

THE CANISTER

Monthly Newsletter of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table



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Serving the Tri-State area of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana since 1956

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November 21, 2024 Program

Cease Firing! Life and Death at the Swope Manor

Presented by

Kellie Gormly

This month we welcome Kellie Gormly, who will discuss her 2023 book *Cease Firing! Life and Death at the Swope Manor*. The book covers the history of the grand inn located in downtown Gettysburg, and contains three types of war history stories: the soldier's story, the civilian story, and the house story. The Swope family was the wealthiest family in Gettysburg in 1863 and included two bank presidents, a doctor, and a congressman. By the time of the Civil War, the house had gone through many incarnations, having begun as a log cabin in the 18th century. However, the most poignant part of the story involves Lt. William Pohlman of the 59th New York. He was wounded during Pickett's Charge and taken to The Swope Manor from a field hospital to have a better environment for recovery. He died tragically two and a half weeks after the battle. His final words - "Cease firing!", spoken in a moment of delirium as he was dying, was the perfect title for the book, which includes an

appendix full of poignant letters between Willie and his family during the Civil War.

Kellie Gormly is a journalist, author and Civil War enthusiast based in Pittsburgh who visits Ohio and Gettysburg frequently. She earned her bachelor's degree in journalism from the



University of Texas at Arlington and a master's degree in Public Affairs Reporting from the University of Illinois at Springfield. Her professional career started in 1996 with an internship at the Fort Worth Star-

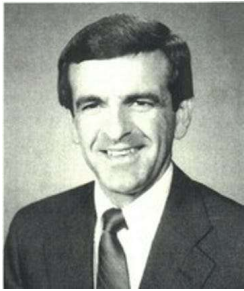
Telegram, and since then has included stints with Copley News Service, The Associated Press, and the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. In 2015, after 13 years at the Trib., Kellie left her newspaper job to pursue a freelance career. She is now writing for many top national and regional publications and organizations, including The Washington Post, Woman's World, Smithsonian, FIRST for Women, History Channel, American Heart Association, Pennsylvania Magazine, and others.

Submitted by Dan Bauer

In Memoriam

Dan Reigle **1946 - 2024**

We are sad to report that former member Dan Reigle passed away October 18. Dan belonged to the Round Table from 1988 to 2019. During most of that time he held a leadership position.



He was secretary from 1990 to 1991, vice-president from 1991 to 1995, and treasurer 1995 to 2001. In addition, beginning in 1991 and continuing for many years thereafter, Dan prepared the monthly quiz. When

Dan completed his last term

as treasurer at the May 2001 meeting the president quipped that “Dan finally gets to eat dinner with the rest of the members.”

But it was not long before he was back in the saddle. He served as vice-president from 2003 to 2004, president from 2004 to 2006, trustee from 2006 to 2013, and webmaster from 2006 to 2015. In addition, he wrote articles and book reviews for the Canister.

Outside of his Round Table duties, Dan volunteered on an expert panel for the Ohio Civil War Genealogical Journal, published by the Genealogical Society of Ohio. And he volunteered at the Public Library in the genealogy department.

Dan was a veteran, having served in the United States Army from 1968 to 1973 as an armor officer and helicopter pilot, attaining the rank of captain. His service included tours in both Germany and Vietnam. He retired from Procter & Gamble in 2003 as Director of Global Product Supply, Labor and Employee Relations. Dan is survived by his wife of 56 years, Beverly, their two sons, and their two grandsons.

Here is a link to his obituary:

<https://www.cincinnati.com/obituaries/pwooo976650>

President's Letter

I hope many of you can join us on November 21st to hear Kellie Gormly speak on the topic of her book, *Cease Firing! Life and Death at the Swope Manor*. The Swope Manor property is currently a Bed & Breakfast, located one block east of the town square in Gettysburg. At the time of the battle, the Swope family lived at that site, and Ms. Gormly's book is a historical narrative about the battle, the family, the house, and a particular soldier. According to recent estimates, over 65,000 books have been written about the Battle of Gettysburg, but our speaker's topic promises to be something new and interesting, not addressed previously. Please join us for our last meeting in 2024.

