

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLII, Number 1

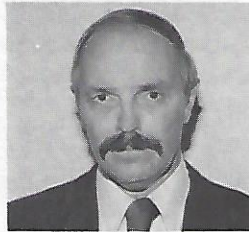
Chicago, Illinois

September, 1981

DR. ALBERT CASTEL ON THE NOT-SO-FINE ART OF LYING: SOME CIVIL WAR GENERALS AND THEIR REPORTS

One of the first casualties of war, it has been said, is the truth, and that axiom, maintains Dr. Albert Castel, Professor of History at Western Michigan University, applies most definitely to the Civil War. In his talk at the first Round Table meeting of 1981-82 on September 11, Dr. Castel plans to provide some examples of how some well-known Civil War generals, both Union and Confederate, engaged in falsification, distortion, and concealment, and will endeavor to explain why they did so.

Two of Dr. Castel's prime examples, he says, will be Joseph E. Johnston and John Bell Hood. The first, he notes, "in effect claimed to have wiped out Sherman's entire army during the Atlanta Campaign, the second tried to escape blame for his defeats by either accusing his troops of cowardice or by trying to hide the fact that a battle had even taken place." Examples of lying on the Union side will include none other than Grant and Sherman.



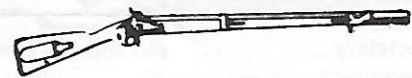
DR. ALBERT CASTEL

The name Albert Castel is a familiar one to regular readers of *Civil War Times Illustrated*. He contributes articles frequently and has prepared a couple of special issues for them: "The Guerrilla War" (1974) and "Fort Sumter—1861" (1976). More significantly, he received the "Best Author" award for 1980 for his three-part series on General W.T. Sherman, "The Life of a Rising Son."

Dr. Castel was born in Wichita, Kansas and received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Wichita University in 1950 and 1951 respectively. Following his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1955, he served in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps until 1957. Before joining Western Michigan University he taught history at Kansas City University, UCLA, City College of New York, and Culver Military Academy.

He is the author of *A Frontier State at War: Kansas 1861-1865* (1959); *William Clarke Quantrill: His Life and Times* (1962); *General Sterling Price and the Civil War in the West* (1968); and *The Presidency of Andrew Johnson* (1979). In addition to writing for *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Dr. Castel has contributed articles, mainly on Civil War subjects, to numerous other publications including *American Heritage*, *Civil War History*, *Journal of Negro History*, and *American History Illustrated*.

Dr. Castel last spoke to The Round Table in 1970 on "Lee



403rd REGULAR MEETING

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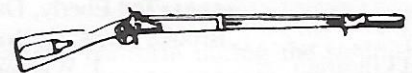
ALBERT CASTEL
ON
THE NOT-SO-FINE ART OF LYING:
SOME CIVIL WAR GENERALS AND
THEIR REPORTS

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1981

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Como Inn
546 N. Milwaukee
Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.



A REMINDER

The first meeting of the year is an appropriate time to remind members to make their meeting reservations early, and in no case later than 5 p.m. on the Thursday preceding the Friday meeting. Also, please call the Book Shop if you have made a reservation but find you cannot attend.

and His Critics: The Western School." It was based on his *Civil War History* article, "The Historian and the General: Thomas L. Connelly versus Robert E. Lee," (March, 1970).

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chesnut 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.



The seventh annual National Congress of Civil War Round Tables will be held in Frederick, Maryland, October 14, 1981. Among the featured speakers will be William Frassanito, Dr. Grady McWhiney, National Park Service Director Russell Dickenson, and Howard Westwood. Ed Bearss and Bob Krick will lead tours of Antietam and Monocacy. For further information, write or call Civil War Round Table Associates, P.O. Box 7388, Little Rock, Arkansas 72217 (501) 225-3996.

SUMMER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

In addition to selecting the 1982 Nevins-Freeman Award recipient (see related story), the Executive Committee considered and took action on several items of importance at its annual summer meeting July 11.

The Committee decided against any dues increase for 1981-82, except for national members who will be assessed \$25, a \$5 increase. In other financial matters, the treasurer was authorized to convert The Round Table's Washington National Life Insurance stock and reinvest it in higher interest-yielding money market certificates.

Due to the unavailability of other convenient, reasonably priced places, it was decided to continue meeting at the Como Inn. However, the December meeting will be at the Illinois Athletic Club since the Como Inn did not have a room available that month.

President Franke reported that Pete Long's tapes of Round Table meetings will be sent to us by his widow, Barbara. Before adding them to the tape collection at the Library Cultural Center, Bob will investigate how they are being stored and preserved there. In addition, Nate Yellen was authorized to investigate the general status of the Civil War and American History Research Collection at the Library, particularly how material is being organized and preserved.

