

# THE CANISTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table



PO Box 621082 • Cincinnati, OH 45262 • [www.cincinnati-cwrt.org](http://www.cincinnati-cwrt.org)  
Serving the Tri-State area of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana since 1956

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## June 19, 2025 Program

### The Hunley, a Harbinger of WWI Unrestricted Submarine Warfare

Presented by

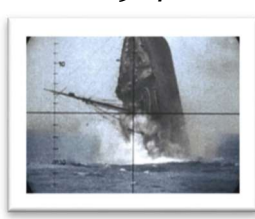
**Gary Johnson**

We welcome Cincinnati Civil War Round Table's own Gary Johnson on June 19 who will speak on the Hunley, a Harbinger of WWI Unrestricted Warfare.

1865



1914



The Confederate submersible Hunley sank the Union warship USS Housatonic in February 1864 but no one on the Hunley survived the attack, a pyrrhic victory. Yet just 50 years later during World War I, submarines sank over 7,600 ships. The war started in August 1914 and the submarines on both sides were sinking enemy

ships in September. This topic traces the equipment and tactics that were developed over 50 years to turn the submarine into such a formidable weapon. Gary will start with the attack by the Hunley in 1864, review the Hunley's serious limitations as a weapon system, and trace the technical and strategy changes that evolved in the 50 years between the Civil War and World War I.

Gary Johnson is a chemical engineering graduate of the Ohio State University. He is a former naval officer, qualified in submarines and nuclear



propulsion. After getting out of the Navy, he worked for Procter & Gamble for 27 years and as an Industrial Ventilation consultant for 14 more years before retiring in 2016. He joined the Civil War Round Table in 2007 and has become an amateur historian on the Civil War navies. This will be his eighth presentation to our round table.

*Submitted by Dan Bauer  
Cincinnati CWRT Program Chair*

# President's Letter

If you were not present at our May meeting, you missed an informative and enjoyable presentation. Derek Maxfield, long-time



history professor at Genesee Community College in Batavia, New York, spoke on General William T. Sherman in the early years of the Civil War. Professor Maxfield was quite engaging and humorous in his talk as he presented basic facts and

interesting details about Sherman. He has a whole lot more to say about the general and said he would be happy to return sometime in the future.

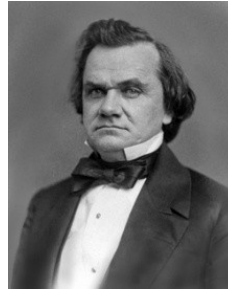
Our May meeting also included the round table's annual business meeting, which primarily consisted of the election of officers for the season beginning next September. As I joked previously, if you like the composition of the current board of trustees, you will be satisfied with the slate for the upcoming season because it is virtually the same. I will return as President, Jeff Mikutis will again serve as the VP, Dave Stockdale continues his run as Treasurer, Dan Bauer remains as Program Chair, Kate Johantgen stays on as Newsletter Editor, Eric Guttag again fills the Membership & Publicity position, and Keith Young and Esly Caldwell II return as Trustees at Large. The Secretary and Preservation Projects positions are vacant, so if anyone is willing to invest some time in the round table, please contact me or any of the board members.

As you are probably aware, usually the round table does not meet from June – August, but this year we are having an extra meeting on June 19th. CCWRT member Gary Johnson will speak concerning the approximate 50-year development of submarine tactics and technology from the CSS Hunley in the Civil War (that sank one ship, not including itself) to

World War I submarines (which sank over 7,600 ships). Please join us for what promises to be a very interesting and informative presentation.

## Notable Civil War events in June:

- June 3, 1861 – U.S Senator Stephen A. Douglas from Illinois died on this date. In 1858, Douglas defeated Abraham Lincoln for the Senate, and Douglas was defeated by Lincoln in the 1860 Presidential election. Douglas's advocacy for "popular sovereignty" (which purported to allow territories to decide whether to permit slavery when achieving statehood) intensified the division between North and South on the slavery issue and contributed to the escalating tensions that eventually led to the Civil War.
- June 12 – 15, 1862 – Confederate General JEB Stuart led 1,200 cavalry troopers on a four-day ride around the Union Army of the Potomac, then commanded by General George McClellan. The purpose of the expedition was to locate the flanks of the Union army and identify its weaknesses, and Stuart succeeded in that mission. The ride caused panic and confusion within the Union lines, and McClellan was criticized for his army's inability to respond effectively. Losing only one man and one cannon, Stuart's force captured 165 Union soldiers, 260 horses and mules, and destroyed railroad tracks, communication lines and supply wagons.
- June 25 – July 1, 1862 – the Seven Days battles near Richmond. Starting on the 25th with a small Union attack in the minor engagement at Oak Grove and concluding on July 1st with the Battle of Malvern Hill, General Robert E. Lee successfully defended Richmond and prevented the Union Army of the Potomac from capturing



