

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLII, Number 9

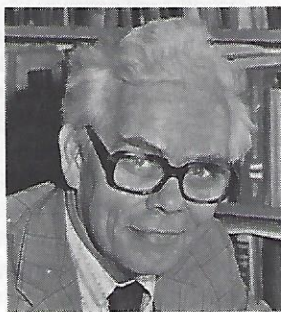
Chicago, Illinois

May, 1982

ZENOS HAWKINSON ON MR. LINCOLN'S WAR AND THE IMMIGRANT IMAGINATION

Most students of the Civil War era are aware of the great influx of immigration into this country after the war. Few, however, have considered the relationship between the war and that influx, how the first may have influenced the latter. This connection will be explored at The Round Table meeting on May 14 by Dr. Zenos Hawkinson, professor of history at North Park College in Chicago.

Between 1847 and 1856, the United States received about three million immigrants, the overwhelming majority of whom went into northern cities and the freelands of the Mississippi Valley. Almost none went to the states of the future Confederacy, whose white population in 1860 was little more than five million. In the 60 years from 1860, more than 28½ million new immigrants flooded into the United States, a number not significantly smaller than the whole population in 1860.

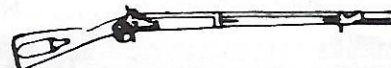


ZENOS HAWKINSON

Dr. Hawkinson maintains that "An analysis of immigration data leaves little doubt that the outcome of Mr. Lincoln's war had important effects on the hopes and dreams of immigrants. I know that in Sweden no American was more often the subject of report and anecdote than Lincoln; for Swedes he became a symbol of 'the promised land.' The largest wave of Swedish immigration began in 1867 when it was clear that Mr. Lincoln's party had indeed succeeded in saving the Union and eliminating slavery. I believe that the Civil War and the European migration to America were the two greatest events of the American 19th century, and the connections between them is what I want to explore with The Round Table when we are together."

Following service in the Navy in the South Pacific during World War II, Dr. Hawkinson did graduate work in history at the University of Chicago where his principal professors in American history were Avery Craven and W.T. Hutchinson. He taught at Youngstown College from 1950-52, and in 1952 came to North Park where he has been teaching ever since. He says that while he has taught about every course in the history curriculum, his own field of research specialization has been 19th century immigration into the United States, and particularly that of the Swedes. He reports that the topic on which he has chosen to speak grew out of his discovery that an old Swedish-American in Grand Rapids, Michigan, had willed to North Park College his more than 600-volume collection of Lincolniana.

Dr. Hawkinson is active in the Swedish Pioneer Historical



411th REGULAR MEETING

ZENOS HAWKINSON ON MR. LINCOLN'S WAR AND THE IMMIGRANT IMAGINATION

FRIDAY, MAY 14, 1982

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



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

An important Executive Committee meeting will be held at the Como Inn at 5:00 p.m. on May 14, just prior to the regular meeting. Among the items on the agenda is selection of the site of the 1983 Battlefield Tour. All current officers, trustees, and committee chairman, as well as all past presidents, are urged to attend.

Association as well as several other professional and community organizations. He is currently at work on a biography of David Nyvall, founder and first president of North Park College, and on a presentation volume for the 1985 centennial of the Evangelical Covenant Church of America.

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.



ELMER R. UNDERWOOD

1896-1982

by Ralph G. Newman

He was one of the kindest and most gentle persons I have ever known. He would make a gloomy day a happy one by his presence. That wistful smile, the low key voice, the intense interest he would indicate in your problems and welfare—how we will miss him.

I knew Elmer Underwood for almost 40 years—almost half of his life and more than half of mine. He lived almost “four score and seven” years (he missed the mark by 17 months). Grover Cleveland was completing his second term as President when Elmer was born, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He attended schools in Fort Wayne and West Mansfield, Ohio, and attended, but did not graduate from, Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Elmer taught school for three years in a one-room country schoolhouse. In the fall of 1917 he enlisted in the U.S. Army. It's difficult to imagine gentle Elmer as a soldier, but patriotism was a family trait, so he felt and responded to the call of duty. He was attached to an air force base in a support function. One of his duties involved the handling of mail for his unit. He would often smile when recalling his war experiences, “I saw little of the war, but an awful lot of France.” He remained abroad until late in 1919 to help the French reorganize their postal service.