I came across an interesting news story recently involving U.S. Grant. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023, signed by President Biden in December 2022, approved Grant's promotion to the rank of General of the Armies, with the same precedence as John J. Pershing. Grant was officially, and posthumously, promoted to that grade earlier this year. (Grant would have probably appreciated the bureaucratic delay in conferring his promotion.) The grade of General of the Armies is distinct from the General of the Army (five-star) rank conferred upon Generals George Marshall, Henry Arnold, Douglas MacArthur, and Dwight Eisenhower during World War II (and upon General Omar Bradley after that war). The General of the Armies rank is considered higher than the General of the Army grade. In addition to Pershing and Grant, the only other individual to receive the General of the Armies rank was George Washington, who was promoted posthumously in 1976. The U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry has established the order of precedence for this rank and considers both Pershing and Grant to be junior to Washington. No specific insignia has been prescribed for the General of the Armies grade, and holders of this rank may design their own. Pershing, who was the only living holder of this rank, continued to wear four stars.

Perhaps this is the season for correcting Civil War matters. Several months ago, the Medal of Honor was posthumously conferred upon two Union soldiers for their actions in the Great Locomotive Chase in 1862. Privates Philip Shadrack and George Wilson, both part of the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment, were part of a small band known as Andrews' Raiders, named after James Andrews, a civilian scout/spy for the Union. The Raiders commandeered a train, The General, near Atlanta and took it northward toward Chattanooga, doing as much damage as they could to the Western and Atlantic Railroad line, which was vital to the Confederates at that time. Shadrack and Wilson were captured and executed by the Confederates. The surviving raiders were awarded the Medal of Honor in 1863, and a recent Act of Congress corrected the historical record by giving the same award to these two.

One last matter of Civil War history. Our November meeting will be 160 years after the same week in November when General William T. Sherman left Atlanta in ruins, beginning his March to the Sea. In his Memoirs, Sherman described the scene, "Behind us lay Atlanta, smouldering (sic) and in ruins, the black smoke rising high in the air, and hanging like a pall over the ruined city." I guess that is one of the reasons for his reputation in Georgia.

Looking forward to seeing you on November 21st.

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, November 21, 2024
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, November 17, 2024.
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

January 15, 2025 **Cincinnati's Germans
in the Civil War**, Presented by Don
Heinrich Tolzman

February 20, 2025 **Butler Boys: 35th
Ohio Infantry**, Presented by Brian Smith of
the Butler County Historical Society

March 20, 2025 **To Be Determined**

April 17, 2025 **Logistics Concern 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

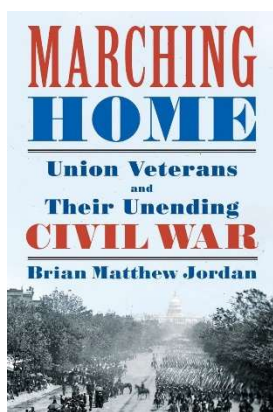
Quiz

1. On December 8, 1863, President Lincoln issued a proclamation that came to be known as the Ten Percent Plan. What was his plan?
2. This Copperhead Ohio congressman, a son-in-law of Francis Scott Key, was Gen. George B. McClellan's running mate in the 1864 presidential election. As a candidate for president in 1868, he led on the first 15 ballots at the national Democratic convention, but was ultimately defeated by New York Gov. Horatio Seymour. In 1869 he was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Ohio, losing to Gen. Rutherford B. Hayes. He is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery.
3. After being wounded at Perryville in October of 1862, (then) Col. William H. Lytle recuperated at home in Cincinnati. From December 1st to the 4th he was the first witness in a Union Army court of inquiry being held in Cincinnati. Which Federal officer was the subject of the court of inquiry?
4. He was second in command at Ft. Sumter under Maj. Robert Anderson, and aimed the cannon that fired the first shot in answer to the Confederate bombardment. As the senior division commander in MG John Reynolds's I Corps at Gettysburg, he assumed corps command when the latter was killed during the first day's fighting. He returned to division command the following day when Gen. Meade appointed a more junior officer, MG John Newton, to succeed Reynolds. He was wounded on the second day. The following November, he accompanied Pres. Lincoln to Gettysburg.
5. These two Confederate generals from Virginia were first cousins. Each graduated last in his West Point class: one in the class of 1846 (59th out of 59) and the other in the class of 1847 (38th out of 38). Who were they?
6. The Confederate cannonade prior to Longstreet's attack on the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg, probably the largest artillery bombardment of the war, reportedly could be heard 140 miles away in Pittsburgh. Who was in charge of the cannonade?
7. The Battle of Olustee, fought on 20 February 1864, occurred in what state?
8. What did the initials in General J.E.B. Stuart's name stand for?