the Confederate capital. Confederate casualties were over 20,000, and the Union's were almost 16,000. During the battles, the Union army retreated to Harrison's Landing on the James River below Richmond, where it was protected by Union gunboats.

- June 27, 1863 – In accordance with President Lincoln's order, General George Meade replaced General Joseph Hooker as the commander of the Army of the Potomac. Meade retained this position for the remainder of the war.
- June 14, 1864 – Confederate General Leonidas Polk killed at Pine Mountain, Georgia. From atop Pine Mountain, Generals Joseph E. Johnston, William J. Hardee, and Polk (and their staffs) observed Union artillery maneuvering to fire in their direction. The Confederates began moving away, but Polk was struck and killed by an artillery shell. Although he was unaware of the identities of the rebel group, it was Union General William T. Sherman who ordered Battery I of the 1st Ohio Light Artillery, commanded by Captain Hubert Dilger, to open fire. Polk graduated from West Point in July 1827 but resigned his commission in December of that year to enter the ministry. He later became the Episcopal Bishop in New Orleans. He was popular with his troops but had a poor record as a field commander.



Hope to see you at our meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

*Tom Robisch*

## Cincinnati CWRT Meeting Details

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Location</b>      | Raffel's Evendale Banquet Center, 10160 Reading Rd., Evendale, OH 45241                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Date</b>          | Thursday, June 19, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Time</b>          | 5:30 Sign-in and Social<br>6:30 Buffet Dinner<br>7:15 Business Meeting<br>7:30 Speaker                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Reservations</b>  | Members who are unable or would prefer not to make their dinner reservation on-line, please call, text, or email Jeff Mikutis, Vice President.<br><br>937-623-4879,<br><a href="mailto:mikutisjeff@yahoo.com">mikutisjeff@yahoo.com</a><br><br><b>Reservation Deadline Sunday, June 15, 2025</b> |
| <b>Cost</b>          | Dinner, meeting and speaker – <b>\$28.00</b><br><br>Meeting and speaker only – <b>\$7.00</b><br><br>Reservation for meeting and speaker only is appreciated but not required.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Cancellations</b> | 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.                                                                                                                  |

# Speakers for Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

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

October 16, 2025 To be determined,  
Presented by Greg Biggs

November 20, 2025 **The Saga of the 35<sup>th</sup>  
Ohio Volunteer Infantry**, Presented by  
Brian Smith

January 15, 2026 **Abraham Lincoln:  
Servant Leader**, Presented by Kim Villalva

February 19, 2026 **Conducting Slaves to  
Freedom: The Underground Railroad**,  
Eric Gutttag, CCWRT

## Quiz

1. James Petigru, a staunch unionist who nevertheless voted for secession out of loyalty to his homeland, said of his state that it was “too small for a republic and too big for an insane asylum.” Which state was his home state?
2. According to last month’s speaker, Kent Brown, the 1861 U.S. Army regulations required that horses and mules be fed how much hay and how much oats per day?



3. Who made the following statement: “I know the hole he went in at, but I can’t tell you what hole he will come out of?” To whom was the speaker referring?
4. In 1862 the first paper currency, known as “greenbacks,” was issued by the U.S. Treasury Department under the direction of Secretary Salmon P. Chase. Bills were engraved with portraits to guard against counterfeiting. A portrait of \_\_\_\_\_ graced the \$1.00 bill, while Hamilton appeared on the \$5.00 bill, and \_\_\_\_\_ on the \$10.00 bill.
5. After the Civil War, four men who had served as major generals in the Confederate Army entered or reentered U.S. Army service during the Spanish-American War, three as major generals and one as a brigadier general of U.S. Volunteers. Two were mustered out of the volunteer service after the war. One continued to serve through the initial phase of the Philippine Insurrection. While in the Philippines he was mustered out of the volunteer service and commissioned a brigadier general in the regular army. After hostilities ceased, he commanded the Department of the Lakes until his retirement on 10 September 1900. Name this Confederate general who retired as a U.S. Army general?
6. Name one of the other three generals described in question 5.
7. Who was the chairman of Congress’s Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War?
8. What cabinet position(s) did Edwin M. Stanton hold between 1861 and 1865?

