

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXXIV, Number 6

Chicago, Illinois

February, 1974

LADIES NIGHT -- DICK BLAKE'S "A LOOK AT LINCOLN"

A unique experience in fine dining and entertainment awaits those who attend the Round Table's annual Ladies Night to be held on February 8, 1974.

The highlight of the evening will be a presentation by our own member, Dick Blake, of his truly fascinating program, "A Look At Lincoln." Vocally and visually, Dick creates the amazing illusion that the audience is actually in the presence of our 16th presi-



Dick Blake on Stage

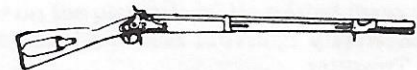
dent. His warm portrayal depicts the essence of Lincoln as the great Emancipator grew from a young politician to a war-weary chief executive. Speaking in Lincoln's own words, Dick addresses the audience as if in conversation with them, thus conveying the moods of the martyr's life, his humor, sadness, dedication, and ideals. It is a memorable performance, one that will leave everyone with a greater understanding of the legend that is Lincoln.

To set the stage for Dick's presentation, we will first be treated to a program of "Songs of the Sixties" (1860's, that is), sung by four professional members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chorus. This talented quartet, named the "Schimmelfennig Singers" in honor of our immortal hero, will include Robert Durnbaugh, Richard Carter, Dale Prest, and the Round Table's senior vice-president, Ward Smidl. Anyone who has had the good fortune to attend Chicago Symphony concerts can well attest to the excellence of its Chorus. These four gentlemen, who represent many years of experience in that Chorus, have planned for us a most enjoyable and representative selection of period music.

The site of the festivities will be the Chandelier Room of The Como Inn at 546 N. Milwaukee Avenue in Chicago. A Chicago landmark, this outstanding restaurant is renowned for its old world atmosphere and Italian and American cuisine. A choice of baked lasagna, rock cornish hen, or whitefish will be available and each entree will be part of a complete dinner from soup to dessert. Free parking service is provided by the restaurant's doorman. The evening will begin with the traditional Command Post at 6:30 P.M., with dinner to follow at approximately 7:30 P.M. The price is \$10.00 per person and payment must accompany your advance reservation.

DICK BLAKE, OUR OWN MR. LINCOLN

Dick Blake began his acting career in the late 1950's as a result of his involvement with the Boy Scouts in the Chicago



328th REGULAR MEETING

Ladies Night

featuring

Dick Blake's "A Look at Lincoln"
and the Schimmelfennig Singers

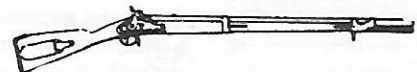
Friday, February 8, 1974

The Como Inn
546 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago

Cocktails at 6:30 p.m.

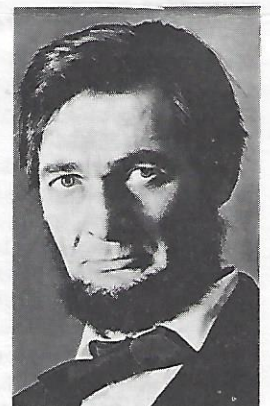
Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Send in your reservation with
payment of \$10.00 per person enclosed.



area. Dick had been active as a district leader and explorer advisor when the eminent English actor and producer, Ralph Reader came to Chicago in 1957 to produce the Boy Scout Gang Show for the Boy Scout Council. This was an event that played for two weeks every year, all of its talent coming from the ranks of scouting. Dick was one of those to answer the call for performers and for the next five years he had feature roles in the shows while he learned the art of acting from Mr. Reader.

