

GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the

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



March 12, 2026

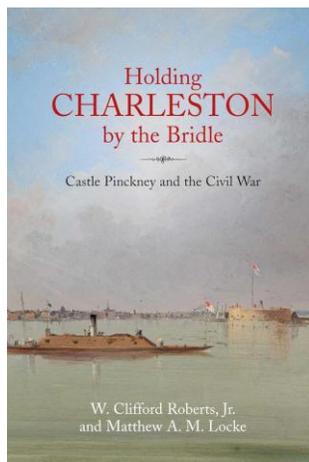
Cliff Roberts

Castle Pinckney and the Confederate Defense of Charleston Harbor

Abraham Lincoln considered the capture of Charleston, where the Civil War formally began, as a crippling blow to Rebel blockade running as well as an emphatic statement of Union success. Despite repeated operations by both the Federal army and navy, and a 545-day bombardment, which is still considered the longest siege in American history, the old city did not surrender until the closing weeks of the war. Castle Pinckney is the oldest fortification still standing in the Charleston Harbor and its central location made it an important piece of P.G.T. Beauregard's "Circles of Fire."

Located on Shutes Folly, a small island about one mile off the Charleston shore in the harbor, the fort was built over the ruins of an older fortification called "Fort Pinckney." By the late 1850s, Castle Pinckney was part of a network of defensive positions in the harbor, which included the larger and more strategically placed Forts Sumter and Moultrie, and other, smaller earthworks and fortifications. In 1860, Castle Pinckney's armament consisted of fourteen 24-pounders, four 42-pounders, four 8-inch howitzers, one 10-inch and one 8-inch mortar, and four light field pieces to protect its flanks.

Cliff Roberts is the author of *Holding Charleston by the Bridle: Castle Pinckney and the Civil War*, which was published by Savis Beatie in the fall of 2024. Copies of Cliff's book will be available at the March Round Table meeting. Cliff graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1981 with a BA in Southern History. He is the author of three books and numerous magazine articles. Cliff is currently the president of the Fort Sumter Civil War Round Table and the vice president of the Friends of the Charleston National Parks. He lives in downtown Charleston with his wife Vicki and dog Hashbrown.



General Orders No. 3-26

March 2026

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
In Memoriam	page 6
Round Table News 2025-2026	page 7

- **2025-2026 Speaker Schedule**
- **2025-2026 Board of Directors**
- **Meeting Reservation Form**

Between the Covers	pages 8-9
Great Lakes Civil War Forum.....	page 10
Wanderings	page 11
Educational Memberships	page 12
NEW Wisconsin Monument Antietam	page 12
Civil War Institute	page 12
Member Spotlight	page 13
More from the Kenosha Museum	page 13
American Battlefield Trust	page 14
Civil War Round Table Congress	page 15
Quartermaster's Regalia	page 16

March 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.

2025-2026 Speaker Schedule p. 7

milwaukeecwrt.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.

Facebook Users!

Members of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table can help spread the word about our organization. If you are a user of Facebook, we ask you to “Like” our page. Then, check back frequently for updates and meeting information. The Facebook algorithms will help to promote our Round Table with each “Like” and “Share” that is clicked by any individual. This is a no cost and fairly effective way to get our Round Table's name out there among the 45+ age group!

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, 2025 through October 31, 2025.

Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

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

Patron (\$200 - \$499)

Mike Deeken, George Geanon, Gene & Jane Jamrozy, Dan Nettesheim, Andrew Platta, 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, Jerry & Ellen DeMers, Thomas Doyle, Lori Duginski, John Durr, Paul Eilbes, Gary & Judy Ertel, Gerald Frangesch, George Geanon, 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 March meetings of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table featured these speakers and topics.

- 2003 Ed Bearss: "Medical Care in the Civil War & WWII"
- 2005 Bruce Allardice: "The Election of 1864"
- 2008 Brian Steele Wills: "The Civil War in Cinema"
- 2009 Dr. John Latschar: "Reinterpreting Gettysburg"
- 2011 Sue Boardman: "The Gettysburg Cyclorama"
- 2012 A. Wilson Greene: "Bermuda Hundred Campaign"
- 2013 Lance Herdegen: "The Iron Brigade in Civil War and Memory"
- 2015 Thomas Huntington: "Searching for George Gordon Meade"
- 2017 Paul Kahan, Ph.D.: "Simon Cameron"
- 2018 Robert D. Jenkins, Sr.: "Battle of Peachtree Creek"
- 2020 David Sutherland: "VMI's Civil War Legacy"
- 2021 Lawrence Desotell: "Confederate Soldiers at Camp Randall"
- 2022 Mark Laubacher: "The USS Red Rover"
- 2023 Dwight Hughes: "The USS Monitor and the Battle of Hampton Roads"
- 2024 Chris Bryan: "Cedar Mountain to Antietam"
- 2025 Gerald Prokopowicz: "Civil War Talk Radio: Podcasting History"



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.

From Camp Douglas to Vicksburg: The Civil War Letters of William J. Kennedy, 55th Illinois Infantry, 1861-1863

Friday, March 13 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Rachel Mellon

During her program, Rachael Mellen will discuss the new book that she and Dave Powell edited which is titled *From Camp Douglas to Vicksburg: The Civil War Letters of William J. Kennedy, 55th Illinois Infantry, 1861-1863*. In August 1861 William Kennedy was a harness-maker living in LaSalle, Illinois. Married with four young children, he volunteered to recruit a company in response to Lincoln's call for more troops. During the next two years, he saw action at Shiloh, Corinth, Chickasaw Bayou, and finally the Siege of Vicksburg. Observant, patriotic and sometimes cynical, Kennedy's letters give us an intriguing picture of how people of the North really experienced the war.