October Meeting

At the October meeting 30 members and guests welcomed to the podium Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan. Dr. Jordan is an Associate Professor and Chairman of the History Dept. at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville TX. The subject of his talk was an overview of his book *Marching Home, Union Veterans and their Unending Civil War*, a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in History.

Several audience members remarked that Dr. Jordan's presentation was probably the most eloquent they had ever heard at a Round Table



meeting, a sentiment with which your writer concurs. The impetus for his book were his meetings as a young Civil War buff with Gary Dillon, a gentleman in his hometown of Akron, Ohio, who had spent considerable time in his own youth in the 1940s and 1950s crisscrossing the Midwest by train in

search of the few remaining veterans of the Union Army. The stories Dillon related of these centenarians' experiences, he said, made the war at once more immediate and real. Dillon told him that these were men set apart; that one got the sense that even after many decades they never really put the war behind them.

Today historians can reflect on the past 160 years and see what the war accomplished. But from the perspective of 1865 the veterans had no certainty that what they fought so long and suffered so much for had been achieved. They believed that their triumph on the battlefield had neither settled the central issues of the war nor resolved the fate of the union. Less than a week after Lee surrendered at Appomattox the president was assassinated. There were race riots and lynchings across the South. The Ku Klux Klan and similar white terrorist organizations appeared. There was widespread resistance to reconstruction. The southern

leaders, civilian and military, whom the veterans considered traitors, were pardoned, and resumed their leadership positions in Southern government.

While white northern civilians insisted that the country's citizens put the war behind them and let bygones be bygones, the veterans had difficulty forgetting. Over a million Northern veterans returned home with physical disabilities. They tended to a litany of psychological, emotional, and physical scars. 49,000 were amputees. Many thousands died in the five years following the war as a direct result of their wounds. Many more were unable to work because of their disabilities. So, they began writing the first drafts of the war's history in personal memoirs and reminiscences, and in regimental, divisional, and brigade histories. They refused to hide their battle scars in public. They set up markers and monuments on their battlefields. They refused to let their country forget their service and sacrifice, because the war, in their minds, was not yet over.

The veterans also turned inward, organizing themselves for their mutual benefit. The most prominent among the veterans' organizations was the Grand Army of the Republic, whose primary importance was not as an arm of Grant's presidential campaign or a political adjunct to the Republican Party, but as one of the most successful organizations engaged in combatting poverty in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Members made routine calls on the sick and on widows and orphans, seeing to their welfare; raised money among themselves to pay to heat veterans' homes in the winter, to pay for costly medical procedures that the government refused, and to bury their comrades. Through the G.A.R. the veterans strenuously lobbied state legislatures and the Congress for what they termed "simple justice," for soldiers' homes, government jobs, hiring preferences, and pension benefits.

Dr. Jordan illustrated his presentation with dozens of apt quotations from memoirs, and stories from newspapers and other accounts of the time. He concluded his remarks by

reflecting on the problems of current veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan: homelessness, alcoholism, drug addiction, unemployment, and suicide, and how little those problems differ from those of the Union veterans.

Submitted by David Stockdale

Quiz Answers

1. Formally known as the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, it provided that a rebel state could be reintegrated with the Union when ten percent of the 1860 vote count from that state had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States and pledged to abide by the Emancipation.
2. George H. Pendleton. He later served one term as a Senator from Ohio (1879 – 1885), during which time he authored the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act of 1883. He died in 1889 while serving as U.S. Ambassador to Germany.
3. Major Gen. Don Carlos Buell. Buell



commanded the Union forces at the 8 Oct. 1862 Battle of Perryville. He was relieved of command of the Army of Ohio on 24 October. The court of inquiry examined his conduct both during and after the battle but reached no conclusions.