This first taste led in the early 1960's to additional acting experience with community theaters in the Chicago area, such as Theater First at the Athenium, Music Onstage in Arlington Heights, and the Lincoln Park Players. He also participated in night club reviews at the Gate of Horn and Meadowbrook Country Club. In 1965, Dick conceived the idea of combining his life-long interest in history with his new-found love of the



(Continued on page 4)

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: WHitehall 4-3085

OFFICERS

President Gordon Whitney
Senior Vice President Ward Smidl
Vice President Donald E. Jensen
Vice President Francis R. Geigle
Secretary Terry Carr
Treasurer Gerald Edelstein
Assistant Secretary Daniel Vetter
Assistant Treasurer Glen Wiche
Editor of Newsletter Marshall D. Krolick
Contributing Editor Dick Clark
Assistant Editor Robert H. Franke
Judge Advocate General Philip R. Davis
Inspector General Charles Wesselhoeft

Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Terms expiring in 1974: Elmer Pendarvis, Edward Johnson,
Norman Toberman.
Terms expiring in 1975: Burton Rovens, Robert H. Franke,
Myron Cohn.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Battlefield Tour Warren Reeder and Gerald Edelstein
Membership and Hospitality Donald E. Jensen
Fellowship Arnold Alexander, Lloyd Miller
House Committee Ray Jankovich and William Sullivan

The only requirement for membership is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Donald E. Jensen, 335 East Woodland Road, Lake Bluff, Ill. 60044.



*from the
Editor's pen*



Almost by definition the Civil War student is, above all, a collector. Whether it be books, artifacts, weapons, or just information and data pertaining to the War Between the States, he is constantly striving to possess those things which interest him most. If it is volumes or physical memorabilia which attract him, then it is not long before his home becomes a private museum or library. If research is his forte, his brain is soon a mini-computer just waiting for the question period at the next Round Table meeting.

Once we acknowledge our, shall we say, desire to acquire, be it knowledge or objects, then we must also recognize that this is a basic area where our Round Table and its Newsletter can be of great service. Our membership consists of almost three hundred men who share a common interest. Where better to seek the answer to the question we are researching, to find someone who wants the relic or book we no longer wish to keep, to locate the object we want to add to our collection?

Therefore, we are announcing the creation of a new feature of the Newsletter, to be entitled "The Sutler's Wagon." As its

name implies, it will be a trading post of items and information. Its inventory will be supplied by our members and they will be its customers. So, if you want to buy, sell, swap, or even give away anything pertaining to the Civil War, or if you need information on any phase of it, please write to the Newsletter and give us the details. Your notice will then appear in a future issue.

* * * * *

On January 11, 1974, the members and their guests were treated to a most interesting and informative description of events on the Kansas-Missouri Border from 1854 to 1865. Our speaker was Stephen Z. Starr, secretary and director of the Cincinnati Historical Society. Mr. Starr pointed out that while many writers dwell on the chivalry and genteel aspects of the participants' conduct during the War Between the States, in Kansas and Missouri it was a true civil war, grim, dirty, treacherous and bloodthirsty.

It all began in January of 1854 when Stephen A. Douglas introduced his Kansas-Nebraska Act which specifically repealed the Missouri Compromise. The latter had prohibited slavery above the line that became the southern boundary of Kansas. Douglas' bill, however, did away with this arbitrary demarcation point and, instead, instituted the doctrine of squatter sovereignty, that is that the residents of a new state would decide by vote whether slavery would or would not be permitted. When the Act became law, the race was on as abolitionists and pro-slavery forces vied with each other to bring into Kansas enough people to carry the question. While many abolitionist organizations, such as the Emmigrant Aid Society, did operate to encourage and assist new residents, most of the anti-slavery settlers were mid-western Free-Soilers who, while not strict abolitionists, were nonetheless opposed to the "peculiar institution." The pro-slavery faction came mainly from Missouri, a slave state, where in the six counties abutting Kansas there were seventeen thousand slaves. For the most part, the Missourians merely travelled to Kansas to perform some symbolic act to establish residency, thus qualifying to vote, before returning back to their Missouri homes to await the election.

The controversy was fanned by the inflammatory rhetoric of politicians and newspapers, some of whom even blatantly suggested that opposition settlers be driven out at the point of a gun. When it became apparent that the anti-slavery residents were in the majority and would control the elections, the Missourians resorted to tactics such as widespread vote fraud in the elections of March 1855 and October 1856. Missouri newspapers advertised free transportation and refreshment to those who would travel to Kansas to vote and caravans of voters were organized. As a result, incidents such as at Oxford, Kansas, where 1600 voted in a district with 30 registered voters, were not uncommon.

