

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLIV, Number 1

Chicago, Illinois

September, 1983

Walter H. Hebert on Fighting Joe Hooker

On February 16, 1943, Walter H. Hebert addressed the 20th meeting of The Civil War Round Table on the life of General Joseph Hooker. On September 9, 1983, the 423rd meeting of The Round Table and the first of 1983-84, he will repeat that address. It should prove to be an interesting and informative evening filled with some lively discussion.

This will, in fact, be Mr. Hebert's third appearance before The Round Table. The publication of his book, *Fighting Joe Hooker*, was the occasion of a gala dinner at our 36th meeting, October 18, 1944, at which the arrival of Robert S. Henry's "First with the Most" Forrest, was also celebrated.

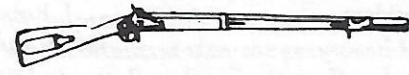
Prior to the publication of *Fighting Joe Hooker*, Mr. Hebert wrote to our founder and proprietor of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, Ralph G. Newman, and outlined his perspective on the controversial Union commander. In his letter, dated August 3, 1944, Hebert wrote: "I think you'll find my characterization



Walter H. Hebert

objective; he has not been praised unduly for his fighting qualities and his appeal to the foot soldier, nor has he been condemned too severely for his harsh criticism of fellow officers and his drinking... Hooker was ever in the center of the fight—with sword, pen or tongue—and was a storm center of any Federal army to which he happened to be assigned. He contributed far more than his share to the disgraceful intrigues and petty bickerings among the high command in the Army of the Potomac and he quarreled bitterly with Grant and Sherman in the west. He did however accomplish some fine work for the Union at the head of his corps or division—work which will always be overshadowed by the Chancellorsville disaster. Unfortunately his propensity for making enemies of the wrong people marked him for certain discard and when Appomattox came along, Hooker was not on hand to receive the expected laurels."

Joseph Hooker, a native of Massachusetts, ranked 29th in a class of 50 when he graduated from West Point in 1837. His army career prior to the Mexican War was commendable, and he served capably in both Taylor's and Scott's campaigns in the war against Mexico. After service in the Pacific division in the early 1850's, he resigned his commission to take up farming in California. He petitioned Secretary of War Floyd for an appointment as a lieutenant colonel in 1858. However, nothing came of it and he continued to eke out a living in the West.

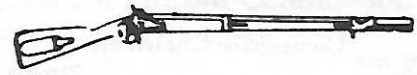


423rd Regular Meeting

Walter H. Hebert
on
Fighting Joe Hooker

Friday, September 9, 1983

Hotel Continental
505 N. Michigan
Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
\$13.00 per person



Meeting Site

Please note that the new location of Round Table meetings is the Hotel Continental, 505 N. Michigan. (The Illinois Athletic Club closed down the end of July.) The first meeting will be held in the King Arthur Room on the 3rd Floor, one flight up from the lobby. There is parking in the hotel on a space available basis (you will be entitled to a \$2 discount from the regular price). There is also a city lot at Rush and Grand, just one block away, and there are other lots east of the hotel. The hotel can be reached via several bus routes running on Michigan Avenue and from the west via the Grand Avenue bus (note that Grand goes under Michigan).

At the outbreak of the Civil War he offered his services to the Union but was rebuffed until May, 1861 when he was commissioned a brigadier general. The following spring, in the Peninsula campaign, his division was prominent in the battle of Williamsburg. The press described him as "Fighting Joe Hooker" and he never lost this sobriquet.

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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 60007.



Summer Executive Committee Meeting

The Round Table Executive Committee took action on several items of importance to all members at its summer meeting July 10.

Battlefield Tour. It was decided that the 1984 Tour to Washington would include one day in Washington itself, one day in Loudon County, and one day at Second Manassas. The fourth day's activities will be determined by the Tour chairmen.

An Honorary Award Life Membership in The Round Table was approved for Charles A. Dornbusch.

Donations of \$50 to the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Society and \$100 to the Chicago Metro History Fair were approved.

A fall tour to Ft. Wayne and the Lincoln National Life Museum was discussed. However, subsequent to the meeting it was decided to postpone the tour until the fall of 1984. That year marks the 175th anniversary of Lincoln's birth and in commemoration there will be an exhibit of Lincoln memorabilia at the Ft. Wayne Art Museum. In addition, Mark Neely, Gabor Borrit and Harold Holzer will have a book out next fall on Lincoln's image in cartoons and prints and it may be possible to have a reception with the authors in Ft. Wayne. All plans are still tentative.

