



# NEWS

## Issue 46: February 2024

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### MEMBER PROFILE OF THE MONTH

#### BOB HEISE

BY LANA BLUMHOEFER



Bob Heise has been a member of the TCCWRT since 2012. He learned of its existence from members of his church who were also TCCWRT members. He has always been interested in history and enjoys the top-notch speakers. It

has increased both his knowledge of the various aspects of the war and his desire to know more. Bob enjoys the dinner meetings and the discussions he has with the people with whom he sits. He also enjoys the annual symposiums.

What he finds most interesting about the Civil War is how it is perceived today in the North and especially in the South. He shared an interesting story about how a few years ago he and his wife were having dinner in Charleston, SC and struck up a conversation with a young couple who were sitting at the next table. The man was a local, and so, of course, the conversation turned to local history and the Civil War. The man referred to the war as "the war of Northern aggression." Bob elected to keep the conversation civil, and so did not respond to that comment. But what he could have told the man was that if they had been in this same restaurant back in 1860, this man's wife



*First Minnesota Monument at Gettysburg*

would not have been allowed to sit with them because she was from India, and her skin was very dark.

Bob has visited several battlefields and has been to Gettysburg twice with his family. Both times, they hired a guide to drive them throughout the park, seeing the same monuments and battle areas. And while both guides were extremely knowledgeable, they had different in-depth knowledge, so it did not feel as though they were seeing the same sites again.

Bob served in the U.S. Navy from 1960-1964. At the time, he felt like it was an adventure that he was being paid to have. Years later he reflected on that experience and realized that three major events occurred during that time:

1. The Cuban Missile Crisis. He was stationed on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, which was replenished with materials that would have been needed to go to war.
2. The assassination of President John Kennedy. Again, the military was put on alert until it was determined that the event was not going to escalate to war.
3. The Gulf of Tonkin. He was also aboard the same aircraft carrier in the South China Sea, and they launched strikes against North Vietnam.

Bob was born in Michigan but came to Minnesota in 1947. He and his wife have lived in Bloomington since 1966.

## OUR FEBRUARY MEETING: FEBRUARY 20, 2024

### **“The Concept of “Cowardice” in the Civil War” – Dr. Lesley Gordon**

The 2nd Texas Infantry Regiment went to war with high expectations that they would perform bravely in battle. Soon after their baptism of fire at Shiloh, however, they faced stinging accusations of cowardice. For the rest of their military service, these allegations cast a shadow even after the martyred death of their colonel and their designation as elite sharpshooters at Vicksburg. After the war and beyond, acknowledgment of these charges was largely forgotten, replaced with the rhetoric of the Lost Cause and a celebration of Confederate heroism. Dr. Gordon’s talk recounts the experience of this unit and the wider significance of exploring instances of cowardice in the Civil War.



*Lesley J. Gordon earned her BA with High Honors from the College of William and Mary, and her MA and PhD in American History from the University of Georgia. She presently holds the Charles G. Summersell Chair of Southern History at the University of Alabama. Her publications include General George E. Pickett in Life and Legend (University of North Carolina Press, 1998), Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory M. Thomas (Louisiana State University Press, 2005), and A Broken Regiment: The 16th Connecticut’s Civil War (Louisiana State University Press, 2014). She has published numerous articles, book chapters and book reviews, and her public talks have been featured on C-Span. She was*

*editor of the academic journal Civil War History (2010-2015), and is now President of the Society for Civil War History (2022-2024). Her current book project explores accusations of cowardice and their lasting effects on two Civil War regiments.*

## STEVEN SCHIER'S CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

On April 26, 1865, General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered nearly 90,000 men of the Army of Tennessee to whom?

(See page 6 for the answer)

## OUR 2024 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

March 19 <sup>th</sup>	“Food and Hunger During the Civil War” Prof. Anne Rubin
April 27 <sup>th</sup>	Minnesota Civil War Symposium – G.A.R. Hall, Litchfield MN
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	“U.S. Colored Troops at War” Dr. David Wright Falade

## THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY – FEBRUARY

1 <sup>st</sup>	1873 – Confederate Naval officer, Commodore Matthew F. Maury dies at the of 67.
7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	1862 – Union forces under Gen. Ambrose Burnside capture Roanoke Island, South Carolina.
11 <sup>th</sup>	1896 – Union Naval officer George M. Bache dies at the age of 55.
20 <sup>th</sup>	1864 – Confederate forces defeat Union forces at the Battle of Olustee, Florida.
23 <sup>th</sup>	1862 – Fayetteville, Arkansas occupied by Federal troops.
25 <sup>th</sup>	1862 – Nashville, Tennessee occupied by Federal troops.

