

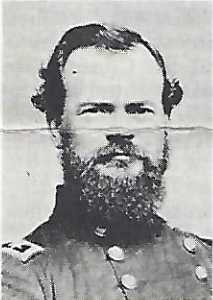
# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXX, Number 1

Chicago, Illinois

September, 1969

## John T. Hubbell on 'James Birdseye McPherson'—Wed., Sept. 10



Gen. McPherson

The brief, remarkable military career of James Birdseye McPherson will come to life at the season's first meeting of the Chicago Civil War Round Table on Wednesday, Sept. 10. Discussing the brilliant general's life and contributions to the Union cause will be John T. Hubbell, assistant professor of history at Kent State University and editor of Civil War History.

"McPherson was a fascinating personality and an esteemed commander, a favorite of his subordinates of all ranks and particularly of his superiors Grant and Sherman," Hubbell says of his September subject.

J.B. McPherson, an Ohioan, was first in his class—"honors man"—in the West Point class of 1853. After a year of instructing engineering at the academy, McPherson was assigned to harbor improvement duty on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, where he served until 1861 as a captain of engineers.

It was Gen. H. W. Halleck who started McPherson's Civil War career by bringing the West Pointer to Missouri as his aide-de-camp. A West Point roommate of John Schofield and John Bell Hood, McPherson was named Grant's chief engineer in Tennessee.

This appointment led to his being named brigadier general of volunteers at Corinth in 1862. McPherson, who later served as the military superintendent of railroads in Western Tennessee, earned the esteem of William Tecumseh Sherman, who paid him this tribute: "He (McPherson) was one of the most useful staff officers in the whole army."

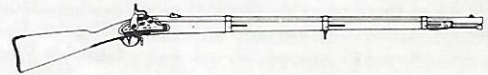
Named a major general of volunteers in October, 1862, McPherson moved to reinforce Rosecrans at Corinth and participated in the celebrated pursuit of Van Dorn. After Vicksburg, McPherson was made a brigadier general in the regular army, a designation coveted by every West Pointer.

McPherson, in about one year, went from captain to major general. This rise in rank brought out in him a characteristic modesty expressed in a letter to his mother in which he said, "A year ago, I couldn't imagine I would be a major general." Hubbell contrasts this modesty with the attitude of McClellan when he was named commander of the Army of the Potomac.

"McPherson," Hubbell reports, "was well liked by his troops. And as a corps commander, his subordinate generals were all civilians, including Logan, who generally disliked West Pointers but revered McPherson." Battlefield reports confirm Hubbell's estimate since Logan, the civilian, and McPherson, the West Pointer, were among the few generals cheered by their troops.

When U.S. Grant was named lieutenant general and departed for the east to assume command of all Union armies he wrote what was for him an effusive letter to Sherman in which he said: "I want to express my thanks to you and McPherson as the men to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success." Grant went on: "The word you I use in the plural, intending it for McPherson also. I should write to him, and will some day, but starting this morning I do not know that I will find time just now."

As Grant went eastward, McPherson took over Sherman's Army of the Tennessee, which he led brilliantly in the Georgia



282d REGULAR MEETING

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John T. Hubbell

on

"James Birdseye McPherson"

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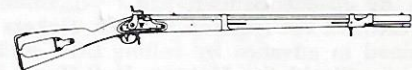
Wednesday, September 10, 1969

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Furniture Club in Furniture Mart

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6 p.m.



campaign of 1864. Before Atlanta, on July 22, 1864, McPherson got orders at Sherman's command post and left to join his troops, taking a road previously checked and found clear. Accompanied by only one aide, McPherson encountered Confederate skirmishers and was killed, marking one of the heaviest individual losses suffered by the Union during the war. McPherson was only 35 years old, a professional soldier who grew to significant stature under wartime stress.

John Hubbell, our September speaker, will concentrate on McPherson's career, "focusing on his personality, particularly as it affected his effectiveness as a soldier. I will have some detailed comments on McPherson's actions at Resaca and Atlanta, two controversial topics."

Hubbell, raised in Oklahoma and a Marine Corps veteran, received a bachelor's degree from Northeastern Oklahoma State College, a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma and a doctorate from the University of Illinois.

Editor of Civil War History since 1965, Hubbell was named an assistant professor of history at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, last year. He has written a number of articles on Civil War history and has compiled critical bibliographies of Civil War books. For example, he comments that Elizabeth Whaley's "Forgotten Hero" is "unsatisfactory," but the only published biography of James Birdseye McPherson.

