

THE CANISTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table



PO Box 621082 • Cincinnati, OH 45262 • www.cincinnati-cwrt.org
Serving the Tri-State area of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana since 1956

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February 20, 2025 Program

Butler Boys: 35th Ohio Volunteer Infantry

Presented by

Brian Smith



personal narratives of 35th soldiers, the presentation will detail the regiment's slow start and lack of action early in the war to its important role at battlefields such as Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge.

Brian Smith is the Executive Director of the Butler County Historical Society. He has been involved with the society for ten years serving as a board member and past president. He is a retired local high school English teacher and a Butler County native.

*Submitted by
Dan Bauer
Cincinnati CWRT Program Chair*

Books – Books - Books



Please see our plans for the February meeting book raffle, page 7 of this newsletter.

We welcome Brian Smith to the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table on February 20, 2025. His topic will be “When the Storm Broke Upon Us: The Saga of the 35th Ohio Volunteer Infantry.” This presentation follows the regiment, also known as “The Butler Boys” and the “Persimmon Regiment,” from its formation in the summer of 1861 until its mustering out in the fall of 1864. Though the rank and file came mostly from Butler County, companies in the 35th also were recruited from Warren, Preble and Montgomery counties. Intermingling regimental specific history, general Civil War information, and

President's Letter

Please join us on February 20 when our speaker will be Brian Smith, Executive Director of the Butler County Historical Society. Mr. Smith will tell us about the 35th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which was organized in Hamilton in September 1861 and consisted primarily of men from Butler County. This regiment fought at Mill Springs, Perryville, Stones River, Missionary Ridge, in General Sherman's Atlanta Campaign, and at Chickamauga. Approximately half of its number were killed or wounded. Mr. Smith's account of this regiment promises to be quite interesting, and we will undoubtedly learn some noteworthy details about the honorable service of men from our area.

Mr. Smith may also say something about the Butler County Soldiers, Sailors and Pioneers Monument, which is located on Monument Avenue in downtown Hamilton on the banks of the Great Miami River. It contains a nice collection of Civil War weapons and swords and has exhibits on other American wars as well. I have visited there and recommend it.

The U.S Grant Homestead Association is sponsoring a program on Saturday February 22 featuring General Grant himself (actually, Dr. Curt Fields as the great man). It begins at 10:00 AM with free tours of the Grant Homestead and School, and the general will speak from 2:00 – 4:00 PM on Confederate



officers he knew. It all happens at 110 East State Street in Georgetown, Ohio.

Speaking of General Grant, the Homestead Association is sponsoring the 25th Annual U.S. Grant Celebration from April 24 – 26 in Georgetown. Dr. Curt Fields will be back on April 22 along with Dennis Boggs portraying President Abraham Lincoln. Visit www.usgrantboyhoodhome.org for more details on both events.

Civil War events that occurred in February:

February 3, 1862 – Did you know that on this day President Lincoln declined the offer of war elephants from the King of Siam because the weather “does not reach a latitude so low as to favor the multiplication of the elephant”?

February 6, 1862 – Fort Henry was captured by Grant and Flag Officer Andrew Foote.

February 16, 1862 – After receiving Grant's message that “No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted,” Confederate Brigadier General Simon Bolivar Buckner surrendered Fort Donelson. Grant's dispatch made him famous throughout the North.

February 17-18, 1865 – Major General William T. Sherman seized Columbia, South Carolina. The city began burning when he arrived and stopped burning when he left. Since then, responsibility for the inferno has been a subject of controversy. Modern historians believe that there were multiple causes, and that Sherman did not order the burning.

Previously, I mentioned that we have an opportunity to receive the *Civil War Monitor*, a very fine publication, as well as benefiting our organization. The Roundtable will receive \$3.00 for every member who subscribes via the publication's website (www.civilwarmonitor.com/subscribe) using the code CINCWRT. I'm a subscriber, and I have enjoyed reading its articles. Subscribers also receive the *Civil War Monitor Gazette*, an electronic newsletter that comes out several times per month, and this also contains useful and interesting articles.



Please consider this opportunity.

Hope to see you at our meeting on February 20th.

