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# Bowling Green Civil War Round Table Newsletter (May 2016)

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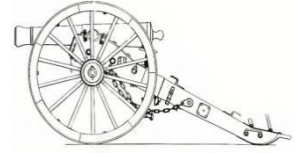
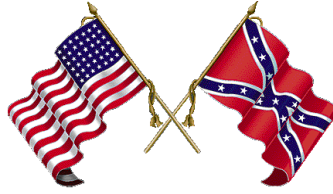
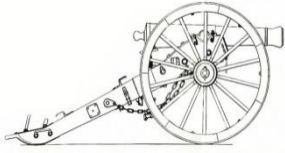
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Founded March 2011 – Bowling Green, Kentucky

# Bowling Green Civil War Round Table

President –Tom Carr; Vice President - Jonathan Jeffrey; Secretary – Carol Crowe-Carraco; Treasurer – Robert Dietle;  
 Newsletter: Tom Burden Advisors – Glenn LaFantasie and –  
 Greg Biggs (Program Chair and President-Clarksville CWRT)

The Bowling Green KY Civil War Round Table meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month (except June, July, and December).

Email: [BGCWRT@wku.edu](mailto:BGCWRT@wku.edu)

We meet at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17th in Cherry Hall 125 on the Campus of Western Kentucky University.  
 Our meetings are always open to the public.

**Members please bring a friend or two – new recruits are always welcome.**

## The Program for May 2016

The Bowling Green Civil War Roundtable is pleased to have Dr. Brian McKnight of the University of Virginia at Wise as our guest speaker this month. He is a Professor of History and Founding Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at UVA-Wise. His topic is “Champ Ferguson Still Lives.” The story of the Civil War guerrilla is depicted in *Confederate Outlaw: Champ Ferguson and the Civil War in Appalachia*. The book received a Tennessee Library Award as an outstanding book on Tennessee history as well as the James I. Robertson Literary Award.

According to all accounts, Champ Ferguson was one of the most notorious and bloodthirsty Confederate guerrillas who fought the Civil War on his own terms. He gave no quarter and killed prewar comrades and longtime adversaries without regret. In the fall of 1865, the US Army executed Ferguson for his role in murdering 53 citizens of Kentucky and Tennessee. Long remembered as one of the most unforgiving soldiers of the 1861-1865 conflict, his story was used by Hollywood to create the role played by Clint Eastwood in “The Outlaw Josey Wales.”

Dr. McKnight has been credited with “deftly separating the myths from reality” as he weaves a “thoughtful, captivating, and accurate portrait of the Confederacy’s most celebrated guerrilla.”

## Our Program for April 2016:

The Bowling Green Civil War Roundtable heard Mr. Tom Parson of the Corinth [MS] Civil War Interpretive Center, a unit of Shiloh National Military Park. His program featured the Battle of Tupelo (Harrisburg) in Mississippi which took place on July 14, 1864. During that very hot summer, a Union column, commanded by Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson Smith, set out from Tennessee with a goal of finding and defeating the cavalry under the command of Confederate major general Nathan Bedford Forrest. Forrest's cavalry was the greatest threat to the long supply line feeding Sherman's armies as they advanced on Atlanta. Smith marched at the head of his “gorillas,” veteran soldiers who were fresh from the Red River Campaign. Aside from diverting Confederate attention away from Sherman, Smith's orders were to destroy Southern railroads and confront Forrest in Mississippi. Just weeks earlier, a similar Union expedition had met with disaster at the Battle of Brice's Crossroads, perhaps the greatest victory of Forrest's military career.

Joined by reinforcements led by Lt. Gen. Stephen Dill Lee, Forrest and his men were confident and their morale had never been higher. For two weeks, however, Smith outmarched, outfought, and outmaneuvered the team of Lee and Forrest. In three days of bitter fighting, culminating in the battle at Harrisburg, the Confederates suffered a staggering defeat. Forrest's corps was devastated. He and his men would recover but would never regain their earlier strength, nor would they ever again prove a serious threat to veteran Union infantry.

*Work for Giants* focuses on the details of this overlooked campaign and the efforts, post-battle and postwar, to minimize the outcome and consequences of an important Union victory. The book draws heavily from previously untapped diaries, letters and journals, and eyewitness accounts, bringing to life the oppressive heat, cruel depredations, and brutal combat the soldiers encountered, and the stoic strength they used to endure them.