# Book Review

Submitted by Eric W. Guttag

## ***West Wind, Flood Tide: The Battle of Mobile Bay***

by Jack Friend, Naval Institute Press, 2014,  
336 pages, hardcover/paperback, used/new,  
\$25.79 and up.

Admiral Farragut's immortal words during a crucial point in the Battle of Mobile Bay on August 5, 1864 are well-known to Americans: "Damn the Torpedoes! Full Speed Ahead!" But what is likely not as well understood is that this operation was actually contemplated at least two years earlier. It was delayed in favor of first taking Vicksburg, which required about a year but was finally achieved on Independence Day in 1863.

*West Wind, Flood Tide: The Battle of Mobile Bay* is a well-written, highly readable book providing important insights into the personalities and ships involved, the preparations for, and especially what happened during that famous battle which reached its climax on a single day in the late summer of 1864. Admittedly, much of the focus is on Farragut who was truly the primary architect of the Union battle plan for invading Mobile Bay, which evolved over time. Even so, this book provides important insights into the key Union infantry commander (Major General Edward Canby) who is often overlooked, but whom Farragut treated as his equal partner in the planning for this operation.

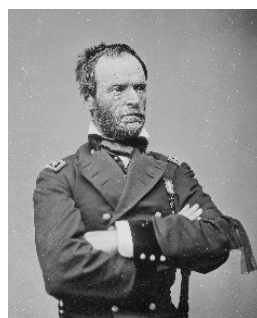
This book also gives significant (if not equal) time to describing the Confederate counterparts to Farragut and Canby: Rear Admiral Franklin Buchanan (the only admiral in the gray clad navy and former commander of

the first Confederate ironclad *Virginia*) whose primary naval asset was the monster ironclad *Tennessee*; and Major General Dabney Maury who had the enormous task of not only defending Mobile Bay, but also a vast swath of the western theatre that included major sections of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama. Both of these Confederate commanders had significant challenges in trying to compete against an adversary that had far more resources in terms of men, resources, and especially ships.

If you want to know why the Battle of Mobile Bay was a significant event in the naval history of the American Civil War, *West Wind, Flood Tide: The Battle of Mobile Bay* is most definitely your "go to" book.

## May 2025 Program

The May program, presented by Professor Derek Maxfield of the State University of New York's Genesee Community College, was an entertaining and insightful look at William Tecumseh Sherman, from his childhood up until the Battle of Shiloh. Professor Maxfield was prepared to tell the rest of the story but Raffel's closes at 9:00. So, he said that we will just have to invite him back, a suggestion that seemed to meet with the audience's approval.

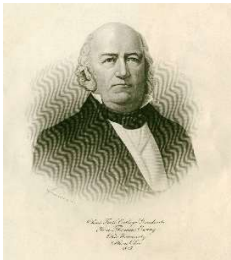


Maxfield's talk was not about Sherman's military exploits but about the man, what made him tick, his upbringing, his personality, the forces and events in his life that molded him, and how those things in turn affected his actions during and after the war. The most startling thing to Maxfield was his assessment that Sherman was vulnerable and insecure about who he was throughout his entire life.

Sherman's father, Charles, who was an Ohio Supreme Court Justice, died suddenly, far from

his Lancaster, Ohio home, while riding his judicial circuit. Sherman, only nine years old at the time, was informally adopted by the family of his father's best friend, Thomas Ewing, who lived up the street. Mrs. Ewing, however, insisted that he be baptized and raised Catholic despite his theretofore Protestant upbringing. The Catholic religion would become a major thorn in his side for the rest of his life.

Sherman looked on Thomas Ewing as a father figure but the relationship became complicated after Sherman began courting, and then married, the Ewings' daughter Ellen. Ellen was her father's favorite and always got what she wanted from him. In addition, Ellen had separation anxiety all her life and preferred to be near her father in Lancaster or Washington rather than wherever her husband was.