Feelings ran high and the explosion came in May of 1856 when a pro-slavery grand jury declared two anti-slavery newspapers and the Free State Hotel in Lawrence to be nuisances. A posse of 800 Missourians soon carried out the destruction of these businesses. In retaliation, the fanatic John Brown and six others murdered five pro-slavery men near Pottawatomie Creek. The violence had begun and soon the massacres, murders, scalplings, burnings, and lootings were an every day occurrence. Corpses were a common sight on the roads and in a thirteen month period, it was estimated that over 200 politically motivated killings occurred.

As Mr. Starr related, the flame that was "Bleeding Kansas" soon spread across the country. In the Senate, Charles Sumner gave a speech on the subject and the next day was caned into insensibility by Preston Brooks. In the presidential election of 1856, the new Republican Party adopted a free Kansas as their battlecry. Atrocity followed atrocity as the opposing forces raided each other across the Kansas-Missouri Border. The eventual outbreak of the Civil War made things even worse as the survivors of the violence of the late 1850's joined the

respective armies or pretended to. The killings, lootings and burnings went on, now disguised under the heading of legitimate acts of war. Both sides took to guerilla warfare and their activities, almost amounting to an orgy of pathological lust, reached a brutal ferocity unparalleled in our history.

Going on to describe some of the leading participants, Mr. Starr referred to the subject of his soon to be released book, Jennison's Jayhawkers, the 7th Kansas Cavalry. This was a Union regiment that prided itself on requiring no subsistence from the Federal quartermaster, as its looting and raiding provided more than enough food and equipment to sustain itself. Among its members was the future "Buffalo Bill" Cody, then 18 years old. Mr. Starr also referred to "Bloody Bill" Anderson who, when killed had six pistols in his holsters, a human scalp woven into his horse's mane, and a silken cord with fifty-three knots in his pocket. Apparently the latter was his scorecard of killings. Also, the career of the infamous William C. Quantrell was covered by Mr. Starr, with specific detail on his bloody attack on Lawrence, Kansas in August of 1863. It was this raid, resulting in the killing of over 150 unresisting men and boys, that led the Union General Thomas Ewing, Sherman's brother-in-law, to order the evacuation of several Missouri counties by the civilian population. The eviction of these people from their homes by Union troops would, Ewing felt, eliminate needed assistance to Confederate guerillas.

Mr. Starr concluded by reminding us that the end of the war did not bring an end to the violence as many of those who had ridden with Quantrell, Anderson, etc., such as the James and Younger brothers, continued their lawless ways.

In response to an inquiry addressed to its community service column "Bee Line", a recent edition of the Chicago Daily News retold the story of William Newby. Newby, from Mill Shoals, White County, Illinois enlisted in Company D of the 40th Illinois Infantry. While in action with his regiment at Shiloh, he was wounded on April 6, 1862 and left on the battlefield for two days unaided. Although the warm and rainy weather caused the bodies of the dead to become swollen and discolored, a burial detail identified a corpse as Newby and buried him under that name. Thus, officially Newby was dead.

However, in 1891, twenty-nine years later, a drifter who strongly resembled Newby, turned up in White County. Several members of Newby's family, including his mother and wife, and many old neighbors positively identified this man as William Newby, citing the similarity of scars and physical characteristics. When the alleged Newby, at the family's insistence, applied for his Army pension and back pay, the government refused the claim and prosecuted the man for fraud. After a lengthy trial, during which the government introduced evidence that the defendant was actually one Daniel Benton who had once lived in the area, but had later moved to Tennessee, the jury rendered a verdict of guilty, thus sustaining the government's position. Newby, or Benton, was sentenced to two years at hard labor.

The decision was extremely unpopular and attracted much attention. Most of the blame was directed at the judge, whom many felt had been biased against the defendant. The entire story, including the trial, was set forth in a book entitled "William Newby, or the Soldier's Return, a True and Wonderful Story of Mistaken Identity", published in 1893. The author, G. J. Geroge, who had been a lieutenant in Newby's company, vehemently criticized the case's outcome, saying "It (the verdict) is an outrage too grievous to be borne." However, no reversal was obtained and the sentence was served. George's book is not readily available, but there is one copy at the Ohio State University Library.