(continued from page 1)

His criticism of Burnside's efforts in the Fredericksburg campaign forced Burnside to add Hooker's name to the list of those officers deserving of relief. However, it was Burnside who was relieved, to be replaced by his nemesis, Hooker. Although he developed a superb plan to force the Confederates back to Richmond through a strategic envelopment, his scheme was thwarted by Lee's bold strategy of splitting his forces and launching Stonewall Jackson's attack on the exposed Union flank. Upon the advice of his field commanders, Hooker ordered a retreat across the Rappahannock. When Lee followed up his victory with the invasion of Pennsylvania, Hooker effectively deployed his army to cover Washington and Baltimore. After Meade replaced him three days prior to Gettysburg, Hooker was sent west to reinforce Grant for the battles around Chattanooga. He participated in the Atlanta campaign until the death of James B. McPherson. When Sherman appointed Hooker's subordinate, O. O. Howard, to command the Union Army of the Tennessee, Hooker, offended by the slight, asked to be relieved. This was granted and he served in various departments until his retirement in 1868.

Walter Hebert is a native Chicagoan, born here in 1908. He graduated in 1929 from the School of Business of the University of Chicago and later secured a master's degree in history from that same school. A newspaperman happened to mention his thesis, "Fighting Joe Hooker—Commander—Army of the Potomac." Ralph Newman noticed this item and arranged for him to meet several members of The Round Table at the home of Alfred Whital Stern, a Lincoln collector and later the 5th president of The Round Table. This informal meeting has led to 40 years of association with The Round Table. After completion of Civil War articles for Encyclopedia Britannica in 1946, Hebert moved to Houston and helped to establish the Houston Civil War Round Table in 1954. His knowledge of the war has led to many speaking engagements to groups in both Texas and Louisiana.

June meeting

Old and new traditions were joined in June when The Round Table combined the presentation of its 1983 Nevins-Freeman Award with the first annual Nevins-Freeman Assembly. The program consisted of a day-long seminar held at the Chicago Historical Society. During the morning session the over 100 people in attendance were privileged to hear Alan T. Nolan, Esq. evaluate Federal commanders, Dr. Wayne C. Temple point out many little known, but important aspects of Abraham Lincoln, and Karen Osborne describe the career of "Mother" Bickerdyke, the famous army nurse and hospital matron.

These presentations were followed by an excellent catered luncheon and the presentation of the 1983 Award to this year's recipient Dr. John Hope Franklin. In his acceptance remarks and his subsequent address on the career of George Washington Williams, the foremost Black historian of the 19th Century, Dr. Franklin amply demonstrated the qualities that have earned him a place alongside the gentlemen for whom our Award is named.

At the conclusion of Dr. Franklin's presentation, the program continued with a panel discussion on the issue of "Civil Rights and the Civil War." Participants on the panel were Dr. Franklin, Dr. Frank L. Klement, Dr. Duke Frederick, Dr. John Y. Simon, and our own Past President and founding member Elmer Gertz, Esq. The panel discussion was moderated by Past President Marshall D. Krolick. The remarks of the panelists generated a lively and controversial question and answer period.

The extremely complimentary comments of all those in attendance indicated that the Nevins-Freeman Assembly is off to a rousing start and next year's event is already being planned and eagerly anticipated. Our thanks go to all those who worked so hard to present this seminar, to the many other midwestern Round Tables who participated and encouraged its support, and especially to our own member, Paul Klinger, whose untiring and devoted efforts made the entire day possible.

We report with sorrow the death, on May 17, of longtime member Dr. Nicholas J. Capos. Dr. Capos was a surgeon at several Chicago area hospitals and taught surgery at Northwestern University. Our sincere condolences are extended to his family.

Round Table members speaking around the country this past summer included Marshall Krolick who addressed the new Northern Illinois Round Table June 2 on "Lee and Longstreet at Gettysburg." (This Round Table is getting off to a great start—for information about their future meetings, contact Ed Corcoran at 259-1492.)

