of noise that likely felt visceral even from Savannah. When you stood there, hearing it roll in as people remarked on its reach—the connection to James's frustration becomes clear. He wrote of the regiment's upset at lacking transportation, the distant cannon fire taunting them as they waited, eager to join the fight.

For the 14th Wisconsin, that sound was both a lure and a torment. As provost guard in Savannah, they were sidelined while the battle raged, the cannonade signaling Union lines buckling under Confederate assault. With over 100 guns in action historically, the noise would have been constant—punctuated by the sharper cracks of musketry—reaching them as a low, ominous rumble. The reenactments' 200+ cannons amplified this into something even more intense, giving a magnified taste of what drove their impatience. The regiment's delay stemmed from logistical gridlock: Savannah's docks were swamped with troops and supplies, and steamers couldn't ferry everyone at once. Overland options were scant, with muddy roads and few wagons, leaving them stranded until evening when boats finally took them to Pittsburg Landing.

The reenactment's scale—doubling the historical artillery—underscores how sound shaped the experience then and now. For James, First Sergeant of Company E, that distant roar was a call to duty he couldn't answer immediately, heightening the tension he'd later face in the rain-soaked fight on April 7. My presence in Savannah, hearing those 200+ cannons, brought his words to life, linking your steps to his. If his diary describes the sound more—its pitch, rhythm, or effect on the men.

A few days before the battle, James mentioned a person injured by a wagon, and he was worried about the soldier. After the battle, there is a mention of a search for stray Confederates, and that 9 Confederates were killed without any of the same concern.

James Tyler's diary entries offer a fascinating glimpse into his mindset as First Sergeant of Company E, 14th Wisconsin Infantry, before and after the Battle of Shiloh on April 6-7, 1862. The contrast between his concern for an injured soldier a few days prior and his apparent lack of empathy for nine Confederates killed during a post-battle search reveals much about the emotional toll of war and his role in it.

James's worry about this soldier stands out. As First Sergeant, he was the senior enlisted man in Company E, responsible for the welfare of roughly 80-100 men—tracking muster rolls, ensuring discipline, and tending to their needs. His concern suggests a personal connection, perhaps to a comrade from Fond du Lac, or simply a sense of duty to his men. In early 1862, the 14th Wisconsin was still green, with only weeks of service, and the unit hadn't yet faced battle's hardening effects. An injury like this, mundane yet serious, would have been a jolt—a reminder of vulnerability even before the cannons roared. If the soldier was from Company E, James's worry might reflect his role as a caretaker, fretting over losing a man to something as unglamorous as a wagon accident.

The killing of nine Confederates during this search suggests a violent encounter—perhaps a skirmish with holdouts who resisted capture, or a summary execution of stragglers deemed a threat. James's lack of concern contrasts sharply with his earlier empathy. By April 8 or 9, he'd survived Shiloh's carnage, where the 14th Wisconsin lost 93 men (16 killed, 74 wounded, 3 missing) in a single day's fighting on April 7. The battle's brutality—thousands of dead, wounded screaming in the mud, and the stench of death—likely numbed him. The Confederates, now the enemy he'd faced in combat, were no longer abstract; they were the force that had bloodied his regiment. His diary's indifference could reflect exhaustion, dehumanization of the foe, or a hardened acceptance that killing was now part of the job.

As First Sergeant, James's perspective was shaped by duty. His concern for the injured soldier shows a leader caring for his own; his silence on the Confederates' fate suggests a man steeled by battle, focused on survival and order rather than sentiment.

Battle had drawn a line: his duty was to his own, not to them.

This shift isn't unique to James—it's a common arc in soldiers' accounts from Shiloh and beyond. The battle's sheer scale (over 23,000 casualties total) and its muddy, visceral horror left marks on even the greenest troops. For James, as First Sergeant, it also reflects his role: he had to keep Company E moving forward, not dwell on the fallen foe. His diary's silence on their deaths isn't callousness so much as a new reality—war had stripped away the space for earlier worries. It's a poignant echo of how Shiloh, fought 163 years ago from today's date of April 5, 2025 still echoes.

PS I must add the modern event was canceled early on the 5th of April 1997, because of a hurricane to the west that had come ashore and the wall of rain that ingulfed the event the story of the cannon and autos and the days pulling them all out of the mud is another story, my dog tent is still stained with Tennessee mud.

