

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXIX, Number 9

Chicago, Illinois

May, 1969

W. K. Alderfer: Illinois' Wartime Capitol—May 9



William K. Alderfer

Members of the Chicago Civil War Round Table will get a sneak preview of our state's restored old capitol building on Friday, May 9, when Illinois State Historian William K. Alderfer speaks on "Illinois' Wartime Capitol."

Alderfer, a scholar known to most of our members and respected by all, will have with him a set of slides that cover the entire building restoration project and the history of the structure that served as Illinois' capitol from 1840 to 1876. The restored building will be open late in the summer of this year, but Alderfer's slides afford a unique advance look at the multimillion dollar project.

In addition to bringing us a preview of the building, Alderfer will discuss the role of the state capitol in Civil War times. It was here that Lincoln in 1858 delivered his "House Divided" speech, a landmark pronouncement of the pre-Civil War era.

After Lincoln's election to the Presidency in 1860, the President-elect used the governor's outer office in this building to receive well-wishers, job seekers and those who wished to discuss the mounting tension between North and South. This room has been restored to appear as it did when Lincoln used it as President-elect.

It was in the capitol building, in the House of Representatives' chamber, that the assassinated Lincoln lay in state before his entombment in Oak Ridge Cemetery.

An obscure yet important role played by the building involved Ulysses S. Grant, who left a life of puttering in Galena to heed the call to arms in 1861. Grant came to the Illinois capitol building and was named adjutant to Governor Yates. It was the beginning of Grant's distinguished wartime service to the Union.

Stephen A. Douglas, as a state legislator and later as United States Senator, used the Illinois capitol building more than perhaps any other important figure of the Civil War era. He made numerous speeches in the building and often used it as his forum when he returned from Washington.

"Douglas literally killed himself trying to bring Republicans and Democrats together to support the Union cause after war was declared," Alderfer says, "and much of what he did took place in the old capitol building."

William K. Alderfer has been Illinois State Historian and executive director of the Illinois State Historical Society since July 1, 1967. He is also active in local and national history-associated organizations.

As State Historian, Alderfer directs the operations of the Illinois State Historical Library which will soon move to new quarters beneath the reconstructed Old State Capitol in Springfield.

The library was established in 1889 and now has more than 120,000 books and printed records on Illinois and the Mississippi Valley. Its collections also include more than a million manuscript items and more Illinois newspapers than can be found anywhere else.



281st REGULAR MEETING

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William K. Alderfer

on

"Illinois' Wartime Capitol"

and Election of Officers

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Friday, May 9, 1969

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Furniture Club in Furniture Mart

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6 p.m.



Its collection of Abraham Lincoln manuscripts is the largest outside of Washington, D.C. The extensive publications program which the library carries out in cooperation with the State Historical Society is planned to serve readers of all ages.

As executive director of the State Historical Society, Alderfer supervises the activities of Illinois' only state-wide history organization. In addition to publishing a quarterly historical journal and books and pamphlets the society sponsors a historymobile and a historical markers program and holds two meetings yearly. Each meeting is held in a different community and a feature of the program is a tour of the historic sites of the area.

Alderfer is secretary of the Abraham Lincoln Association, which recently raised the funds for furnishing the reconstructed Old State Capitol, and he is also a member of Springfield's Capitol City Planning Commission. He is a member of the awards committee of the American Association for State and Local History and a member of the American Historical Association and the Society of American Historians.

Alderfer was born in Pennsylvania and received his B.S. in economics degree in 1951 from the Wharton School of Commerce and Finance, University of Pennsylvania. In 1957 he was awarded an M.A. in American history from the University of Rochester, and continued his graduate studies in history at the University of Wisconsin. He was supervisor of field services for the State Historical Society of Wisconsin from 1958 to 1963 when he became director of the Historical Society of Michigan at Lansing.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940
18 East Chestnut Street,
Chicago 11, Illinois
Phone: WHitehall 4-3085

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Charles Wesselhoeft.

Terms expiring in 1970: S. J. Kearney, James Coulter, James
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Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968



PRESIDENT WARSHAW asks all members to volunteer to work on appropriate committees of the CWRT. Chairmen appointed by the president for 1968-1969 are:

Membership: Maurice Fisher
Awards: Chuck Falkenberg
House and Meals: Dick Cohen
Sickness and Memorials: Jim Coulter
Fellowship Co-Chairmen: Arnold Alexander, Pete Long
Auditing: Charley Wesselhoeft
Nominating: Brooks Davis
Publicity: Dick Bjorklund
Battlefield Tour: Dan Lapinski and Clyde Walton
Speakers Bureau: Don Pfeuffer
Stand-by Speaker: Miner T. Coburn
Special Events: Ver Lynn Sprague and Warren Reeder

Applications for CWRT fellowships are now available from Arnold Alexander, chairman of the CWRT fellowship committee, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Ill. 60611. Chairman Alexander reminds all CWRT members and friends that they may make tax-deductible contributions to the CWRT Fellowship Fund for Civil War research and education. Contributions may be sent to Alexander at the address above.

