



HARDTACK



Indianapolis Civil War Round Table Newsletter

<http://indianapoliscwrt.org/>

Monday, June 9, 2025 at 6:45 p.m.
Meeting at MCL Cafeteria Township Line
2370 W. 86th Street

The Plan of the Day



“The Sultana Disaster”

On April 27, 1865, the paddlewheel steamboat Sultana suffered a boiler explosion on the Mississippi River shortly after leaving Memphis, Tennessee. The severely overcrowded boat was carrying home recently released Union prisoners-of-war from camps in Georgia and Alabama. Although it is the worst maritime disaster in American history, few people have heard of the Sultana, largely because of numerous other historic events happening at the same time.

Our Guest Speaker



Gene Eric Salecker

Gene Eric Salecker is a military historian whose seven published books include *Destruction of the Steamboat Sultana: The Worst Maritime Disaster in American History* (2022) and *Typhoon Louise vs. the United States Navy: Catastrophe at Okinawa, October 9-10, 1945* (2023). He owned the largest collection of Sultana artifacts and memorabilia which he donated to the Sultana Disaster Museum in Marion, Arkansas. A graduate of Northeastern Illinois University, he is a retired police officer and retired middle school teacher currently acting as the historical consultant for the Sultana Disaster Museum. He lives in River Grove, Illinois with his wife, a cat, and dozens of tropical fish.

Roster of Officers and Committees for the 2024-2025 Campaign

Officers:

President: Chris Smith

Vice President: Tony Roscetti

Secretary: Eric Dove

Treasurer: Pete Mohr

Immediate Past President: Pete Benner

Committees:

Preservation: Andy O'Donnell

Website: Ed Pope

Program Selection: Chairman Steve Magnusen; Members: Bob Gottschalk, David Finney, & Tony Trimble

Publicity: Peg Bertelli

Quiz Master:

Tony Trimble

Book Raffle Masters

Roy Agnew/Charlotte Carmichael

HARDTACK Newsletter:

Bob Gottschalk

Other Camp Activities

Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable: Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday each month at the Cornerstone Lutheran Church, Main St. & Gray Rd., Carmel. Entrance Door #6. Opens at 6:30, and program begins at 7:00.

Madison County Historical Society Civil War Roundtable: Meetings take place on the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Bowman Room at the Museum of Madison County History, 15 West 11th Street, Anderson, Indiana. Upcoming presentations:

June 16: David Finney. "The Civil War: A Living Legacy."

July 21: Tony Trimble. "Cades Cove: A Community at War."

Official Records

Alan T. Nolan Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund: The Executive Board of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table has established this fund to provide membership dues, annual tour expenses or other worthwhile purpose for any full-time student of any age. Please see Tony Roscetti to donate to this fund.

Facebook: The Indianapolis Civil War Round Table is on Facebook. We invite you to join our group. Feel free to post Civil War related messages on our site.

Charitable Sponsors: In an effort to upgrade our speakers and programs, the board of ICWRT is asking members and organizations with which they are involved (companies or charitable organizations) to consider sponsoring one or more speakers. This could be done as a gift now, or a person could opt to make a bequest in a will for that purpose. Because of our limited membership, we can't bring in as many national speakers as we would like to. If you are interested or want more info, call Chris Smith at 450-7430.

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The Officers for the upcoming 2025-2026 Campaign are:

President - Tony Roscetti

Vice-President - Danny Russell

Secretary - Gregg Herke

Treasurer - Pete Mohr

Preservation - Andy O'Donnell

Web Master - Ed Pope

Hardtack Editor - Theresa Russell

Membership Secretary - Roy Agnew

Book Raffle Master: Charlotte Carmichael

Assistant Book Raffle Master - Eric Dove

Quiz Master - Tony Trimble

Program Selection Committee - Steve Magnusen, Chairman; Bob Gottschalk; David Finney; and Tony Trimble

Nominating Committee - Linda Smith and Nikki Schofield

IF ANY FORMER INDIANAPOLIS CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OFFICERS OR MEMBERS HAVE ARCHIVAL MATERIAL THAT THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO DONATE, PLEASE BRING IT TO THE JUNE MEETING, WHERE IT WILL BE ORGANIZED AND KEPT IN A CENTRAL LOCATION!