Sir Denis Brogan, noted British historian, died in a nursing home in Cambridge, England on January 6, 1974. He was 73



TO THE CAMP FOLLOWERS (LADIES)

A real treat awaits the camp followers on February 8th as we will be joining the Round Table for their annual Ladies Night at the Como Inn. Mr. Dick Blake, a member of the Round Table, will present an outstanding portrayal of the trials and tribulations of our 16th president. Mr. Blake has presented this program on television and has appeared at colleges all over the nation.

So bring your spouse or make up a party for a very special and entertaining evening. See the front page of the Newsletter for all of the details.

At our last meeting, Ward Smidl, the senior vice-president of the Round Table, presented a most outstanding program on slavery in the South. Ward began by describing the history of slavery in America and then went on to detail the experiences of the slaves while on the voyage from Africa and their subsequent life on the plantations. He related many interesting examples of the hardships and sufferings they were forced to endure.



years of age. Sir Denis, a lecturer at the University of Illinois in 1956 and at the University of Chicago in 1966, was the featured speaker at our 250th regular meeting on April 6, 1966. That night was also the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic. Sir Denis' topic on that occasion was "The War As A War", a study of the strategy, tactics and weapons of the Civil War, as well as the role of that conflict in the history of warfare.

Arnold Alexander, co-chairman of our Fellowship Committee, advises us that the deadline for applications for the 1974-1975 Fellowship Award is March 1, 1974. To be eligible for the Award, a three thousand dollar grant, an applicant must be a graduate student working on a Ph. D. in history, specializing in the Civil War period. The applicant must have completed the oral examinations and must have the intention of teaching. Any interested and qualified parties can obtain an application by addressing the Round Table. Each application should be accompanied by a grade transcript, description of the doctoral thesis, copies of any previous articles or dissertations, and two written faculty recommendations. The winner of the Award, as decided by the Committee, will be announced at the June meeting.

Can there be a comprehensive "Ten Title Civil War Library", one that would cover the broad range of Civil War interests without duplication of subject matter or author? That is the question raised by Past President Ver Lynn Sprague. For some time Ver Lynn has been working on such a list that would provide an in-depth study of all aspects of the Civil War to those who are not inclined to read countless volumes or who do not have the room for an extensive book collection. It is a challenging project and he would welcome the suggestions of other members. So get your pencils out, review your bibliographies and send your list to Ver Lynn at 195 Pago Pago Drive, Isle of Capri, Naples, Florida 33940. The only stipulation is that the books be reasonably easy to obtain; no rare or out-of-print titles. He will compile the consensus results, which will be published in a forthcoming issue of the Newsletter.

Our President, Gordon Whitney, was scheduled to speak on "General Jefferson C. Davis" before the Decatur, Illinois Civil War Round Table in December and was rescheduled to appear

(Continued on page 4)

THE NEW BOOKS



(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Bradlee, Francis B. C. *Blockade Running During the Civil War and the Effect of Land and Water Transportation on the Confederacy*. Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1974. \$20.00. Reprint of 1925 print.

Dodd, Donald B. *Historical Statistics of the South, 1790-1970*; a compilation of State-level Census Statistics for the Sixteen States of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia. University: University of Alabama Press [1973]. \$7.75

Everett, Frank Edgar, Jr. *Brierfield, Plantation Home of Jefferson Davis*. Hattiesburg; University and College Press of Mississippi, 1971. \$5.95

Grant, Matthew G. *Robert E. Lee; the South's Great General*. Illustrated by John Keely. [Mankato, Minn.: Creative Educational Society, 1974]. \$3.95. For young people.

Jones, Katharine M. *Heroines of Dixie; Confederate Women Tell Their Story*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press [1973]. \$18.50. Reprint of the 1955 issue.

Longacre, Edward G. *From Union Stars to Top Hat, a Biography of the Extraordinary General James Harrison Wilson*. Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1972. \$10.00

McKee, Jennie Starks. *Throb of Drums in Tennessee, 1862-1865*. Philadelphia: Dorrance [1973]. \$6.95. Some material on Wilder's Brigade.