Mellen and Powell used their expertise to sift through genealogical records, histories of the war, and other regimental accounts to flesh out the people, places, and events that can now be shared with everyone. These documents have brought William Kennedy and his family back to life for their 21st-Century relatives and a wider audience.

How the Great Lakes Caused the Civil War

Friday, April 10 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Ted Karamanski

The Civil War was won, and the American Republic was saved because of the remarkable contributions of men, supplies, and leaders provided by the states of the Great Lakes region. These are the states that created the Republican Party. Something more than slavery was behind their deep resentment of the Confederacy. Join us for a program detailing how navigation issues exasperated sectional relations in the years before the war and how Union victory transformed our region.

Theodore Karamanski is a Professor Emeritus of History at Loyola University Chicago where he has taught courses in American Indian history, the Civil War, and public history. Karamanski has been a leading national voice in the promotion of American and public history for more than three decades. He was the founder and later director of Loyola's Public History Program as well as a prolific author in the fields of American Indian, Great Lakes, Civil War, and nineteenth-century American history.



Grant County Herald March 26th 1862

Letter from the Potomac

Camp Tillinghast, Va.

March 10th, 1862

Friend cover:- I reached this place on the 1st inst., and found my soldier friends in fine health and exuberant spirits except Gilligan and Fletcher Kidd, of the 7th regiment and B.F. Kinney, Jonathan Booth and young Black of Captain McKee's company, the latter there slightly, those of the 7th dangerously sick. That portion of the grand army located hereabouts was under marching orders, which will serve to explain the multiplied and discordant yells of the "boys." They livened up the wearisome day and made the nights hideous.

I passed the time until Thursday the 6th and calling upon my old friends in the 2nd, 6th, and the 7th regiments of Wisconsin, in many of the surrounding camps composed of volunteers from other states everywhere receiving soldiers' hospitality and welcome.

I have no reason to be ashamed of the Grant County delegation here. Captains McKee, Collins, Finnegan and new Smith with their officers and men, are justly regarded by distinguished judges of military matters, as the most popular and efficient in the service.

On the 6th betimes in the morning, for soldiers are early risers, the Second was detailed to go on picket, and receiving a unanimous call from officers and men to accompanying them, I at once accepted, merely stipulating that I should be furnished with the rifle and other Tarps becoming the now character I was to assume. A keener observer than myself might doubtlessly have detected a lurking waggish expression in the boy's eyes as one buckled around me the heavy cartridge box containing 10 rounds of ball cartridges another throw over my shoulder to have haversack with three days rations, added to those a heavy leather belt with a cap box and sheath and which dangles a long heavy dangerously looking bayonet, and you have my likeness as I have set out on my first and last picketing.

Our course was about due West 7 miles through the most villainous red mud you ever saw. Passing our camp where the second were stationed previous to Bull Run, Bulls Crossroads, Upton Hill, from the observatory built here, the Blue Ridge, Fairfax courthouse, Bally's crossroads, and other points of historical interest are before you.

The first night Captain McKee's company being the color company of the regiment, was stationed in huts composed of pine and cedar broth, nearly a mile inside the extreme outpost.

A raw recruit first night on the very confines of law and order, and one might say civilization, is well calculated to sharpen all his senses. Hark! There goes a musket, 2 more, and the long roll is beaten, and the men form into line of battle.

Sergeant of the guard, do you see that dark object way down there at a distance of 900 yards, just the range of our new rifles. That's certainly a *secesh* he has emerged from the wood. I valiantly covered him with my rifle being at a safe distance myself, and waited the order to fire, but the officer in charge thought the best way would be to modify the captain of the reserve guard in order to reconnaissance of the locality.

I've received permission of Adjutant Dean to explore the neighborhood, talked to the rebels in their houses, (the latter privilege being deemed a military man) and I do pretty much as I please, provided I did not go beyond our lines, which was something, by the way, that I had little taste for. I visited however, and had a friendly chat with the woman of the house where Captain Kellogg was decoyed by some rebel women, surrounded by Calvary, and captured. I also went into the cornfield where a party of the Brooklyn 14th met with a significant discomfort caused, they say, by the treachery of one Bush who resides near.

Yesterday I attended a military funeral. Although the deceased was a private, the ceremonies were solemn, the coffin was a good one and when it was lowered into the grave, chaplain Richmond read the Episcopal service particular to such occasions. Nine of his fellow soldiers of company I, dressed for the occasion, stood at the foot of the coffin, with reversed arms, firing 3 rounds at close at the close of the exercises

But this morning at 1:00 came along and anxiously looked for order to "March on Centerville" at 3:00 AM. To do justice to the scene that immediately followed would require an abler pen than mine. Imagine a mighty host of 150,000 men from their camps on every hilltop and valley over the space of near 20 miles in diameter, going suddenly forth with a common impulse to engage in Mortal Combat with the enemies of our country and civilization. This important movement which will no doubt decide the great controversy, possessed in itself instinctively all of the elements of the sublime.

The effect was brightened by the darkness of the hour, and it was only we had the bonfires kindled at different camps we passed and the camps placed that rendered of streams that induced the Stewart forms of gallant men dimly visible. The sound of martial music, the sharp nervous orders of the officers at the top of the column, promptly repeated by the subordinates far down the line and the deafening cheers of the soldiers could be distinctly heard when they were miles away. But they ceased length and those who have relatives or near friends in that noble bond await almost breathlessly the tidings that must fall soon blanch many a chest.

W. N. R. **Thank you, Jim Johnson, for these monthly *From the Field* features!**



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!