Merlin Sumner spoke to the Atlanta Round Table June 14 on the Grant/McClerland Controversy, and Gordon Whitney discussed General Jefferson C. Davis before the Indianapolis Round Table June 13.

Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site have received \$263,000 from the 1983 Emergency Jobs Appropriation Act to carry out a number of important rehabilitation projects. At Gettysburg, the projects will include major repairs to the Cyclorama Center roof, reconstruction of deteriorated sidewalks and stairs, and historic scene restoration work near the Rose Farm. At Eisenhower, livestock fencing will be replaced. The work will be completed through contracts with private firms in an effort to ease unemployment.

Kennesaw Mountain management plan

In May, we reported that a general management plan for Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield had been prepared. Following review of that plan, President Don Anderson, Battlefield Preservation Committee Chairman Ed Cosentino, and Inspector General Wayne Anderson sent the following letter to Neal Guse of the National Park Service's Southeast Regional Office:

"We have received a copy of the General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment for Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. Overall, the plan is satisfactory in providing for the Park's future use. However, the members of The Civil War Round Table are opposed to two components of the plan.

First, the proposed interpretive node for the Kolb Farm battlefield should be re-located. According to page iii of the General Plan, the visitors parking area is located near Cheathan Hill, approximately one mile north of the Kolb Farm area. We recommend that the proposed interpretive node be located off Powder Springs Road, where the engagement actually took place.

Second, alcoholic beverages must be prohibited from the Park's grounds. The purpose of Kennesaw Mountain is to help preserve a part of our American heritage and not to function as a playground. The State of Georgia has banned the use of alcohol from its recreational parks. The reason for this is to reduce the potential for vandalism and property destruction.

In conclusion, we request that these two recommendations be incorporated into the General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment for Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. It is very important that positive action be taken in order to preserve our historic Civil War battlefields, so that future generations can appreciate their heritage."

A petition, signed by a number of Round Table members supporting the recommendations in the letter, was also sent to Mr. Guse.

Abraham Lincoln Commission

At the request of national member Frank J. Williams of Rhode Island, Senator John H. Chafee has introduced Senate Joint Resolution 118 establishing a commission to commemorate the 175th anniversary of Lincoln's birth on February 12, 1984. The commission would "plan, encourage, coordinate, and conduct observances and activities commemorating events which took place during the life of Abraham Lincoln." Frank, who is president of the Lincoln Group of Boston, encourages all Round Table members to write their congressmen and senators to encourage adoption.

The 1982 Fletcher Pratt Award of the New York Round Table was presented to Dr. Richard McMurry at their May meeting. The award is presented to the author or editor of the best non-fiction book on the Civil War published in a calendar year. Dr. McMurry received the award for *John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence*.

The Lee-Jackson Foundation will hold its ninth annual Lee-Jackson Day celebration on October 28 in Charlottesville, Virginia. The guest of honor and speaker will be Dr. John Wilson, recently installed president of Washington and Lee University in Lexington. He is Robert E. Lee's eighth successor as president of the university.



THE NEW BOOKS

(compiled by Dick Clark)

Berryhill, William Harvey. *The Gentle Rebel: The Civil War Letters of 1st Lt. William Harvey Berryhill, Co. D, 43rd Regiment, Mississippi Volunteers*. Edited by Mary Miles Jones, Leslie Jones Martin. Yazoo City, Miss.: Sassafras Press, 1982. 170 p. \$12.95.

Billings, John Davis. *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life*. Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life Books, 1982. \$19.95. Originally published 1887.

Bowman, John S., executive editor. *The Civil War Almanac*. Ian V. Hogg and Antony Preston, technical consultants. New York: Facts on File, 1982. 400 p. \$19.95.

Brock, Sallie A. *Richmond During the War: Four Years of Personal Observations by a Richmond Lady*. Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life Books, 1983. \$19.95.

Buck, Irving Ashby. *Cleburne and His Command*. Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1982. 378 p. \$27.50. Reprint of 1958 issue.

Commager, Henry Steele, editor. *Fifty Basic Civil War Documents*. Malabar, Florida: R. E. Krieger Pub. Co., 1982. pbk \$6.25. Originally published 1965.

Cooper, Norman Lee. *A Confederate Soldier and His Descendants*. With Battle Narratives by Stewart Sifakis. Bowie, Md.: N. Cooper Associates, 1982. 256 p. \$20.00.

