

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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November, 1975

## GEORGE M. FREDRICKSON ON LINCOLN AND RACIAL EQUALITY

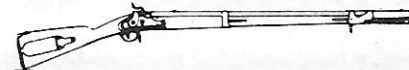
Frederick Douglass recalled in the 1880's, "In all my interviews with Mr. Lincoln, I was impressed with his entire freedom from popular prejudices against the colored race." Yet, in an oration delivered in 1876, at the unavailing of a monument to Lincoln, Douglass felt obliged to remind his black audience that "Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. In his interests, in his associations, in his habits of thought, and in his prejudices, he was a white man. He was preeminently the white man's President, entirely devoted to the welfare of white men. He was ready and willing at any time during the first years of his administration to deny, postpone and sacrifice the rights of humanity in the colored people to promote the welfare of the white people of this country."

Apparent contradictory elements in Lincoln's racial attitudes have long interested historians. George M. Fredrickson visits the Round Table on November 14th to discuss and analyze Lincoln's racial attitudes. Professor Fredrickson received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1964 and has been a member of the Northwestern University History Department since 1966, having been appointed a full professor in 1971. He is the author of *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (1965) and *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny 1817-1914* (1971). He has also edited *Great Lives Observed: William Lloyd Garrison* (1968), *The Impending Crisis of the South* by H. R. Helper (1968), and *A Nation Divided: Problems and Issues of the Civil War and Reconstruction*.

Professor Fredrickson will attempt to distinguish between Lincoln's deeply held personal convictions and the evasion and equivocation of the politician responding to public opinion. As a professional politician Lincoln had to compromise and adjust at all times trying to carefully work within the limits allowable by public opinion at a given moment. However, many of Lincoln's key statements with regard to race were not totally determined by political concern. They follow a pattern of beliefs developing throughout his career, beliefs which can be traced back to his early affiliation with the Whig Party and his persistent devotion to Henry Clay.

In the 1850's Lincoln was to assume Clay's mantle as a moderate opponent of slavery. He thought of himself as taking up where Clay had left off. He quoted Clay, paraphrased him, and at times plagiarized from him in order to win Whigs to the new Republican Party. Thus, in analyzing Lincoln's attitudes during that period, Professor Fredrickson will, in fact, be portraying Henry Clay's attitudes towards race relations.

As private citizen, politician, and Chief Executive, Lincoln's racial philosophy embodied the elements of moral opposition to slavery, acceptance of the basic humanity of blacks and a conservative position on the prospects for racial equality in the United States. He thought slavery contradicted the Declaration of Independence but the denial to blacks of political and civil



345th REGULAR MEETING

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Dr. George M. Frederickson  
on  
Lincoln And Racial Equality

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Friday, November 14, 1975

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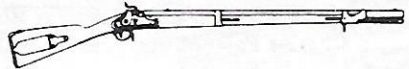
Cocktail at 5:30 P.M.

Dinner at 6:30 P.M.

The Blackhawk Restaurant  
139 North Wabash

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Meeting at 8:00 P.M.  
G.A.R. Memorial Auditorium  
Chicago Public Library Building  
Randolph at Michigan



Please note that the November meeting will *not* be held at the Bar Association. Instead, we will assemble for the Command Post at 5:30 P.M. in the Old Frontier Room of The Blackhawk Restaurant, 139 North Wabash. Dinner will follow at 6:30 P.M. in the same location. At approximately 8:00 we will recess for a short walk to the G.A.R. Memorial Auditorium in the Public Library Building where the evening's program will be presented.

equality did not. He felt the majority of citizens could grant or withhold full privileges of citizenship as they saw fit. In the core of his thinking, Lincoln was thus trapped by "the American dilemma." For Lincoln the negro was a man but not a brother.

Lincoln was to follow Clay's solution for the race problem and advocate a policy of colonization for the black man. He believed that equality for a racial group was essentially due to its superior adaptability to a physical environment. Social equality could only come in a racially homogenous society. The fact that Lincoln was caught in a moral and ideological dilemma was to distinguish him from Stephen A. Douglas and the other politicians of his time.