Tom Robisch
President, Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Cincinnati CWRT Meeting Details

Location	Raffel's Evendale Banquet Center, 10160 Reading Rd., Evendale, OH 45241
Date	Thursday, February 20, 2025
Time	5:30 Sign-in and Social 6:30 Buffet Dinner 7:15 Business Meeting 7:30 Speaker
Reservations	Members who are unable or would prefer not to make their dinner reservation on-line, please call, text, or email Jeff Mikutis, Vice President. 937-623-4879, mikutisjeff@yahoo.com Reservation Deadline Sunday, February 16, 2025
Cost	Dinner, meeting and speaker – \$28.00 Meeting and speaker only – \$7.00 Reservation for meeting and speaker only is appreciated but not required.
Cancellations	We are charged for the number of dinners called in to Raffel's after the reservation deadline. Refunds will be made after the deadline only if a late-comer can be substituted.

Future Speakers for Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

March 20, 2025 **Arming Ohio**, Presented
by Phil Spaugy

April 17, 2025 **Logistics Concerns of
Both Meade and Lee at Gettysburg**,
Presented by Kent Masterson Brown

May 15, 2025 **Man of Fire: William
Tecumseh Sherman**, Presented by Derek
Maxfield

September 18, 2025 **Civil War Music**,
Presented by Steve Ball

October 16, 2025 To be determined

November 20, 2025 To be determined

January 15, 2026 **Abraham Lincoln**,
Presented by Kim Villalva

Quiz

1. When this Confederate applied for a pardon in November of 1865, President Johnson responded, "There are three persons of the South who can never receive amnesty: Mr. Davis, General Lee, and yourself. You have given the Union too much trouble." To whose application was Johnson responding?
2. Richard and Robert were first cousins who shared the same last name. Both graduated from West Point in 1841, both served as generals in the Confederate Army, and both

were killed in action: Robert at Carrick's Ford on 13 July 1861, and Richard at Gettysburg on 3 July 1863. What was their last name?

3. Where were the two main termini (or terminuses) of the Underground Railroad?
4. What Confederate official held three different cabinet posts during the Civil War?
5. What Union victory on March 8, 1862, was the largest battle west of the Mississippi?
6. What was the last battle in which Grant and Sherman fought together?
7. In which battle did the Confederates make their longest charge over open ground to attack Union troops?
8. He was born in Alabama, raised in Mississippi, and had attended the Georgia Military Institute. Assigned as Lieutenant and aide-de-camp on General Longstreet's staff on 2 July 1861, he served as Longstreet's Chief of Ordnance from the Maryland Campaign through the surrender at Appomattox. What was his name? (Hint: it is the same as an NFL Hall of Fame Quarterback)

January Program

Thirty-three members and guests attended our January meeting to hear Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, Emeritus Curator of the German-American Collection and Director of German-American Studies at the University of Cincinnati, talk about Cincinnati's Germans in the Civil War. Professor Tolzmann was gradually drawn to the topic beginning with his publication of *German-Americana, A Bibliography*, in 1975 and *America's German*

Heritage in 1976, the latter of which included mention of August Willich, adjutant of the all-German 9th Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

Tolzmann's attention was drawn to Willich because of his connection to Cincinnati. Then in his 1982 book *Festschrift for the German-American Tricentennial Jubilee*, Tolzmann included an article on August Willich written by historian James Barnett. In it Barnett made the observation that "The contributions of Cincinnati's German population to the Union cause . . . were so extensive that they could fill many volumes if recorded in detail."

Following *Festschrift* Tolzmann assisted historian Frederic Trautmann in translating and editing *Die Neuner*, Constantin Grebner's 1897 regimental history of the 9th O.V.I. In doing so, Tolzmann came to realize how little attention historians had paid to German-Americans in the Civil War. He attributed this neglect first to the dearth of American historians who could understand German, and to the still smaller number of them who could read Fraktur, the old German typeface; and second to the lingering negative influence of the anti-German sentiment of two world wars.

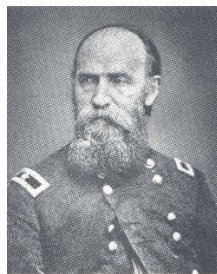
Following the airing of Ken Burns's documentary, *The Civil War*, which completely overlooked the contributions of German and other ethnic units, Dr. Tolzmann and his colleagues decided to bring out a translation of Wilhelm Kaufmann's 1911 book *Germans in the American Civil War*. This 1999 publication was followed in 2011 by a translation of Gustav Tafel's 1901 work *The Cincinnati Germans in the Civil War*, which was reviewed in last month's *Canister*.