Colonel Henry Morrow: Pioneer of the Post Exchange

Henry Andrew Morrow was born on July 10, 1829, in Warrenton, Virginia. He attended school at the Rittenhouse Academy in Washington, D.C. and while there, received an appointment as a page in the United States Senate. At the onset of the Mexican-American War, Morrow enlisted in a regiment comprised of Maryland and D.C. volunteers and saw some action at the Battle of Monterrey; he was 17 years old. Following the war, Morrow returned to Washington and upon the advice of Senator Lewis Cass from Michigan, traveled to Detroit where he studied law and became a lawyer.

When the Civil War broke out, he traded his judicial robes for a colonel's uniform, raising the 24th Michigan Volunteer Infantry in 1862. His transition from a "political appointee" to "hardened combat leader" was swift. The Michigan men were assigned to the First Brigade, First Division of the Army of the Potomac. Initially, the veteran regiments of the Iron Brigade were slow to accept the 24th, feeling that the new men had not earned their Black Hats. Their saving grace was that they, too, were a western regiment happy to brigade with all-western men.

Morrow and the 24th was first engaged at the Battle of Fredericksburg, and then Chancellorsville but his defining combat moment occurred on July 1, 1863, in McPherson's Woods. Commanded by Morrow, the 24th went into battle with 496 soldiers on July 1, 1863. They were engaged in savage combat in Herbst Woods (now known as Reynolds Woods), fending off determined Confederate attacks until ultimately driven back in retreat from McPherson's Ridge to Seminary Ridge and finally through Gettysburg to Cemetery Hill.

During the struggle, the 24th Michigan lost 363 men killed, wounded, or captured -- a 73% loss. Among the casualties were no fewer than 14 men who went down carrying the regimental flag. At one point during the engagement, Colonel Morrow himself lifted the flag and rallied men around it and was struck in the head and wounded. Making his way into town, Morrow was captured by Confederate soldiers but was not taken with the Confederate army upon their retreat. Instead, he remained in town, receiving treatment for his injury.

After Gettysburg, Morrow commanded the 24th Michigan for the duration of the war. He was wounded again in the Wilderness in 1864 and again at Petersburg in 1865. Brevetted a brigadier general for "distinguished and conspicuous gallantry," Morrow was discharged from the army on July 19, 1865.

Post-war, he accepted a commission as a lieutenant colonel in the 36th U.S. Infantry and was stationed at various posts in the South during the Era of Reconstruction. In 1879, Morrow was promoted to the rank of full colonel and given command of the 21st U.S. Infantry. While stationed at remote Western outposts like Fort Douglas, Utah, and Fort Sidney, Nebraska, he observed a systemic problem: the sutler system. Sutlers were civilian contractors who followed the army, providing a service that often became a monopoly with price-gouging and inferior or rotten food products.

In 1880, while commanding the 21st Infantry at Fort Sidney Nebraska, Morrow took a radical step. He abolished the sutler and established a post canteen (the precursor to the PX). The canteen was owned and operated by the units themselves, not a private civilian. Goods were sold at near-cost, ensuring soldiers could afford basic comforts like tobacco, paper, and soap. Profits didn't go into a merchant's pocket; they were funneled back into the unit to buy library books, garden seeds, and better food for the mess halls. Morrow also replaced the rowdy sutler shops with a clubhouse atmosphere, which significantly reduced instances of public drunkenness and desertion. By 1895, the War Department was so impressed by the success of Morrow's model that it ordered the establishment of Post Exchanges at every army post, effectively ending the sutler era forever.

Colonel Henry Morrow died, still in command of the 21st, after a lengthy illness on January 31, 1891, at the age of 61. Soon after, his canteen concept became official Army policy. Morrow was a man whose life mirrored the turbulent transformation of 19th-century America. Brave on the battlefield, and always prioritizing the welfare of his men, he is a rare figure in military history: a man who proved his mettle in the bloodiest infantry combat of the century yet possessed the administrative vision to know that a soldier's life in the peacetime army was as vital as his courage in time of war.

**gleaned from an article written in the newsletter of
The Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia**

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.

Contact John Helmenstine at helmenstine@att.net for more information.

Schedule of meetings for the Driftless Area Civil War Club

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 th 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

In Memoriam

Renowned historian, author and professor Gabor S. Boritt passed away recently in Gettysburg, shortly after celebrating his 86th birthday. A leading Lincoln scholar, Boritt penned 16 books throughout his career, including the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Lincoln and the Economics of the American Dream*, as well as work that advanced Civil War academia.

Born in Budapest during World War II, Boritt's family was forced from their home during the Nazi occupation. In 1956, after participating in the Hungarian Revolution, he and his sister escaped the country during the Russian invasion and made their way to an Austrian refugee camp. Months later, he arrived in the United States with one dollar in his pocket, one of tens of thousands of Hungarian refugees welcomed here.

"Gabor Boritt was a towering figure in Civil War and Lincoln scholarship. He had a profound influence on my understanding of that period and that man, as well as my work," said award-winning documentarian Ken Burns. "And he was a good friend—for decades. His loss is immeasurable."

Beyond leaving a lasting legacy in the field of history, he is survived by his wife of more than 50 years, Liz, with whom he shared a farm in Gettysburg that served as a hospital during the battle and a stop on the Underground Railroad; their children – Beowulf, a Tony Award-winning set designer, Jake (Heather), a documentarian and founder of the Gettysburg Film Festival and Dan (Katie), executive director of the Indiana Wildlife Federation; as well as five grandchildren.

We mourn his loss together with the entire Civil War community.