4. Major Gen. Abner Doubleday.
5. George Pickett and Henry Heth. Heth's mother was Margaet Pickett, the sister of George Pickett's father.
6. Colonel Edward Porter Alexander.
7. Florida.
8. He was James Ewell Brown Stuart. He was named after his paternal aunt's husband.

*Quiz and its Answers
Submitted by David Stockdale*

Thank You

A big THANK YOU to Dave Mowery for conducting his **Cincinnati in the Civil War Walking Tour** on Saturday, October 12. About 15 of us enjoyed this informative tour. The weather was perfect. We learned many facts, heard many stories, stood in precise locations and tried to imagine Cincinnati during the Civil War. For me, I came to understand more clearly the importance of Cincinnati during the war.

I hope to re-read Dave's book, *Cincinnati in the Civil War; the Union's Queen City* and then revisit some of the sites. And if it is offered, I will gladly take his tour again. At that time, I will encourage you to participate too.

Kate Johantgen

5th Ohio Infantry Monument at Gettysburg

Letter written by Dave Mowery

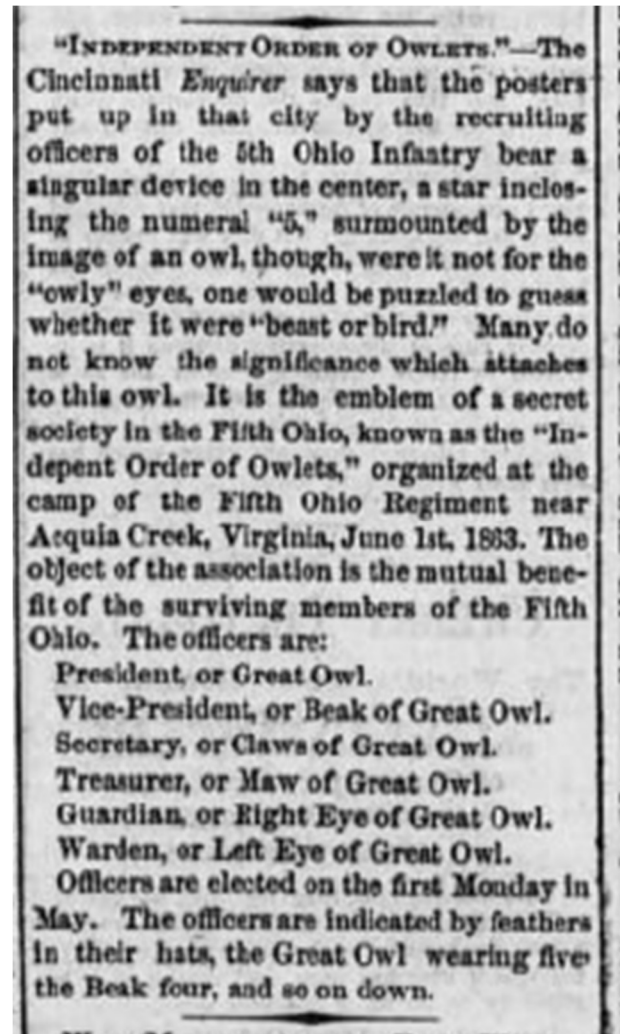
Dear Gettysburg Licensed Tour Guides:

When my brother, Daniel, and I toured the Gettysburg battlefield together in 1992, we were fortunate to accidentally meet Tim Smith, who was a licensed guide at the time. Tim discovered that we were from Cincinnati, and because we were standing on Culp's Hill at that moment, Tim's first question to us was, "Do you know why there is an owl on the 5th Ohio Infantry monument?" Of course, the 5th Ohio is known by its Gettysburg monument as the "Cincinnati Regiment," so Daniel and I were intrigued back then what the owl meant, but we had no answer for Tim in 1992.