Dammann, Gordon. *Pictorial Encyclopedia of Civil War Medical Instruments and Equipment*. Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1983. 100 p. pbk \$7.95.

Daniel, Frederick S. *Richmond Howitzers in the War: Four Years Campaigning with the Army of Northern Virginia*. Richmond, 1891. Gaithersburg, Md.: Butternut Press, 1983. \$22.50.

Davis, William C., editor. *Fighting for Time. The Image of War: 1861-1865*. Volume IV. Garden City: Doubleday, 1983. \$39.95.

Davis, William C. *Stand in the Day of Battle. The Imperiled Union: 1861-1865*. Vol. 2. New York: Doubleday, 1983. \$19.95.

Foner, Philip Sheldon. *History of Black Americans: From the Compromise of 1850 to the end of the Civil War*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983. \$39.95.

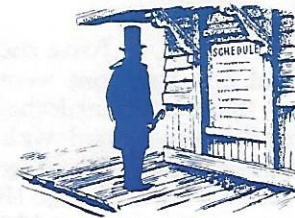
Jones, John B. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capitol*. Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life Books, 1982. \$26.00. Original of 1866.

Kircher, Henry A. *A German in the Yankee Fatherland. The Civil War Letters of Henry A. Kircher*. Edited by Earl J. Hess. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1983. 170 p. \$19.95.

McCarthy, Carlton. *Detailed Minutiae of Soldier Life in the Army of Northern Virginia, 1861-1865*. Illustrations by Wm. L. Sheppard. Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life Books, 1982. \$26.50.

Monsell, Helen Albee. *Robert E. Lee, Young Confederate*. Illustrations by James Arthru and Gray Morrow. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1983. Pbk \$3.95. Originally published as *Boy of Old Virginia, Robert E. Lee, 1937*.

Monteiro, Aristides. *War Reminiscences*, by the Surgeon of Mosby's Command, 1890. Gaithersburg, Md.: Butternut Press, 1983. 236 p. \$25.00.



BULLETIN BOARD

Future meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Hotel Continental, 505 N. Michigan, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

September 9: Walter H. Hebert on "Fighting Joe Hooker."

October 14: Robert K. Krick on "Cedar Mountain."

November 11: William M. Anderson on "Col. Lawler and the Lawless 18th Ill."

December 9: Karen Osborne on "Women in the Civil War."

January 13, 1983: Mike Cohn on "Civil War Telegraphy."

February 17: Brooks Davis, Marshall Krolick, Jim Vlazny and Gordon Whitney in "Senate Confrontation, November-December, 1860" with Ralph Newman as Pres. Pro. Tem.

March 9: To be announced.

April 13: Richard McMurry, subject to be announced.

May 2-6: Battlefield Tour to Washington, D.C.

May 11: To be announced.

June 8: Dan Jordan on "John S. Mosby."

New members

Dr. James M. Brophy III, 35478 N. Shoreline Dr., Ingle-side, Illinois 60041 (312) 546-3023.

Luann Elvey, 3554 N. Hermitage, Chicago, Illinois 60657 (312) 528-9385.

Patrick Foley, 9700 W. Bryn Mawr, Rosemont, Illinois 60018 (312) 860-3179.

Robert I. Girardi, 452 N. Artesian Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60612 (312) 733-0679.

John McManus, 3741 N. Ottawa, Chicago, Illinois 60634 (312) 625-4976.

John E. O'Connor, 4100 N. Plainfield, Chicago, Illinois 60634 (312) 625-6124.

Changes of address

Allan W. Follett, 12 Westover Court, Madison, Wisconsin 53719.

Francis J. Lynch, 2608 Lakeview, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

Richard Percy, 1020 Williams St., Apt. F4, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

Win Straeke, Mountain Empire Hotel, 259 S. College, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524.

Two reminders

We mentioned these before, but in case you forgot... The 1st Annual Midwest Civil War Collectors Show will be held in Union, Illinois on Saturday, September 24. For information and table reservations, contact Robert Nowak, 3238 N. Central Park, Chicago 60618 (312) 539-8432.

The Ninth Annual Congress of Civil War Round Tables will be held in Charleston, South Carolina, October 6-9. Among the speakers will be Ed Bearss. For further information, contact CWRT Associates, P.O. Box 7388, Little Rock, Arkansas 72217.