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. 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 11, 2025** **Dr. James Pula**
Overlooked and Underappreciated: Dan Butterfield
- October 9, 2025** **Kim Harris**
Libbie Bacon Custer
- November 13, 2025** **Chris Kolakowski**
*Civil War to World War:
Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. and Sr.*
- December 11, 2025** **Brian Jordan**
*(At the Bavarian Bierhaus)
Marching Home: Union Veterans - Their Unending Civil War*
- January 8, 2026** **Guy Fraker**
Lincoln the Lawyer
- February 12, 2026** **Keith Bohannon**
*General Joseph Wheeler and the Army of Tennessee's
Cavalry Corps in the Atlanta Campaign*
- March 12, 2026** **Cliff Roberts**
Castle Pinckney
- April 9, 2026** **Wayne Motts**
*Nevins-Freeman Award Winner
Wisconsin Civil War Artifacts in the Collection of the
National Civil War Museum*
- May 7, 2026** **Chris Mackowski**
*A Tempest of Iron and Lead:
The Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse*
- June 11, 2026** **Alex Rossino**
*Calamity at Frederick: A Fresh Look at the Creation and
Loss of Special Orders No. 191*
- Speakers/topics remain subject to change.**



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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office/Position</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Terry Arliskas	Secretary/Program Chair	2028
Thomas Arliskas	Past President	2028
Michael K. Benton	President	2026
Dale Bepalec	Member	2026
Roman Blenski	Second Vice President Quartermaster	2028
Mike Deeken	Member	2028
Paul A. Eilbes	Treasurer	2028
Tom Hesse	Past President	2026
Grant Johnson	Membership/Webmaster 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.milwaukeecwrt.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

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 March 12, 2026

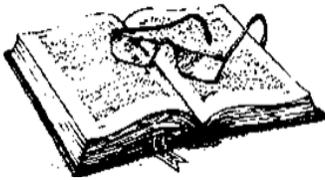
Mail your reservations by Friday, March 6 to:

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

Call or email reservations to:

**(262) 376-0568
peilbes@gmail.com**

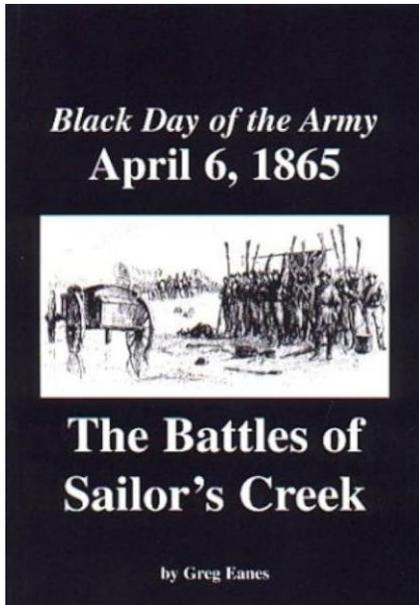
**Enclosed is \$_____ (meal is \$35.00 per person) for _____ people for the
March 12, 2026 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.
(Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)**



BETWEEN THE COVERS

Sailor's Creek: Black Day of the Army

Colonel Greg Eanes



This review is on a book I purchased on the Kenosha Civil War museum's October trip to visit the Petersburg Battlefield sites and Sailor's Creek Battlefield this past October. Sailor's Creek Black Day of the Army was written by Colonel Greg Eanes. It is a revised and retitled version of the 2001 Black Day of the Army, April 6, 1865, the Battles of Sailor's Creek. The book is 240 pages with 74 pages of appendices.

This book is the story of the Army of Northern Virginia on April 6, 1865 during Lee's retreat from Richmond. The work focuses on this single day using rare or underused primary sources to capture the action and viewpoints individual participants. Appendices include transcriptions of rarely found post-war correspondence of General William Mahone and General Joseph B. Kershaw, a wartime letter from an Amelia County citizen whose home was occupied by Union cavalry, a former slave's testimony and other material. Also included is a section on minority Confederates at Sailor's Creek to include a list of African-Americans in Confederate service. The work includes maps and photos.

I thought this book would be the typical battlefield description, one of following the forces involved by Corps, divisions, regiments and miscellaneous individual units. It would be descriptions of some individual's giving their experiences during the battle as how they saw it and fought in it. However, that turned out not to be the case. After I bought the book someone mentioned that this book is mostly statements from soldiers who participated in the fight and not necessarily like most books on battles. So I discovered when I began the first chapter. At first it seemed confusing and I was having some trouble figuring out how this battle had developed and what was going on with the fight.

What I actually ended up doing was first to concentrate on the maps provided for each chapter. Then as I read the comments from each soldier on that part of the battle and found I could follow along with the action that they were describing as I looked at the map for each chapter. Another thing that helped me visualize the scene was the fact that on our tour of Petersburg we spent a day following the flow of the fight at Sailor's Creek. Obviously if you hadn't visited the battlefield that isn't an option. In either case however working the maps into the reading can make a big difference in seeing and imagining what the soldier was seeing and better understanding this fight.

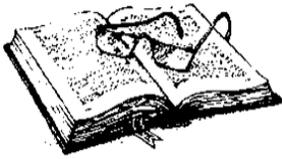
A very interesting piece of information in one section of the book concerns a statement from a Major W. T. Walthall that occurred in a letter from Custis Lee relating an event of his capture. He talks about a conversation with Union General Benham who tells him that the Union forces knew the route of Lee's retreat due to finding a document found in Richmond at President Davis' residence. This document was a letter from General Robert E. Lee to the Secretary of War spelling out the route Lee's Army would take and where supplies were to be sent. I'd never read anything about Grant's forces having information about the retreat route and that may require some additional research on my part.

Another point of interest in the story relates to a couple of the appendices E and F, which are related to letters from General Mahone and General Kershaw describing their roles in the battle and how they saw the final events of the battle.