## CIVIL WAR BIRTHDAYS – FEBRUARY

3 <sup>rd</sup>	1824 – Brig. General George Thomas Anderson C.S.
15 <sup>th</sup>	1835 – Brig. General Alexander S. Webb U.S.
16 <sup>th</sup>	1814 – Brig. General Joseph R. Anderson C.S.
16 <sup>th</sup>	1822 – Major General James Patton Anderson C.S.

## TCCWRT MEMBERS WITH FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/2 Tom McClellan  
2/7 Catherine Martignacco  
2/9 Larry Koenig  
2/10 David Murphy  
2/16 Kiki Sonnen  
2/16 Dennis Garoutte  
2/17 Bob Huber  
2/21 Annalisa Pearson

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS



Left to Right: Michael Cronin, Ken Rowe and Bob Slaney.

## BATTLE OF NASHVILLE TRUST MOURNS PASSING OF JOHN ALLYN

Contributed by Ken Flies

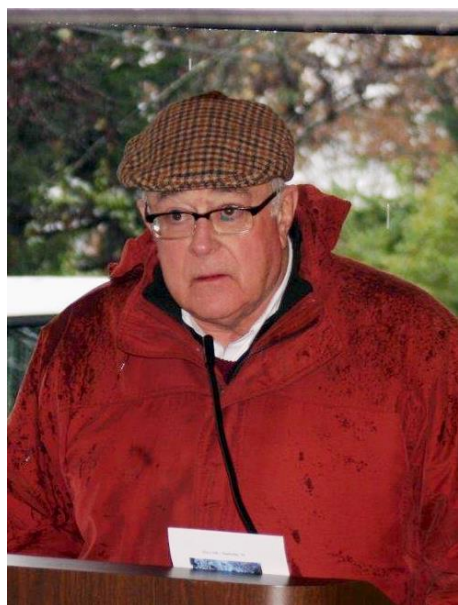
“John was a great friend and advocate for the Minnesota troops at the Battle of Nashville, the deadliest battle for Minnesota troops in the Civil War. John spoke a few years ago at the TCCWRT.”

“John was the President of Battle of Nashville Trust when we installed the Minnesota marker in 2014 on the battlefield and was instrumental in the dedication of the marker. Many from TCCWRT who made the trip will remember John. He wrote extensively on the Minnesota troops at Nashville, the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> in the battle and a company of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 8<sup>th</sup> Minnesota at Battle of the Cedars and the 11<sup>th</sup> in support at Edgefield.” **Ken Flies**

Here’s John’s BONT obituary:

## **BATTLE OF NASHVILLE TRUST MOURNS PASSING OF JOHN ALLYN — HISTORIAN, COLLEAGUE, AND FRIEND**

The fields and stone walls around Confederate Redoubt No. 3 in Nashville would have been enveloped in a maelstrom of rifle fire, the whine of minie balls and thunder of artillery, and the thick fog of black powder smoke, as the Union army bore down from three directions on the last remaining Confederate earthworks in the late afternoon of Dec. 15, 1864.



*John Allyn speaking at the Minnesota Monument Dedication Ceremony on Shy’s Hill, 2014*

It was therefore the perfect place for the home of Nashville attorney John Allyn to live with his family on the short dead-end street which later evolved there, Hood’s Hill Road, just over a football field’s distance from the Redoubt, the vestiges of which are now barely visible in the backyard of the nearby Calvary Methodist Church.

John, 76, passed away on Nov. 4, 2023, but he left a long and meaningful legacy of contributing to the preservation and understanding of the Battle of Nashville and other aspects of Nashville’s military and ancestral history. He served many years on the Battle of Nashville Trust board in his role as a tireless supporter of its mission of acquiring, preserving and interpreting remnants of the battlefield.

A New Yorker by birth, John came south to attend Vanderbilt University. He majored in history, or as his family noted, he “majored in his hobby.” Afterwards, he received his law



degree from Vanderbilt Law School, and decided to stay in Nashville. These decisions were fortunate for Nashvillians interested in the history of the city, especially the years of the Civil War and the December, 1864, Battle of Nashville.

