

# GENERAL ORDERS



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



December 11, 2025

Brian Matthew Jordan

## Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War

The Civil War visited unprecedented violence on the United States. That violence was also inscribed on the bodies and minds of the nearly two million men who donned Union blue between 1861 and 1865. How did Union veterans make sense of their physical, psychological, and emotional wounds as the nation plunged into the years of Reconstruction? How did the politics of the postwar years complicate their reintegration to civilian life and personal healing? Why were so many veterans so unwilling to let go of the war and its legacy, and what urgent messages do those ex-soldiers have for us today?

Brian Matthew Jordan is Associate Professor of U.S. Civil War History, Co-Director of the SHSU Civil War Consortium, and Chair of the History Department at Sam Houston State University, where he has taught since 2015. Professor Jordan earned his undergraduate degree in Civil War Era Studies at Gettysburg College (under the tutelage of Gabor S. Boritt and Allen C. Guelzo), and M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. degrees in History at Yale. His first book, *Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War*, was a finalist (one of three runners-up) for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in History. In its dissertation form, that book won the George Washington Egleston Prize (for Best U.S. History Dissertation at Yale) and John Addison Porter Prize (one of Yale's highest academic honors).

Dr. Jordan has authored or edited five other books on Civil War soldiers, veterans, and memory, including *The War Went On: Reconsidering the Lives of Civil War Veterans* (with Evan Rothera); *A Thousand May Fall: An Immigrant Regiment's Civil War*, and *Final Resting Places: Reflections on the Meaning of Civil War Graves* (with Jonathan W. White). Presently, he is at work on *Written in Blood: A New History of the U.S. Civil War*, a one-volume history of the conflict for Liveright/W.W. Norton, as well as *More Than An Eagle on the Button: Black Military Experiences in the Civil War Era* (with Lorien Foote and Holly Pinheiro, Jr.).

Brian is the founding co-editor of the series "Veterans" at the University of Massachusetts Press, and, for more than a decade, has served as Book Review Editor for *The Civil War Monitor*. In 2020, he appeared as a talking head in two episodes of the HISTORY Channel's three-part mini-series on the life of U.S. Grant. He has delivered invited lectures in more than thirty states. In August 2024, he had the honor eulogize 28 Union veterans inurned at Tahoma National Cemetery in Washington State—perhaps the last Civil War eulogy ever delivered. Dr. Jordan is a native of Akron, Ohio, and lives in Houston with his wife and four-year old daughter, Elizabeth (who, despite her youth, has already stomped several battlefields).

## General Orders No. 12-25

### December 2025

#### IN THIS ISSUE

|                                    |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| MCWRT News .....                   | page 2  |
| From the Archives .....            | page 3  |
| Kenosha Civil War Museum .....     | page 3  |
| Area Events .....                  | page 3  |
| From the Field .....               | page 4  |
| Through the Looking Glass .....    | page 5  |
| Driftless Area CW Club .....       | page 6  |
| Annual Patriotic Luncheon .....    | page 6  |
| Round Table News 2025-2026 .....   | page 7  |
| • 2025-2026 Speaker Schedule       |         |
| • 2025-2026 Board of Directors     |         |
| • Meeting Reservation Form         |         |
| Between the Covers .....           | page 8  |
| Wanderings .....                   | pages 9 |
| Travel and Tours .....             | page 10 |
| More from the Kenosha Museum ..... | page 10 |
| Member Spotlight .....             | page 11 |
| Preservation News .....            | page 11 |
| Quartermaster's Regalia .....      | page 12 |

#### December Meeting at a Glance

Bavarian Bierhaus

700 W. Lexington Blvd  
Glendale, 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.

**2025-2026 Speaker Schedule p. 7**

**milwaukeewrt.org**

# Civil War Round Table News

## MCWRT Mission Statement

The purposes of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee shall be to promote study of personalities and events leading to or associated with the American Civil War; to provide a forum for members and guests to exchange views; and to support study and remembrance of our own nation's history.

## 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.

Reservations for the December meeting are requested two weeks in advance. This ask comes from the Bavarian Bierhaus, our venue for that evening. With the meeting scheduled for December 11, that places the reservation due date at November 27. As that is Thanksgiving, perhaps November 25 would be a good date to let Paul Eilbes know your plans for the evening.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas as you spend moments with family and friends. Take time, relax, and rejoin with us in January as we travel down history's lanes together.