Overall, I came around to enjoying this book and description of the final days of the Army of Northern Virginia on the fight at Sailor's Creek. I believe this to be a source of information of this battle and should be added to any student's library of the Civil War.

submitted by Bruce Klem

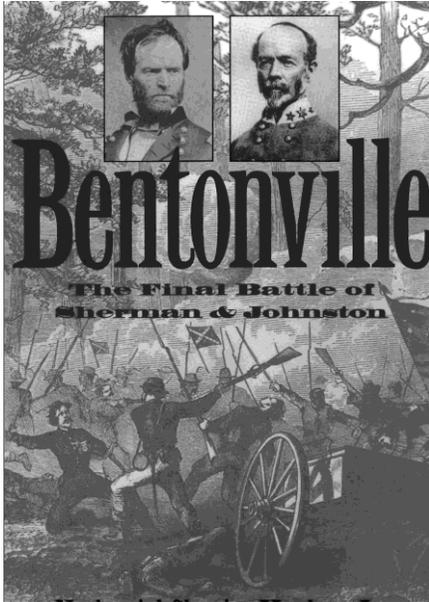
As he witnessed the collapse of his lines at the Battle of Sailor's Creek on April 6, 1865, Robert E. Lee was heard to exclaim, "My God! Has the army dissolved?"



Between the Covers

Bentonville: The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston

Dr. Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes



This review is on a book I got from the Kenosha Civil War Museum's used book section. The book is Bentonville: The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston. Written by Dr. Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes, it was published in 1996 by The University of North Carolina Press. It has 232 pages of text and 2 appendices of 11 pages. One of the appendices is an order of battle and the other is a list of all the key leaders with a brief write up of what happened to them after the battle and the war. This book covers the final phase of Sherman's Carolinas campaign in early spring 1865, focusing on the concluding battle of Bentonville, NC. I think the author does a nice job of laying out the options that Johnston has in making some attempt to stop Sherman from moving further to eventually link up with Grant.

When Sherman reached and captured Savannah Grant was entreating the idea of shipping the bulk of Sherman's army by sea to join him and fight it out with Lee. When Thomas destroyed Hood's Army at Nashville, Sherman opted to devise a plan to march his men through the Carolinas to Goldsboro and in the process destroy what was left of the Confederacy, link up with Grant and then smash Lee together. This book offers a detailed and well researched account of the final battle between Sherman and Johnston at Bentonville fought on March 19-21, 1865. This was the last full-scale battle between the two opposing armies. The book has 9 maps which are well presented and the battle ones are very easy to understand and follow.

Sherman's long march through the South had sapped the Confederacy's will to keep fighting and destroyed the resources they needed to do so. Sherman used a two-wing approach on his planned march to Goldsboro. This tactic managed to keep the Confederates under Hardee off balance and unsure of which wing to attack and mystified as to each wing's target. With one wing threatening Augusta and the other Charleston forced the Confederates to defend each one, Sherman then concentrated between the two out maneuvering Confederates and then capturing Columbia instead. Sherman eventually moved on taking Fayetteville. The Confederates were thus forced to abandon both Augusta and Charleston and fell back.

Sherman now expected a fight with Johnston who now took charge of the Confederate forces. Johnston began to consolidate forces in an effort to gain a large enough army to be able to hit hard at one of Sherman's wings which were separated. Johnston estimated Sherman to have about 35,000 infantry and an unknown number of cavalry. Johnston could have about 20,000 by combining remnants of Army of Tennessee, the Savannah and Charleston garrisons, large cavalry contingents under Hampton and Bragg's North Carolina Department troops. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 20,000. With this force he hoped to perhaps wound Sherman, thus maybe checking any further advance or actually defeat him. So he set up his plan and laid out positions.

Overconfident, the Union forces walked into an ambush at Bentonville. General Joseph E. Johnston's adroit use of his outnumbered forces was successful at first; his surprise attacks through the swampy terrain along the Union army's flanks threatened at first to collapse their line, but the Confederates were eventually worn down by Sherman's counterattacks. Conspicuous bravery was commonplace. Soldiers in both armies, worn down by hunger and lack of sleep, sensing that the war was finally drawing to its close, kept fighting. In time both commanders realized that Johnston could not win and Sherman could not lose. Some rebels, realizing this, simply walked away and went home.

I felt the author provides a thorough account of this great (and bloody) tactical struggle between two skilled soldiers. Despite his fearsome reputation, Sherman usually tried to avoid bloody battles and to preserve the lives of his men by strategic maneuvers, and he did so again, successfully, at Bentonville. I suspect he realized the end was near and as result he did his best to minimize losses. I felt this was an interesting read as I had not read much about this last battle and believe if you haven't read much about this fight it is worth the read.

submitted by Bruce Klem

Ethnic Regiments of the Army of the Cumberland
presented by Dan Masters

The Upper Midwestern states of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio provided the bulk of the soldiers for the Army of the Cumberland, the Federal government's second largest Civil War army. Dan Master's program will highlight several of the ethnic regiments—including the 24th Illinois (German) 32nd Indiana (German), 35th Indiana (Irish), 2nd Missouri (German), 9th Ohio (German), 10th Ohio (Irish), and 15th Wisconsin (Scandinavian) -- that served with this potent fighting force.

John Don't Call Me Hunt Morgan and the Not-So-Great Raid of 1863
presented by Darryl Smith

Darryl Smith's presentation will discuss John H. Morgan's Indiana-Ohio Raid from a different perspective – one that shows the raid was not the successful effort that some historians claim it to be – and how it adversely impacted operations in Tennessee. The result was not some grand effort, but instead led to the destruction of a Confederate cavalry division.

Hazardous Duty: Civil War Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes
presented by Brendon Bailod

Raw materials from the Great Lakes region fueled the industrialization of America and played a key role in developing the Union's capacity during the American Civil War. Hundreds of ships were lost in the years prior to the Civil War due to southern opposition to harbor appropriations for the Great Lakes. Hundreds more were lost during the Civil War as they sailed east with cargoes of grain, iron ore and copper. This talk will tell the story of the Great Lakes role in the Civil War through the lens of Great Lakes shipwrecks.