His work for BONT was concentrated in the years 2013 to 2018, when he served as its president, but his work and influence spread far beyond that role. He became one of the Trust's "go to" historians who, as an attorney, dedicated his keen mind, analytical ability and pure joy of history to understanding and interpreting every aspect of the Battle of Nashville.

John wrote a number of in-depth articles for the BONT website, including, as would be expected, contributing to the site's page on the mayhem that had occurred in his neighborhood about 150 years earlier at [Redoubt No. 3](#), and also on the [Cumberland River naval skirmishes](#) that preceded the main battle of December 15 and 16. In 2013, he edited massive changes to the [Battle of Nashville Wikipedia page](#) in order to clarify and amplify the factual content.

**He had a special interest in the men who fought for Minnesota, a state which suffered more casualties at Nashville than at any other battle where its troops fought, and which is commemorated with a granite monument and flag on Shy's Hill. He wrote an essay for the website on the importance of [Minnesota troops in the Battle](#), and was later invited to present his thoughts and findings to the Minnesota Historical Society and Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable.**

His interest in the ancestry of those who fought in Nashville led him to contribute a website essay on Nashville's Civil War burials, and to become involved with other Nashville historical groups, especially the Nashville City Cemetery Association for which he served as a board member and president, enjoying especially leading some of the City Cemetery's legendary tours. In addition, he had an important role with Friends of Fort Negley, and served as a featured speaker at various historical meetings. John had an ancestral link to the Battle through his wife, Cary DeWitt Allyn, whose great-grandfather, Marcus Bearden DeWitt, was the chaplain for the 8<sup>th</sup> Tennessee posted on the down slope of Shy's Hill on Dec. 16.

The BONT board and membership will miss John personally as well as his dedication to its mission, his time and talent as president, and his work clearing brush on the slopes of Shy's Hill with as much zest as his time spent in the research of official battlefield records. The Trust will honor his memory at its annual Wreath Ceremony on the summit of Shy's Hill on Dec. 16, 2023, the 159th anniversary of the Battle of Nashville.


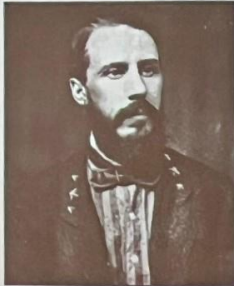
## **STEVEN SCHIER'S TRIVIA QUESTION ANSWER:**

Major General William T. Sherman

## **A LOOK BACK AT OUR JANUARY MEETING**

**Derek Lee introduces us to the secret world of Civil War codes and ciphers.**



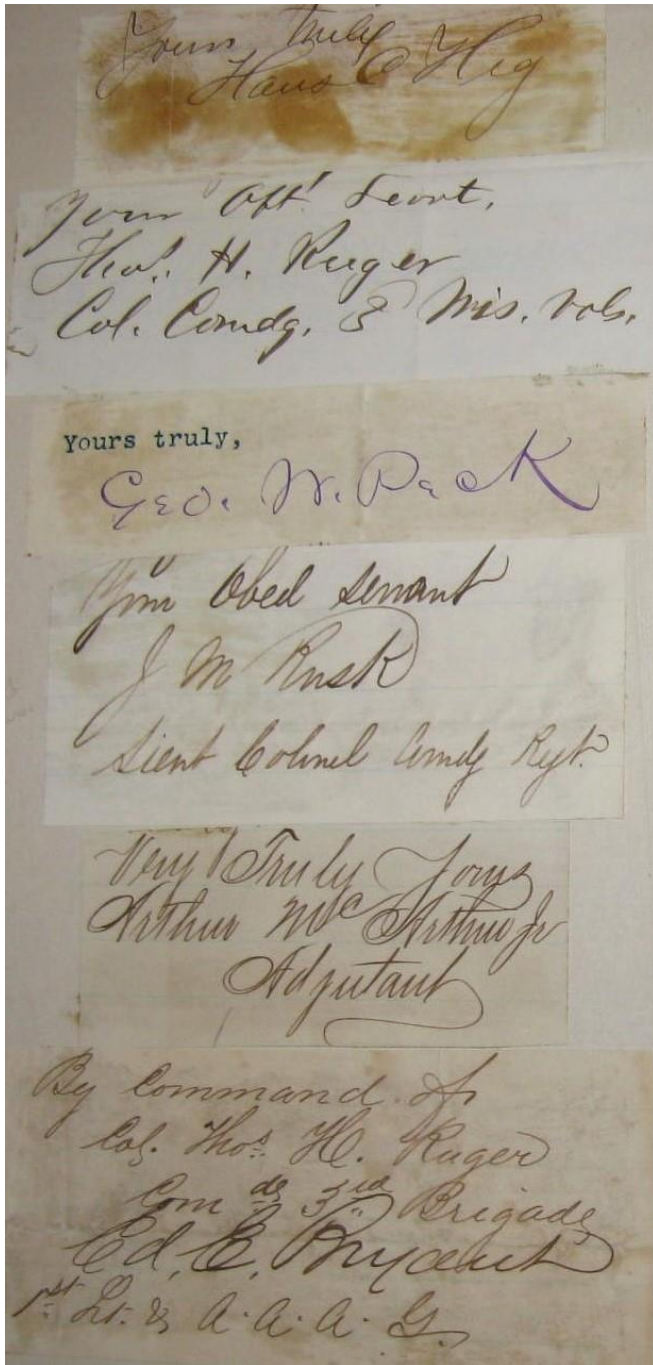
The Union	The Confederacy
<p>MAJ Albert J. Myer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Father of the U.S. Army Signal Corps"</li><li>• Army surgeon</li><li>• Wig-wag signaling</li> <li>• No established Signal Corps or personnel</li></ul>	<p>2LT Edward P. Alexander</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assistant to Major Myer before the war</li><li>• Resigned to join the Confederacy</li></ul>
	