Two weeks later I was in New York at Grant's Tomb rededicating the tomb with many other thousands, standing on the steps of the tomb, I was standing with the Second Wisconsin Regimental Flag along with at least a 100 more Regimental flags of the Union.

I brushed the mud from my frock coat from the Shiloh event onto the steps of the Tomb, a perfect final home - Grant and Shiloh mud at last together again.

submitted by James Johnson



The 14th Wisconsin story appeared in two parts. Part One was in the May issue of General Orders.

Thank you for submitting this article, James. The connection between past and present resonates with us all.

Civil War Memory

Abraham Lincoln wrote about the "mystic chords of memory" that wrapped around great deeds and places. He spoke of the sacrifices on every battlefield and marked by every patriot grave in a heroic attempt to save the Union. That Union would again swell when touched by "the better angels of our nature." In his First inaugural Address, Lincoln wrote about what makes up the fabric, the soul of a nation, and its memory of times before. The following piece is another take on what constitutes our shared history and memory.

His name was Samuel Harlan. In 1905, he sat each morning on the porch of his farmhouse in Virginia, wrapped in a wool coat even in summer. The musket he once carried was gone. So were most of his comrades. But the war lived on in his eyes — quiet, distant, unshakable.

He didn't talk much about the battles. Not Fredericksburg, not Antietam, not the years of mud, fire, and death. But his silence told more than any tale could. Each wrinkle was a memory. Each sigh was a name unspoken.

Passersby knew him only as the old man on the porch. Children whispered tales. Some saluted. But inside, Samuel watched a changing world he no longer recognized. The trains roared louder. Cities grew. But he held onto a slower time — a time of honor, heartbreak, and sacrifice.

His cane tapped gently against the wood. The wind lifted his gray hair. And in that moment, history breathed — not in books or parades, but in a lone man watching the last light fall.

Civil War Museum Curator and Site Coordinator Doug Dammann will lead a private tour of the Civil War Museum and its galleries for members of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee and Iron Brigade Association. Even if you've been to the museum many times before, Doug will share insights on the building of the exhibits, point out often unseen details, and provide access to the museum's artifacts collection that the average visitor does not get.

When: The tour will start at 5PM on Thursday, August 14

Who: Private Tour of the Civil War Museum and its Galleries for Members of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee and Iron Brigade Association

Capacity: Maximum number of people 30

Cost: \$10 (Free for Round Table members. There is a limit of 4 people per reservation.)

Registration: The museum created a private link for the membership to register for the tour. This link for your members only, so we won't publicize the tour on our website, Facebook, or on the online museum calendar. <u>https://84428.blackbaudhosting.com/84428/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=2563a10b-5b7a-4867-90eb-cbda5be91620</u>

If MCWRT members would rather register by phone, they can call museum staff member Kiera at 262-653-4433. She is part-time, so if she doesn't answer, leave a message and she will get back to them.

General Orders, the official publication of the **Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee**, Inc. is produced September through June and upon request of the Board of Directors.

Send submissions to **David Wege** at <u>wegs1862@gmail.com</u>. All submissions must be received by no later than the 10th of the month prior to the next issue. We reserve the right to select articles to be printed and to edit for content, style, and length.

All address changes or problem receiving your *General Orders* should be directed to Treasurer Paul Eilbes.

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Yearly Round Table membership available: Individual (\$50), family (\$65), non-resident (\$30), attending education institution (\$25). Contact Paul Eilbes for information at (262) 376-0568.

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. admits members of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, and activities of the Round Table.

MILWAUKEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE 2024-2025 SPEAKER SCHEDULE

September 12, 2024	John Horn			
Wilson-Kautz 1	Raid			
October 10, 2024	Jen Murray			
General George Gora	lon Meade			
November 7, 2024 The Grant-Rawlins Relationship	Allen Ottens During the Civil War			
December 12, 2024	Jon Sebastian			
(At the Bavarian Bierhaus)				
We Are All in This War – The	e Northern Homefront			

January 9, 2025 Bjorn Skaptason Milwaukee and Shiloh

February 13, 2025Hampton NewsomeGettysburg's Southern Front

- March 13, 2025 Gerald Prokopowicz Civil War Talk Radio: Podcasting History
- April 10, 2025 Phil Spaugy The 19th Indiana of the Iron Brigade – Here was Made Our Last and Hopeless Stand
- May 8, 2025 Steven Phan Asian and Pacific Islanders During the Civil War

June 12, 2025 Dave Powell Nevins-Freeman Award Winner Lost Opportunities in the Atlanta Campaign

Speakers/topics remain subject to change. We appreciate your understanding!



Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.

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~ CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE NEWS EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS ~

Would you like to receive an email reminder before each meeting? How about an email telling you about a special or upcoming Civil War event in our area? If you are interested in receiving an email reminder/notification please send your email address to Grant Johnson at: grant.johnson@responsory.com

Grant will be creating a database with email reminders set to go out a week before the scheduled event. This is a purely optional choice on each member's part. If you have any questions please talk to Grant at a Round Table meeting or email him at the listed email address.

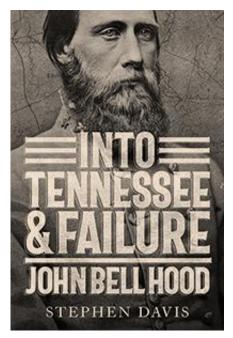
Milwaukee Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for June 12, 2025

Mail your reservations by Friday, June 6 to:

Paul Eilbes 1809 Washington Avenue Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730 Call or email reservations to: (262) 376-0568 peilbes@gmail.com

Enclosed is \$_____ (meal is \$35.00 per person) for ____ people for the June 12, 2025 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. (Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)





BETWEEN THE COVERS Into Tennessee and Failure: John Bell Hood

Stephen Davis

INTO TENNESSEE AND FAILURE is the second volume of Stephen Davis's study of John Bell Hood's generalship in 1864. Volume One, <u>TEXAS BRIGADIER</u> <u>TO THE FALL OF ATLANTA</u> traces Hood's rise from lieutenant of cavalry in Virginia to commanding general of the Army of Tennessee. In his first test as Confederate general, July-September 1864, Hood failed to prevent Sherman's capture of Atlanta. Here Davis picks up the story in September-October 1864, tracing Hood and his army into North Georgia and Alabama.

Few Civil War operations matched the controversy, intensity, and bloodshed of Confederate general John B. Hood's ill-fated 1864 campaign against Union forces in Tennessee. In this second volume Stephen Davis examines Hood's leadership and the three-month operation, covering the battles of Allatoona, Spring Hill, and Franklin, as well as the decimation of Hood's army at Nashville.

For years, one of the commonly held views among American Civil War history enthusiasts was the superiority of Confederate military leadership to that of the Union's. While there were many talented commanders on both sides, one less often discussed topic involves those commanders whose performances left something to be desired. One such commander was General John Bell Hood, who led the Confederate Army of Tennessee during one of the final campaigns of the Civil War.

The Franklin-Nashville Campaign was the last gasp of the Confederate war effort and would require a highly skilled commander. Hood believed himself to be the man to soar to greatness and achieve victory; however, this was not the case. Unfortunately for the Confederacy there was no such figure.

John B. Hood continues to have devoted fans and critics and neither side will be thrilled with Davis's conclusions. While Davis defends Hood when it comes to casualties and alleged drug abuse, this is not a hagiography. Davis rightfully notes that Hood undermined Joe Johnston and hoped to replace him.

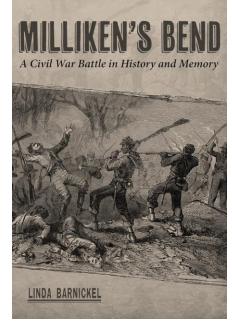
Until becoming the commander of the Army of Tennessee, replacing Joseph Johnston, his career had been noteworthy. Gettysburg and Chickamauga highlighted his "Striker of Manly Blows" reputation but at a great personal cost. Losing the use of his arm at Gettysburg and the loss of his leg at Chickamauga must have made for difficult campaign conditions yet Hood struggled on. His battlefield ardor brought him promotions even when others questioned his tactical and logistical leadership abilities.