He returned home to the family farm in Ohio, and was married to Marie almost 60 years ago. They lived on the farm for a year or so and then moved to Cincinnati, and after a brief time there, came to the Chicago area where he lived in Oak Park and then in Forest Park. It was after they became Forest Park residents that daughter Phyllis was born. He went to work for the Bowman Dairy Company and then in 1936 began to work for the Railway Postal Service, where he served faithfully until his retirement in 1962. Elmer was an active, useful, energetic, dedicated member of his community. He served as a deacon of the First Baptist Church of Oak Park; commander of Oak Park Post No. 15 of the American Legion; was a thirty-third degree Mason and a member of the High Twelve Club.

His love affair with American history traces back to his grandfather, Hiram Underwood, who was a member of Company H, 96th Ohio Volunteers and served under Ulysses S. Grant at Vicksburg. About 15 years ago, I bought a large collection of Civil War muster rolls. I placed Elmer in charge of organizing the collection. A few days later he came to me with a muster roll for Company H of the 96th Ohio. He asked if he could buy it. I looked to see if it contained any famous Civil War names. There was only one—Hiram Underwood. I told Elmer it was not for sale, but rightfully belonged to him. What force was it that brought the document to the one place where it could be recognized and be truly significant?

He first visited the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop when it was located on the 19th floor of a downtown office building. I was just preparing to leave the business to enter the Navy. We next met in the book shop's new location on Michigan Avenue, just after World War II ended. Like many another history enthusiast he figuratively “never left.”

His retirement was of a very brief duration. He soon was working at a near north side book shop, charged with undoing the disarray caused by its owner and keeping its archives and stock in order. With infinite care, patience, great skill and love he brought the chaos to a logical arrangement where if you wanted something all you had to do was ask Elmer. And as a salesman he was superb. His own enthusiasm and honesty, plus his earnestness, made him a truly great bookman.

(continued on page 4)

The Abraham Lincoln Association, in cooperation with the Illinois State Historical Society, has announced a call for papers for the Tenth Annual Abraham Lincoln Symposium to be held on February 12, 1983, at the Old State Capitol in Springfield. Papers on any phase of Lincoln's career or his relationship with associates or to events will be considered. Proposals or abstracts of 300-600 words, together with a personal resume, should be sent to Roger Bridges, Chairman, Lincoln Symposium Committee, Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois 62706. Proposals must be received by August 10, 1982.

APRIL MEETING

The life story of Julia Dent Grant, told in the first person, was presented to Round Table members and guests at the meeting on April 9. Telling the story for Julia was our own member, Pat Newman, who had the distinction of being the first woman to address a regular meeting of The Round Table. Julia Grant, like so many wives of famous men, is little-known, but Pat helped correct that situation, providing insight into Julia's own life and personality as well as her relationship to Grant.

Julia was born in St. Louis in 1826. Her parents owned both a townhouse and a farmhouse, called White Haven, about 10 miles from town. The townhouse was near Jefferson Barracks; one of the officers stationed there was Ulysses S. Grant. Julia was 18, Grant 23 when they first met. He visited often and they were secretly engaged before Grant went away for 10 months. On his return he asked for her hand but her father didn't think army life was proper for his daughter; Grant, however, said he would leave the army.

Their engagement lasted four years; part of the time Grant was away at the Mexican War. They were finally married in 1848; the day after the wedding they left for Ohio to visit Grant's parents. It was the first time Julia had ever been on a boat or in a stagecoach.

Julia and Ulysses lived first in New York and then Detroit (their first child was born during this period). Grant was ordered to Panama where he contracted malaria; he was sent to California to recover. This, said Julia (Pat), was the lowest ebb of his life. He tried to earn extra money to bring his family out, but finally decided to leave the army. The Grants had some land in Missouri given them by her father; they now started to build a cabin and work the farm, which they called Hardscrabble.

When Julia's mother died, her father couldn't adjust and Grant had to manage White Haven as well as Hardscrabble. By this time the Grants had four children. Then Jesse Grant, Ulysses's father, offered Ulysses a job in his leathers goods store in Galena, Illinois and they decided to take it. Julia loved Galena and they were fairly satisfied there. But, in less than a year, the Civil War began.

Grant was turned down by the army but was appointed a colonel in the militia. Julia did not regret his going off to war since neither of them expected it to last long. In fact, Grant even took his son along to Cairo for an outing. Julia visited him several times in the early days of the war, a practice which she was to keep up throughout the four years that followed.