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street,  
Chicago 11, Illinois  
Phone: Whitehall 4-3085

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Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968



CWRT members are specially invited to attend a reading of "Around the Dear Ruin," a play about the widowhood of Mary Todd Lincoln, to be presented in the Leo Lerner Theater, 4520 N. Beacon, on Friday, Sept. 19, at 8 p.m. The play, written by Joseph Sander, will be directed by George Keathley, director of the Ivanhoe Theater. Tickets at \$10 each may be obtained in advance by calling LO 1-8033. Proceeds from the event will aid the Uptown Hull House Center. Leo Lerner Theater is named for a former member of the Chicago Civil War Round Table whose brother, Mike Lerner, is one of our past presidents. Joseph Sander is the author of the award-winning television program "Three from Illinois."

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Volume one of the series of recordings planned by the 1st Brigade Band, 3rd and 4th Divisions, 15th Army Corps, is now available. The price is \$3.98, plus shipping and mailer, which brings the total to \$4.25. If you would like one, please remit a check or money order for the latter amount, and a recording will be shipped to you as soon as our mailers arrive. This record is in hi-fi, and can be played on any monoraul and stereo machine. Members of the 1st Brigade Band sincerely appreciate your interest in our cause. The purchase of this album of original Civil War period band music will help us to continue to perpetuate this historic music for this and coming generations. Send checks to Heritage Military Music Foundation Inc., Fred Benkovik, Sec'y, 1824 N. 36th St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208

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Win Stracke, reporting to our June meeting on his trip to Japan with the Lincoln exhibit, told that he felt at home when police used tear gas on Tokyo young people demonstrating for Japanese control of Okinawa.

from the  
Editor's pen



Treasurer Dick Cohen announced that all dues notices have been mailed and that \$20 dues for 1969-70 is owed by each CWRT member. Send your dues in now and note the meeting dates for the year published in the Bulletin Board on the back page of this Newsletter.

Members should note that the first meeting is to be held on a Wednesday night, September 10, to avoid conflict with the Rosh Hashana holiday late in the week. Other meetings will be held on Friday nights in the Furniture Club.

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Several members report that our Baladeer Win Stracke displays his usual knack for capturing audiences at the Fifth Peg, a saloon on Armitage Avenue near Win's Old Town School of Folk Music. One number sung by Win was described this way by Roger Ebert of the Sun-Times: "He does a hilarious bawdy song 'John Harrison' about the Confederate shortage of nitrate for bullets. A plan was invented by the unfortunate Mr. Harrison to extract nitrate from... but I can't think of any way to describe it in print."

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Six young people with a Ouija board claim they made "contact" with John Mulligan, commander of Mulligan's Brigade, who is buried in Evanston's Calvary Cemetery. They blamed police for breaking their contact just when they got good vibrations. They didn't say what Mulligan told them from beyond the grave, but we suggest it might have been "Lay me down and save the flag!"

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Our founding member and Honorary Life Member Charles N. Owen made an important gift to the Chicago Historical Society—a letter written by Gen. Philip H. Sherman to Gen. U.S. Grant in 1865.

"If the thing is pressed," Sherman wrote Grant, "I think that Lee will surrender."

The letter was written April 6, 1865, at Union cavalry headquarters in Sailor's Creek, Va., to report the rout of Lee's forces as they withdrew from Richmond to join Johnston's army in North Carolina.

Grant was with the Army of the Potomac west of Richmond.

President Lincoln, notified of Sherman's letter, commanded Grant by telegram to "let the thing be pressed."

Only three days later Lee, pressed by Grant and Sherman, surrendered at Appomatox Courthouse.

Lincoln's telegram, already the property of the Chicago Historical Society, will be displayed along with the newly acquired letter from Sherman to Grant.

Honorary Member Owen, a resident of Glencoe, is descended from a family that settled in McHenry County in 1837.

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Frank Rankin, a good friend of the Chicago CWRT and a frequent visitor to our meetings, is actively engaged in efforts to restore Whitehall, home of Cassius Clay, noted Kentucky emancipator. Clay, a relative of Henry Clay who was known as the "lion of Whitehall, once freed 100 slaves valued at \$1,000 and helped others escape through the countryside surrounding the estate at Richmond, Ky. Vandals and antique hunters recently invaded Whitehall, which stood vacant for several decades. Mrs. Louis B. Nunn, wife of Kentucky Gov. Nunn, is solidly behind the restoration effort and announced that present plans call for the mansion to be opened in June of next year.