### Presidents Notes

We will continue with our usual schedule of **not** meeting in Cherry Hall in the months of June, July and Dec., due to the building shutdown during those months. However, as I did in 2015, I will attempt to create events, or make available knowledge of existing ones, for our members in June and July. If you have an idea for an off-site event for either June, July or December, please let me know. (Since writing the above, June and July events have become available. Please think ahead for Dec.'16 and for next year.)

#### **JUNE: Two opportunities**

**Opportunity # 1** I am assisting the *Orphan Brigade Kinfolk Association* (of which I am a life member) in locating a suitable venue for our Annual Meeting, to be held on Saturday, June 4th, near the Jefferson Davis State Historic Site. We are holding our meeting earlier in the year than usual, to coincide with the June 3-5, 2016 event commemorating the 208th anniversary of Jeff Davis' birth on June 3, 1808. I have arranged for our annual **OBKA** meeting to take place in the training room of the Fairview Volunteer Fire Dept. Our meeting will start at **11:30 AM CDT**, with lunch made available by the Fairview Volunteer Fire Dept., as a fund-raiser. In case of inclement weather, we will be there most of the day. Fairview VFD is located at 10920 Jefferson Davis Highway, Pembroke, KY42266 GPS coordinates (which may be entered as an address in any mapping program), are: 36.8435, -87.3015  
All photographs of the members of the Orphan Brigade (that we currently have) will be on display throughout the day in the Fire Dept training room.

At **2:00 PM CDT**, the Commander of the OBKA, John Lewis English, will speak on his Civil War ancestor, Brig. Gen. **Joseph Horace Lewis**, at the smaller of the two pavilions immediately behind the Jefferson Davis Monument, and immediately preceding the **3:00 PM** battle reenactment.

For those not familiar with Brig. Genl. Lewis, the last commander of the Orphan Brigade, here is a brief description of his life:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=8928>

Please note: Asa Lewis, who was executed for desertion by orders of Braxton Bragg, was not Genl. Lewis' son.

I invite all reading this to attend. You do not have to be a member, but we welcome you to join if you are a descendant.

Please call or text me at 270 779-5022, to let me know if you plan to attend.

The OBKA meets each year, as near as possible to the location where the veterans of the Orphan Brigade met 100 years before.

As soon as I find a location for our meeting, I will let you know. You are all invited to attend.

## **Opportunity # 2**

• General Grant is coming to Bowling Green to talk about his activities in the Civil War. General Grant in real life is actually Curt Fields, a modern educator and actor, who has researched US Grant extensively. He even looks like the General.

On **June 14th** (the 2nd Tuesday) at 6:30 PM General Grant/Curt Fields will speak at the Bob Kirby Branch of the Bowling Green/Warren County Public Library, at 175 Iron Skillet Court Bowling Green, KY 42104.

BGCWRT member Dr. Michael Trapasso, dressed as General Rufus Ingalls, will introduce General Grant.  
*[For those who missed the suggested Sunday, June 28, 2015 event at Riverview, Michael ably portrayed Ingalls and spoke on his life and actions during the war.]*

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• I always wonder which of my fellow students of the Civil War have an ancestor who participated in, and/or experienced the Civil War. I'm sure there are many, who do not have, or are searching for, such an ancestor. I am a generation closer to my Civil War ancestors than most my age, as my parents were considerably older than is usual when I was born.

If you are a descendant of a Civil War participant please send me, via email at [bgcwrts@gmail.com](mailto:bgcwrts@gmail.com) any details you may be willing to share about your ancestor's activities and experiences. In particular the unit or units with which he was associated, his rank(s) and any skirmishes, battles or campaigns in which he participated, with dates and locations.

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## **• JULY 19**

Eileen Starr, Director of Riverview at Hobson Grove, called me Fri., April 1, to invite us to meet at Riverview at Hobson Grove for our July 19th meeting. She also wanted to let me know of the Curt Fields event (#2 above).

Coincidentally (see notes above), she suggested that those in attendance, who wish to, could speak for a short period each, on what they know of their Civil War ancestor(s).