The Western Sanitary Commission
presented by Dana Shoaf

The Western Sanitary Commission, though overshadowed by the larger United States Sanitary Commission in the east, performed invaluable work. Union General John C. Fremont, Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, James E. Yeatman, and Dorothea Dix established the WSC in August 1861. Headquartered in St. Louis, the hard-working doctors, civilians, and nurses of the WSC established hospitals, administered medical services, and improved sanitation in camps. Additionally, the WSC established a fleet of hospital ships to travel throughout the sprawling Western Theater and provide aid from the Battle of Wilson's Creek until the end of the war.

Return to the Valley: Battles for the Breadbasket

The **Civil War Time Travelers** will be returning to the Shenandoah Valley October 24-31 2026. We will be based in Woodstock, VA for five straight nights! From that base visits will be made to Kernstown, Cross Keys, Port Republic, New Market, and more. A trip over Skyline Drive will reveal the beauty of the Valley from above as nature's tapestry is laid out below us. Our trip will cover sights from both Jackson's 1862 Campaign and the 1864 Campaign that effectively destroyed the Shenandoah Valley's ability to help feed the Army of Northern Virginia.

More information will soon be available, but the ballpark cost for the trip is \$1,250.00. That includes motor coach transportation from Wisconsin, hotel costs, all museum and historian fees, and most meals. Join us for an eight-day excursion into the Valley. See why Thomas Jackson said, "If this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost."

Contact Dave Wege at wega1862@gmail.com for additional information.

Anticipation: A Trip to the Valley



“On the road again . . . I just can’t wait to get on the road again . . .” Willie Nelson and I have a little bit in common. The month of March suggests spring is coming, and sometimes the pretty crocuses begin to poke little tips out of the ground. The air smells clean and fresh and I just can’t wait to get on the road again!

What does this have to do with Civil War Wanderings? If your husband is the editor of a Civil War Round Table newsletter, one might be asked out of the blue to reflect on what a trip to a Civil War site might mean to you. What follows are my thoughts.

As a school teacher, long breaks in routine are just as welcomed as they are to the students. This spring breaks enticed us to head east to “The Valley” as it is affectionately known by many Civil War enthusiasts. To me, this is a magical place where our family rallied after a very heart-rending ordeal. Our Marine son, Josh, survived an IED (improvised explosive device) attack in Afghanistan in October of 2009, resulting in the loss of both legs below the knee. Dr. Irvin Hess, a friend of my husband via American Battlefield Trust Civil War Teachers Institute, owned the Widow Pence Farm property at the time. His generous offer to our family of the home for a week was just too kind to pass up. We informed Josh’s siblings and made plans to enjoy all of us being together again in June of 2010 in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. It was a time of healing, thankfulness, love, and joy.

Let’s first remember the beauty though. I had never been to the Valley before. Dave was excited about the Civil War history and I just loved the mountains, streams, green valley, and flowers. I will admit, I do not proclaim to be a Civil War nerd like my husband, or even a history scholar, but I do appreciate dedication, will, determination, and love for homeland. In 2010, we enjoyed family more than the scenery as the family really just wanted to be together and enjoy each other. So, Dave and I returned the next summer to appreciate the history and blood shed for the land. The stories he told me were intense, which made me appreciate any era of the military even more. What I remember most is that the Rebels triumphed more often over the Union in 1862 due to the efforts of some Jackson fellow. I was surprised because I had always had the impression that the Union dominated everything. I know a bit more of the story now.

Another couple, friends of the Civil War Time Travelers, LLC, mentioned their interest in accompanying us on any future scouting trips we may take before one of our group tours. Dave had heard that the Valley had changed quite a bit from the last tour we led to the Shenandoah in 2019. There are new trails at Cross Keys, new land purchases to investigate, and we have a private tour scheduled of the Kernstown battlefield on our March trip. Since the Civil War Time Travelers are visiting the Shenandoah Valley this coming October 2026, it just made sense to scout out the changes before our group returns.

I am very excited to journey again to the Shenandoah Valley and drive along Skyline Drive without the leaves on the trees. I am in awe and wonder as I look upon the beauty that lies before me and I thank God for the beautiful country He chose for me to inhabit. It is also my hope to visit some of the camping areas along the mountain top without having to maneuver a large coach bus as is used by our tour group. Dave and I love to camp and hike inside the majesty of God’s nature; we do plan to return on our own to do just that. I have heard that we might see little bear cubs climbing trees along the trails. Yes, I promise not to get too close to them for photos due to the fact that where cubs are, mom is not far away.

Our Civil War Time Travelers learn the history of the war, but there is so much more to that than blood, sweat, and tears. We study troop movement and strategy, but that doesn’t interest everyone on the trip. Some enjoy the stories of the common soldier rather than grand strategy. For me, the story of the VMI Cadets at New Market was especially poignant. The Field of Lost Shoes cut to my heart as a mother of five, and yet the resilience of youth and resolve made me proud. Standing where they stood, seeing where they fought, knowing what they accomplished makes the deed come to life—even though some gave theirs for duty. The Time Travelers learn appreciation for dedication to home and family, to terrain and beauty, to serving others selflessly, and to thank God for the blessing of every day we have opportunity to live on this earth. We attempt to see life can be “better every day.” Of course, to me, I love the beauty and the fellowship of friends, but I certainly appreciate the sacrifices made, then and now, to preserve this country as it was intended to be, a land of freedom.

I just can’t wait to get on the road again.

submitted by Kay Wege
at the behest of the editor

Milwaukee Civil War Round Table Educational Membership

It will come as no surprise that we have a very generous group of members, deeply interested in the Round Table's focus on education and preservation. Through that generosity, the Round Table has several Education memberships available.