In the spring of 1862, as Grant advanced in rank and stature, Julia became aware that her husband was in the limelight—she even decided that as the wife of such a well-known man she should have an operation to correct her cross-eyed condition. It couldn't be done however. In March, 1864, Grant was given command of all the armies and the Grants moved east—the children were enrolled in school in New Jersey.

After the war Grant was treated like a hero by the nation and there was talk of his becoming president. Johnson tried to keep him on his side by appointing Grant to replace Stanton as Secretary of War, but Grant resigned after holding the post a short time. Both he and Julia became more sophisticated during this period—wearing fine clothes and giving glittering receptions.

Grant was nominated for President by the Republicans and elected in November, 1868, when he was only 46 years old. The Grants, and particularly Julia, transformed the White House, redecorating and reorganizing the staff. It was an exciting eight years. Two of their children were married in the White House and their first grandchild was born there. These years, Julia (Pat) said, were the happiest of her life. She even wanted Grant to run for a third term.

When Grant left office they decided to take a world trip—they visited their daughter in England and met the Queen. On their return, however, financial disaster struck. Their son Buck, who

was in business, had borrowed money in Ulysses's name. When he couldn't pay Ulysses had to and was wiped out. He started writing articles for *Century Magazine* which were well received. He soon discovered he had cancer of the throat and when Mark Twain suggested he write his memoirs it became a race with death to get them finished. His efforts made Julia a wealthy woman—the memoirs brought in about \$500,000. Julia later decided to write her own memoirs, but these were not published until 1975. She spent her last years enjoying her grandchildren and passing out \$5 bills which, of course, have Grant's picture on them. She died at age 73.

In concluding, Pat said she hoped everyone would now remember Julia as well as Ulysses, particularly since "she was the mainstay of his existence."

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Bob Walter, chairman of the Nominating Committee, has announced the following proposed slate of officers for the 1982-83 year:

President	Marvin Sanderman
Senior Vice President	Donald E. Anderson
Vice President	J. Robert Ziegler
Vice President	Daniel R. Weinberg
Secretary	William Margeson
Treasurer	Pat Krelle
Assistant Secretary	James Vlazney
Assistant Treasurer	Richard Tibbels
Trustee	Martin Dutch
Trustee	Marvin Goldsher
Trustee	Richard McAddo
Trustee	Leslie McDonald
Trustee (to fill the unexpired term of James Vlazney)	Karl Sundstrom

The election will be held during the May meeting, at which time additional nominations for any of the above offices may be made from the floor. Installation of the new officers will be part of the program at the Nevins Freeman Award Dinner on June 11. Three current members of the Board of Trustees, Betsy Davis, J. William Gimbel, Jr., and Matthias Lorenz, will remain in office for the coming year as they complete their two-year terms.

In response to an item in the April newsletter about the CBS mini-series, "The Blue and the Gray," Barbara Long has brought to our attention the fact that her late husband Pete was historical consultant for the script of the film. She reports that he worked for months with Ian Hunter, the writer, to try to keep the story line and details within the bounds of historical accuracy, and that he had looked forward to being the historical consultant when shooting began. As most know, Pete, who was a long-time and Honorary Award Life Member of The Civil War Round Table, and a Nevins-Freeman Award recipient, passed away at the end of March last year. We are pleased to know of his involvement and express our regrets that he was not able to see the project through to completion since, as Barbara notes, "between script and screen there can be many a slip."

An exhibit of Jefferson Davis portraits will be on display at the State Historical Museum, Old Capitol Restoration, in Jackson, Mississippi, June 3-July 11, 1982. The exhibit, which is in celebration of Davis's 174th birthday, will consist of approximately 50 portraits. Gathered from a variety of sources, the images depict Davis as a young man as well as in his later years. Among the art forms that have been used are photographs, drawings, etchings, an oil painting and a wood-chip mosaic.

THE NEW BOOKS



(Compiled by Dick Clark)

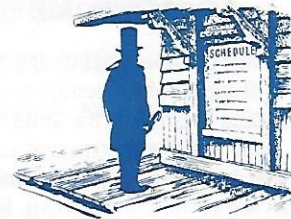
Beale, Richard L.T. *History of the 9th Virginia Cavalry in the War Between the States*. Gaithersburg, Md.: Zullo and Van Sickle Books, 1982. 192p. Reprint of issue of 1899. \$28.50

Gache, Louis-Hippolyte. *A Frenchman, A Chaplain, A Rebel. The War Letters of Pere Louis-Hippolyte Gache, S.J.* Translated by Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J. Chicago: Loyola University Press.