• Riverview address: 1100 West Main Ave, Bowling Green, KY 42101

(PLEASE NOTE: If you are not familiar with the location, I suggest using the GPS coordinates I've provided below. The address above, if followed, will direct you to the clubhouse, or the back of the Hobson Grove golf course, which is not where you want to go.)

• GPS coordinates to Riverview (Hobson House) parking lot: Go to 37.01082, -86.45890 and continue counter-clockwise around Hobson House to parking lot on right. (NOTE: You may copy & paste the above coordinates into any mapping app on your smart phone or computer, and it will map the route for you.)

## AUGUST

The National Park Service turns 100 on August 25, 2016, and everyone can take part in the celebration!

The centennial will kick off a second century of stewardship of America's national parks and engaging communities through recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs.

We invite you to find your park and discover the national parks and programs in your own backyard! 100 Years: Let's celebrate!

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm>

I hope to see each of you at all three of these events. Bring a friend.

Tom Carr

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This letter from Bowling Green, KY, was written by Lt. James O Norton of the 32nd Tennessee Infantry. Norton was an early enrollee of the 32nd, fought at Ft Donelson, was captured and sent to Camp Chase where he died. (Courtesy of Greg Biggs, Program Chair and Tennessee State Library and Archives)

*Camp Grantland near Bowling Green, Kentucky Jan 4, 1862*

*My dear Wife, I received your most welcome letter last night. I want you to quit grieving yourself about my condition. I am well as heart could wish. I received a pittance for my rations and live in comfortable quarters. Our house is quite as warm as yours when the door is closed and five men and we sit back to back or I do smoke the pipe and sweat and when we go to bed we are as comfortable as you could deserve, more than we have any use for as far as hard times, as far as I am concerned. I have no complaints to make and I am perfectly satisfied as well as a man could be away from his wife and children. I have no hard tasks to perform. We drill about enough for good exercise when the weather is good. When it is bad we stay in quarters by the fire. All a man has to do is attend to his business and let other men alone and he will have no difficulties in getting along. As to the war news you hear, you pay no attention to it. I heard all the way as I came here that they were fighting and men told me they heard the cannon firing all night so I expected to be into it or be in just after a war over but it has not been yet nor do I believe I will be here this winter, if ever, although there are as many troops here and between us and the enemy as there is need of. There is enough it seems to me ahead of us to do the work if they would come there? They will not cross Green River and they were to come here they would meet with a warm reception from every hill around here as they are all fortified with the strongest fortifications and cannons in abundance besides flying artillery from every side. Cavalry in abundance and if they were disposed to advance on us we have shelter enough for all our men and one half of our men can whip them easy if we have correct reports. I learn that the Commissary General issues rations for one hundred and ten thousand men. I still continue to come every day and ? On some stop and rest a few days and then move on. There was ten thousand came here in one day. We are under General Buckner and he is at home here with his family and you know he will keep us here as long as he can. It's no worth my while to undertake to describe to you what I see here for it would be impossible. There are men here not only men but regiments of men from Virginia, Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee. I see men of my acquaintance every day that I have not seen for years. I can find if I had time and opportunity to run about a man from almost any where. ..discusses the price of food and getting money to his wife. I have not seen a pork hog and only 20 or thirty shoats and no sort of cattle except milk cows and few of the. I have not seen save one crow and one hawk. I took a walk in the country about three miles to see Nick. He is in General Hardee's Division. I got some (?) here and*

*sweet potatoes for dinner. They stand a better chance to get such things as they are out of town but what they gain in one thing they lose in another. They have to wade the muddy road to town to stand guard and make reports and draw provisions (?) While we are close to the pavements. We are just in the east end of town if we stay here much longer there will not be much town left. The whole country is turned into wheat clover and blue grass field and we are drilling on them. They pull down a man's fence and burn it without asking questions, pull down plank fences and posts from around a man's door and turn him into to the woods.*

### ***Membership Information***

Come join us! If you have friends interested in the Civil War, please bring them along. ***January is our fiscal year when dues for the current campaign are due.*** If you haven't paid your dues for this season yet please do so. Our dues help us obtain great speakers. With enough members we may also assist with historical preservation in the future.

#### **Annual dues are as follows:**

- **Student - \$10**
- **Single - \$20**
- **Family - \$30**
- **Military (active duty and veterans) - \$15 Military family (active duty and veterans)-\$25**