

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXXIV, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April, 1974

ROBERT WOMACK ON STONE'S RIVER—APRIL 12, 1974

To those in the North it is Stone's River. Southerners refer to it as Murfreesboro. By either name, it is well remembered as a bloody, two-day conflict which resulted in over twenty-four thousand killed, wounded and missing. On April 12, 1974, we will be privileged to hear a description of this major battle presented by Dr. Robert Womack, Professor of Educational Philosophy at Middle Tennessee State University.

As Dr. Womack will describe, after the Battle of Perryville Bragg had concentrated his Army of Tennessee at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. There, on December 31, 1862, he was confronted by Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland which had advanced southeast from Nashville, following the line of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. In a strange twist, each commander determined to attack his opponent's right that morning. However, the Confederates moved first and the Federals were forced to the defensive. For the remainder of the day the two armies struggled in bitter combat in the fields and woods west of the town. The fiercest action occurred in a grove officially referred to as the Round Forest, but to the soldiers who fought there it was ever after known as "Hell's Half Acre."

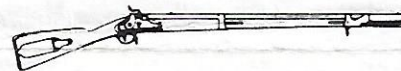


Dr. Robert Womack

Although being initially forced back, Rosecrans held his final position and so determined not to retreat. The next day, January 1, 1863, the two armies quietly faced each other in an unusual lull in the fighting. On January 2, the Confederates resumed the offensive, but the Union forces successfully counterattacked to recover much of the ground they had lost earlier that day.

The battlefield was again quiet on the 3rd and that night, despite his tactical victory in the opening stages of the battle, Bragg withdrew his army to the south. When Rosecrans declined to pursue, the battle was over. Not until the following June, five months later, would the two generals feel that their forces had recovered sufficiently to begin active operations once more.

In addition to outlining the military aspects of Stone's River, Dr. Womack will concentrate on the human interest element involved, an area of Civil War study he finds especially fascinating. His familiarity with operations in the western theater is a natural one as Middle Tennessee State University is located at Murfreesboro, while his boyhood home was only a short distance from such other prominent battlefields as Franklin, Nashville and Chattanooga. Prior to becoming a



330th REGULAR MEETING

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Dr. Robert Womack

on

The Battle of Stone's River

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Friday, April 12, 1974

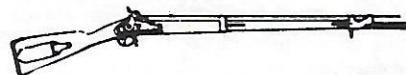
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Chicago Bar Association
29 South LaSalle Street

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Send in your reservation.



college professor, Dr. Womack also taught on the elementary and high school levels. He received his doctorate from Peabody College in Nashville. During World War II, he was a naval officer, spending two years in the South Pacific.

Dr. Womack has done extensive research on the Civil War in Tennessee, with special emphasis on the letters and diaries of the soldiers themselves. In addition to speaking before many other Round Tables, he has authored numerous articles on the Tennessee campaigns and battles. Among his published works is "Stone's River National Military Park," which he wrote for the Tennessee Historical Society. Proving that man need not live by Civil War alone, Dr. Womack is also considered one of the nation's foremost authorities on the famed Tennessee Walking Horse. In this regard he has written "The Echo of Hoofbeats," which is a history of that unique equine breed. Among his recent achievements in other fields was a commission to visit the Middle East to prepare a series of articles on the treatment of Arab orphans after the Seven Days War. Thus, our April speaker is a man of numerous accomplishments in varied endeavors, but closest to his heart is the Civil War and the battlefield that is only three miles from his home. His description of the events which occurred there one hundred and eleven years ago should provide us with a most interesting evening.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
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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*



(What could be more appropriate as an editorial this month than a fitting tribute to a grand gentleman whose devotion to this Round Table and the history of the Civil War was only exceeded by our affection for him. Therefore, we turn our pen over to one who was privileged to know him well.)

IN MEMORIAM — JAMES AMBLER JOHNSTON

By J. Brooks Davis

Our friend, Ambler Johnston is dead. The physical shock of breaking his hip in November, 1972 and the resulting operations eventually proved too much for him. He was buried at the age of 88 on February 9, 1974 in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.

Our club first met Mr. James Ambler Johnston in Richmond during the 1953 annual Battlefield Tour. His friend, Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman had asked him to guide the club over the Richmond battlefields. A mutual admiration developed, with Hal Hixson leading the charge. As J.A.J. once wrote, "While there was nothing lovely about the awful Civil War, its history has certainly brought a lot of congenial souls together who would otherwise have been unknown — each to the other."

He had learned the fields south of the Chickahominy swamp while duck hunting. Noting that his new friend, Dr. Freeman, spoke only of those north of it, Ambler asked about that, thus forming a touring association that was to last many years. As Ambler drove, Dr. Freeman made notes.