In other actions, the Battlefield Tour committee was instructed to plan a Gettysburg tour which would devote four full days to the battlefield itself. However, they were directed to explore the possibility of also setting up an alternate day for those who wished to take in other sites, such as the Eisenhower Farm. Finally, Ted Eberly volunteered to make portable flagstands which will be easier to take on Battlefield Tours.

The New Trier Extension Service is again offering, as part of its Fall Program, an adult education class entitled "The Civil War: A Military History." The 12-week course, which will be taught by our own Past President, Marshall Krolick, will begin on September 14, 1981. Sessions will be held on Monday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at New Trier West High School in Northfield. The curriculum will emphasize the battles and campaigns, but attention will also be given to personalities, weapons, soldier life, etc. For additional information or registration forms, contact the New Trier Extension Service, 3013 Illinois Road, Wilmette, Illinois, 60091, 256-7070.

Edward C. Mussenden, great-great-grandson of a Maine shipbuilder, has filed suit against the federal government to recover a Civil War debt arising from his ancestor's construction of a Union gunboat. His great-great-grandfather, Stephen Larrabee, who with a partner ran a shipyard in Bath, Maine, won a contract in 1862 to build a 300-foot gunboat for the Navy. The vessel, the *Iosco*, was commissioned two years later. Although Congress appropriated \$80,000 for the vessel, Larrabee maintained the final bill was \$11,708 more because of legitimate cost overruns. Records show the Navy and the U.S. Board of Claims recommended at the time that the extra sum be paid, but Congress took no action. Six relief bills have been introduced in Congress over the years, but all have died.

According to our own Merlin Sumner's research in *Naval Chronology*, the *Iosco*, among other things, participated in the attack on Fort Fisher in 1864 and, on November 21 of that year captured a blockade running schooner carrying a cargo of cotton.

JUNE MEETING

Nevins-Freeman Award evenings are clearly the highlight of each year for The Civil War Round Table. The guest of honor is always one of the giants in the field of Civil War history and a person truly deserving of high acclaim. And, that person usually honors us with some remarks about his life and work, providing unique insight into both the man and the study of Civil War history.

Friday, June 5, showed once again just how special Nevins-Freeman Award evenings—and Award recipients—can be. Those who came to honor James I. Robertson (or Bud as he is more affectionately known) were not only treated to an insightful, entertaining account of his life and career, they also heard him discuss, from a very personal perspective, some of the giants of years past (Wiley, Nevins and Freeman). It was truly an evening to remember.

Bud began by noting that he came by his interest in the Civil War naturally. His great grandfather was in the 57th Virginia (serving as Lee's cook) and as a boy he visited the battlefields with his father. In school, Bud began as a premed student, but, he said, organic chemistry convinced him "history offered unlimited opportunities." He studied under Bell Wiley at Emory (and much to Wiley's chagrin earned money by playing the drums in a strip joint). A mentor must be tough, Bud said, and Wiley was. But, he was always willing to give advice and counsel.

During the Civil War Centennial Bud served as head of the Centennial Commission, meeting four presidents in the process. (He was also in charge of decorating the East Room for Kennedy's funeral). In 1965 Bud went to teach in Montana but soon came back to Virginia Tech where he has been ever since.

Bud explained that his greatest satisfaction as a Civil War historian has been his association with other persons involved in the Civil War. Although he never knew Freeman personally, he came to know him through Freeman's wife and J. Ambler Johnston. Nevins, with whom he worked, Bud described as the only genius he has ever known. Nevins was always working, and usually on three books at once. In his opinion, Nevins should be held in much higher esteem than he is.

Nevins and Freeman, Bud said, taught him several lessons: history is the chronicle of living men and women and an exciting subject; and, good writing is superior to good research—if research cannot be communicated it is useless (Bud feels there are too many Ph.D.'s in ivory towers producing for other Ph.D.s in ivory towers). These lessons have led to Bud's three-fold approach to history. 1) Write for the layman; 2) let those who lived it tell us about it as much as possible (that is why Bud has done so many edited works); 3) provide reference guides to facilitate the work of others.

In concluding, Bud said he expects no awards for what he does—he already has the friendship of other Civil War buffs like those in The Civil War Round Table. But, he added, he cherishes most an award from an organization like The Civil War Round Table which represents such a broad spectrum of people.

