



# NEWS

## Issue 71: March 2026

### MEMBER PROFILE: KAYLA WILLIAMS BY LANA BLUMHOEFER



Kayla Williams joined the TCCWRT in 2023 after attending as a guest a few times with her grandfather, long-time member, Wilfred (Will) Williams. They are joined by Kayla's father, Chris Williams, who also recently joined the organization. Kayla recently joined the TCCWRT technical crew and will be running the tech show for our symposium on April 25, 2026. "I really enjoy volunteering for the tech committee because I've made really good friendships with people by getting involved. Technology comes easy to me, and I enjoy being able to help."

Kayla's interest in history grew out of her family's interest in the Civil War. She recalls reading about Abraham Lincoln as a child. Then she discovered she had a great-great-great-grandfather, Augustus H. Williams, who served in the Civil War. He enlisted on June 17, 1861, and was mustered out on

July 4 1864. Augustus served as a private in Co. D, 2nd MN Infantry Regiment. At the end of the War, he settled in Burnsville, married, and became a successful farmer. He was an active member of the G.A.R.

Kayla enjoys TCCWRT's variety of topics that are covered each month. Most recently, she enjoyed the January meeting that covered the prisoners of war and the many encampments that were built all over the country to house them in varying conditions. What is most interesting to Kayla is that the War was one of the most brutal and yet fundamentally transforming wars that happened on U.S. soil. It was one of the first modern wars, with traditional combat as well as industrial technology like railroads and telegraphs. This caused more people to die in the Civil War than any other American war, more so by disease than combat.

Kayla lived in Mankato for five years while attending college there. The Dakota War is her favorite battle sites. She would like to learn more about the 38 Native Americans who were executed by hanging in Mankato. She shared that Reconciliation Park in Mankato serves as a primary memorial site for these hanged men with a stone buffalo sculpture and a monument

listing their names. She is currently enrolled at Metropolitan State University getting a Biology degree.

Most people don't know that Kayla surrounds herself with animals: a puppy named Juni, a tortoise named Bowser, and a cockatiel named Cheeks, along with a couple of quails! She also loves gardening in the summer.



Augustus H. Williams after he enlisted and was mustered into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Minn Infantry in St. Paul, 1861.

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

Lincoln's March 4, 1861, inaugural address declared that his administration would not do what?

**(See page 13 for the answer)**

## **OUR MARCH MEETING – MARCH 17, 2026**

### **The Union in Peril: Lincoln and the Secession Crisis 1860-April 1861 - Ian Iverson**

The election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860 precipitated an unprecedented national emergency. The secession of seven southern states between December and February triggered a flurry of efforts in Washington to peacefully reunite the country, even as Secessionist forces seized U.S. arsenals and menaced federal troops occupying forts in South Carolina and Florida. Within the halls of lame-duck Congress, advocates of compromise grappled with hardliners to draft legislation and constitutional amendments that would diffuse the crisis. In this lecture, Dr. Ian Iverson will outline the difficult choices facing President-elect Lincoln, detail the political machinations that stymied the so-called "Crittenden Compromise,"

and walk through the chain of events that culminated in the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861.



*Ian T. Iverson is an associate editor at the John Dickinson Writings Project. A graduate of Princeton University, he holds a Ph.D. in American history from the University of Virginia. His doctoral dissertation won the 2023 Hay-Nicolay Dissertation Prize, awarded by the Abraham Lincoln Association and the Abraham Lincoln Institute for the best dissertation on Lincoln’s legacy. His first book, *Holding the Political Center in Illinois: Conservatism and Union on the Brink of the Civil War*, was published by the Kent State University Press in 2024.*

## OUR REMAINING 2026 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

April 25, 2026      Annual Symposium

May 19, 2026      “Disunion in the Confederacy or What If Lincoln Lived?” – Brian Jordan

## TCCWRT MEMBERS WITH MARCH BIRTHDAYS

3/3    Ed Edmonds

3/17    Tom McManus

3/10    Paul Purman

3/17    Margie Hendriksen

3/10    Craig Sharpe

3/28    Ray Horton III

3/14    Matthew Pennington

3/16    Lyle Thorpe

**Happy Birthday, Members!**

## From the Dusty Collection #62 *Always the Unexpected: The 2026 Show of Shows*

The largest international military antiques show in the world is held in Louisville each year. With 2,000+ tables of sales items in a massive expo hall, the pace is frenetic as thousands of collectors race from table to table hoping to find bargains. There are probably over 20 languages spoken in the hall, but the one universal language is hundred-dollar bills. It's no wonder that all serious collectors so look forward to this annual event.