Do you know of someone interested in Civil War history that attends or teaches an educational institution? Let's get them connected to the Round Table via an Education membership! It is the perfect opportunity to get students and teachers involved in the organization, and help fuel that interest in learning about the Civil War!

Please contact me if you would like to learn more about this opportunity, or if you would like to join those who have donated the memberships which make this possible.

Paul Eilbes
Treasurer

A Wisconsin Monument at Antietam? Honoring Wisconsin Civil War Heroes from Congressman Bryan Steil

More than 160 years ago, Wisconsin soldiers fought in two of the Civil War's most consequential battles. Despite serving in some of the fiercest fighting during the war, their service at Antietam and Manassas National Battlefields has never been formally recognized with memorials.

I recently introduced a bill to address this oversight and authorize memorials at Antietam National Battlefield and Manassas National Battlefield Park. These memorials will recognize the service and sacrifice of the Second, Third, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin Infantry Regiments during the Civil War. Many of these regiments were made up of soldiers from Southeast and Southcentral Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's Second Regiment was composed of ten companies, including Company F, which was primarily made up of volunteers from Racine County and Company D, whose ranks were largely filled by men from Janesville and Rock County. George B. Ely, a former district attorney from Janesville and captain of Company D, played a key role in organizing the company before being wounded at the Battle of Antietam.

I'm proud to join this effort to honor the sacrifice of Wisconsin soldiers in protecting our nation and securing liberty for all Americans, and preserve their legacy for future generations.

How Many Different Ways Can One Experience Gettysburg?

I've been to Gettysburg close to forty times in my life. It's always been a place that has "called to me" ever since my first visit back in 1976. I've spent countless hours walking the fields but my advancing age plus a bum knee led me two years ago to consider yet another way to view the place I love. At the invitation of fellow Roundtable member Seth Maxfield, I attended the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College. It was a memorable 5-day event filled with wonderful and noteworthy speakers plus extensive battlefield tours.

Last summer I returned and took along fellow Roundtable member George Affeldt. We were again joined by now Major Seth Maxfield who continues in his role as an instructor at the United States Military Academy at West Point. There were two exceptional panel discussions; one on the role of Robert E. Lee in history and memory and the other on how we understand civil war history in today's public domain. Another very interesting presentation was from the National Park Service as they shared stories and artifacts uncovered during the recent work done on Little Round Top. Gary Gallagher was another big-name presenter.

This year's Institute will be June 12-17 and another impressive lineup of speakers is already in place including Jeff Shaara, Jennifer Murray, Keith Bohannon, Kevin Pawlak, Jim Hessler, and Dennis Frye. I'm planning to go again and would love the company of another Round Table member or two! Give me a call (414-698-2387) or send an e-mail (aoren@att.net) if you're interested in learning more. You can also check out the Civil War Institute website at [2026 Civil War Institute Summer Conference - Gettysburg College](https://www.civilwarinstitute.org).

submitted by Andy Oren



Dale Bspalec is this selection for this month's Member Spotlight. Dale is a long-time member of the MCWRT and currently serves on the board of directors. His serious interest in the Civil War did not emerge until the 1990's when a good friend told him about all of the trips that he took to battlefields with his brother. Since his brother could not travel anymore, Dale volunteered to accompany his friend. After his first trip that included Gettysburg and Antietam, he was hooked. Although he has visited many Civil War sites, his main interest is the people and personalities of the times. This is no surprise since he is a clinical psychologist (mostly retired!). He usually takes at least one trip each year and has been a part of the Time Travelers and Chicago CWRT tours. He holds a special interest in the life and experiences of Mrs. Mary Lincoln, and did a presentation about Mrs. Lincoln for the Time Travelers as they stood on the battlefield of Richmond, Kentucky.

Dale lives in Grafton with his wife Marylou and their adopted dog Perle. Dale's daughter and grandchildren moved from Chicago to the Chattanooga, TN area. Visiting family usually includes time on the battlefields and Civil War sites of the area.

Freedom Will Be Theirs by the Sword

Friday, May 1 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Jeff Kluever

On September 29, 1864 fourteen black men earned the Medal of Honor for their actions at the Battle of New Market Heights outside Richmond, Virginia. Their charge against Confederate fortifications broke the Rebel lines, but left hundreds of their comrades dead and wounded on the field. Join author and historian Jeff Kluever to learn the stories of these former slaves and freemen who fought valiantly for a country that did not yet consider them citizens.

The Organ of the Soldiers: An Introduction to Civil War Camp Newspapers

Friday, May 8 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Dan Freas

“Camp newspapers are a feature of the war that is worth attention,” reported a St. Louis newspaper in 1862. “The camp paper is the organ of the soldiers, through which they communicate their condition, wants, enjoyments, and local news to the public, and to their distant friends.” Historians have documented more than 200 camp newspapers printed during the Civil War. The majority of these publications were published by printers in Union regiments using confiscated shops, equipment and materials in occupied southern communities. A few were created using portable printing offices. Mr. Freas's presentation will introduce you to the printers, technology, and content from some of these camp newspapers which, given the lack of military or government censorship, provide honest and intriguing accounts of the soldier experience. An emphasis will be placed on camp newspapers associated with the Upper Middle West.

Dan Freas recently retired from a 42-year career in program development and administration of historic sites and museums, most recently serving for 12 years as the director of Old World Wisconsin. A native of Western Pennsylvania, Dan's interest in the Civil War began at a young age during a family trip to Gettysburg. His father worked for his hometown newspaper and one of Dan's first jobs as a living history interpreter was working in a historic print shop. With a little bit of ink running through his veins, he is now combining interests in printing and the Civil War through research and writing about camp newspapers and field printing during the conflict.