Some 8,000 Cincinnati Germans responded to Lincoln's call for volunteers after the fall of Ft. Sumter. They formed 13 units including infantry, cavalry, artillery, and militia reserves. Many of these volunteers had prior military experience. Some had studied military science at one of the military academies that the individual German states had established. Many more had experienced compulsory military service before emigrating to America. In addition, many had actual combat infantry

and artillery experience in the 1848 Revolution. These were the so-called Forty-eighters.

The German population heeded Lincoln's call for a variety of reasons. The Forty-eighters had fought for liberty and to unify the German states. They did not want to see the Union broken up into independent states as Germany was. The German immigrants also opposed slavery. They wanted to honor the German name and to demonstrate the patriotism of German Americans. Then too there was the opportunity to gain citizenship, which they could do on completion of their service. Finally, there was peer pressure from the German community in general.

Professor Tolzmann talked about the 9th O.V.I. as one example of those 13 units. Attorney Robert McCook suggested the idea of a German regiment to his law partner, Johann Stallo, a German immigrant. Together they took the idea to Gustav Tafel, president of the Turner Society, who called for a mass meeting at the Turner Hall. The Turner Society, which had its own rifle company, many Forty-eighters among its members, and a membership dedicated to physical fitness, was fertile ground. Out of this was born the 9th Ohio. McCook was elected colonel because of his purported connections in Columbus and Washington, while August Willich became the military adjutant.



August Willich

Willich was a graduate of the Prussian military academy in Berlin and had served in the Prussian Army for 19 years. He was noted for the use of horn signals rather than voice commands on the battlefield, and for the introduction of two battlefield tactics borrowed from the Prussian Army: the close combat bayonet charge and the advance firing line.

After training the 9th Ohio, Willich accepted the Indiana governor's invitation to raise and train the 32nd Indiana Volunteer Infantry, an all-German regiment that included a company of Cincinnati Germans. The 32nd Indiana under Willich's command played a decisive role in the defeat of Confederate forces at the Battle of Rowlett's Station, KY, on 17 December 1861. The 9th Ohio played a similarly decisive role at the Battle of Mill Springs, KY, one month later. At the Battle of Chickamauga, the 9th suffered 50 per cent casualties, the highest rate of any Union regiment.

Dr. Tolzmann also reviewed the role of Cincinnati Germans during the Siege of Cincinnati in 1862. The 106th Ohio commanded by Gustav Tafel was deployed to Northern Kentucky, as were the militia reserve units organized by Tafel, one of whose members was the brewer Christian Moerlein. And he discussed other German volunteers such as Hubert Dilger, who had been an artillery officer in Baden, and became captain of Battery I of the 1st Ohio Light Artillery that was formed in Cincinnati. Dilger was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery in covering the retreat of the Union XI Corps during the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Professor Tolzmann concluded his talk by highlighting the involvement of Cincinnati Germans in veterans' activities, including the Grand Army of the Republic. And he displayed photographs of various monuments to their participation in the Civil War.



Gustav Tafel

Submitted by Dave Stockdale



Every March, the Clark County (Ohio) Historical Society offers a one-day detailed exploration of the American Civil War. This year join Generals Grant and Lee as they explore the Overland Campaign and the Battle of Appomattox that led to Lee's surrender.

When: Saturday, March 8th from 9 AM to 4 PM.

Where: Hellmuth Rotating Gallery in The Heritage Center, 117 S. Fountain Ave., Springfield, Ohio

Continental breakfast & lunch will be provided.

Ticket prices:

Non-members	\$70
Members	\$50
Students	Free!
Remember to present your student ID at check-in.	

Link to this event:

<https://heritage.center/events/civil-war-symposium/>

Link to purchase tickets:

<https://form.jotform.com/241005835732148>

The Speakers:

Curt Fields is a nationally-recognized living historian who has played **General Grant** for many years. **Thomas Jessee** is a native Virginian who has been a reenactor for over 50 years, portraying **General Lee**.