A bequest of \$57,000 from a park admirer will enable Appomattox Court House National Historical Park to beautify and provide additional interpretive material at the spot where Lee bade a last farewell to his troops. The funds came from the settlement of the estate of Gary Stuart Cheatham of Bluefield, West Virginia who died in 1976. Preliminary plans call for a ramp and trail widening project to increase access to the site, especially for the handicapped, the clearing of undergrowth, and the construction of a new wayside exhibit.

1982 NEVINS-FREEMAN AWARD

The Executive Committee, at its summer meeting, selected the eminent Civil War historian Frank E. Vandiver as the recipient of the 1982 Nevins-Freeman Award. Dr. Vandiver, currently president of North Texas State University in Denton, is the author or editor of numerous books on the Civil War, including *Mighty Stonewall*, *Jubal's Raid: General Early's Famous Attack on Washington in 1864*, and *Tattered Flags: The Epic of the Confederacy*. Although he has not appeared recently, Dr. Vandiver has addressed The Round Table on several occasions. The award will be presented at the Nevins-Freeman Award dinner on June 11.

A gift from Mrs. Lloyd (Kathryn) Lewis has enabled the Newberry Library to establish the Lloyd Lewis Fund for Midwest Manuscripts. Income from the fund will be used to continue to acquire and catalogue the papers of great Midwestern authors. Lloyd, as most know, was a long-time Chicago newspaperman and the author of several books, including *Myths After Lincoln*.

Lloyd had worked closely with the Newberry to define and establish the Midwest Manuscript collection. It now includes the archives of the Arts, Friday, Chicago Literary, and Fortnightly Clubs and the papers of Ben Hecht, Sherwood Anderson, Willa Cather, Ring Lardner, John McCutcheon, and a host of other prominent journalists and writers of the region. After Lloyd's death in 1949, his papers were also added to the collection.

What is the fourth most popular U.S. tourist attraction for international visitors after New York, Washington, D.C. and Disneyland? Springfield, Illinois and Lincoln's home. According to a UPI story, almost 8,500 of the 408,000 visitors to the house in 1980 were from abroad. "The story of Abraham Lincoln is very relevant for people in emerging countries," says Albert Banton, superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. "It's a story of self-motivation, of a backwoods boy who succeeded by his own strength and self-education. Many of the people from emerging countries we talk to feel the same way—that by their own bootstraps they can make it." To meet the increase in foreign tourists, Lincoln's farewell speech to Springfield and some guiding messages are being translated into Japanese, German, French, Spanish, Greek, Russian, Chinese, and Pakistani.

On the speaker's platform during the summer was past president Merlin Sumner who addressed the combined Round Tables of Cambridge, Ohio and Wheeling, West Virginia on June 16. His topic was "Grant and McClernand: A Command Decision."

President Bob Franke reports that the position of publicity committee chairman is currently unfilled. The job entails sending out notices of meetings to the media and otherwise seeking to promote awareness of The Round Table and its activities among the public. Interested members can contact Bob at 392-6721.

We have learned of the passing, in early June, of former member John K. Grubbs. Our sincere condolences are extended to his family.



THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Baxter, Nancy Niblack. *Gallant Fourteenth*. Pioneer Study Center Press, 1980. \$10.00. (Indiana regiment, "The Gibraltar Regiment")

Bartlett, Irving H. *Wendell and Ann Phillips: The Community of Reform, 1840-1880*. New York: Norton, 1981. \$17.95.

Bearss, Edwin C. *Hardluck Ironclad. The Sinking and Salvage of the Cairo*. Revised edition. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980. \$17.50; paper \$5.95.

Calkins, Christopher M. *Thirty-six Hours before Appomattox: April 6 and 7, 1865*. Farmville, Va.: Farmville Herald, 1980. 80 p. Paper \$2.00.

Cresap, Bernard. *Appomattox Commander. The Story of General E.O.C. Ord*. San Diego: A.S./Barnes, 1981. 518 p. \$15.00

Croom, M.L., editor. *Easy Company: N.C. 61st Infantry Regiment, C.S.A.* Richlands, N.C.: Croom, 1980. 60 p., Paper \$8.95.

Davis, William C., editor. *The Image of War: 1861-1865. Volume I. Shadows of the Storm*. Bell I. Wiley, Senior Consulting Editor. New York: Doubleday for the National Historical Society, 1981. Prepublication price \$29.95. Of a projected six-volume series.

Foster, William Lovelace. *Vicksburg, Southern City under Siege*. William Lovelace Foster's Letter Describing the Defense and Surrender of the Confederate Fortress on the Mississippi. Edited with an introduction by Kenneth Trist Urquhart. New Orleans: Historic New Orleans Collection, 1980. \$15.00, postage \$1.50.