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J. Ambler Johnston, a friend of many in the Chicago CWRT, was honored by the "J. Ambler Johnston Day" sponsored by the Richmond (Va.) Rotary Club on May 20.

## MESSAGE FROM WARSHAW

Old presidents never die.  
They merely reminisce.  
They probably should repent.

With the start of a new Round Table year upon us, I think this a most opportune time to thank the members of the Round Table for the honor they conferred upon me—that of being President for 1968-69. I shall cherish the memory of the year always, and at present I am torn between being sorry and being happy that the year is over.

It was quite a year!

It was a year of much accomplishment and much sadness.

With the deaths of Gill Twiss, Bill Smith and others, we lost old campaigners we could ill afford to lose, but as in the great Civil War armies, others rushed in to fill the gaps, and the holes in our lines were breached.

There were some great volunteers who stepped in when needed and in so doing made the job of president easier and gratifying.

And as Ben Grierson once said of other great volunteers, "Without their hearty co-operation, which was given freely under the most trying circumstances, we could not have accomplished so much."

Above all I would like to thank all the officers and committee chairmen for a job well done.

But special thanks are due, Dick Bjorklund, your editor, who stepped in at a moment's notice to take over the newsletter, and has done a superb job ever since.

Special thanks also to my Devil's Advocate, Marshall Krolick, who kept the club and president on an even keel, and who really deserves more praise than I can give for the magnificent job done over the years as treasurer. A most remarkable fellow.

Thanks to my mentor, Brooks Davis who untiringly made himself available when needed for advice and counsel. And to Arnold Alexander and 'Pete' Long for making the fellowship program so successful this year. (We received the largest number of applications ever, which makes me very proud).

Thanks also to Dan Lapinski and Clyde Walton for a most memorable Battlefield Tour. And of course thanks to Chuck Falkenberg, awards chairman, whose professionalism in awards presentation will set standards for years to come.

Personal thanks also to Lloyd Miller, Jim Coulter, Miner Coburn, Maurice Fisher, George Donovan, Bob Douglas, Charley Wesselhoeft, Dick Cohen, Dick Clark and of course that most unsung hero of all unsung heroes, Al Meyer, without whom the Round Table would have a hard time functioning. I must also thank our speakers who were most co-operative and gracious, and who did such a fine job, and of course thanks, much thanks to Margaret April for being around.

If I have left anyone out, it was inadvertent. But so much happened last year, and everyone who was asked to help did so unstintingly. And it is just such devotion and participation that keeps the Round Table the exciting organization it is.

The year 1968-69 is over, and we are beginning a new year and if your new president, Clyde Walton, receives the same response and support I did, it will indeed be another great Round Table year. I wish him the very best and as Ben Grierson might have said that day in May, 1863, "It was a Hell of a campaign."

Jerry Warshaw  
President, CWRT  
1968-69

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The June meeting of the Arkansas Civil War Round Table featured a discussion of the Chicago CWRT's tour of Shiloh by W. M. Hackett and Jerry L. Russell.

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Edwin Bearss, a friend of many members of the Chicago Civil War Round Table, spoke on "Grierson's Raid," a favorite Chicago CWRT topic, at a June meeting of the Prison Civil War Round Table in Richmond, Va., a group that meets weekly.

## TO THE LADIES—

On Wednesday, Sept. 10, at 18 E. Chestnut St., the Camp Followers will get the inside story on "Lincoln and the Women in His Life" from Miner Coburn. Although Mr. Coburn promises no "purple passages," he does propose some interesting insights into the different kinds of women in Lincoln's life and their effects in shaping that life.

We hope to see all the "old faithfuls", who will be most welcome, but why not bring a friend to introduce her to the pleasures of "camp following?" If you like it, why wouldn't she? For reservations, please call Lenore Fleming, 928-8977.

Cocktails at 5:30, dinner later.

The Camp Followers concluded last season with a most interesting and informative talk on "General and Mrs. George Armstrong Custer" given by CWRT Vice President Don Russell. Mr. Russell is an authority on Custer, and his fascinating presentation was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. This fine program culminated a successful and enjoyable year for the Camp Followers.

## 1968-69 FELLOWSHIP FUND DONORS

George Donovan, Arnold Alexander, Wilson Smith, Charles Wesselhoeft, John Brooks Davis, Bernard Slepak, Ver Lynn Sprague (Zion-Winthrop C. of C.), Alastair Napier, Francis R. Geigle, Joseph L. Eisendrath, Jr., Jerry Warshaw, Wilson Smith, Dan Lapinski, Ver Lynn Sprague (4th Pres. Church), Harriet E. Smith, Joseph L. Eisendrath, Jr., Maurice Fisher, Ralph Newman.