## The Muster Roll: NEW MEMBERS

| MUSTER ROLL |                     |   |  |                       |   |
|-------------|---------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| NAME        |                     |   |  |                       |   |
| MEMBERSHIP  | NAME                | DESCRIPTION<br>(Age, Rank, Company or Battalion, Regiment, Division, State)   | PLACE OF BIRTH<br>(During the American Revolution or Present)          | PAST MILITARY SERVICE | SERVICES  |
|             |                     |   |  |                       |   |
| 249         | <b>Jerry DeMers</b> | Businessman<br>1. George Pollock 38 Ranger<br>2. George Clarke 33. Farmer<br>3. Edie Baumhamer 43. +<br>4. Lois Stoen 29. +<br>5. Lois Laverne 8. Laborer | Belvidere<br>Cottage, Belvidere<br>Belvidere<br>Belvidere<br>Belvidere | None                  | House cleaning, of course<br>Home field shooting, running my<br>olive<br>Total destruction of landscape |

## 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, 2025 through October 31, 2025.

### Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch, Doug Haag, Van & Dawn Harl, Rebecca & Charles Jarvis, Grant Johnson

### Patron (\$200 - \$499)

Mike Deeken, Gene & Jane Jamrozy, Dan Nettlesheim, Laura Rinaldi, Brad & Kathy Schotanus, Dave & Kay Wege

### Associate (\$100 - \$199)

Don & Amy Bauer, Mike Benton, Crain Bliwas, Ellen & Jerry DeMers, Gary & Judy Ertel, Bill & Claudette Finke, Jim Heinz, Peter & Jean Jacobsohn, Bruce Klem, Steve Leopold, Kathy McNally, Jim & Monica Millane, Dennis Slater, Dan Tanty, Justin Tolomeo

### Contributor (up to \$99)

George Affeldt, Gordon Dammann, Thomas Doyle, Lori Duginski, John Durr, Julian Gonzalez, Leon & Margaret Harris, Christopher Johnson, Rich Kallan, Jerome Kowalski, Jay Lauck, Fred Madsen, Rod Malinowski, Seth Maxfield, Paul & Susan Miller, Thomas Olsen, John Rodahl, Rick Schultz, Diana Smurawa, Anne & Dave Steinhilb, Dan VanGrunsvan, Paul Zehren

### Speaker Enhancement Fund

George Affeldt, Don and Amy Bauer, Ellen & Jerry DeMers, Thomas Doyle, Lori Duginski, John Durr, Paul Eilbes, Gary & Judy Ertel, Gerald Frangesch, Julian Gonzalez, Jim Heinz, John Helmenstine, Tom Hesse, Don & Laverna Hilbig, Peter & Jean Jacobsohn, Gene & Jane Jamrozy, Dan Jones, Rich Kallan, Allan Kasprzak, John Lencheck, Steve Leopold, Rod Malinowski, Robin & Tom Martin, Kathy McNally, Jim & Monica Millane, Paul & Susan Miller, Thomas Olsen, John & Susan Petty, Laura Rinaldi, Diana Smurawa, Dan Tanty, Paul Zehren



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

- 2004 Dr. David Zarefsky: "Lincoln, Douglas, and Slavery"
- 2005 Steve Fratt: "Civil War Combat and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Revolution in Military Affairs"
- 2007 The Garth Neustadter Trio at Our Christmas Gala
- 2010 Samuel C. Hyde, Jr.: "A Wisconsin Yankee in Confederate Bayou Country"
- 2011 Dr. James Robertson, Jr.: "The Untold Civil War"
- 2012 Dale Phillips: "The Red River Campaign"
- 2014 Jim Ogden: "The Fight at Reed's Bridge"
- 2015 Dave Keller: "Camp Douglas"
- 2016 Bjorn Skaptason: "What I saw at Shiloh"
- 2017 David Dixon: "The Kost Gettysburg Address"
- 2019 Daniel Weinberg: "Abraham Lincoln Bookshop Artifacts"
- 2020 Steven Rogstad: "Stories from Among the Badgers"
- 2021 Dennis Doyle: "Illinois Regiments at Gettysburg"
- 2022 Garry Adelman: "Civil War Photo Extravaganza"
- 2023 Scott Mingus: "Unceasing Fury: Texans at the Battle of Chickamauga"
- 2024 Jon Sebastian: "We Are All in This War: The Northern Homefront"



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.

### Civil War Railroads and Their Tactics

Friday, December 12 | 12pm – 1 pm

Presented by Charlie Banks

One of the aspects that makes the American Civil War one of the first modern wars was the use of railroads. Railroads were vital lifelines for armies because they were the fastest and most efficient way to transport soldiers and supplies. Because of this, major campaigns such as Chattanooga, Atlanta, Richmond, Petersburg, and Corinth were fought within 20 miles of a rail line or major rail hub. Mr. Banks' presentation will show how railroads brought about changes to military logistics and tactics that carried on to the major conflicts that followed the Civil War.