**Photos by Dave Greener**

Here's the link to the video of January's presentation: <https://youtu.be/Lfh72BeGvlw>

## From the Dusty Collection #36 A Wisconsin Book of Notable Autographs

Our neighbor state Wisconsin produced hundreds of memorable Civil War heroes, and many Wisconsin veterans later settled in Minnesota. So naturally Wisconsin's Annual Report of the Adjutant General for the Year 1865, with short synopsis of service for each regiment, was an early and important addition to my reference library. But this particular copy is unique, and at the same time a sad commentary on an early collecting trend. The original owner had obvious access to a large assortment of Civil War documents, and in the fashion of his age assembled a collection of notable clipped signatures. The original documents probably survive somewhere, but no longer have the signatures that are now glued into the first three pages of the Report.



At the top of the first page is the very rare signature of Colonel Hans Heg, commander of the mostly Norwegian born 15<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. Journalist Heg was a prominent leader of the Norwegian immigrant community in southeastern Wisconsin, staunchly anti-slavery, and in September 1863 was killed in action leading his brigade at the Battle of Chickamauga. You may remember that



his statue in Madison was vandalized by obviously ignorant “activists” a few years ago. The MNHS recently published his biography.

Next comes Thomas H. Ruger, West Point graduate and commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wisconsin. He soon moved up the chain of command and was breveted a major general for his role in the 1864 Battle of Franklin. Ruger stayed in the regular army until 1897, as a brigadier general since 1886 and a major general his last two active years. Here is one of his Civil War brigadier general shoulder straps that came my way many years ago.



George W. Peck was an officer in the 4<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry, but his fame came later as a nationally prominent author, humorist and politician. He authored the “Peck’s Bad Boy” series of novels among others, wrote a humorous history titled How Private George W. Peck Single-Handedly Won the Civil War (still in print), and found time to serve as a mayor of Milwaukee and a governor of Wisconsin.

Lieutenant Colonel Jeremiah Maclain Rusk of the 25<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry was breveted brigadier general in 1865 for gallant and meritorious service. He later served as a congressman and as US Secretary of Agriculture. His signature as lieutenant colonel *commanding the regiment* dates after the Battle of Atlanta where his colonel was wounded and taken prisoner.

First Lieutenant Athur W. McArthur, Jr. of the 24<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry signs here as adjutant, a position he held until promotion to major in 1864. He was breveted lieutenant colonel and then colonel of volunteers for gallant service in several battles. At Missionary Ridge the 18-year-old adjutant seized the fallen regimental colors and crested the rebel works shouting “On Wisconsin”, an action that earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor and in his state an enduring sports slogan. McArthur reentered the army in 1866 as a second lieutenant and retired as a major general in 1909 after distinguished service in the Philippines and across Asia among other assignments. His long career left many autographs that are valuable today, but few that can be pinned down to his Civil War years. And yes, he was the father of Douglas McArthur who served as an aide on his staff near the end of his service.