Did Lincoln modify some of these conservative views in the last years of the war? For example, in 1864 he expressed interest in partial black suffrage, proposing that the Louisiana Constitutional Convention consider voting privileges for "very intellectual blacks and those who have fought gallantly in our ranks." These and other interesting questions will be mentioned by Professor Fredrickson in what will be a stimulating view of the great Civil War martyr.



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street  
Chicago Illinois 60611  
Phone: (312) 944-3085

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The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Ward C. Smidl, 1104 Whippoorwill Lane, Palatine, Illinois 60067.



*from the  
Editor's pen*



Two years ago, our Executive Committee determined that it would be most fitting and proper if The Round Table was to present an annual award for outstanding contributions to the field of Civil War study. Thus it was that the Nevins-Freeman Award was born. It is a noble idea, one of which we can be justifiably proud. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the ceremonies attending the presentation of the Award to its first two recipients.

With the best of intentions, it was decided that the perfect setting for the festivities would be the G.A.R. Rotunda and Auditorium in the central building of the Chicago Public Library, the future home of our Research Center. While it cannot be denied that these rooms provide a lovely and digni-

fied background for the affair, it is our position that the choice of this site can only be categorized as a serious error. The reasons are many. First of all, the building does not have food service facilities. This necessitates the engagement of a caterer to bring in pre-prepared food, the cost of which results in our being faced with the choice of a prohibitive charge per person or, equally undesirable, the treasury's absorbing a serious financial loss.

Secondly, the acoustics in the Auditorium are terrible. Even with the use of a loudspeaker system, the words of the speaker cannot be heard in the rear portions of the room. Third, the seats themselves are extremely uncomfortable, certainly not conducive to enhancing the audience's enjoyment. Fourth, and most important of all, there is no air conditioning. As the Award Dinner is held in June, this has produced a climatic condition which has bordered on the unbearable.

There are other problems, but perhaps we are being unfair. The Library building is presently undergoing major renovations and maybe these changes will eliminate the difficulties. If they do, fine, but if they do not, we strongly urge the Executive Committee to consider another site. Certainly, before any plans are finalized, there should be a thorough investigation as to the proposed status of the rooms by next June.

However, the physical surroundings have not been the only flaw in the conduct of the Award evenings. Indeed, probably the major detraction has been the program itself. The first year it was decided to schedule only a series of speakers to recount the contributions of our recipient. This was subsequently criticized as having resulted in too "dry" an evening, especially as it presented nothing to amuse the ladies. Therefore, the next year a program of entertainment was scheduled to follow the several speakers. And what happened? As soon as the Award had been presented, at least seventy-five per cent of the audience proceeded to the exits, leaving rows of empty chairs to be "entertained". True, the hour was late and the room was hot, but these facts can in no way justify the extreme rudeness thus shown by those who departed to a lovely and gracious lady who had travelled over a hundred miles to share with us her considerable talent and historical knowledge. It is a stain on the otherwise bright history of this Round Table.

It is obvious that what we have tried so far has not worked. The several speakers are, despite their fine efforts, truly not necessary. If we are all not already aware of the recipient's achievements, then we have made a poor selection. So, what are the alternatives? We think there are two, either an invitation to the recipient to deliver a major address or a short presentation ceremony followed by a program of entertainment, as we used to have on Ladies Night. While we personally favor the latter, we feel it is a matter to be seriously considered. The President should, and must, immediately designate a committee to study in depth the problems of the Award Dinner and arrive at a well-planned solution. At stake are respect for the Nevins-Freeman Award and our pride in The Round Table. There is no reason why the enjoyment of the evening cannot equal the dignity of the occasion.

All of those members whose 1975-1976 dues have not as yet been paid have now been dropped from the membership roster and the mailing list. However, reinstatement can be effectuated if the delinquent dues are received by the Treasurer by the date of the November meeting.

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We are most pleased to announce that the brilliant performance of our own Richard Blake, "A Look At Lincoln", is now available on a long-playing record. The album, produced by Illini Records of Springfield, Illinois, can be obtained for \$5.98 by writing directly to Dick at 3617 N. Grand Ave. East, Springfield, Illinois 62702. Dick's masterful portrayal of our 16th president, whether viewed in person or heard on this record, is undeniably a very moving experience.