Charles (Charlie) Banks is a member of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table and a founding member of the McHenry County Civil War Round Table. He has a deep interest in the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and its subsidiaries. Besides his interests in the Civil War, he also enjoys antiquing with his wife, Mary, and building his model railroad.

### Christmas at the Museums Saturday, December 6 | 10am – 3pm

Celebrate the Christmas Season with the Kenosha Public Museums. This dual event features activities for all ages at the Civil War Museum and the Kenosha Public Museum.

Experience living history demonstrations in our main exhibit gallery, enjoy live musical performances, attend a Victorian fashion show, tour a one-day-only Civil War Era exhibit of period fashions.

### Pearl Harbor Day Ceremony Sunday, December 7 | 11am – 1pm

Join us for a commemorative ceremony honoring the brave men and women affected by the attack on Pearl Harbor, led by Naval Ship Club 40. All are welcome to attend and pay tribute to this pivotal moment in history.

### Santa at the Museum Sunday, December 14 | 1pm – 3pm Sunday, December 21 | 1pm – 3pm

# FROM THE FIELD

Washington, Dec 2, 1861

From our Regular Correspondent

Thanksgiving was duly honored throughout the camps of the Wisconsin regiments and in King's brigade it was a gala day indeed. At 11 o'clock the brigade was drawn up in a semi-circle, four deep in front of the Arlington House, Gen. King's headquarters; the 6th Regiment on the left, the 7th (for the first time in their new uniform) and 2d in the centre and 19th Indiana on the right; when the General introduced Governor Randall, who addressed them saying to the Wisconsin soldiers that it was the last time that he should appear before them as the Executive of the state; commanding them for their good behavior and soldierly conduct; congratulating the Indiana regiment on the glorious achievements and high honor of their state, etc. His speech was most excellent and I had intended to give a full report of it but have not the means if I had the time. As he closed his eloquent address, Col. Sol. Meredith, whose tall form towered in front of his division called for "three cheers for the Governor of Wisconsin" which were given with a will by the gallant Indianans and responded to most heartily by the Wisconsin boys; when the Governor gracefully returned the compliment of Col. Meredith, by calling for "three cheers from the Wisconsin boys for the gallant sons of Indiana," which were promptly and heartily given.

The morning was a delightful one and the scene most cheerful and inspiring. The band of the 19th, one of the best in the service, stationed at the right of the portico, discoursing martial strains; upwards of three thousand were in solid column just below the point of the commanding height on which the old baronial mansion stands as the relic of a decayed aristocracy; the broad Potomac and the splendid capitol lying below, with the intervening stretch of woodland variegated with splendid evergreens and with the tents and horses of camps of cavalry all added inspiration to the occasion.

The review, speech, &c., occupied about one hour, when the troops filed off around the Arlington House to their various camps preparatory to Thanksgiving dinner which was served at the various officers' messes, as well as in many of the companies in a style worthy of our gallant men who carry with them their home, institutions and glory in the recollection and associations of home. Passing through the camps of the Sixth and Seventh where I was pressed to partake at table that for luxury and adornment were equal to the best among the homes of Wisconsin went to meet a prior engagement with Col. Fairchild and dine with the Second. There were assembled the Brigadier General's staff, Secretary Seward,

Senator Wilson, Governor Randall and others, and at about three o'clock all were invited to a large tent upon entering which we were greeted at a table as neatly spread and as luxuriously and bountifully loaded as you will ever find at the Newhall and the like of which is never found at a public table in Washington.

How it was got up amid the narrow accommodation of camp or how cooks could be found to provide such a variety and get it up in such exquisite taste, was a mystery. The flags of the regiment hung over the entrance, The table occupied three sides of the large tent and about fifty officers and guests partook of the ample repast. And lest you should fail to appreciate the realities of the affair, I send you one of the bills of fare a copy of which was found in hotel style of each plate. Not only was every article named actually on the table but all in as perfect order and as well prepared as if served from the cook-room of your first-class hotel; and here were the fancy trimming of flowers, evergreens and bouquets, &c.

After discussing the solids to the satisfaction of all without making any sensible impression upon the profuse amount supplied, the Heidsick and Catawba were introduced and Lieut. Meservey arose and read the proclamation of Gov. Randall for the observance of the day, which was followed by a toast of the Governor, drank with three rousing cheers, to which the Governor replied with a few words of thanks and congratulation, Maj. Allen then arose and read a letter from Gen. McDowell, expressing his deep regret that circumstances prevented his presence and closing by giving as a toast, Brigadier General King, and characterizing him as an officer and a civilian worthy of the highest confidence.