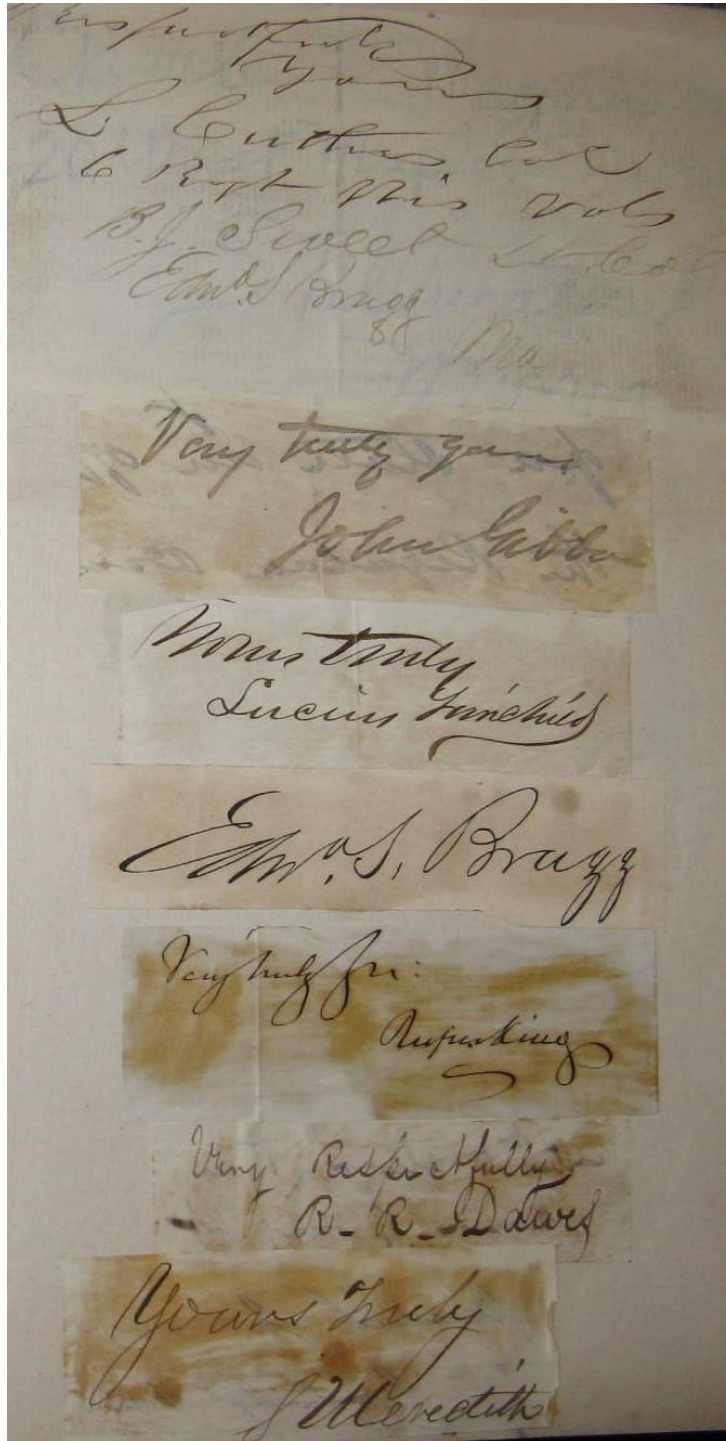
Vermont born Edward E. Bryant was a lawyer who enlisted as a private in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, quickly rose to sergeant major, then lieutenant and adjutant. His signature is as assistant adjutant general on General Ruger’s staff. Bryant was made lieutenant colonel of the 50<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry in 1864, and served as Wisconsin’s adjutant general under several post war governors.

The second page is the Iron Brigade collection, starting with a unique triple autograph (on one sheet) of the famous 6<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry's Colonel Lysander Cutler, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin J. Sweet, and Major Edward S. Bragg. The latter two officers assumed their ranks on September 17, 1861 and by the next summer were promoted thus dating the signatures to last 1861/early 1862. The 54-year-old Cutler moved to Wisconsin after a long business and political career in Maine. He was twice badly wounded, commanded brigades and divisions, and was promoted to general. Sweet was promoted to command the 21<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Infantry, also wounded in battle, and breveted brigadier general. Bragg commanded the 6<sup>th</sup> much of the war and the Iron Brigade during the last year. He was also wounded and promoted to brigadier general.