Camp Followers, George Donovan, Mrs. Foreman M. Lebold, E. B. Long, Gladys L. Morrison, Elmer Underwood, Richard K. Ink, Elmer R. Underwood, George Donovan.

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Members Elmer Underwood and Pete Long attended ceremonies honoring Brig. Gen. William Sooy Smith at Forest Home Cemetery on July 22. Gen. Smith was buried at that site in an unmarked grave in 1916—"unwept, unhonored and unsung." A staff officer of Grant's, Smith served with special distinction at Shiloh and in the battle of Vicksburg.

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Club members who know of the death or illness of anyone associated with the Chicago CWRT are urged to promptly contact President Clyde Walton or the CWRT through the Abraham Lincoln Bookshop, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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Pete Long reported that in 1968-69 there were 15 applications for CWRT fellowships as against only three the previous year. The winner, if we got the name right, was Okon Edit Oya, a Nigerian student at the University of Wisconsin. His subject: "Robert Smalls."

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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.

## THE NEW BOOKS

Basler, Roy P. **THE LINCOLN LEGEND**. N.Y.: Octagon, 1969. \$10. Reprint of 1935 ed.

Benson, Edwin C. and Ardel M. Gibson. **FORT SMITH: LITTLE GIBALTAR ON THE ARKANSAS**. Norman: Univ. Oklahoma, 1969. \$6.95

Block, William R. **THE CIVIL WAR**, compiled by. N.Y.: Harper, 1969. Paper, \$2.75

Brown, John. **THE LIFE, TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN**. N.Y.: Da Capo. 1969. \$10.00. Reprint 1859 ed.

Cate, Wirt A. **LUCIUS Q.C. LAMAR: Secession and Reunion**. N.Y.: Russell & Russell, 1969. Reprint 1935 ed. \$15

Cruden, Robt. **THE NEGRO IN RECONSTRUCTION**. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice, 1969. \$5.95. Paper \$2.45

Cunningham, Horace H. **FIELD MEDICAL SERVICES AT THE BATTLES OF MANASSAS (BULL RUN)**. Athens, Ga.: Univ. Georgia Press, 1968. Paper \$2.75

Current, Richard N., ed. **RECONSTRUCTION IN RETROSPECT: Views from the Turn of the Century**. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Press, 1969. \$6.50

Dye, John Smith. **HISTORY OF THE PLOTS AND CRIMES OF THE GREAT CONSPIRACY TO OVERTHROW LIBERTY IN AMERICA**. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Lib. Pr., 1969. Reprint 1866 ed. \$14.50

Emilio, Louis Fenollosa. **A BRAVE BLACK REGIMENT: History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863-1865**. N.Y.: Arno Press, 1969. Reprint 1894 ed. \$14.50

Flexer, James T. **DOCTORS ON HORSEBACK: Pioneers of American Medicine**. N.Y.: Dover, 1969. Paper \$2.50

Goff, Richard E. **CONFEDERATE SUPPLY**. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Pr., 1969. \$8.75

Grant, Ulysses S. **THE PAPERS OF ULYSSES S. GRANT**. Volume 2: April-September 1861. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1969. \$15

Jordan, Donaldson and Edwin J. Pratt. **EUROPE AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR**. N.Y.: Octagon, 1969. Reprint 1931 ed. \$9

Miles, Nelson A. **PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS OF GENERAL NELSON A. MILES**. N.Y.: Da Capo, 1969. Reprint 1896 ed. \$27.50

Moog, Vianna. **EM BUSCA DE LINCOLN (in Portuguese)**. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilizacao Brasileira, 1968. Wrappers, \$5

Pearson, Elizabeth Ware, ed. **LETTERS FROM PORT ROYAL, 1862-1868**. N.Y.: Arno Press, 1969. Reprint 1906 ed. \$10.50

Sanger, Donald and Thomas Robson Hay. **JAMES LONG-STREET**. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968. Reprint 1952 ed. \$7.50

Scripps, John Locke. **LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN**. N.Y.: Greenwood Press, 1968. Reprint Indiana Univ. Press ed.

Smedley, Robert C. **HISTORY OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN CHESTER AND THE NEIGHBORING COUNTIES OF PENNSYLVANIA**. N.Y.: Negro Univs. Pr., 1968. Reprint 1883 ed. \$14 (Arno Press also has at same price.)