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Photos of Scott Diezman's May presentation on Wilder's Lightning Brigade, courtesy of Steve Magnusen.

Test Your Civil War Knowledge (with Trimble's Trivia)

by Tony Trimble

No new quiz for June. Here are the answers to the May quiz.

1. Gettysburg
2. Louisiana
3. Kill Ration
4. Mrs. E.K. Newsom
5. The capture of forces under Jackson & Ewell, commanded by John C. Fremont.

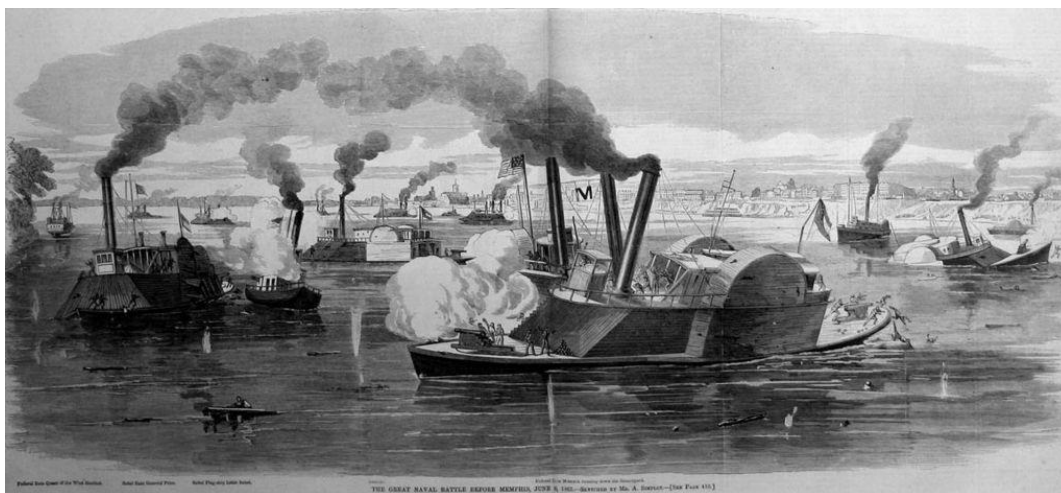


This Month in Civil War Era History

June 23, 1860 - The United States Congress established the Government Printing Office.

June 24, 1861 – Tennessee became the last state to leave the Union.

June 6, 1862 – The Western Gunboat Flotilla under Flag Officer Charles H. Davis defeated the Confederacy's Mississippi naval fleet near Memphis, Tennessee leading to the city's surrender.



June 7, 1863 - Mexico City was captured by French forces.

June 7, 1864 - Abraham Lincoln was renominated for a second term as U.S. President by the Republican Party.

June 28, 1865 - The Army of the Potomac was disbanded.

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The Last Witness to Appomattox

Norman Dasinger, Jr., March 28, 2025, blueandgrayeducation.org



In a quiet cemetery near Lincoln, Alabama, lies Pleasant Riggs Crump, believed to be the last living witness to one of the most defining moments in American history: the surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, on April 9 and 10, 1865.

Born in 1847 in St Clair County, Alabama, Crump—known simply as “Riggs” to those who knew him—traveled to Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864 to enlist in Company A of the 10th Alabama Infantry Regiment of the Confederate States Army. Many of the men in the 10th hailed from Crump’s home region, and by the time he joined, the unit had already witnessed the death and misery of the Civil War in the Eastern Theater. Crump arrived just in time to participate in the Battle of Hatcher’s Run, Virginia, and the siege of Petersburg.

When General Lee decided to end the bloodshed, Crump and the 10th Alabama were with the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox. Reflecting on that moment years later, Crump wrote that he stood “just across the road from the McLean House ... and took his little part in the stacking of the arms.”

More than just a witness, Crump has also been recognized by some historians in recent years as the last documented surviving Confederate soldier. He passed away in 1951 at the remarkable age of 104.