## OCTOBER MEETING

Mixing a well-honed sense of humor with a high degree of scholarship and research, Dr. Alfred C. Raphelson presented sixty-seven members and guests with a detailed and delightful review of the career of our patron saint, Alexander Schimmelfennig. In his remarks Dr. Raphelson captured perfectly the mood of The Round Table as he maintained the same balance of respect and irreverence which have characterized our love affair with the almost forgotten general.

Schimmelfennig, born in Prussia in 1824, spent his early years in military training and army service in his homeland. Defecting from the Prussian Army to join the revolt of 1848, he was subsequently forced to flee to Switzerland when the republican movement collapsed. After short stays in the latter country and England, he realized that thoughts of a return to Prussia were only empty dreams and so, in 1853, he emigrated with his family to America.

While employed in Philadelphia as an engineer and draftsman, Schimmelfennig found time in 1854 to author a history of the Turkish-Russian War. Despite its military subject, the book is basically a well written text in support of the republican form of government, of which the future general cited the United States as a prime example. In light of his feeling for his adopted country, it is no wonder that he was among the first to respond to the call for volunteers in 1861. After assisting in the organization of German refugees in several cities, he accepted the offer of a colonelcy of a regiment of his fellow immigrants, the 35th Pennsylvania.

Unfortunately, ill-health, which was to plague Schimmelfennig almost continuously until his untimely death, struck almost immediately as he began his American military career. A fall by his horse resulted in a severely injured leg and then, as he recuperated, he fell victim to small-pox. When he was finally able to resume full time duty, Schimmelfennig found his regiment, now renamed the 74th Pennsylvania, assigned to Pope's Army of Virginia. His brilliant performance at 2nd Bull Run earned him command of a brigade. However, he was to see no further action for eight months as his troops were left in the Washington defenses during the Antietam campaign and were in reserve at Fredericksburg.

Having been promoted to general at the age of thirty-eight, Schimmelfennig was commander of a brigade in Shurz's division of the XI Corps as the Army of Potomac marched to Chancellorsville. As Hooker took up his unexpected defensive position, the new general's brigade was on the left of Devin's troops, the latter being the right flank element of the army. Upon the report of his aide, who had discovered Jackson's flank march, Schimmelfennig repeatedly attempted to warn his superiors of the impending danger. However, even a personal visit to corps headquarters could not convince Howard of his peril. As the attack struck, Schimmelfennig attempted to reform the lines, but could not stem the tide of retreat caused by the rout of Devin's brigade.

After the battle, the XI Corps became the scapegoat for the defeat as the press castigated the "cowardly Dutchmen". Schimmelfennig bitterly resented these assaults on the ability of his men and he turned his battle report into a vehement defense, as well as a diatribe against the newspapers. Nonetheless, his demands for retractions were ignored. The morale of Howard's soldiers was thus extremely low as they entered Gettysburg.

Schimmelfennig's role in that battle, at once both comic and pathetic, is well known. Faced with almost certain capture during the retreat on July 1, 1863, he was forced to take refuge in the celebrated Garlach family pig sty until the Confederates retreated three days later. Reunited with his command, he found his men again the object of derision despite the Federal victory. Unable to bear further service under Howard, Schimmelfennig requested a transfer and was assigned to the Department of the South. Serving ably in the lengthy siege of Charleston, he suffered the ravages of exposure to the

## TO THE CAMPFOLLOWERS (LADIES)

At our October Meeting, we determined the extent of our expertise by taking a "Civil War IQ" test. The quiz was carefully researched and prepared by Kathy Carr and Roberta Krolick (without assistance from their spouses) and was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants.