This was received with great applause and briefly responded to by Gen. King, who proposed the health of their honored guest, Secretary Seward. Mr. Seward responded by saying that as a minister of the Government he was precluded from making speeches and must simply thank them for the compliment and give as a sentiment the Union, &c. I did not get the entire sentiment but it was happily expressed and cordially responded to by deafening applause. Next followed a toast of Gen. Wilson who responded in a brief and happy manner - Then Col. O'Connor, Lieut. Col. Fairchild, Major Allen and others were toasted. When Col. Fairchild was proposed, the officers gave an outburst of applause that very nearly overturned the tables, and it was repeated, with the most unbounded enthusiasm. Col. Fairchild made a brief and happy response saying the in his present position with the 2d Regiment "he was perfectly happy - happy as he ever expected to be while a sinner - and wanted nothing more or better."

I was not able to remain till the festivities closed as I was compelled to visit the camp of the Fifth Wisconsin, ten or twelve miles distant and roads were bad and the night was approaching. In company with Gov. Randall and Col. Mansfield I left and our Thanksgiving evening was spent in the quarters of Col. Cobb. near Lewinsville, in company with Him, Lieut. Col. Emery, and Major Larabee. I partook of their hospitality for a couple of days, and returned to the city on Saturday evening.



*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 General Orders. Thank you!

## Old Douglas of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Mississippi

The Confederate Army had some unusual brainstorms during the Civil War. One of these was to use camels as pack animals. The experiment failed, in part because camels scared horses, but one dromedary was apparently personable enough to persevere: "Old Douglas." His presence was reminiscent of The Camel Corps, a herd of camels imported in the 1850s by future Confederate President Jefferson Davis, who thought that camels could help settle the desert Southwest. He persuaded a skeptical Congress to appropriate \$30,000 to fund the purchase. A ship brought them from what are today Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and what's now Turkey.



Old Douglas was a domesticated camel used by Company A of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Mississippi Infantry, part of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. Because of their association with Old Douglas, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Mississippi Infantry came to be known as the Camel Regiment.

During the same period as the Texas Camel Experiment, camels were also being privately imported into Mobile, Alabama. According to newspaper accounts in Alabama and Mississippi, planters sought to experiment with the camels for agriculture work. Old Douglas was purchased by William

Hargrove and initially given to Colonel W. H. Moore by Hargrove when he joined the 43rd Mississippi Infantry. Besides being a mascot, Moore assigned Douglas to the regimental band, carrying instruments and knapsacks. Old Douglas's first active service was with General Sterling Price in the Iuka campaign. Later he was present at the 1862 Battle of Corinth and stayed with the regiment until the Siege of Vicksburg.

Old Douglas was "a favorite of both beasts and men," according to the lengthy inscription on his tombstone, but was "intentionally killed by Yankee sharpshooters" during the siege of Vicksburg on June 27, 1863. The camel had wandered into No Man's Land in search of food, and became a too-tempting target. A band of Union sharpshooters was ordered to shoot "Old Douglas". Enraged at his murder, Confederates swore to avenge him. Col. Bevier enlisted six of his best snipers, who successfully shot the culprit, wounding him severely.



The story goes that Old Douglas served his hungry handlers even after death. Buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Vicksburg, he has his own tombstone. The tombstone states, *"He may have been eaten by starving Confederates."* Indeed, though it sounds fanciful, this seems to have been true.

Also present on the field of battle at Vicksburg was the mascot of the 8<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin, Old Abe the War Eagle. There is no record of the two ever meeting "in combat," but it is interesting to note that two famous regimental mascots were present in the same time and space. The American Civil War has many interesting tales just waiting to be shared!

submitted by Dave Wege

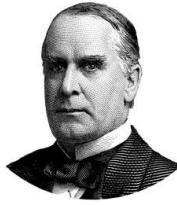
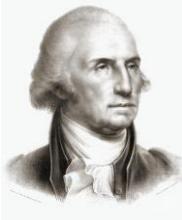
## The Driftless Area Civil War Club

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

Contact John Helmenstine at [helmenstine@att.net](mailto:helmenstine@att.net) for more information.

### Schedule of meetings for the Driftless Area Civil War Club

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| December 20, 2025  | Pat and Mike Reilly, owners of the <u>Dodgeville Chronicle</u>      |
| January 17, 2026   | Charlie Banks – US Military Railroads in the War Effort             |
| February 21, 2026  | Show and Tell – Club Members will discuss their Civil War artifacts |
| March 14, 2026     | Brian Conroy – Irish in the American Civil War                      |
| April 18, 2026     | Chris Kolakowski – Civil War in New York                            |
| May 9, 2026        | Reverend Miller – Both Prayed to the Same God                       |
| June 20, 2026      | Jerry Allen – The 15 <sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Regiment               |
| July 18, 2026      | Mark Tully – Frontier Doctor  |
| August 15, 2026    | Bruce Allardice – Lincoln as a War Leader                           |
| September 19, 2026 | Laura Schiller -Illinois Cavalry                                    |
| October 17, 2026   | Leslie Goddard – Clara Barton                                       |



## 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Patriotic Luncheon Saturday, February 7 at 12:30

A flyer with details is at the registration table.