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Club members who know of the death or illness of anyone associated with the Chicago CWRT are encouraged to promptly contact President Warshaw or the CWRT through the Abraham Lincoln Bookshop.

from the Editor's pen



Even the strongest doubters of the military expertise of George B. McClellan came away impressed by the presentation on the general at our April meeting by Warren W. Hassler Jr.

Hassler stoutly defended McClellan in his speech and in a spirited question period that followed. Among his major points:

- McClellan, a great organizer, molded the "superb" Army of the Potomac, even though his progress seemed "maddeningly" slow to both the press and the Congress.
- McClellan was often deceived by intelligence reports from Pinkerton on the strength of Confederate forces. At one point Pinkerton reported 400,000 Southern troops in Virginia when there were in fact only about 40,000. Yet McClellan has taken the brunt of criticism concerning his alleged timidity.

Hassler noted that McClellan had known Lincoln when both were associated with the Illinois Central Railroad, McClellan as a company officer and Lincoln as a lawyer. In a letter to his wife, McClellan wondered whether Lincoln made up his anecdotes as he went along.

In presenting his account of McClellan, Hassler acknowledged that McClellan could have done more in the battle of Antietam which resulted in the greatest loss of life in any military encounter in North America.

Hassler alleged that Lincoln removed McClellan from command when the President could no longer stand the pressure from radicals in Congress. Yet even in eclipse, McClellan was loyal to the Union and urged support of Burnside as his successor.

In answer to a question by Marshall Krolick, Hassler said that McClellan was a competent commander despite the fact that he failed to wage an offensive campaign.

Pete Long alleged that McClellan had an "anxiety state with paranoiac overtones." Hassler acknowledged that McClellan had an anxiety state, but he didn't panic.

McClellan's night at the round table was in what old timers call "the old tradition" of the Chicago Civil War Round Table with plenty of controversy and give-and-take.

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Among visitors to our April meeting were students from Quincy College with their instructor, Father Landry.

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Sig Derman's table won Krolick's Kwick Kwiz, but the questions must be getting easier because several tables came close to weaving their way through last month's trivia.

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Dan Lapinski, chairman of this year's Battlefield Tour, announced that the group will visit Boonville where Sheridan won his star.

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The receipt of your letter which enclosed my Honorary Life Membership card brought back a flood of pleasant memories. The honor has always been a source of great pride to me, and I shall cherish this handsome proof of it and, to quote you, "carry it with pride."

Through the years since its founding, the Chicago Civil War Table has contributed so much to the stimulation of interest in the war for the preservation of the Union that the country as a whole, and the field of education in particular, have benefited far more than most men know. I am proud to be a part of it.

Col. Allen Phelps Julian
1838 Meredith Drive, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia.

ELECTION NOTICE

Bob Douglas successfully presented amendments to the constitution which had the effect of increasing the vice presidencies of the CWRT from one to three, thereby enabling fresh leadership to be developed within the group. One provision of the new election regulations requires that the senior vice president be automatically nominated for president at the conclusion of his term.

The Chicago Civil War Round Table will elect its new officers according to the rules adopted at the April meeting at our meeting on May 9.

A nominating committee composed of past presidents of our group nominated:

President Clyde Walton
Senior Vice President Dan Lapinski
Vice President Don Russell
Vice President Charles Falkenberg
Secretary Charles Wesselhoeft
Treasurer Richard Cohen
Assistant Treasurer Don Jensen
Directors (for terms expiring in 1971): Don Pfeuffer,
Elmer Underwood and Marshall Krolick.

Members of the slatemaking committee pointed out that a number of the members slated for office are relatively new members of the Chicago Civil War Round Table. New members are encouraged to take full part in the activities of the Round Table and to make themselves available for positions of leadership.

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I regret exceedingly that I cannot be present at the March 14 meeting, for I should enjoy nothing more than being allowed to stand (with the help of my cane) and give my advanced middle-aged garrulity free rein. I should like to give the old story of how our founders group got together and launched our prestigious organization, and to pay tribute to and stick a few needles into) the so-called founders.