This year's show was scheduled earlier due to a venue conflict; then the massive snow storm hit just prior. Despite some personal misgivings, my son talked me into the long trek. We jumped into the fray on Wednesday night, finally packing up for the drive home on Saturday. Our sales tables



gave us a good base of operations, and Austin was soon off scouring tables for WWI postcard photos of identified soldiers (a reminder of my similar quests for Civil War cartes de visite several decades ago.)

The Show of Shows is predominantly a WWI and WWII collector event, with an overabundance of Third Reich material. This actually simplifies the shopping for Civil War collectors since most tables don't require a second look. But the Civil War relics are out there!

At one point I spotted a guy walking by with some sort of a strange Civil War musket which did not seem to have a dealer tag attached. Apologizing to end a conversation at our tables, I caught up with him to look at his Garibaldi Rifle and bayonet – and yes, he was selling it. A deal was quickly struck, and I had the rifle. Not for myself, it was for the collections of the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum.

But why?

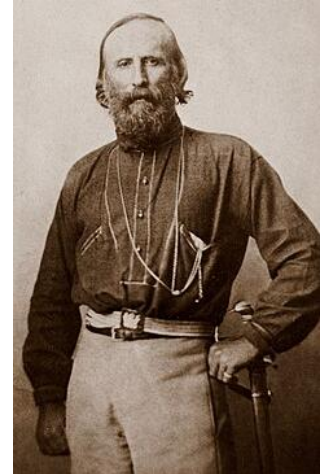


The Garibaldi Rifle was arguably the worst long arm issued to Civil War soldiers. It is ungainly, heavy, kicks like a mule, and is prone to malfunctions. The immense and old-fashioned long sword bayonet just adds to its weight and general ugliness. But they did end up in Minnesota in 1863, intended to arm settlers otherwise hesitant to return to rural farms after the



Dakota Conflict.

The Austrian M1849 Kammerbusche Rifle had an unusual pill lock mechanism that used a tube-shaped primer to fire the muzzle loaded charge. The Austrians soon replaced it with a more practical rifle. The outdated M1849s went to Belgium to be converted to the simpler percussion lock by welding a bolster and nipple on the breech. Agents for revolutionary Giuseppe Garibaldi found the rifles for sale and bought most of them to arm their troops fighting in the 1859-61 Italian Wars of Unification.



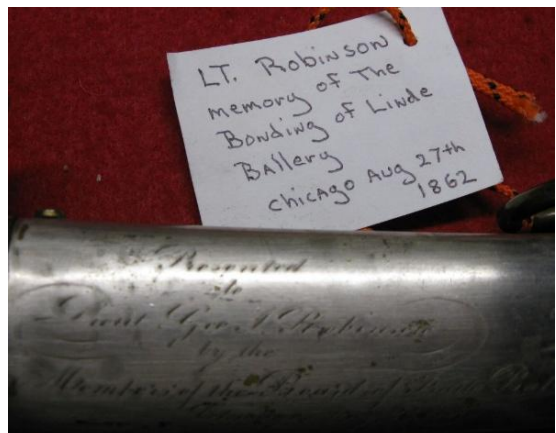
Early in the Civil War purchasing agents, North and South, scoured Europe for surplus arms. Most common was the excellent Enfield Rifle Musket of which around a million eventually armed both armies. But they bought junk just as readily. Among that was around 26,000 Garibaldi Rifles most of which went to the Midwest. The Minnesota State Arsenal inventoried 1,796 of them in 1863 but had only issued out around 500 by 1865. At least one ended up at Fort Snelling where it left a few fired 69 caliber minie balls with the impression of the Garibaldi's unique 12 lands and grooves. So, it is appropriate that the Military Museum should have one of these ugly ducklings and veteran of two wars in its collections.