Robertson, James I., Jr. *Civil War Sites in Virginia: A Tour Guide*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1982. pbk. \$4.95.

Stuart, Reginald C. *War and American Thought: From the Revolution to the Monroe Doctrine*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1981. \$19.50.

Trefousse, Hans L. *Carl Schurz: A Biography*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982. \$29.50



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.

May 14: Zenos Hawkinson on "Mr. Lincoln's War and the Immigrant Imagination."

June 11: Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and installation of officers, Recipient of award: Frank E. Vandiver. The social hour and dinner will be at the Illinois Athletic Club; the program at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

David G. St. John, 1952 Edgebrook Dr., Apt. 3B, Palatine, Illinois 60067 (312) 934-4068.

A bill designed to protect the natural and cultural resources of the National Park System was introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. John Seiberling (D-Ohio) on February 22. The National Park System Protection Act of 1982 (HR 5552):

- provides authority for and directs the use of National Park Service funds to monitor, study, and report on impacts on the natural and cultural resources of the parks;
- authorizes the National Park Service and the Department of Interior to control activities on federal lands adjacent to the parks, so as to guard against the degradation of park resources;
- requires that federal grants, licenses, and permits include conditions necessary to protect the parks against adverse impacts;
- provides for grant assistance to local governments to promote planning that will emphasize park protection for areas adjacent to the parks;
- requires the National Park Service to submit to Congress every two years a report on the state of the National Parks.

The importance of this bill, and particularly the provisions regarding lands adjacent to the parks, is pointed up by the situation at Petersburg. Civil War Round Table Associates reports that just months after the Department of Housing and Urban Development backed off from a proposal allowing the construction of a fifth housing project on the boundary of Petersburg National Battlefield, plans are afoot to allow the construction of a large waste recycling center and landfill next to the park, adjacent to an historic gun emplacement. An EPA operating permit must be granted and the state Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation must review the effects of the plant on the battlefield, but this process might not be triggered until plans are finalized and construction underway.

Among the 1982 Pulitzer Prize recipients announced April 12 were two Civil War-related books. The Pulitzer Prize for history was awarded to *Mary Chestnut's Civil War*, edited by C. Vann Woodward. *Grant: A Biography* by William S. McFeely won the prize in the biography and autobiography category.

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His great love, beyond his first love—his family—was American history, particularly the American Civil War. He was a member of both the Chicago and Illinois State historical societies and, of course, The Civil War Round Table, which he joined in 1950. It is difficult to believe that he held off joining for a few years because the cost of the dinners was \$3.00 and he wasn't certain that he could afford it. He became our secretary, a member of our executive committee, a vice president, and was elected to honorary life membership.

In recent years, we saw him only infrequently. But what a joy it was to see his face, his smile, hear his voice. He did make the world a better place—to paraphrase an old saying, "He was one of the persons not wrong with the world." A gentle, intelligent, concerned human being, who shared our triumphs and defeats, who never forgot a birthday, a kindness, or an accomplishment. He truly cared about "The family of man." He was the conscience and the memory of The Civil War Round Table and of his favorite book shop. A world without Elmer Underwood is difficult to comprehend or accept, but aren't we all so fortunate to have known him and to have enjoyed his love and his friendship.

Editor's note: Elmer's family has requested that any memorials members wish to make be sent to the Civil War Research Fund, in care of The Civil War Round Table.

Descendants of men who served in the Union army's first black regiment, the 54th Massachusetts, are being sought by the National Park Service for the rededication of the 54th's monument in Boston this summer. The regiment was formed in Boston and men from 20 states served in it. The 54th distinguished itself at the Battle of Fort Wagner, South Carolina, in 1863. The monument, sculpted by Augustus St. Gaudens, was originally dedicated in 1897. Descendants of men who served in the 54th can contact Dorothea Powell, National Park Service, 15 State St., Boston, Massachusetts 02109.

Frances Dillon Ames, a member of the Salt Creek Round Table and a frequent participant in our Battlefield Tours, died March 10. Our sincere condolences are extended to her family.