The 56th annual Patriotic Luncheon, honoring Presidents Washington, Lincoln, and McKinley, will be held Saturday, February 7, 2025, at 12:30 pm, at Alioto's Restaurant, 3041 N. Mayfair Road.

It is hoped you'll make plans to join those patriots, representing over 30 organizations, for this welcome tradition. Enjoy fine food, fellowship, and guest speaker Doug Dammann from Kenosha's Civil War Museum, who speak about Colonel Elmer Ellsworth in a presentation entitled, *The Greatest Little Man I Ever Met*.

Reserve your place today and know that your participation supports veterans' relief, historic preservation and patriotic programming in southeast Wisconsin. Program sponsorships are always welcome!

***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 [wegs1862@gmail.com](mailto:wegs1862@gmail.com). All submissions must be received by no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> 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**.

Copyright © 2015 by the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. Permission is granted for use of the contents, in whole or in part, in non-profit Civil War Round Table newsletters only. All other rights are reserved.

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 11, 2025 | Dr. James Pula<br><i>Overlooked and Underappreciated: Dan Butterfield</i>                                     |
| October 9, 2025    | Kim Harris<br><i>Libbie Bacon Custer</i>  |
| November 13, 2025  | Chris Kolakowski<br><i>Civil War to World War:<br/>Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. and Sr.</i>                      |
| December 11, 2025  | Brian Jordan<br>(At the Bavarian Bierhaus)<br><i>Marching Home: Union Veterans - Their Unending Civil War</i> |
| January 8, 2026    | Guy Fraker<br><i>Lincoln the Lawyer</i>   |
| February 12, 2026  | Keith Bohannon<br><i>Topic to Be Determined</i>   |
| March 12, 2026     | Cliff Roberts<br><i>Castle Pinckney</i>   |
| April 9, 2026      | Wayne Motts<br><i>Nevins-Freeman Award Winner</i><br><i>Topic to Be Determined</i>                            |
| May 7, 2026        | Chris Mackowski<br><i>Topic to Be Determined</i>  |
| June 11, 2026      | Alex Rossino<br><i>Topic to Be Determined</i>   |

***Speakers/topics remain subject to change.  
We hope to have more details by October!***



## Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. 2025 – 2026 Board of Directors

| Name              | Office/Position                        | Term Expires |
|-------------------|--|--------------|
| Terry Arliskas    | Secretary/Program Chair                | 2028         |
| Thomas Arliskas   | Past President                         | 2028         |
| Michael K. Benton | President                              | 2026         |
| Dale Bespalec     | Member                                 | 2026         |
| Roman Blenski     | Second Vice President<br>Quartermaster | 2028         |
| Mike Deeken       | Member                                 | 2028         |
| Paul A. Eilbes    | Treasurer                              | 2028         |
| Tom Hesse         | Past President                         | 2026         |
| Grant Johnson     | Membership/Webmaster<br>Past President | 2027         |
| Bruce Klem        | Past President                         | 2027         |
| Daniel Nettesheim | Member                                 | 2027         |
| Frank Risler      | Member                                 | 2027         |
| Justin Tolomeo    | First Vice President                   | 2026         |
| David Wege        | Editor, General Orders                 | 2027         |

**[www.milwaukeewrt.org](http://www.milwaukeewrt.org)**

### ~ 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](mailto: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 December 11, 2025

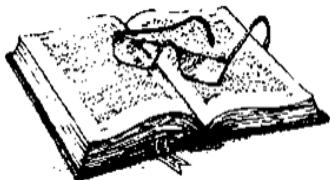
**Mail your reservations by Tuesday, November 25 to:**

**Paul Eilbes  
1809 Washington Avenue  
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730**

**Call or email reservations to:**

**(262) 376-0568  
[peilbes@gmail.com](mailto:peilbes@gmail.com)**

**Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_ (meal is \$35.00 per person) for \_\_\_\_ people for the  
December 11, 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

## A Campaign of Giants

### The Battles for Petersburg

**A. Wilson Greene**

This book review is on a book that I had purchased at the Kenosha Civil War Museum when Mr. A. Wilson Greene was presenting volume 1 on his book on the Pietersburg Campaign on July 21, 2018. The book is A Campaign of Giants, the Battle for Petersburg. This is volume 1 which covers from the Crossing of the James to the Crater. Since we are going on the Museum's battlefield tour of Petersburg, the Crater area and Appomattox, I thought it would be a good idea to read this volume in preparation for making the trip. This is a long book, 517 pages, so I started this one in August and finished the end of September. I will mention that the campaign is going to be spelled out in 3 , of which this is the first. I believe the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume is now available. Perhaps I'll get it on the tour.