I have been a member of the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table since 1995, and I found out when I joined that the mystery of the 5th OVI's owl had been a subject of debate amongst its members for decades. No one could find a definitive record linking the meaning of the owl to the 5th Ohio. There have been many different suggestions for the owl's meaning – such as regimental sponsorship from the Wide Awakes to the owl being a German Turnverein symbol. All these claims have been undocumented. For the past 30 years, we've had no luck in finding a reliable source that states the meaning of the owl to the 5th OVI – until now!

My brother, Daniel, is a professional researcher and expert genealogist. Last week, Daniel found the attached Daily Ohio Statesman newspaper (Columbus, OH) excerpt from February 14, 1864. It is the first period source we've ever seen that talks about the owl and its significance to the 5th Ohio Infantry:



As you can see from the article, a group of soldiers of the 5th Ohio Infantry regiment adopted the owlet (defined as a "young owl") as the mascot for their own fraternal secret society, whose members consisted only of 5th Ohio soldiers. They called this internal association the "Independent Order of Owlets," which was likely inspired by the name of the national fraternal organization, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, which began in the US in 1806. The article indicates that the owl appeared on the 5th Ohio's recruiting posters after June 1, 1863, which is when the 5th Ohio soldiers founded the Independent Order of Owlets.

We already know that the "5" within the star is the regiment's symbol of being part of the XII Corps, whose corps badge is the star. The corps badges were adopted by the Union Army on March 21, 1863, at which time the XII Corps designated the star as its unique badge shape.

I found an article in the Feb 13, 1864, Cincinnati Enquirer that first mentions the owl and the secret order that it symbolized:

"INDEPENDENT ORDER OF OWLETS."—The "posters" that are put up in the city by the various recruiting officers for the Fifth Ohio Infantry bear a singular device in the center, a star inclosing the numeral "5," surmounted by the image of an owl, though, were it not for the "owly" eyes, one would be puzzled to guess whether it were "beast or bird." Many do not know the significance which attaches to this owl. It is the emblem of a secret society in the Fifth Ohio, known as the "Independent Order of Owlets," organized at the camp of the Fifth Ohio Regiment near Acquia Creek, Virginia, June 1st, 1863. The object of the association is the mutual benefit of the surviving members of the Fifth Ohio. The officers are

President, or Great Owl.

Vice-President, or Beak of Great Owl.

Secretary, or Claws of Great Owl.

Treasurer, or Maw of Great Owl.

Guardian, or Right Eye of Great Owl.

Warden, or Left Eye of Great Owl.

Officers are elected on the first Monday in May. The officers are indicated by feathers in their hats, the Great Owl wearing five, the Beak four, and so on down.

The following are the officers at present:

Great Owl—Col. J. H. Patrick.

Beak of Great Owl—Captain R. Kirkup.

Claw of Great Owl—Lieutenant W. H. Thomas.

Maw of Great Owl—Captain A. T. Shirer.

Right Eye of Great Owl—Lieutenant K. Yerkes.

Left Eye of Great Owl—Lieutenant Charles Friedebone.

secret society are given. Their hats contained feathers whose number designated the men's rank on the board of the Independent Order of Owlets.

I am convinced this is the source for which we've been looking to connect a meaning of the owl to the 5th Ohio Infantry members. By the time the 5th Ohio monuments at Gettysburg, Antietam, and Spring Grove Cemetery (Cincinnati) were designed, the Independent Order of Owlets had become a symbol of fraternal care, like a "band of brothers," among the survivors of the battle-worn 5th Ohio veterans. The owl represented their shared experiences as members of the regiment, and something unique to the 5th Ohio.

I hope you find these sources useful. I feel we have finally answered the question, "Why is there an owl on the 5th Ohio Infantry monument?"

Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Thanks,

Dave

David L. Mowery

Author, Cincinnati in the Civil War: The Union's Queen



The Cincinnati Enquirer article is almost the same as the Daily Ohio Statesman version, except here, the names of the officers of the

Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

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Activities: **VACANT**

Preservation Projects: **VACANT**

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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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*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.*