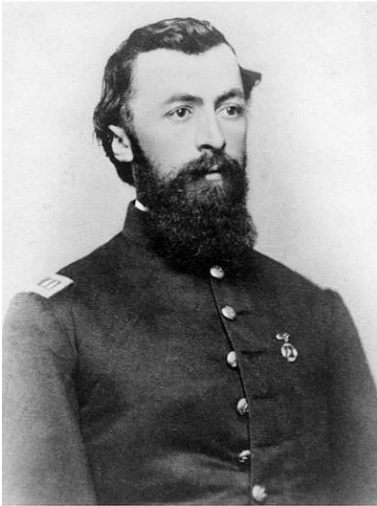
The unexpected treasure at the show – an historic Civil War presentation sword – had been found in a Chicago area pawn shop 25 years ago and was now on a table of mixed odds and ends.

Fortunately, the seller had incorrectly deciphered the hand engraved inscription on the silver-plated scabbard. [see his tag, right]

The actual inscription reads: ***Presented to Lieut. Geo. I. Robinson by the Members of the Board of Trade Battery, Chicago, Aug. 27, 1862.*** While far from cheap, the sword was affordable thanks to this critical erroneous identification. A quick glance and I correctly read the inscription.



I knew what it was and knew of the impressive history of the Board of Trade Battery, and so grabbed it before a Civil War dealer happened upon the table.



The six (and later seven) gun light artillery battery was one of several Illinois units raised and funded by the respected, and well-heeled, Chicago Board of Trade. The Board announced recruiting in late July 1862 and within only a few days a committee hand selected artillerymen from the many eager recruits who stepped forward. Most were among the city's better social classes; over half worked in white collar jobs. The new unit was commanded by 1835 West Point graduate and Seminole War veteran James H. Stokes. Senior First Lieutenant George Robinson [left] replaced him in command in 1864. Rhode Island born Robinson was a 23-year-old store clerk who had drilled with Chicago's Ellsworth Zouaves and marched with the uniformed Wide Awakes during the 1860 Lincoln campaign. The men of the Battery enthusiastically elected him their first

lieutenant, and pooled their money to buy him a beautiful sword which they presented to him before leaving for Louisville and active service.

Robinson had previously raised a full company of recruits from the YMCA for the three July 1862 infantry regiments supported by the Board, and so was well known to its members and the recruits.

The Battery's first major action was at Stones River Tennessee where on December 31, 1862 as part



of an ad hoc Pioneer Brigade building breastworks. They beat off repeated attacks, and fired an astounding 1,300 rounds of ammunition. [Their position today, left.] Two days later they were among the 58 Federal cannons massed to stop Confederate attacks and thus barely win the battle for the Union.

In 1863 the Battery fought at Chickamauga, then engaged in the Tullahoma Campaign through the mountains north of and guarded strategic positions around Chattanooga, and finally rode against Confederate cavalry forces in Alabama. That year the Board of Trade Battery was redesignated from Mounted Field Artillery to *Flying Horse Artillery* and permanently attached to a cavalry brigade. It was the only Western Theater unit so designated. In 1864, as they moved into Georgia, their armament was traded from bronze 6 pounder guns to steel 3-inch Parrott rifles. The more modern Parrotts were lighter and more accurate at longer ranges. The battery

fought at Resaca and at Noonday Creek, then participated in several cavalry raids as Sherman approached Atlanta.



The most notable of these raids was General Judson Kilpatrick's fast paced ride around Atlanta August 18-27, 1864. The mounted raid was intended to disrupt Confederate supply lines by destroying railroad tracks and infrastructure. Lieutenant George Robinson by then commanded the battery and would be promoted to captain on August 22. His stirring account of Kilpatrick's Raid is here: [Robinson's Account of Raid Around Atlanta](#) The fast action, narrow escapes, and amazing shots at a water

tower and railroad station cupola make for a great read. General Kilpatrick was eventually surrounded and charged his way out through a Confederate battle line in four close columns of saber wielding cavalymen. The Battery provided support firing from the position shown here today, now long urbanized.

The Board of Trade Battery turned in its horses and moved by rail to Nashville in the fall, receiving new horses and taking position on the right of that city's defenses in December. It helped repulse General John Bell Hood's Confederates, then pursued them to the Tennessee River. In April 1865 they helped capture Selma, Alabama then finished out the war at Columbus and Macon, Georgia.