After the loss of Atlanta, the question of who and when the decision was ultimately made to strike north into Tennessee has long been a point of dispute among historians. Davis's examination of the evidence strongly supports the argument that the September 1864 strategy meeting between Hood and President Davis marked the official genesis of the operation.

Davis draws on his mastery of the secondary literature to effectively harvest from the many inclusive overview of several generations of published views and opinions on every major decision point and controversy related to the 1864 Tennessee Campaign. Doing much more than simply summarizing competing interpretations both old and new, Davis analyzes the positions of other historians through the judicious insight of his own decades of primary research. Davis hasn't simply produced his take on Hood's ultimately disastrous Tennessee campaign, which would merely add yet another version of the history to those by Connelly, Sword, Jacobson, etc. instead he has done it through a different lens- at several points summarizing the existing secondary literature on several controversies and providing his own conclusions.

continued on page 13





Between the Covers Milliken's Bend: A Civil War Battle in History and Memory

Linda Barnickel

My review is on a book that I purchased at the visitor center when we visited the Vicksburg Battlefield with the October 2024 Kenosha Civil War Museum tour on the Vicksburg Campaign. The book was published in 2013 by the Louisiana State University press. It is a relatively short read at only 212 pages with appendices.

In this work the author presents a comprehensive account of the battle fought just a few miles from Vicksburg. This book helps to bring to light some of the first battle between USCT troops and the Confederate forces. The terrain was on the west side of the Mississippi between a seasoned Confederate Brigade (McCulloch's Brigade) and mixed Union forces of the USCT African Brigade, the 23rd Iowa Infantry regiment, and Union gunboats.

The author begins with historical background, carefully setting the stage where the Union's Black soldiers fought, Southern fear of Black anger and slave uprisings; the social and economic underpinnings of the belief in slavery; the threat to the Southern way of life posed by the Emancipation Proclamation; and then this threat compounded when ex-slaves and Freedmen began to join the Union army. Arming Black soldiers was a fraught, tense, escalation of what was already a furious fight between North and South. Many Southerners now feared that the war could come to every door in the entire South, as fast as the walk from a nearby slave cabin. The prospect was terrifying.

I thought the author helped to provide some key information on how the Southern mindset had been focused on slave rebellions from the very beginning of slavery in the US. Over time it had been exacerbated by the revolution in Haiti, Nat Turner and other minor revolts by slaves over time. Facing units of the Union army of armed blacks of ex-slaves was an unthinkable horror to the average Southerner. As a result, Union white officers were subject to execution if captured and black troops if captured would be brought back into slavery or no quarter granted if trying to surrender.

The book shows how the development of USCT was slow and sometimes painful to begin. Confederate raiders continued to harass freed slaves living and working in Union supported farms and as a result of these raids many former slaves were taken back into slavery.

Newly assigned white officers had varying degrees of racial prejudice and experience, and officers were denied higher rank and pay until they recruit a full complement of men. Recruitment itself wasn't going as planned. Meanwhile, Union quartermasters were dragging their feet about arming and clothing the men, thus, no guns for drill nor proper uniforms. The generals in command were bickering, one openly abusing the slaves for his personal use, another fighting an endless paperwork war for simple equipment (joking in frustration about getting wheelbarrows instead of wagons). Slaves newly freed now face the prospect of army passes and army discipline by white officers, to their minds, reminders of the old slave masters. Truly things weren't a simple process.

Despite all the variables of forming units the newly minted USCT units stationed at Milliken's Bend when attacked met the challenge and with the help of Union gunboats and an Iowa regiment defeated the Confederate attack and proved the concept of USCT units was viable.

I thought this was an interesting read in that the author laid out the issues for both sides of the slavery question as to attitudes and fears on both sides. The battle itself is covered well along with the immediate after math and how the battle along with other events cemented the idea of freed slaves serving well as soldiers. Even though Milliken's Bend is long gone, since the Mississippi has changed its course the legacy of the fight continues. Much detail is also provided on how the area and the history of the battle is remembered by residents in the county today. I recommend this book to any student interested in further exploration of the Vicksburg Campaign.

submitted by Bruce Klem

Trouble in the Trans-Mississippi

Wanderings



The Civil War Time Travelers enjoyed a six-day tour to Missouri and Arkansas. For the most part, stormy weather stayed on the horizon. Our hotel in Springfield had a tornado brush past it the night **after** we stayed there, but power had been restored by the time we returned two days later. It was a tumultuous few days featuring the region's temperamental storms. But, in the end, all was well.