In the book's forward noted historian Gary Gallagher posits the question as to why there hasn't been a comprehensive study on this battle. His answer is "that scholars have been intimidated by the daunting prospect of doing justice to an event that extended across nearly 300 days, involved four armies, and included ancillary cavalry operations that ranged far for the besieged city" I think the advantage Mr. Greene has over others was his 25 years working in and around Petersburg with the National Park Service and Pamplin Historical Park. Many authors I have read don't provide much detail on the entire campaign as Mr. Greene does at least in this first volume. Past efforts generally for the most part write of this fight as the forerunner of WWI trench warfare. Mr. Greene, I think shows his rich knowledge of the overall strategy and tactics used by both sides in the fight and goes beyond just trench warfare.

The Petersburg campaign of 1864-65 is not easy to write about--it was basically a long, drawn-out war of attrition between two entrenched armies with few set-piece battles. However, I believe the author does a very good job in covering the first phase of this campaign (June-July 1864) and gives a cogent analysis of what Grant and Lee were trying to accomplish from their different vantage points. I was impressed with the detail he provides on his discussion at the end of the 'Crater' operation and how and why it turned into a disaster for the Union army.

Overall, I thought Mr. Greene provides a terrific study on command on all the major commanders from Lee and Grant, as well as Beauregard, Mahone, Hill and Meade, Smith Burnside Warren Sheridan and Ord. I thought the author does a fine job in explaining the complex situation that each of the commanders faced and how they managed to implement solutions. Sometimes not the best but the rationale is laid out, so the reader can understand the why.

Due to the campaign's length and numerous Union offensives, the Petersburg campaign is often seen as a challenging study but through articulate writing, great research with firsthand accounts and numerous well designed battle maps, this book provides the reader with a good picture of this part of the campaign. After visiting the battlefield this October with the Kenosha Museum's trip. I saw firsthand the complexities of the campaign fluidity that Mr. Greene explains.

Volume 1 features Beauregard's finest days and the Union's numerous lost opportunities affected by war-weary soldiers. Volume I ends with the infamous Battle of the Crater that coincides with an offensive on the Richmond side. For the Union and Grant, the Petersburg Campaign up to this point had brought nothing but sadness and a series of tactical failures and bloody defeats since crossing the James River. Commanders dropped the ball by not taking Petersburg early on when defenses were weak and the various failed results from raids attempted wrapped up with the battle for the Crater, Union efforts were failures.

At 517 pages this first volume does plenty to explain what the start of the campaign is and I thought does it well. I was figuring this book would cover it all but being on the ground I can see why it is going to be multiple volumes, 3 all total. I will have to buy the next one to see what part volume 2 covers and looking forward to read it. I did buy two books covering the campaign and will start them shortly. Both were related to Sailor's Creek. Because of the government shutdown our tour substituted Sailor's Creek, which I found to be a very interesting part of this campaign and excellent site to visit.

submitted by Bruce Klem



## Fall 2025 Kenosha Civil War Museum Tour

Each year since 2015, the Civil War Museum has sponsored a fall campaign tour to one of the iconic Civil War battlefields of the country. We started at Antietam in 2015, and with a single year off in 2020, have been going strong ever since. Our model is to ask the registrants to travel on their own to the Base Hotel of the tour in time for a Sunday night kick off dinner and program. Starting that evening, we take care of all transportation, meals, guide services, and park fees until the tour ends on Wednesday afternoon. We've had a lot of fun over the years, met some great people, ate too much at times, and seen some of the best battlefield parks in the country.

This October, the museum put together a trip to visit the sites of the 292-day Siege of Petersburg and follow Lee's retreat route to Appomattox. This was done at the recommendation of Steve Acker, retired Slinger High School English teacher and a valued contributor to the Civil War Museum. Steve had visited Petersburg many times, written books about the campaign, and taught programs at the museum about its soldiers and individual battles, so I knew he knew what he was talking about. His knowledge of the sequence of events at Petersburg, the city and the terrain of the area was invaluable for putting together our itinerary.