On November 14, CWRT member Jerry Warshaw will speak on movies with Civil War themes. After dinner Joyce Warshaw will show some of these films which will also illustrate the techniques of movie-making in its earlier years. The meeting will be held at Pioneer Court Restaurant, 401 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago. The cash bar will be open at 5:30 p.m., the program will begin at 6:00 p.m. and the dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m. To make your reservation and obtain parking information please call or write Roberta Krolick, 3126 Violet Lane, Northbrook, Illinois 60062, 498-3126.

harbor climate. The duty was tedious and of insignificant tactical purpose. Schimmelfennig himself saw his role as merely one of compelling the Confederates to maintain a large force in his front, thus keeping needed reinforcements from Lee. However, on February 18, 1865, the general did have the honor of receiving the surrender of Charleston.

His health ruined by repeated attacks of dysentery and tuberculosis, in April of 1865 Schimmelfennig travelled to a mineral spring in Pennsylvania in the hope of recovery. The attempt was in vain for, on September 7, 1865, while still at the resort, he passed away. Just before his death, and despite the pleas of his old friend Shurz, he had been mustered out of the army, thus denying to his family the pension that was reserved for the survivors of officers who died while still on the rolls. His was truly a tragic career, but one which was marked by bravery, ability and dedication. It deserves to be remembered not only in jest, but also in admiration.

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At the conclusion of Dr. Raphelson's excellent remarks, Past President Dan Lapinski requested the floor allegedly for an opportunity to rebut the slanders of the pig sty fable. In his self-proclaimed position as one of the two international members of the Alexander Schimmelfennig Society (A.S.S.), Dan revealed that while supposedly in hiding on the Garlach property, the general was actually on detached service performing a secret mission for the C.I.A. However, Dan's theory was quickly rejected by Dr. Raphelson who stated that the members of A.S.S. were obviously "behind" the times. This remark made Dan the "butt" of the joke and provided a fitting "end" to the evening.

The Cincinnati C.W.R.T. has begun a most interesting program, one which other Round Tables should also consider. The Ohioans propose to sponsor a new Explorer Scout post in which the members will wear the uniforms of the Civil War, with their scout activities based upon the events of 1861-1865. This project should provide a viable method of interesting young people in the study of our favorite period of history. We applaud their efforts and extend our best wishes for success.

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Julia Grant Cantacuzene, 99, granddaughter of General Grant, died recently in Washington. The daughter of Grant's oldest son, Major General Frederick D. Grant, had, at one time, been married to the Russian prince, Michael Cantacuzene. During the Russian revolution, she and her husband had been forced to flee from the Ukraine to America. Mrs. Cantacuzene spent the last years of her life as one of the more spirited hostesses residing in our nation's capital.



# THE NEW BOOKS



(Compiled by Dick Clark)

DeLeon, Thomas Cooper. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals . . . With Biographical Sketch of the Author* by Louis de V. Chaudron. Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1975. Reprint of author's autograph edition. \$18.00

Donald, David H., editor. *Gone for a Soldier: The Civil War Memoirs of Private Alfred Bellard*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1975. \$20.00

Gavin, William G. *Accoutrement Plates, North and South, 1861-1865; An Authoritative Reference with Comparative Values*; Foreword by Stephen V. Grancsay. 2nd edition. York, Pa.: George Shumway, 1975. \$20.00

Glenn, William Elkins. *Between North and South: A Maryland Journalist Views the Civil War; the Narrative of William Wilkins Glenn, 1861-1869*. Edited, with notes and glossary by Bayly Ellen Marks and Mark Norton Schatz. Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975. \$18.00

Goldhurst, Richard. *Many Are the Hearts: The Agony and the Triumph of Ulysses S. Grant*. New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1975. \$10.00

Gutman, Herbert George. *Slavery and the Numbers Game: A Critique of Time on the Cross*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975. Paper, \$2.95

Haworth, Paul Leland. *Reconstruction and Union, 1865-1912*. New York: AMS Press, 1975. Reprint of 1912 edition. \$14.00

Hubbell, John T., editor. *Battles Lost and Won: Essays from Civil War History*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975. \$13.95

Longacre, Edward G. *Mounted Raids of the Civil War*. New York: A.S. Barnes, 1975. \$12.00

Rowell, John W. *Yankee Artillerymen: Through the Civil War with Eli Lilly's Indiana Battery*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975. \$11.95