Our first stop was Wilson's Creek National Military Park, Missouri. Time Travelers had arranged for us to have as our guide Jeff Patrick, a National Park historian at the battlefield. We started at the visitor center, looked over museum displays and watched the movie about the battle. We then got on the tour bus and began touring the battlefield. Our first stop was the Ray House on the east side of the battlefield.

There Jeff Patrick gave us the story of the Ray family who were not only near the fighting, but subject to being shot at as well. It was here that Jeff first told us of the importance of the Telegraph Road, a.k.a. the Wire Road, which ran from St. Louis, Missouri south to Fort Smith, Arkansas. In fact, all three of the battlefields that we visited were connected by the Telegraph Road.

From there we went back to the visitor center to eat the catered lunch that had been arranged. Afterward we went back out, this time ending up on the northwest side of the battlefield, then walked to where Union Gen. Lyon was killed. Jeff Patrick gave fine presentations at several stops along the trail, and even those unfamiliar with the battle or the Civil War had good things to say about him and his presentations.

We traveled to Bentonville, Arkansas to spend the night, then drove to the Pea Ridge National Military Park the next day. After days of threatening the rain came. The battle at Pea Ridge can be confusing, with fighting at two separated locations, but the excellent movie in the visitor center gave everyone a comprehensive overview. Once on the coach, we drove up to the fourth stop on the tour road located near the southern side of Oberson's Field. Here we got out in the rain as Dave Wege related the fighting that took place here, focusing on the deaths of the Confederate commander, Benjamin McCulloch, and his second in-command, James McIntosh.

At this point we did something quite interesting. Dave had asked Tom and Terry Arliskas to talk about individuals from this battle in great detail, focusing on why we should remember them from the fight. We had good people who researched and give these short talks, doing a "deep dive" into certain personalities. Jeff Arnold, Paul Eilbes, Doug Haag, and Kay Wege also gave great presentations on topics they had researched and prepared.

We then returned to the visitor center and ate our box lunches. Like Wilson's Creek, the auto tour route at Pea Ridge is a loop, so we started back at the beginning, heading to Elkhorn Tavern, the other battle site. When we got to Elkhorn Tavern the rain had begun coming down more heavily. The tour leader gave everyone the choice of staying on the coach or walking the short distance to Elkhorn Tavern, and to their credit most walked over. We stood on the porch out of the rain as Dave, standing in the rain, once again described the action, with some input from other participants. Then it was back to the coach and on to Bentonville for dinner and fellowship.

The next day we traveled to Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park. Here we got quite a shock: the ranger with whom arrangements had been made for a guided tour no longer worked there, and complete details had not been made. The superintendent of the park, Susan Donnangelo, made a few quick phone calls to get a guide over to us. We went through the visitor center then, heard from a battlefield volunteer named Rusty who did the overview of the battle while we stood outside. Tom, another park volunteer, and Susan rode with us over to the center of the battle line and gave us a good account of the battle in that location. After lunch, we had more time to explore the grounds. My own ancestors were shooting at the 20th Wisconsin during this fight. Unfortunately, the weather radar showed a bad storm cell heading for us and we were forced to leave early.

After Prairie Grove we had the choice of visiting the Walmart Museum or Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, both in Bentonville. The last day was non-Civil War tourism as we first visited the Ancient Ozarks Natural History Museum in Ridgedale, Missouri, then lunch and shopping at Branson Landing. From there it was back to the motel in Springfield, Missouri, where we had stayed the first night before going to Wilson's Creek.

All in all, it was a very good trip for both those with little to no knowledge of the Civil War, and those with more advanced knowledge. The group of travelers was wonderful and took to heart the Time Traveler's goal of fellowship, making everyone feel welcomed. The motels were very nice, with good choices for the meals. A good time was had by all.