“To Care for Him Who Has Borne the Battle”

Civil War Medical Weekend with the 17th Corps Hospital Group

Saturday, May 2 | 10am – 4pm

Sunday, May 3 | 12pm – 4pm

Find more information on the website of the Kenosha Civil War Museum. Look under the tab for Public Programs. Updates will also be included in the [General Orders](#) as the event draws closer.

Preservation News: American Battlefield Trust

There is always a lot going on in the area of battlefield preservation. If you read this information closely, there is an answer to the often-asked question, “What can my donation accomplish?” The answer is there, and it is heartening! Here is a look at current efforts at land preservation.

Preserve the Missing Piece at Appomattox

Two profoundly significant parcels of battlefield land are urgently in need of protection. Together totaling just 2.4 acres, these properties represent a rare chance to complete and protect key stories from American history.

One property is one of the **last unprotected tracts** within the preserved landscape of **Appomattox Court House** — the site of General Lee’s surrender and the symbolic beginning of national reconciliation. Securing this land would complete a decades-long effort.

The second property lies at the **Old Cold Harbor crossroads**, tied to both the **Battle of Gaines’ Mill** and the **Battle of Cold Harbor**. This tract offers one of the most powerful interpretive opportunities in Virginia and is critically threatened by modern development.

Together, these two parcels are valued at **\$680,000**—but through state and federal grants and a deferred payment agreement, only **\$172,500** must be raised by the end of January. Thanks to a limited-time **\$4-to-\$1 match**, every dollar donated will be multiplied four times in impact!

45 Acres at Fredericksburg and Stones River

A final payment is all that stands between preservation and permanent loss of 45 acres of hallowed battlefield ground — 7.5 acres at Fredericksburg, Virginia, and 38 acres at Stones River, Tennessee.

More than a year ago, an opportunity arose to purchase land at Fredericksburg that witnessed **both the First and Second Battles of Fredericksburg**. With the recent construction of nearby multi-unit housing projects, this land was next in line to be lost forever. Instead, the owners — motivated by respect for history and patriotism — agreed to sell the land for preservation.

A payment plan was arranged to raise the **\$1.5 million** purchase price over three years. Thanks to dedicated donors, that goal is now within reach — **one year ahead of schedule**.

Now, an additional opportunity is available: to protect 38 acres at the Stones River Battlefield in Tennessee — a tract valued at over \$9.4 million.

Through the combined efforts of private donors and public grants, the total cost to preserve both properties has been reduced to just \$172,323. This is a rare moment to complete the preservation of 45.3 acres for a fraction of their market value.

The American Battlefield Trust website has several others preservations campaigns in play. The organization works hard to take donations and multiple their impact by seeking matching funds from private and public funds.

**Donations may be made by going to the
American Battlefield Trust website.
www.battlefields.org/give/save-battlefields**

LECTURE Series

Friday, March 6, 2026

7 pm, Eastern / 4 pm, Pacific

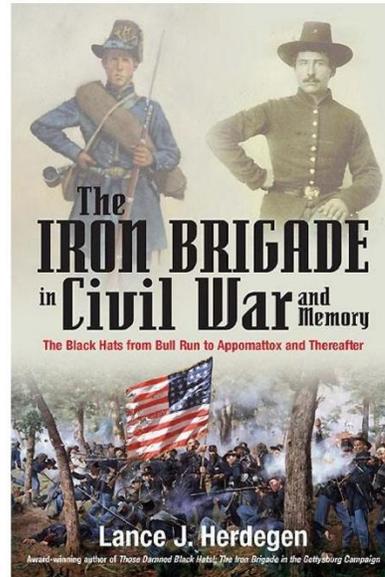
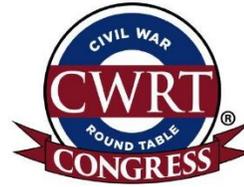
with Lance J. Herdegen

THE IRON BRIGADE IN CIVIL WAR AND MEMORY

The Black Hats from Bull Run to Appomattox

The Iron Brigade is one of the most celebrated organizations in the American Civil War. Originally composed of the 2nd, 6th, and 7th Wisconsin, 19th Indiana, and Battery B of the 4th U.S. Artillery, it fought in the Western and Eastern theaters of war. Yet it was at Gettysburg on July 1st where the brigade was immortalized at the railroad cut and helped save the high ground west of town that proved decisive but was nearly destroyed for its brave stand.

When we were young, explained one Black Hat veteran many years after the war, we hardly realized that we "had fought on more fields of battle than the Old Guard of Napoleon, and have stood fire in far greater firmness." Herdegen has produced the full story of how young farm boys, shopkeepers, river men, and piney camp boys in a brigade forged with iron helped save the Union.



www.cwrtcongress.org/future-events/fridays.html

Perhaps the March General Orders arrived too late for you to take advantage of Lance Herdegen's presentation on the Iron Brigade. If that is the case, try these other presentations on for size! Go to **CWRTcongress.org** to find a list of upcoming offerings.

NEIL P. CHATELAIN
TREASURE & EMPIRE IN THE CIVIL WAR:
THE PANAMA ROUTE, THE WEST AND
THE CAMPAIGNS TO CONTROL AMERICA'S MINERAL WEALTH
FRIDAY March 13th @ 7 PM EASTERN

JOSEPH M. BOSLET
LITTLE ROUND TOP AT GETTYSBURG:
A REASSESSMENT OF JULY 2, 1863
FRIDAY March 20th @ 7 PM EASTERN

The list of educational programs offered by the CWRT Congress extends all of the way into November of 2026. There are some truly interesting topics! Please check out the website! The mission of the CWRT Congress is to inspire Civil War Round Table leaders to adapt, adopt, and maintain strategies for sustainability.



Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.



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

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(414) 327-2847 dbcpmilw@gmail.com

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