Pitman, Benn. *The Assassination of President Lincoln and the Trial of the Conspirators; the Courtroom Testimony as Originally Compiled by Benn Pitman*. With an introduction by Philip Van Doren Stern. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press [1974]. \$22.00. Facimile edition of the 1954 Putnam issue.

Prideaux, James. *The Last of Mrs. Lincoln*; a play in two acts. [New York] Dramatists Play Service [1973]. Paper \$1.75

Sigelschiffer, Saul. *The American Conscience: The Drama of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates*. New York: Horizon Press [c1973]. \$12.95

Spring, Leverett Wilson. *Kansas: the Prelude to the War for the Union*. [New York: AMS Press, 1973], \$18.50. Reissue of a title first published in 1907.

(Continued from page 1)

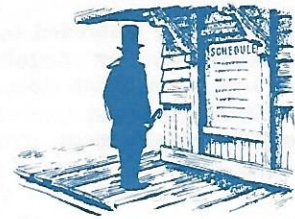
theater by the development of a one-man program about Abraham Lincoln. After two years of preparation, he was ready and, in 1967, he gave up his other commitments to concentrate full-time on presenting "A Look At Lincoln."

Now, seven years later, Dick has put on over 1500 performances in twenty-two states, including television appearances in Chicago, Oklahoma City and Binghamton, New York. His audiences include colleges and community and service organizations, as well as regular theater presentations. Coming up is a special appearance at Lincoln College on February 12th.

Dick, who has been a member of the Round Table for several years, was born in Davenport, Iowa, but has lived in Chicago since he was a young boy. He attended Steinmetz High School and DePaul University. During World War II, he served in, appropriately enough, the Blackhawk Division. Dick has three sons and three grandchildren with another of the latter on the way.

(Continued from page 3)

in January. Unfortunately, each time the Central Illinois area was hit by a severe winter storm on the day of the meeting,



BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

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

February 8: Ladies Night, Richard Blake program, "A Look at Lincoln," at the Como Inn.

March 8: Marshall Krolick on Lee and Longstreet at Gettysburg.

April 12: Robert Womack on the Battle of Murfreesboro.

May 2, 3, 4, and 5: Annual Battlefield Tour to Chattanooga and Chickamauga.

May 10: Program and location to be announced.

June 14: Annual Award Dinner and Installation of Officers; program details to be announced.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at LaSalle Hotel coffee shop; all members invited.

New Member

Mr. Donald McCluskey, 1630 Walnut Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091

Change of Address

Mr. Walter Pickart, 500 W. Lincoln Hwy., Suite C, Merrillville, Indiana 46401

making it impossible for Gordon to travel from his home in Hammond to Decatur. Realizing that there may be a causal connection in all of this, Decatur has wisely decided to insure mild weather for the balance of the winter by resetting Gordon's appearance for July.

Chicago is truly a city of warm, considerate people who will go out of their way for others. This fact was again brought home to the Round Table recently when Treasurer Jerry Edelstein's car was broken into and the brief case containing the financial and membership records of the Round Table was stolen. Several days later, a gentleman called the Round Table office at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop to advise us that he had found the brief case on the street and would take time out from his personal affairs to deliver it to the Book Shop. Fortunately, all of the records were intact, as only a small amount of cash had been taken by the thief.

From the January, 1974 issue of *Battle Lines*, the newsletter of the Atlanta Civil War Round Table, we learn that Ship Island, off the coast of Gulfport, Mississippi, is part of the region recently designated as a National Seashore Recreational Area by the Department of the Interior. During the Civil War, this island was used by the Union as a Confederate prisoner of war camp and 153 Southern soldiers died there. The Mississippi Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy has begun a campaign to collect funds to erect a memorial on Ship Island to these Confederate dead. Once it is erected, the National Park Service will care for the memorial. Anyone wishing to contribute may correspond with Mrs. J. O. Jones, Chairman, Ship Island Memorial Committee, Drawer 280, Gulfport, Mississippi 39501.