We rely on local historians to act as step on guides for the tour, and last January we contacted Zach Pittard of the Pamplin Historical Park about leading our group. Zach agreed and after several phone conversations, we came up with a rough outline for the tour. Working with Zach and having special access to Pamplin Park turned out to be one of the highlights of the tour. If you have not met Zach, heard one of his programs, or gone on a tour with him, I highly recommend that you do so. He is a great young Civil War historian with deep family roots in the Petersburg area. He knows every inch of the campaign and has an easy-going manner and sense of humor that makes working with him enjoyable. Plus, he has a really cool, unique Virginia accent—almost a mix between deep south and Canadian—that I can't quite describe. I'm sure he thought our Upper Midwest accents strange as well and joined right in with our weeklong efforts at being “Midwest nice”.

We started our tour with Zach at City Point, the confluence of the Appomattox and James Rivers. City Point set the stage for the importance of Petersburg and why the two armies fought so hard to control the area. That morning we also visited The Crater and learned about Henry Pleasants, the 48th Pennsylvania, the efforts of the 29th USCT soldiers to break through after the blast, and William Mahone's leadership to plug the gap. That afternoon, we visited the earthworks around Weldon Railroad and finished up at Five Forks before heading back into Old Town Petersburg for a BBQ dinner. The second day started with a raid on the museum store at Pamplin Park and then a detailed tour of the buildings, grounds and earthworks at the site. The highlight was Zach's description of the April 2 Union breakthrough of the Confederate lines, led by the 5th Vermont, that happened right on the Pamplin grounds. We finished the afternoon with another iconic site, Ft. Gregg, and learned of the last stand of the 200+ Confederates who bought Lee and Longstreet time to evacuate their army out of Petersburg.



Day Three was a bit of a pivot from the original plans, but it turned out to be one of the best things we could have done. Originally, the goal was to visit the Sailor's Creek Battlefield in the morning then continue westward to Appomattox Court House. With the temporary closure of the National Park Service, we chose not to go to Appomattox and instead spend more time at Sailor's Creek and the High Bridge over the Appomattox River. Both sites are expertly maintained and interpreted by the Commonwealth of Virginia. At Sailor's Creek, Joshua Lindamood (another up and coming young Civil War historian) led the group on a morning tour. After a picnic lunch on their grounds (which are spectacular) we loaded up for the final visit to High Bridge. Zach set the stage at the park visitor center, then we made the 1/4 mile hike to the bridge. Walking out on that bridge gave me feelings of both awe and fear. The bridge is 125 feet in the air, so when you stand on it, you are above most of the tree tops of the Appomattox river valley that is far below. I conquered my love/hate relationship with heights and approached the edge of the very safe bridge to take some pictures of the valley, but I'd be lying if I didn't say I was relieved to be back on solid ground during the walk back to the bus.

We returned to the hotel that afternoon and said our goodbyes. All in all, I rate the 2025 Petersburg tour as one of my favorites of the 10 tours the Civil War Museum has organized since 2015. We had beautiful weather, our bus driver Ivan was awesome, the food was great, the sites were unique and Zach and Joshua painted a great historic picture of the campaign. If you've not visited Petersburg before, I would highly recommend it. And if you do, make sure to look up Zach and Joshua.

submitted by Doug Dammann



## **Attacking the Arteries of Rebellion April 18-25, 2026**

Final cost has not yet been determined, but will include deluxe coach transportation, all hotels and most meals, entrance to museums and parks, and fees for historians. The ballpark for this eight-day trip is \$1,275.00.

Join the Civil War Time Travelers for an eight-day trip exploring western waterways that shaped the rebellion and the Union's response to them. From the "Father of Waters" to the waters of Mobile Bay, we will investigate actions at Vicksburg, Fort Gaines, and Fort Blakeley.

A highlight of the tour will be a pontoon boat trip on the Tensaw River. Confederate defenses there guarded the back door to Mobile, and were an engineering feat of epic proportions. With park rangers, local historians, and the talents of our own CWT, we will see how the Civil War story unfolded at these key sites.

Good eating - Good history - Good times lay ahead!

*Traveling Where Heroes Trod*

Contact: [wegs1862@gmail.com](mailto:wegs1862@gmail.com)

## **Civil War Media Club: *The Mexican-American War Experiences of Twelve Civil War Generals***

**Edited by Timothy D. Johnson**

**Tuesday, December 9 | 6:30pm – 8pm | Instructor: Doug Dammann | \$8 (\$10 for non-members)**

Long overshadowed by the American Civil War, the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) has received significantly less attention from historians, partly because of its questionable origin and controversial outcome. The contributors to this volume, however, argue that the Mexican-American War was a formative experience for the more than three hundred future Civil War generals who served in it as lower-grade officers. The Mexican War was the first combat experience for many of them, a laboratory that equipped a generation of young officers with practical lessons in strategy, tactics, logistics, and interpersonal relationships that they would use later to command forces during the Civil War.