Smith, William Russell. *The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama*; begun and held in the city of Montgomery, on the seventh day of January, 1861; in which is preserved the speeches of the secret sessions, and many valuable state papers . . . Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1975. Reprint of 1861 edition. \$21.00

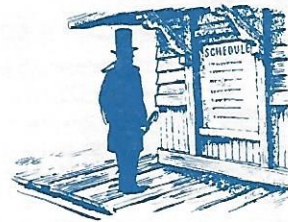
## FIRST NATIONAL CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE CONGRESS By William Sullivan

On October 2-4, 168 delegates from 27 Round Tables in 23 states met in Manassas, Virginia in an attempt to discover constructive means to ensure the protection of our Civil War battlefields against the encroachments of developers and to provide funds for future battlefield preservation. It was no accident that we chose to meet in Manassas, where there is currently being waged a massive struggle to prevent the development of a giant amusement park, proposed by the Marriott Corporation, abutting the battlefield. At the sessions of the Congress, this matter was reviewed thoroughly and a further report on the status of the situation will be made in a future issue of the Newsletter.

The delegates also discussed the Civil War Sites Fund which, since its inception several years ago by the staff of Civil War Times Illustrated, has unfortunately not been successful in attracting the necessary financial support. The fund is administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the money is used solely for the purchase of Civil War historic sites. Speakers at the Congress urged all Round Tables and their members to contribute as much as possible to this fund on a continuing basis.

In addition to directing letters to various individuals regard-

# BULLETIN BOARD



## FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular Meetings are held at the Chicago Bar Association, 29 South LaSalle, second Friday in each month except as noted.

November 14: Dr. George Fredrickson on "Lincoln and the Race Issue."

December 12: Dr. Harry Pfanz on "The First Day at Gettysburg."

January 9: William Sullivan on "The Civil War on The Plains."

February 13: James T. Hickey on "Recent Lincoln Document Acquisitions by the Illinois State Historical Library."

March 12: Edward G.A. Kubler on "The Building and Recovery of the Monitor."

April 9: 350th Regular Meeting. Symposium, chaired by E. B. "Pete" Long, on "Is Civil War History Still a Pertinent Subject?."

May 5-9: Annual Battlefield Tour to Manassas and Antietam.

May 14: Albert P. Scheller on "Illinois Regiments and Generals in Mississippi."

June 11: Ladies Night. Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and Installation of Officers.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at LaSalle Hotel Coffee Shop; all members welcome.

## CHANGES OF ADDRESS

J. B. Neville, M.D., 970 Armour Circle, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045.

Allan Niemiec, 3512 West 64th Place, Chicago, Illinois 60629.



ing the problems of battlefield preservation, the delegates also approved a message to our own founder, Ralph G. Newman, thanking him for his many contributions to the Round Table movement. Speakers at the congress included Dr. Bell Wiley on "The Common Soldier", Dr. B. F. Cooling, Dr. Robert Meinhard and our own VerLynn Sprague, on "Battlefield Preservation", Dr. Thomas Connelly, on "Lee", Mr. R. Donnelly, on "The Confederate Marine Corps", Dr. Francis Lord, on "Tactics", Richard Hoffman, Superintendent of the Manassas Battlefield Park, and Congressman Herbert Harris, who explained his recent bill regarding the preservation of the Manassas area.

Thanks to the efforts of Jerry Russell and the participation of the many delegates, this initial Congress was obviously a success. It was decided that this should be an annual affair and the 1976 Congress is scheduled for Carlisle, Pennsylvania in October of next year. Our host at that time will be the staff of the Army War College and U.S. Military History Research Collection.

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On November 19, 1975, the anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg address, the Kentucky monument at Gettysburg will be dedicated in impressive ceremonies. As Kentucky had no organized units present at the battle, the monument has been located near the spot where Lincoln delivered his famous remarks. This event will mark the completion of a project initiated four years ago when the Kentucky General Assembly appropriated funds for markers at both Gettysburg and Shiloh. The monument at the latter field was previously unveiled in April, 1974. The Kentucky (Lexington) and Louisville C.W.R.T.'s are planning a joint bus trip to Gettysburg to be present at the ceremonies. The group will depart from Kentucky on November 17th and will return three days later.