During the Civil War, the Battery marched 5,268 miles and was involved in 11 major battles, 26 minor battles and 42 skirmishes. Lieutenant George Robinson probably carried this sword in most of them. It shows even wear consistent with three years of mounted service with the unique Chicago Board of Trade Battery.

## **Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum Update**

Building construction will soon be completed and exhibits installed during the summer. Minnesota made exhibit cases are on order and content is being gathered for three theaters and seven multi-media stations. High density shelving will be installed next month for artifact storage.

The Twin Cities Civil War Round Table has met our \$50,000 challenge goal although we are still awaiting about \$12,500 in pledges. You can still donate through 2026. TCCWRT will be prominently recognized on the donor panels.

The Museum is planning a Civil War Day Saturday, September 26, 2026, as part of a grand opening month. A TCCWRT charter bus will depart the Maple Grove

Transit Hub at 8 AM and return at 6 PM. Seats are only \$20 with museum admission free to our members. Put it on your schedule now and watch for registration updates.

Below is a *sneak preview* of what you can expect that day:

**Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum  
Civil War Day Activity DRAFT Schedule  
26 September 2026**

Time	Location	Activity
Ongoing	West Front Field	Recruiting Sergeant & Flag Demonstrations
Ongoing	Civil War Gallery	Guided Tours
Ongoing	West Front Field	Civil War Tintype Artist (tbd)
Ongoing	West Front Field	Civil War Medical Tent (tbd)
Ongoing	Vessey Memorial Hall	Special Exhibit: Civil War Infantry Arms
Ongoing	West Front Field	Sanitary Fair and Apothecary
Ongoing	West Front Field	Civil War Quilt Display
tbd	Museum Entrance	Bus Tour to Original Fort Ripley (sign up required)
1000	Parade Ground	Flag Raising Ceremony
1015	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 1]
1030	West Front Field	Civil War Tentage Demonstration
1030	Collections Storage	Behind the Scenes Tour (sign up required)
1045	West Front Field	Participate in New Recruit Drill
1045	West Front Field	Meet President Lincoln
1100	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 2]
1130	Parade Ground	Infantry Drill and Firing Demonstration
1200	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 3]
1230	Civil War Gallery	Creating the Taylor Brothers Mannequins
1245	West Front Field	Participate in Recruit Drill
1300	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 4]
1330	Parade Ground	Infantry Drill and Firing Demonstration
1400	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 5]
1430	Collections Storage	Behind the Scenes Tour (sign up required)
1430	West Front Field	Civil War Tentage Demonstration
1445	West Front Field	Participate in Recruit Drill
1445	West Front Field	Meet President Lincoln
1500	Parade Ground	Artillery Firing Demonstration [gun 6]

1530	Parade Ground	Infantry Drill and Firing Demonstration
1545	Parade Ground	Artillery Battery Firing Demonstration, 6 Guns
1600	Parade Ground	Flag Lowering Ceremony

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBER: PATRICK SCALLEN



L to R: Patrick Scallen, President Mark Pridgeon

## MINNESOTA CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM

**Saturday, April 25, 2026, 9:00 A.M. - Bloomington Event Center**

Sponsored by the Rochester, St. Croix Valley, Cannon Valley, Central Minnesota, Hiawatha Valley, Litchfield G.A.R., Minnesota Valley, Albert Lea, and Twin Cities Civil War Round Tables.

### THE CAVALRY!!

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome, Minnesota Round Tables Brief Introductions, and Announcements, Mark Pridgeon
- 9:10 a.m. Arming the Minnesota Cavalry, 1861-1866, Stephen Osman
- 9:45 a.m. Break (Browse tables of books and memorabilia for sale.)

- 10:00 a.m. To Reclaim a Western Frontier: Jenkins’s 1862 & 1863 Trans-Allegheny Raids, Jon-Erik Gilot
- 11:00 a.m. Sound the Trumpet, Beat the Drums, Cavalry Music. Professor Bruce P. Gleason, PhD.
- 11:50 a.m. Pearl Button Band, Introduction by Sherry Ladig
- 12:00 a.m. Lunch Break with Musical Serenade by the Pearl Button Band
- 1:00 p.m. JEB Stuart & His Controversial Role in the Gettysburg Campaign, Jeffery Wert [via Zoom]
- 2:00 p.m. Break (Browse tables of books and memorabilia for sale.)
- 2:15 p.m. “Worth to Us An Army...” The Jones-Imboden Raid, Jon-Erik Gilot
- 3:15 p.m. Q and A, Stephen Osman, Professor Bruce P. Gleason Ph.D., and Jon-Erik Gilot
- 3:30 p.m. Closing Announcements

The Bloomington Event Center (Knights of Columbus Hall), 1114 American Blvd. W., Bloomington MN 55420, is SE of the Highways 494 & 35W interchange. Take the Lyndale Ave. exit south from 494 and turn west at the first light onto American Blvd.