Smith, Theodore C. **PARTIES AND SLAVERY, 1850-1859**. N.Y.: Haskell House, 1968. Reprint 1906 ed. \$12.95

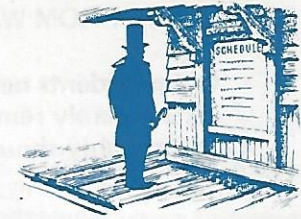
Stowe, Harriet Elizabeth (Beecher). **THE KEY TO UNCLE TOM'S CABIN**. N.Y.: Arno Press, 1968. Reprint 1854 ed. \$15.50

Sunderland, Glenn W. **LIGHTNING AT HOOVER'S GAP: THE STORY OF WILDER'S BRIGADE**. N.Y.: Yoseloff, 1969. \$10

Tate, Allen. **JEFFERSON DAVIS**. N.Y.: Putnam, 1969. For young people. \$3.49

Steward, Austin. **TWENTY-TWO YEARS A SLAVE, AND FORTY YEARS A FREEMAN: embracing a correspondence of several years, while president of Wilberforce Colony, London, Canada West**. N.Y.: Negro Univs. Pr., 1968. Reprint 1856 ed. \$12.50

Taylor, Alruthus A. **THE NEGRO IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF VIRGINIA**. N.Y.: Russell & Russell, 1969. Reprint 1926 ed. \$9.50



## BULLETIN BOARD

### FUTURE MEETINGS

*September 10:* John T. Hubbell on "James Birdseye McPherson."

*October 10:* Bell I. Wiley on "Letters from Liberia."

*November 14:* Thomas L. Connelly on "Lee and the War in the West."

*December 12, January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8 and June 5*—Programs to be announced.

All meetings, except the Wednesday meeting on Sept. 10, are held on Friday nights in the Furniture Club in the Furniture Mart. Mark your calendars now for all meetings for the 1969-70 CWRT program year.

**NEW MEMBERS:** Clarke A. Greene, 660 N. Wabash, Chicago, Ill.; John F. Scapin, 330 Romona Road, Wilmette, Ill., 60091; Langford Spraggins, 11 E. Adams, Chicago, Ill., 60603; John D. Kaluf, P.O. Box 152, St. John, Indiana; George A. Rounsaville, 3851 N. Kildare, Chicago, Ill., 60641; Daniel Vetter, 393 Vine Avenue, Highland Park, Ill., 60035; Daniel J. Fuss, 608 Ravine, Lake Bluff, Ill., 60044, and Dwight R. Duncan, 907 NW 18th, Oklahoma City, Okla., 73106

*Changes of Address:* Philip R. Davis, 30 N. LaSalle, Chicago, Ill., 60602; Samuel K. Levin, 1228 Farwell, Chicago, Ill., 60626; Ver Lynn Sprague, 195 Pago Pago Drive, Isle of Capri, Naples, Florida, 33940; Donald F. Pfeuffer, 614F S. Milwaukee Ave., Libertyville, Ill., 60048.



Trow, George Swift. **MEET ROBERT E. LEE**. N.Y.: Random, 1969. For young people. \$1.95

Trowbridge, John Townsend. **THE SOUTH: A TOUR OF ITS BATTLEFIELDS AND RUINED CITIES**. N.Y.: Arno Press, 1969. Reprint 1866 ed. \$18.00

Webb, Ross. **THE BORDER STATE DILEMMA: Benjamin Helm Bristow and Kentucky Politics**. \$8.75

Woodruff, Mathew. **A UNION SOLDIER IN THE LAND OF THE VANQUISHED: The diary of Sergeant Mathew Woodruff, June-December, 1865**. Edited and annotated by F.N. Boney. University: Univ. Alabama Press, 1969. \$5.00

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Charles "Pie" Dufour was his usual charming and informative self at the June meeting as he discussed the Blue and the Gray in Mexico. Engineers, he said, carried the Mexican War for the U.S. And Dufour also enumerated the future Civil War leaders who distinguished themselves in the Mexican conflict. He quoted Bernard DeVoto as saying "Jefferson Davis learned enough about war in five minutes at Buena Vista to defeat the Confederacy."

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Applications for Civil War Round Table fellowships are available from the CWRT fellowship committee, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Ill., 60611. Round Table members and friends may make tax-deductible contributions to the CWRT fellowship fund for Civil War research and education. Contributions may be sent to the committee at the Chestnut Street address