*Thomas Ewing*



*Ellen Ewing Sherman*

It was Thomas Ewing, a prominent Whig politician, who decided that Sherman would go to West Point. Sherman was never consulted. He flourished academically and was popular at West Point but lacked the military bearing required to be a cadet officer. He was fourth in his class academically but graduated sixth because of the demerits he received. In Maxfield's view, Sherman was the most intellectual man to wear a general's stars on either side. He was given to spouting Shakespeare even in the midst of battle. He could discourse knowledgeably with anyone on almost any subject. It helped that he had a photographic memory.

Sherman first served in Florida and then was posted to Ft. Moultrie, near Charleston. There Sherman, a talented artist, bonded with the commandant, Robert Anderson, who had a valuable art collection; and they became good friends. It was at that time that a budding

romance developed between Sherman and Ellen.

In 1846 the Mexican War began. Sherman expected to be joining his fellow West Point alumni in the fight. Instead, he was ordered to Pittsburgh on recruitment duty. Maxfield speculated that Ellen did not want her beau placed in harm's way, so Daddy pulled some strings. Not one to suffer silently when he felt wronged, Sherman put up such a loud fuss that his orders were changed to California, which meant an eight-month voyage around Cape Horn. On the voyage he met and became good friends with Henry Halleck, a man who would betray that friendship time and again during the war.

When he reached California, the war was over, but soon the Gold Rush was on. Sherman and a partner opened a general store on the side and made a tidy sum selling to the forty-niners headed for the gold fields. Then the Ewings (read Ellen) decided that Sherman should leave the army, lest hostilities break out somewhere else. So, they began pitching him various job opportunities in government and in Ewing business interests. Sherman resisted because it was not his idea and because he did not want something handed to him; he wanted to earn it. He resigned his commission and sought opportunities on his own.

He worked for a time as manager of a bank in San Francisco. When the bank closed its San Francisco branch, he went back east unemployed and, humiliated, was forced by circumstances to accept the Ewings' offer of a position with his brothers-in-law in their Kansas law firm. He rarely saw his children, who were with the Ewings in Lancaster, or Ellen, who was either in Ohio or with her father in Washington.



*Henry Halleck*



*P.G.T. Beauregard*

In 1859 his old West Point friend P.G.T. Beauregard presented him with an offer to become superintendent of a military preparatory academy in Louisiana. He took the position despite the looming possibility of secession and civil war because he believed, perhaps naively, that the politicians would find a peaceful solution. Although he enjoyed his new position, he made it clear that if secession came, he would resign. When it did come, he was so distressed by the thought that one day he might encounter his students as enemy soldiers, that he could barely speak at his farewell gathering.

Upon his resignation his brother, Sen. John Sherman, immediately summoned him to Washington and took him to see Lincoln. When he told Lincoln that Louisiana was preparing for war, the President brushed him off. Infuriated, Sherman stormed out of the White House and took the next train to Lancaster. It was a long time before he changed his negative opinion of Lincoln. The family was disappointed on his return, however, as they had been given to understand that John had obtained a general's commission for him. Sherman soon departed for St. Louis. There he took a job as president of a streetcar company, all the while rejecting numerous offers from the War Department. Finally, after Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers, he accepted the offer of a colonelcy of a Regular Army regiment. He was furious when he found out that the regiment existed only on paper.

He was given command of a volunteer unit at Bull Run. Despite the Union Army's rout, Sherman was able to keep his troops intact and to effect an orderly retreat. Within weeks he was appointed a brigadier general. He then accepted an offer from Robert Anderson, now commanding the Department of the Cumberland and charged with securing Kentucky, to be his second-in-command. The department had few soldiers, no arms or equipment, and a 300-mile border, on the other side of which was Albert Sidney Johnston. Johnston was in no better shape, but he had a printing press and some skill as a

propagandist. Johnston began issuing reports that made Anderson and Sherman believe that 100,000 Confederates were about to march to the Ohio. He intensified these propaganda efforts even as Confederate forces actually were invading Kentucky. Then Anderson abruptly retired, leaving Sherman in charge, a position he did not want.