Career soldier John Gibbon needs little introduction, moving through divisional and corps commands including divisional command of the First Minnesota at Gettysburg. Below a bold Edward Bragg signature is the autograph of Rufus King who formed the Iron Brigade, moved to division command, but then was forced to resign due to epileptic seizures.

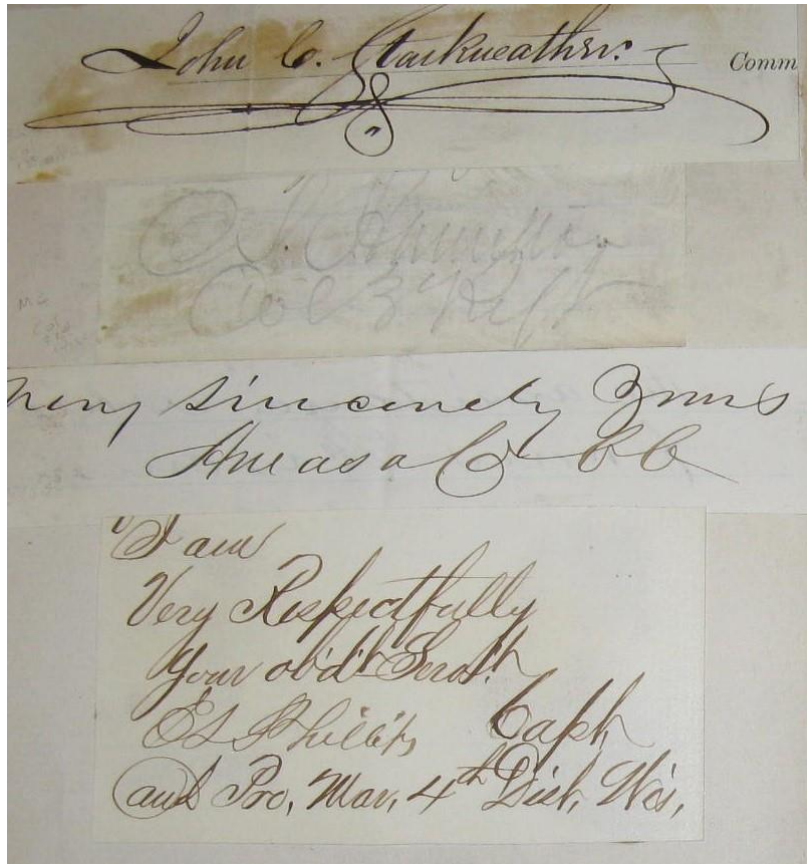
Rufus Dawes commanded a company in the 6<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin and as lieutenant colonel led the counter attack at the Gettysburg railroad cut on July 1, 1863. He also was breveted brigadier general.

Indiana farmer and politician Solomon Merideth led the 19<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry and then the Iron Brigade. His controversial field career was ended by several severe wounds at Gettysburg.



The last page of clipped autographs has only four before the collector laid down his scissors and glue pot. John C. Starkweather commanded the 1<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry before moving to brigade command. He was wounded at Chickamauga and promoted to brigadier general. Career soldier Charles Smith Hamilton, who signed in now faded pencil, was first colonel of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, then a brigade and division commander. Removed by McClellan, he was posted to the west and eventually resigned in 1863 after a dispute with General Grant.

Amasa Cobb was a judge and politician who commanded the 5<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin then a brigade at Antietam. He was elected to congress but continued to serve in the field as new colonel of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.



The last signature is a bit of a curiosity. Businessman and politician Elihu L. Phillips served only as provost marshal and recruiting agent in the Fond du Lac area, never taking to the field. So, did the collector just like his impressive signature, or was he perhaps a relative of Phillips?

Collections like this pose a challenge. Should the owner steam off each signature and frame with a period photograph or print? Or should the book be left as it is?

Hopefully the volume's future will be with a serious Wisconsin collector who will enjoy the important role each of the signatories played in that state's Civil War legacy.

## CONTACT US:

### Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable

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<https://tccwrt.com/>

**Can you contribute to a future newsletter? Writers are wanted to submit Civil War related articles to this newsletter.**

**Please submit your drafts to Bruce Cooper: [earlofbruce@hotmail.com](mailto:earlofbruce@hotmail.com)**