The signal honor of my being lead-off man was due to my enthusiasm, rather than my knowledge, and to the reluctance of the others to be the fall guy. We were quite a bunch, pretty knowledgeable and all that—but more than anything else congenial. The R.T. was always as much a social pleasure to us as an intellectual one. I think that is the key to the Chicago group's success and long life. And then we had a great diversity of interests in the subject.

Newt Farr did all his work in politics, Seymour Frank in economics, Elmer Gertz in public relations and opinions, Monroe Cockrell and I in the military (to me the War was Lee and Grant—with Lincoln dominating the background). Otto Eisenschiml in every phase, including incomparable battlefield roaming, the Otto was the greatest—especially as an aristocratic lovable gentleman. Ralph Newman was a slouch—after all he knew the answer to every question in the war except how much Lincoln offered the slave holders per head for their chattel (see: the History of the \$64,000 Question).

Also I'd like to tell of our peregrinations—from the Bismark, to other restaurants, and to the University Club where I steered the meetings (and left them when I left Chicago in 1942).

But let this note do what I can't do in person: Greetings to all, and as Tiny Tim (Dickens' that is) said, "God bless us every one."

Percival G. Hart
246 Spalding Dr.
Beverly Hills, Calif.

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I want to thank you for sending me the Life Membership card in the Civil War Round Table of Chicago. I am proud to have it and will carry it wherever I go.

I hope to be able to get to Chicago before too long and renew my acquaintance with members of the Round Table.

Bruce Catton
551 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y.

TO THE LADIES —

E. B. Long presented a very interesting program entitled "A Capsule Preview of the 1969 Battlefield Tour" to the Camp Followers on Friday evening, April 11. This enjoyable and enlightening talk stimulated a question and answer period, and was most heartily received. After the dinner Mrs. G. P. Clausius gave a short biography of Gen. Stephen A. Hurlbut, who was at Shiloh, and who was from Belvidere—the Clausius' town.

"The Camp Followers' Book Shelf—Or Don't Clutter Up My Mind With Facts" is the title of the May program, which piques our curiosity and interest. It will be given by Mrs. Brooks Davis. Those who heard her previous presentation know what an interesting evening this will be.

Reservations for the catered dinner should be made with Mrs. Robert G. Walter, 2009 So. 22nd Ave., Broadview, Ill. 60153, phone 681-0588.

IN MEMORIAM

DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER

(To mark the recent death of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, we reprint an eloquent statement on the Civil War that he prepared as a special message to the Chicago Civil War Round Table on the occasion of its 250th meeting.)

Box FFF, Indio, California
March 25, 1966

To The Chicago Civil War Round Table:

With all who believe that knowledge of our history is a rich source of strength and wisdom to every American generation in the meeting of its problems and trials, I salute the contribution made by you of the Chicago Civil War Round Table to the revival of Civil War study.

Here was a war between men of like tongue and loyalties and aspirations. Neither side had a monopoly on courage or conviction or integrity. Both sides, indeed, could boast of combat leaders and fighting men, of statesmen and citizens whose conduct from the beginning to end of the conflict was marked by uncommon courage, stout conviction, sterling integrity. Nor was victory, until the final months of Southern exhaustion, a matter of mathematical odds or economic statistics.

Through most of its duration, the war was a supreme testing of men's spirit. From that testing, both sides—those who won and those who lost—emerged, heroic in stature. North and South alike were proved great in their will to endure tragic trial, to persevere unflinchingly, to sacrifice blood and treasure and young hopes for a cause beyond self or worldly ease. Out of Civil War study, one paramount lesson emerges that all of us descended in blood and in spirit from those who fought in Blue and in Gray, should forever bear in mind:

The Republic, one and indivisible, a heritage costly to our forebears in its building, merits of every one of us the persistent and productive resolve that each day of our lives we shall in some way, in some work, prove ourselves worthy heirs to it, builders in our time of new strength and brighter promise.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Thank you so very much for the Civil War Round Table card. I am hoping that my schedule and the workload here will soon allow me to be able to join with my many friends.

Thank you again ever so much.

Otto Kerner
Circuit Judge
United States Court of Appeals
Chicago, Illinois

THE NEW BOOKS



Basler, Roy P., ed. **ABRAHAM LINCOLN: HIS SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.** N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1969. \$27.00. Original of 1946.

Bennett, Lerone, Jr. **BLACK POWER U.S.A.: THE HUMAN SIDE OF RECONSTRUCTION, 1867-1877.** Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969. Paper, \$1.45.