Combat in the American Civil War: Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery Friday, August 8 | 12pm – 1pm Presented by: Dr. Steve Fratt

Some have seen the Civil War as the first modern war due to the introduction of new technologies. They also mention that sadly, the casualties on the battlefield were caused by employing obsolete tactics against these new technologies. Our guest will explain how the American Civil War fits within the era of modern warfare and how the tactics used were appropriate for the last musket war of the nineteenth century.

Dr. Steve Fratt is Professor of History – Emeritus who taught for 30 years at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois. His perspective on the Civil War is uniquely informed by his study of the historical sources, his articles and publications, 25 years of experience in the field as a reenactor (including 7 years of commanding the Federal Army in Chicago), and his design of tabletop miniature games of "war college" quality.

The 6th Wisconsin and the Antietam Campaign Friday, September 12 | 12pm – 1pm Presented by Dr. James Marten

Reimagining one of the oldest genres of Civil War history, Dr. Marten's program will explore the Antietam Campaign through the lens of a single regiment, the Sixth Wisconsin. One of the core units of the famed Iron Brigade, the Sixth was organized in July 1861 and mustered out in the summer of 1865, playing major roles at Antietam as well as Second Manassas, Gettysburg, and the Overland campaign of 1864.

Dr. James Marten, Professor Emeritus of Marquette University, has written, edited, or co-edited over twenty books in two different fields: The Civil War era and the histories of children and youth. His books include *The Children's Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), a Choice "Outstanding Academic Title" and winner of the Alpha Sigma Nu Jesuit Book Award, as well as more recent books on Civil War veterans, including *Sing Not War: The Lives of Union and Confederate Veterans in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), *America's Corporal: James Tanner in War and Peace*, a short biography of the disabled Civil War veteran and activist James "Corporal" Tanner (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014), and *Buying and Selling Civil War Memory in Gilded Age America* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2021), co-edited with Caroline E. Janney.

His latest book is *The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War: The Biography of a Regiment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2025), explores the war-time experiences and the long-term effects of the Civil War on a regiment that fought in one of the most famous units in the Union army—the Iron Brigade.

Between the Covers – continued from page 10

His thoughtfully weighed conclusions are appropriately equivocal in places where strong evidence is lacking. Also appreciated are the stimulating side discussions that take place in both footnotes and main text, such as whether Hood should have executed a flanking maneuver at Spring Hill. Davis's analysis is perceptive even if a reader might quarrel with some of his solutions.

The book also discusses at some length Hood's postwar fight over control of the historical memory of the Atlanta and Nashville campaigns, a frequently unseemly conflict in word and print that often pitted Hood and President Davis partisans against General Johnston's many supporters. When it came to Hood's, Sherman's, and Johnston's published recollections of the Atlanta Campaign, there were more than enough half-truths and untruths to go around.

Davis's epilogue summary of Hood's entire Civil War career is appropriately titled "Spurs Without Greatness." As a bold, brave, and aggressive brigade and division commander, Hood, in the author's view, certainly earned his spurs, and he was an adequate corps commander among a rather undistinguished Army of Tennessee peer group. Yet the general's bid for greatness fell far short of expectations during the battles around Atlanta and especially during the 1864 Tennessee Campaign.

This is a well-written, well-done book by a highly-qualified author and will allow a better understanding of the Tennessee Campaign regardless of the many previously books read on this subject.

submitted by Robert Johnson



Attacking the Arteries of Rebellion: April 18-25 The Civil War Time Travelers' Spring 2026 trip will feature a visit to Vicksburg, Mobile Bay, and Fort Blakeley. For information contact Dave at wegs1862@gmail.com. It's back to the Eastern Theater for the Civil War Time Travelers. We will visit the Confederate capital at Richmond and the fighting at Petersburg with its famous Crater, existing trenches, and more. Pamplin Park is on the list of stops as well. Then, we're off to Appomattox for the end of the war and a visit to the American Civil War Museum.

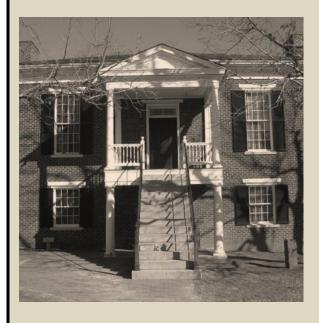
Along with these sites, early plans include experiencing Ford's Theater, Arlington, Five Forks, Sailor's Creek, and James Monroe's Highland.