After the war, Crump returned home and married Mary Hall. Following her death in 1901, he married Ella Wallis. According to *The Anniston Star* (May 5, 2006 edition), Crump applied for a Confederate veteran’s pension in 1915 and received a check until his death. “He continued to work on his farm until after World War II.” He served as a deacon of Refuge Baptist Church for 71 years.

His obituary noted that President Harry S. Truman honored him with the ceremonial title of “Colonel.” In *The South’s Last Boys in Gray* by Jay Hoar, family members remembered Crump fondly:

“Mr. Crump was active all his life. He loved pies and cakes and meat. He smoked his pipe all the time. ... He liked to do things and had a sound mind as long as he lived.”

. . .

Preserve 1,099 Acres of Hallowed Ground

The American Battlefield Trust is approaching a major milestone in our mission to preserve America’s sacred battlegrounds: 60,000 acres protected.

And right now, there is an urgent opportunity to save 1,099 acres tied to three critical Civil War sites:

- 1,006 acres at Chickasaw Bayou, part of the Vicksburg Campaign
- 84 acres at Gettysburg, expanding preservation of South Cavalry Field
- 9 acres at Brandy Station, the largest cavalry battle in North America

More than \$4 million in public and private matching funds have been secured. Just \$162,500 remains to unlock the total preservation goal — a remarkable \$26-to-\$1 match on every dollar contributed.

The History

Chickasaw Bayou – Vicksburg’s Forgotten Beginning

In December 1862, Confederate forces repelled an early Union attempt to capture Vicksburg, delaying the Union advance for six critical months. The battle at Chickasaw Bayou, often overshadowed by the later siege, marked a significant early phase in the campaign to control the Mississippi River.

The 1,006 acres now under contract represent the largest preservation effort ever at this site — a key opportunity to elevate a long-overlooked chapter of the war.

Gettysburg – Completing the Story at South Cavalry Field

Though much of Gettysburg has been preserved, key pieces of the battlefield remain unprotected. The 84-acre tract at South Cavalry Field saw action before, during, and after Pickett’s Charge.

Preserving this land helps tell the complete story of Gettysburg — and ensures future generations can learn from the full scope of what unfolded there.

Brandy Station – A Cavalry Clash That Shaped Gettysburg

On June 9, 1863, Union and Confederate cavalry forces engaged in the largest cavalry battle ever fought in North America. This engagement played a vital role in the unfolding of the Gettysburg Campaign.

The 9-acre property targeted for preservation lies within the footprint of that battle and is facing imminent threat from development in rapidly growing Virginia.

Make History by Saving It

This preservation effort goes beyond protecting land. It protects legacy. Memories. Truth.

Every donation toward this campaign will:

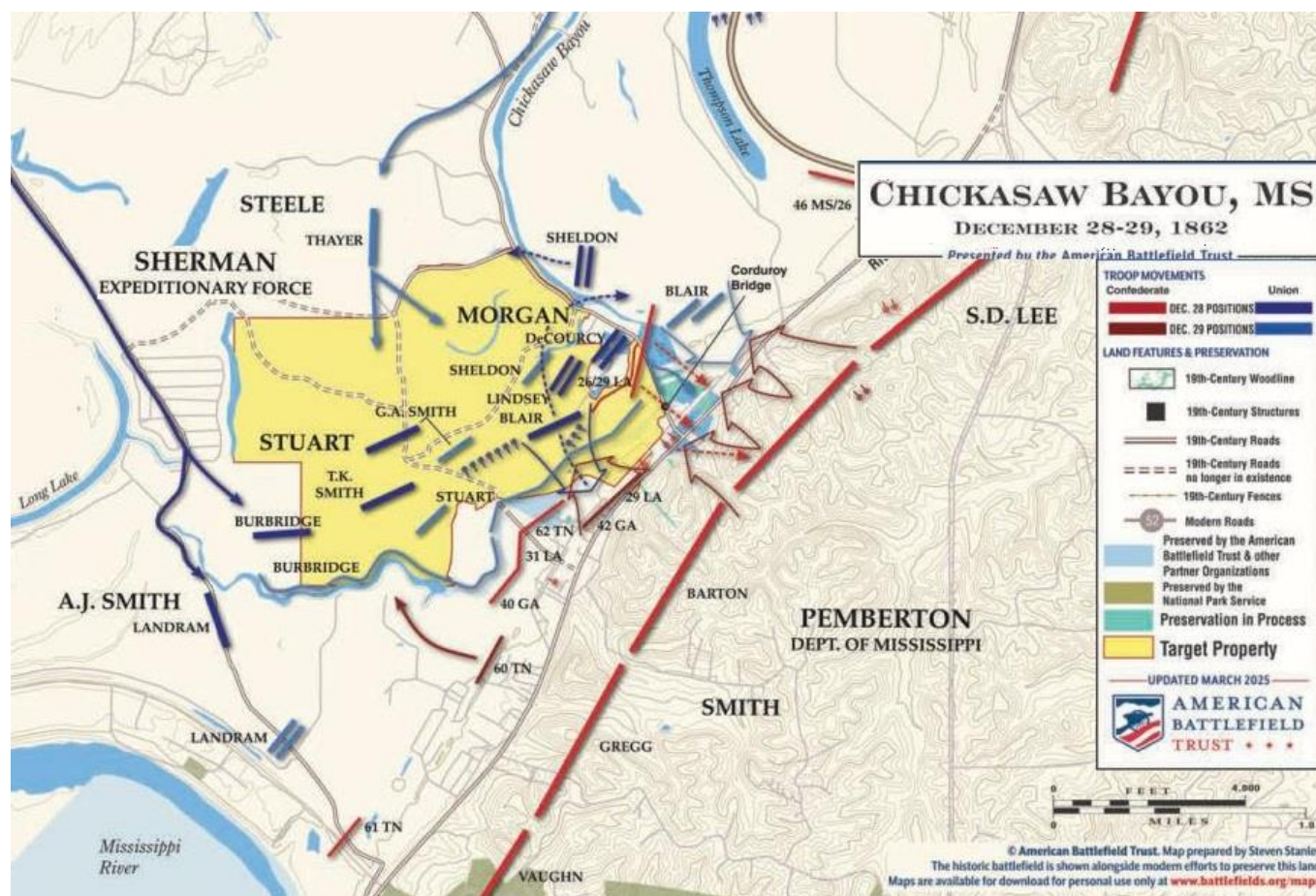
Help protect 1,099 critical acres tied to three major campaigns

Contribute to reaching the 60,000-acre milestone

Prevent encroaching development from erasing vital history

Leverage a powerful \$26-to-\$1 match — turning every dollar into twenty-six

The deadline to complete this opportunity is fast approaching. The time to act is now. Honor those who fought by ensuring the fields they marched and fell on are preserved forever.



American Battlefield Trust
 1030 15th Street NW, Suite 900 East
 Washington, DC 20005

RE-ENLIST NOW FOR THE 2025-2026 CAMPAIGN!

All ICWRT members may continue to receive the monthly newsletter, HARDTACK, via email at no additional charge. Members who prefer to receive the HARDTACK by U.S. Mail are asked to pay an additional \$12.00 to help cover printing and mailing costs.



Please bring your completed re-enlistment form (below) together with your payment to Indianapolis Civil War Round Table, and give it to Pete Mohr, ICWRT Treasurer, at the next Round Table meeting, or mail your re-enlistment form and payment to:

Pete Mohr

6308 Breamore Road

Indianapolis, Indiana 46220

Phone: (317) 828-5176

Email: pmohr2@gmail.com

Please complete and detach the form below and include with your check:

ICWRT Membership Enlistment for July 2025 thru June 2026

Please print legibly!

Name..... Date

Address.....

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Phone: (.....) Email Address:

We must have a valid email address if you wish to receive the HARDTACK newsletter free of charge!

(please specify Membership Level):

_____ \$30 Individual _____ \$35 Family _____ \$15 Student

_____ I wish to receive the newsletter via U.S. Mail for an additional \$12

In addition to my membership dues, please accept my generous gift of \$ _____ to the ICWRT general operating account (This donation is not tax deductible)

If someone invited you to join the ICWRT, please add their name. _____