So, Sherman began dispatching one telegram after another to Washington, some directly to Winfield Scott and President Lincoln, about the gravity of the situation and what the War Department must do to respond. Getting no answers, Sherman demanded a meeting with Secretary of War Cameron who would be passing through Louisville on his way to deal with Frémont. Cameron agreed to a 30-minute meeting but it did not go well. Sherman, who was very high-strung and a non-stop talker, bombarded Cameron with maps and facts and figures showing how dire the situation was, the enormous number of troops to defeat what he thought was the size of the opposing forces, how they should be deployed and how many casualties should be expected. When afterwards the War Department still did not heed his pleas, and not wanting to be responsible for the impending disaster, he asked to be relieved of command.

In short order he was not only relieved of that command, but he was sent home on leave. Unbeknownst to Sherman, his "friend" Henry Halleck had informed the War Department that he thought Sherman was insane. Then a *Cincinnati Commercial* headline proclaimed that as fact. He was humiliated. That was too much for Thomas Ewing and John Sherman, who came to his rescue and persuaded the War Department to restore him to active duty. His salvation would come at the Battle of Shiloh.

*Submitted by Dave Stockdale*

# May Business Meeting

Thirty-seven members and guests attended the May meeting. One of our frequent guests, Rusty Haid, became a member. Welcome Rusty! We are now at 68 members.

This was our annual business meeting. The nominating committee presented the following slate: for President, Tom Robisch; for Vice-President, Jeff Mikutis; for Treasurer, Dave Stockdale; for Secretary (no nomination); for Program Chair, Dan Bauer; for Newsletter Editor, Kate Johantgen; for Membership/Publicity Chair, Eric Gutttag; for Trustee-at-Large (2 yr. term), Keith Young. Trustee Esly Caldwell II is in the middle of his 2-year term. President Robisch called for nominations from the floor. There were none. It was moved and seconded that the slate be elected and, there being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

As you can see, **WE STILL NEED A SECRETARY!** The primary responsibility of the secretary is to keep a record of what transpires at our membership and board meetings. The board usually only meets two or three times a year. No special literary talent is required. If you regularly attend the monthly Round Table meeting and are willing to do a short write-up of the meeting for the Canister (it can be as long or as short as you want), **you would make an excellent secretary.** Please consider lending a hand.

*Submitted by Dave Stockdale*

## Quiz Answers

1. South Carolina.
2. 14 lbs. each.
3. The speaker was President Lincoln; and he was referring to William Tecumseh Sherman during his March to the Sea.

4. Salmon P. Chase put his own portrait on the \$1.00 bill and President Lincoln's on the \$10.00 bill. That's one way to promote yourself if you are considering running against Lincoln in 1864.
5. Joseph Wheeler. The story is told that Wheeler attended the one hundredth anniversary celebration of West Point in 1902 wearing the dress uniform of his most recent rank, a brigadier general in the U.S. Army. His Confederate comrades James Longstreet and Edward Porter Alexander were seated on the porch of the old West Point hotel. And as Wheeler approached them, Longstreet recognized him and called out "Joe, I hope that Almighty God takes me before he does you, for I want to be at the gates of hell to hear Jubal Early cuss you in that blue uniform."
6. The other three were:
  - Fitzhugh Lee. Lee had been the U.S. Consul General in Cuba and was the last American to leave before the U.S. declared war on Spain. He saw no action but returned to lead an occupation command. He finished his military career in Omaha NE as commander of the Department of the Missouri and retired in 1901 as a brigadier general, as Wheeler had, in the regular service.
  - Matthew Butler. Appointed a major general of volunteers, Butler supervised the evacuation of Spanish soldiers after the war.
  - Thomas Rosser. Appointed a brigadier general of volunteers, Rosser trained cavalrymen in the United States.
7. Ohio Senator Ben Wade.
8. Attorney General (until 4 March 1861 under James Buchanan) and Secretary of War (under Lincoln and Johnson).

*Quiz and its answers submitted by  
Dave Stockdale*

# Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

## Board

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

## Committees

Activities: **VACANT**

Preservation Projects: **VACANT**

|                                      |              |                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Webmaster/Social Media: Tom Williams | 513-608-4391 | <a href="mailto:tom@jandtwilliams.com">tom@jandtwilliams.com</a> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                  |  |                                                            |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Welcoming Committee: Dawn Mowery |  | <a href="mailto:Dmowery11@fuse.net">Dmowery11@fuse.net</a> |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------|

|                              |              |                                                          |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Speakers Bureau: Tom Breiner | 513-382-1412 | <a href="mailto:tbreiner@fuse.net">tbreiner@fuse.net</a> |
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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.*