*Media Club attendees are encouraged to read the book before meeting and come prepared to share their views and opinions on it in an open forum. Online sales end two days prior to class due to supply needs for the instructors, please call the Museums (262-653-4140) to inquire if registrations are still available. Register online at the Kenosha Civil War Museum website.*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**The Civil War Museum is like no other Civil War museum in the country. The Museum focuses on the Civil War from the perspective of the people of the seven states of the upper middle west: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.**

**These seven states sent over one million men to serve in the Union army while providing much of the food and raw materials necessary for the northern states to carry on the war. Through the use of personal stories and narratives, the Museum also explores how the Civil War impacted the people on the Western home front before, during, and after the war by connecting the prewar causes to the postwar effects.**

## Member Spotlight



This month's Member Spotlight features Grant Johnson.

Is Grant buried in a famous tomb? People say he is a relative of US Grant and Andrew Johnson. Folks ask him if he has lineage from the War. His response is "My first name is Grant and last name Johnson. What do you think?" In reality he is not related at all. It's all about his name. He has no lineal relatives to the war, but has fun keeping people guessing.

Grant (not the general) has been involved with the CWRT of Milwaukee for many years. He served as president of the Round Table, where he often exhorted members to promote the group by sharing that we are the best-kept secret in southeastern Wisconsin. Grant wanted to change that. He still serves on the Round Table Board of Directors.

After watching Ken Burns' now famous PBS program on the Civil War he became intrigued and his gaze never left the rearview mirror. His general interest is US Grant, Sherman and Nathan Bedford Forest. He prefers biographies and heart-felt reading of the War. Battles he likes are Antietam and Gettysburg.

Grant was a Jazz Critic in College for The Milwaukee Journal and radio host on WUWM.

Grant is the founder of Responsory, a measurable marketing firm in Brookfield, Wisconsin, and has been in business 27 years striving for honesty in a dishonest business category. Responsory hosts the website for the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. Grant is married to Maria. They have four children, Morgan, Mason, Maddie and Emma, and granddaughter Lucy. He is not called grandpa, rather "GO GO." That is fitting for a man who is always on the move!

## Campaign Update October 2025: We're Close to Victory

**There are just three months to secure one of the largest campaigns in preservation history!**

More than \$483,000 has already been raised to help preserve 417 acres at Pamplin Historical Park. Now, only \$176,316 remains to close the campaign and secure this land forever. The deadline is December 31. This is the final stretch of one of the largest battlefield preservation efforts in American Battlefield Trust history.

**Every dollar is matched \$17-to-\$1 in value through generous partner grants.**

Through the purchase of 417 acres at Pamplin Historical Park, the Trust has the rare chance to create an 857-acre unified battlefield park that boasts some of the best-preserved Civil War earthworks in the country.

Connecting to hundreds of acres previously acquired by the Trust, the Pamplin campus includes historic trenches, Civil War-era buildings, a monument honoring Medal of Honor recipient Captain Charles G. Gould, the "First Man Over the Works," and an acclaimed living history museum that showcases the experience of ordinary Civil War soldiers. Pamplin also features beautifully constructed period accurate fortifications made from fiberglass and cement that serve as an incredible teaching tool for visitors.

---

The American Battlefield Trust has several other opportunities for preservation giving. Some have matching grants that increase the financial punch your donation would provide. The link at the bottom of the page shares the link that will tell you more. Once on the website, go to "Save Battlefields."

**An Unprecedented Chance to Protect 27.5 Acres of Hallowed Ground! (Manassas)**

**History Was Made Here at Gettysburg**

**Help Save Two Battlefield Properties at Antietam!**

**Save 77 Acres of Historic Battlefield Land in Georgia**

**Go to [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org) to find out more.**

## 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.....                       | \$10.00 |
| Blue Brief Case.....                    | \$25.00 |
| Blue Light-Weight Sweatshirt.....       | \$30.00 |
| Blue Izod Polo Shirt.....               | \$40.00 |
| Blue Dress Shirt.....                   | \$40.00 |
| Blue Fleece-Lined Jacket.....           | \$60.00 |
| Iron Brigade Pin.....                   | \$5.00  |
| CWRT Pin.....                           | \$5.00  |
| Bugle Pin.....                          | \$5.00  |
| Iron Brigade Medal.....                 | \$25.00 |
| Red River Medal.....                    | \$25.00 |
| CWRT 60 Year Medal.....                 | \$10.00 |

### Contact Roman Blenski, Quartermaster

4601 W. Holt Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53219  
(414) 327-2847 [dbcpmilw@gmail.com](mailto:dbcpmilw@gmail.com)

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