Quiz Answers

1. James Longstreet.
2. Garnett. Robert was the first general officer killed in the war.
3. Windsor, Ontario, and Ontario's Niagara Peninsula.
4. Judah Benjamin.
5. Pea Ridge or Elkhorn Tavern.
6. Chattanooga or Missionary Ridge.
7. Franklin, Tennessee.
8. Peyton Manning. So far as your quiz master has been able to determine they are not related to each other. Manning was struck in the head by a shell fragment at Chickamauga and appeared to have suffered a mortal wound as he began gasping. But it transpired that he was only momentarily choking on the potato he had been eating when he was struck. While only 5' 7" and 120 pounds, he was one of three officers who lifted the 200+ lb. Longstreet from his horse when he was wounded by friendly fire during the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864.



Peyton Manning

*Quiz and its Answers
Submitted by David Stockdale*

Books – Books - Books

Some may be unaware that our round table recently acquired a lot of books, which were donated to us, and which approximately tripled



the number we have had on hand.

Starting at our next meeting, we will increase the number of books given via our raffle, and we will also encourage attendees

to purchase books if desired. Our plan is to allow folks to make offers on books, and all reasonable offers will be accepted. This is an opportunity for bargains because our concept of reasonable offers does not involve large dollars. Our plan (hope) is to raise some additional revenue from these books, which would allow us to fund more and better-known speakers from outside our area. This could increase our membership and attendance at meetings.

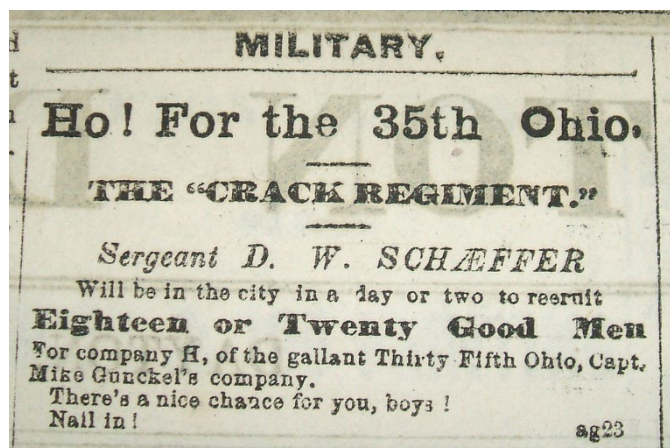
So please come to our next meeting, not only to hear Brian Smith speak about the 35th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment, but also to increase your personal Civil War library.

Check Your Credit Card Statement

If you have paid your dues for 2025, THANK YOU! But please check your credit card statement and your checkbook to make sure that you have not inadvertently paid more than once. If you have paid online, you may have noticed a box which can be checked to automatically renew your membership each year. You may have forgotten that you checked the box last year. Or perhaps the box was pre-checked and you failed to uncheck it. In either event your credit card may have been charged twice, or you may have written a check in addition to the credit card charge.

If you find that you have paid more than once, please contact me at the email address on the last page and we will be happy to refund the overpayment. Of course, we will be happier still if you decide to just consider your overpayment a contribution.

*Dave Stockdale
Treasurer*



Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

Board

President: Tom Robisch	757-327-1388	Trobisch63@gmail.com
Vice-President: Jeff Mikutis	937-623-4879	mikutisjeff@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Dave Stockdale	513-310-9553	djrtstockdale@aol.com
Secretary: Jenny Breeden	859-261-0859	jennybree054@yahoo.com
Program Chair: Dan Bauer	513-759-4495 (h)	dbauer002@cinci.rr.com
Newsletter Editor: Kate Johantgen	513-731-2563	katejo77@msn.com
Membership & Publicity: Eric Gutttag	513-317-5313	Ericgutttag1952@gmail.com
Trustee At Large: Keith Young	513-260-0268	kryoung@isoc.net
Trustee At Large: Esly Caldwell, II	513-607-6598	ecaldwel2@gmail.com

Committees

Activities: **VACANT**

Preservation Projects: **VACANT**

Webmaster/Social Media: Tom Williams	513-608-4391	tom@jandtwilliams.com
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Welcoming Committee: Dawn Mowery		Dmowery11@fuse.net
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Speakers Bureau: Tom Breiner	513-382-1412	tbreiner@fuse.net
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CCWRT E-Mail Address		ccwrt@cincinnatiwrt.org
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*The **CANISTER** is regularly published eight times per year, in January, February, March, April, May, September, October, and November; sometimes more often, if we have a lot to say to our members.*