Daly, Robert Welter. **ABOARD THE USS FLORIDA: 1863-65.** Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1968. \$13.00

Davis, David Brion. **THE PROBLEM OF SLAVERY IN WESTERN CULTURE.** Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell, 1969. Paper \$2.95. Hardcover (1966) \$10.00

Ford, Worthing C., ed. **A CYCLE OF ADAMS LETTERS, 1861-1865.** 2 vols. in 1. N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1969. \$25.00

Garner, James Wilford. **RECONSTRUCTION IN MISSISSIPPI.** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U., 1968. Paper, \$3.95 Reprint 1901 edition.

Gurowski, Adam, Count. **DIARY.** 3 vols. in 2. N.Y.: Franklin, 1968. \$37.50

Hesseltine, William B. **SECTIONS AND POLITICS: Selected Essays by . . .** Madison, Wis.: State Historical Soc. of Wisc., 1968. \$5.00

Horn, Stanley F. **THE DECISIVE BATTLE OF NASHVILLE.** Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr. 1968. \$4.50

Leckie, Robert. **THE WARS OF AMERICA.** N.Y.: Bantam, 1969. 2 vols. paper, \$1.25 each.

McElroy, Robert M. **JEFFERSON DAVIS: THE UNREAL AND THE REAL.** N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1969. 2 vols. in 1. \$25.00. Original of 1937.

Mearns, David Chambers. **THE LINCOLN PAPERS: The Story of the Collection, with Selections to July 4, 1861.** N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1969. 2 vols. in 1. \$22.00. Original of 1948.

Moore, George Henry. **NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS.** N.Y.: Negro Univ. Pr., 1968. \$10.25. Reprint of 1866 ed.

Scarborough, Ruth. **THE OPPOSITION TO SLAVERY IN GEORGIA PRIOR TO 1860.** N.Y.: Negro Univ. Pr., 1968. \$10.75. Original of 1931.

Schwab, John Christopher. **THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, 1861-1865: A Financial and Industrial History of the South During the Civil War.** N.Y.: Burt Franklin, 1968. \$17.50. Original of 1901.

Shugg, Roger W. **ORIGINS OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN LOUISIANA: a Social History of White Farmers and Laborers During Slavery and After, 1840-1875.** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Pr., 1968. \$7.50; paper \$2.95

Williams, George Washington. **HISTORY OF THE NEGRO RACE IN AMERICA, 1619-1880.** 2 vols. in 1. N.Y. Arno, 1968. \$34.50. Reprint 1883 ed.

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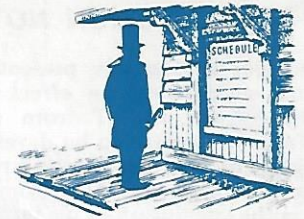
Our member Frank Palumbo has asked members of the Chicago Civil War Round Table to make contributions to Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis., for acquisitions for the college's history collection.

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Thank you for your letter of March 25 and inclosure.

I am proud to be an Honorary Life Member of the Chicago Civil War Round Table. I cherish past associations with members of this illustrious group and I hope for renewals of the associations in the years to come.

Bell Wiley
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia



BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

JUNE 6: Charles L. Dufour "The Blue and the Gray in Mexico."

All meetings are held on Friday nights in the Furniture Club of the Furniture Mart.

This year's battlefield tour will visit Shiloh, Corinth, Brice's Crossroads, Holly Springs and Memphis on May 1-4.

DECEASED: Marda Alexander, wife of member Arnold Alexander and a member of the Camp Followers, died April 16.



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A symbolic charge recalling the heroism of Virginia Military Institute cadets in the 1864 Battle will highlight the 105th anniversary ceremonies at the New Market Battlefield Park, New Market, Va., Sunday, May 11.

Current VMI cadets and representatives of a number of reactivated Civil War units will take part in the ceremonies which start at 3 p.m. A replica 12-pounder Napoleon cannon will fire just as the uniformed men in a symbolic charge from the historic farmhouse reach the crest of the hill where the Union cannon stood.

The park is a nonprofit facility of VMI dedicated to youthful valor as shown by the cadets of 1864.

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From Publishers' Weekly: The annual Harry S. Truman Award for meritorious service in the field of Civil War history has been presented by the Kansas City Civil War Round Table, Kansas City, Missouri, to Glenn Tucker, author of numerous books of American history and biography.

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Salt Creek Civil War Round Table has tentatively scheduled a Springfield Tour on June 7 and 8. Those interested might contact Dan Lapinski, a member of the Salt Creek CWRT executive committee.

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Members may wish to join the Civil War Round Table Associates, P.O. Box 7388, Little Rock, Ark. 72207, which publishes the Civil War Round Table Digest. Memberships, which include subscriptions to the digest, are \$7.50 per year.

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