Hale, Laura Virginia and Stanley S. Phillips. *History of the Forty-ninth Virginia Infantry, C.S.A. "Extra Billy Smith's Boys."* Lanham, Md.: Stanley S. Phillips, 1980. 367 p. \$20.00.

Harnell, Agnes. *An Attempted Evocation of the Civil War: Sculpture and Poetry*. Ardmore, Pa.: Dorrance, 1980. \$8.95.

Ingenthron, Elmo. *Borderland Rebellion. Missouri Arkansas Civil War History*. Branson, Mo.: Mountaineer Book Shop, 1981. \$15.95, paper \$10.95. 373 p.

Meany, Peter J., O.S.B. *The Civil War Engagement at Cool Spring, July 18, 1864*. Morristown, N.J.: Privately printed, 1980. 77 p. Paper \$3.00.

Muhlenfeld, Elisabeth. *Mary Boykin Chesnut: A Biography*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981. \$20.00.

Reese, Michael II. *Autographs of the Confederacy. A Reference Work for Autograph Collectors*. The Michael Reese II Collection formerly the Jno. F. Mayer Collection and other collections. New York: A Cohasco Publication, 1981. \$47.95; ltd. numbered, sgd. ed. \$89.95.

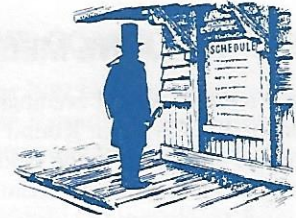
Richards, Kent D. *Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry*. Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1979. 485. p. \$15.95.

Smith, Philip Dodd, Jr. *The Sagebrush Soldiers: Nevada's Volunteers in the Civil War*. Carson City, Nev.: State Printing Office. Reprint of Nevada Historical Society Quarterly, vol. 5, nos. 3, 4 (1962). 98 p. paper \$3.50 plus 50¢.

Stearns, Amos Edward. *The Civil War Diary of Amos E. Stearns, a Prisoner at Andersonville*. Edited by Leon Basile. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, c1980. \$15.50.

Sullivan, Edmund B. *American Political Badges and Medalets 1789-1892*. Lawrence, MA: Quarterman Publications, 1981. \$60.00. Much revised edition of J. Doyle DeWitt's original.

BULLETIN BOARD



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Como Inn, 546 N. Milwaukee Avenue, the second Friday in each month except as noted.

September 11: Albert Castel on "The not-so-fine art of lying: some Civil War generals and their reports."

October 9: Ken Haffendorfer on "The Battle of Perryville."

November 13: Lowell Reidenbaugh on "Jackson at White Oak Swamp."

January 8: William Davis: Subject to be announced.

May 5-9, 1982: Annual Battlefield Tour: Gettysburg.

June 11, 1982: Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and installation of officers. Recipient of award: Frank E. Vandiver.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Wieboldt's Men's Grill, 9th Floor, State and Madison; all members welcome.

NEW MEMBERS

Richard I. Shane, 3300 Lakeshore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60657 (312) BU-1-8693. Mr. Shane heads Richard I. Shane Insurance in Skokie.

William R. Treece, 415 N. Elmhurst Avenue, Mt. Prospect, Illinois 60056 (312) 392-2406. Bill works for G.D. Searle and Co. in Skokie and is interested in military aspects of the war.

Fred K. Werhane, 610 Washington Street, Lena, Illinois 61048 (815) 369-2747. Mr. Werhane is president of Werhane Enterprises, Ltd. in Lena and is interested in military aspects of the war.

R. David Williams, 1464 Farragut, Chicago, Illinois 60640 (312) 728-2767. Mr. Williams heads R.D. Williams Electric in Chicago.

A total of \$2105 was raised at the auction of books from Ver Lynn Sprague's library which was held on June 6, enabling The Round Table to begin the new year in a more favorable financial condition. The gratitude of The Round Table for the donation of the library is extended to Ver Lynn's widow, Eleanor, and to Dan Weinberg who sorted and catalogued the books for the auction.

Tucker, Glenn. *Hancock the Superb*. Dayton: Morningside Bookshop, 1980. \$15.00. Reprint of the 1960 edition.

Tuttle, John W. *The Union, the Civil War, and John W. Tuttle: A Kentucky Captain's Account*. Edited by Hambleton Tapp and James C. Klotter. Frankfort: The Kentucky Historical Society, 1980. 298 p. \$20.00.

Vandiver, Frank E. *A Basic History of the Confederacy*. Huntington, NY: 1980. Robt. E. Krieger reprint of 1962 edition. Paper \$4.95.

Warren, Gordon H. *Fountain of Discontent: The Trent Affair and Freedom of the Seas*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981. 288 p. \$18.95.