Our first-ever eight-day excursion promises to be another unforgettable trip where strangers become friends, and friends become family.

Pricing for this trip is not yet available. It will, however, include all hotels, guides, museums, and deluxe motorcoach transportation from Wisconsin to the seat of war.

Contact wegs1862@gmail.com

For more information, the itinerary, and other details on the tour, please go to the Kenosha Civil War Museum website. The October trip is listed under Special Events.



Kenosha Civil War Museum Petersburg and Appomattox Campaign

From **October 19-22, 2025**, step back in time on this immersive four-day bus tour exploring the pivotal final days of the Civil War. Walk the battlefields of Petersburg, stand where history changed at Appomattox, and visit key sites like City Point and The Crater. Expert guides will bring the past to life with in-depth tours of forts, museums, and historic landmarks. Discover the stories of soldiers and civilians caught in the conflict as you journey through Virginia's hallowed grounds.

The cost of the tour includes hotel stay in Colonial Heights for Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday nights; all breakfasts, lunches and dinners; motor coach services, tour guide fees, park and museum admissions, and evening programs.

Sunday, October 19 – Wednesday, October 22 \$1060-\$1305* (\$1140-\$1385** non-members)



The Great Lakes Civil War Forum: The Many Sides of the Antietam Campaign

Saturday, September 13 | 9:30am - 4:00pm | \$72 (\$90 non-member)

Check-in starts at 8:30am, program begins at 9:30am. Includes full day of programs, coffee, refreshments, and a catered lunch.

Antietam Landmark: The Dunker Church presented by Alann Schmidt

Faces of Antietam and the 40-Acre Cornfield presented by John Banks

Perspectives on the Artillery Battle of Antietam presented by James A. Rosebrock

Medicine and The Battle of Antietam presented by Dr. Gordon Dammann



Spending a day at The Great Lakes Civil War Forum is a special treat. Share some time with people who share your interests in the Civil War, while focusing on America's single, bloodiest day in the Civil War. The speakers are always top-notch and the camaraderie cannot be beaten. Leave with a more complete knowledge of this important day in American history.

The Driftless Area Civil War Club

Programs are held monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 1:00 at the Odd Fellow Lodge at 112 Front Street Mineral Point.

June 2025 - Paul Eilbes of the Milwaukee Civil War Roundtable will speak on General Ambrose Burnside and his successes and failures as a commander.

July 2025 - Dave Wege on "When Johnny Came Marching Home." The topic explores the effects of going to war and experiencing traumatic injury. What is a wounded veteran's life like on returning home? The talk will include a "then and now" scenario.

August 2025 - John Pare (Mt. Horeb), and John Helmenstine will display & inform us on the collecting of Civil War stamps, envelopes & other paper.

September 2025 – Jim Heinz will speak about Admiral David Farragut and his important contributions to a final Union victory.

Contact John Helmenstine at <u>helmenstine@att.net</u> for more information.

If you have not done so already, please go online and check out the revamped website of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee!

Grant Johnson and his crew at Responsory have done a magnificent job of refreshing the site and making it user-friendly.

Grant is a nationally recognized thought leader in marketing. That expertise certainly shows in the exceptional work he has done on our behalf.



Thank you, Grant!

MILWAUKEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE QUARTERMASTER'S REGALIA

What better way to show off your pride in our organization! All items are made of first-rate, quality materials, modestly embroidered with the Round Table/Iron Brigade log, along with your name or initials.

ITEM	COST
Hooded Sweatshirt in Northern Blue \$	\$35.00
Baseball Hat\$	510.00
Blue Brief Case	525.00
Blue Light-Weight Sweatshirt\$	530.00
Blue Izod Polo Shirt	640.00
Blue Dress Shirt	640.00
Blue Fleece-Lined Jacket	60.00
8	\$5.00
CWRT Pin	\$5.00
Bugle Pin	\$5.00
Iron Brigade Medal	525.00
Red River Medal	525.00
CWRT 60 Year Medal	510.00

Contact Roman Blenski, Quartermaster

4601 W. Holt Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53219 (410 327-2847 dbcpmilw@gmail.com

You may also see Roman in person at the monthly meeting at the Book Raffle table.