Registration: \$20 per person. Students free. Buffet lunch (prepared by the Event Center): \$25.00, including students. Menu: Red beans with sausage, rice, and cornbread. To register: Via Zelle to tccwrt.com (indicate attendee names in Memo line) or Via check payable to TCCWRT with form below to: Civil War Symposium, 5540 Sanibel Dr., Minnetonka, MN 55343  
 Registration at door for available seating only. Lunch requires pre-registration by April 10, 2026.

## **TCCWRT DELEGATION TO FREDERICKSBURG**

We’re heading to Fredericksburg to meet our Sister Round Table! Details of a proposed itinerary are listed below. If you’re interested in getting emails on updates, please contact Carol at [info@tccwrt.com](mailto:info@tccwrt.com).

**Tuesday, June 16, 2026**

Morning flight to Reagan National Airport.  
Leadership Meeting with the CWRT of Fredericksburg group followed by dinner.

### **Wednesday, June 17 2026**

Tour during the day, followed by attendance at the CWRT meeting (includes dinner). John-Erich to speak for five minutes about the TCCWRT.

### **Thursday, June 18 2026**

All day touring.

### **Friday, June 19, 2026**

Fly out of Reagan. Return to Minneapolis.

**Hotel Choices:** Marriot Downtown Fredericksburg or the Ironclad Inn B&B (5 rooms left!)

### **Possible places to tour TBD**

- Chatham Mansion and grounds (part of the NHP but across the river from the town)
- Kenmore Plantation House
- Confederate Cemetery
- Fredericksburg Area Museum
- Masonic Cemetery
- Mary Washington's memorial
- Rising Sun Tavern
- Hugh Mercer's Apothecary museum
- James Monroe Museum
- Fielding Lewis' Store
- Ferry Farm (Washington's boyhood home)
- Belmont (Gary Melchoir's --world famous artist --House in Falmouth)



### CHECK OUT OUR NEW AND IMPROVED FACEBOOK PAGE

Have you checked out our New and Improved Facebook page yet? If you are currently on Facebook and have not yet visited our page or have not visited it in a while, I encourage you to visit it soon. If you are not currently on Facebook, I encourage you to join up soon. The new page is full of all kinds of Civil War related news and information, well worth your time.



#### Twin Cities Civil War Round Table

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This page focuses on the US Civil War and promotes the activities of the Twin Cities Civil War Round Table, Inc., a non-profit, hosting subject matter experts who speak at monthly gatherings (September-May) in Bloomington, MN.

Nonprofit organization



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# **RELICS AND ARTIFACTS WANTED**

## **For our April 25, 2026, Symposium Silent Auction**

**Symposium attendees have always shown great interest in the items donated for our Memorabilia Table connected to the Civil War. Items such as letters from-to soldiers, military items such as uniforms, musket rounds, newspaper articles of the day, really any item that brings one closer to understanding what times were like during the Civil War. Please check your souvenir drawer for the things you would like to donate and bring them to the March meeting.**

**Please contact Phil Baker at [pbaker527175@gmail.com](mailto:pbaker527175@gmail.com) to inform him of what you can donate.**

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

Initiate a civil war

## **OUR 2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

President: **Mark Pridgeon**

Vice President: **John-Erich Mantius**

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NEWS Editor: **Bruce Cooper**

## **CONTACT US:**

Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable

[info@tccwrt.com](mailto:info@tccwrt.com)

<https://tccwrt.com/>

**Editor's Note: The article entitled "TCCWRT Delegation to Fredericksburg" uses a larger font size than normally used (14 verses 11). Some members with more "experienced" eyes have asked for a larger font size to make reading the TCCWRT News more enjoyable for them. This is a little experiment to see how members feel about the larger font size.**

**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)**