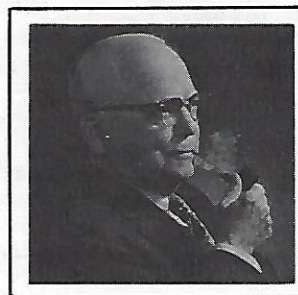
The two men were instrumental in forming the Battlefield Markers Association in the 1920's and later the Richmond Battlefield Parks Corporation which secured many, many parcels of battlefield land and turned them over to the National Park Service. The field at Fort Harrison was one of those closest to Ambler's heart, for his father, Pvt. Nathaniel Burwell Johnston had served near there as a member of Griffin's Battery, 1st Regiment, Hardaways Battalion; the "Salem Flying Artillery". Ambler gave his father's knapsack and rifle to the National Park Service, which promptly placed them on display there.

He and his fellow members of the Richmond Civil War Round Table were our hosts again in 1963. Once again distances were carefully measured, facts double checked, special maps prepared. "There were right many details to be worked out." The Chicago crowd was coming and accuracy was important, for "all they want to know is where they are on the map." Between visits by our group and many others, he had been instrumental in forming a C.W.R.T. at the local state prison. "They hold out no program of field trips." We in Chicago hope that the faithful in Richmond will continue to watch over this fine group.

Ambler joined with us on many of the annual Battlefield Tours, often bringing friends from around the country. Our visit to Gettysburg in 1962 drew him north of the Mason Dixon line for the first time to visit a Civil War battlefield, chiefly because his father had fought there. He spoke in Chicago several times, the last appearance in 1966, speaking on Grant and Lee. At a prior visit in 1957 he had been made an honorary member of our club. He loved and respected the Civil War Round Table, as evidenced by his message read before our 25th anniversary meeting in 1965. "More than you Chicago 'boys' perhaps realize, your Round Table has done more to rescue from oblivion the true history of the second most important event in the life of our nation. Prior to Freeman's Lee (1933), the Chicago Round Table (1940), Bruce Catton (several dates), there had been romance and biography in abundance, but not the careful, documented, on-the-site study so largely initiated by your enthusiastic group. My association with you *all* has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."

During the Centennial, his local Richmond committee received the first national award and published 10 papers and maps. His stories were legendary, from the introduction of Jack Daniels whiskey to Virginia, to the one about the watch used by Thomas J. Jackson at Chancellorsville. J.A.J. earned his livelihood as an architect and his firm built many buildings in Richmond, V.M.I., and at his beloved V.P.I., which dedicated a dormitory to him in 1969. He was an active member of the advisory council of the Confederate Memorial Literary Society (the Confederate White House group) and the Virginia Historical Society, along with many civic groups and was the last surviving member of the original Southern Historical Society. We bid him an affectionate farewell.

Contributions to his memory may be made to the Civil War Round Table Research Center Fund.



THE MARCH MEETING

By Gordon Whitney
Guest Reviewer

On March 8, 1974, 88 members and guests of the Round Table witnessed a slight change in the program as a very surprised Marshall Krolick was "roasted" with tender, loving care and appropriate remarks by Charles Wesselhoeft, Charles Falkenberg, Bob Walter, Ward Smidl, Ralph Newman, Brooks Davis and yours truly. A very appropriate "sonnet" was received from member Lowell Reidenbaugh of St. Louis, which was read through bursts of laughter. Besides the "well-landed" puns, Marshall received an array of rare Civil War artifacts to add to his collection: a Confederate flag 4" x 4", a picture of Gen. Grierson (his backside), a Brady caricature, a photo of the Codori Farm and barn at Gettysburg signed by B. S. Codori, and an original pants presser found at Gettysburg and used during the battle by General Electric.

When the laughter subsided, Marshall launched into a spirited presentation on the Confederate command in the Gettysburg campaign, its success and failures and especially its consequential effect on the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee's love and thrill for combat, his habit of giving discretionary orders and his failure to properly handle his subordinates were the chief reasons for the fall of a great army, which through the Battle of Chancellorsville was undefeatable. Lee, himself, thought his men were endowed with super powers, but with the loss of the mighty Stonewall, the army was never to be the same. Lee could not find another lieutenant who could lead and who possessed the ability to wage offensive war as well as T. J. Jackson.

With the reorganization of the Army of Northern Virginia in the spring of 1863, Lee divided it into three corps. Jackson's old corps, the Second, was given to Ewell. Although a veteran officer, he lacked the forceful aggressiveness needed to be an effective Corps commander. The new Third Corps was commanded by A. P. Hill, a tough experienced soldier but one not able to lead without assistance. The First Corps was under James Longstreet. Lee called him his "old War Horse." He was the only veteran corps commander in Lee's army and was a hard-hitting combat officer, a stubborn man with his own ideas and the man Lee was to lean on in his most trying hour.

For the absence of Stuart, Marshall placed the primary blame on Lee. The cavalryman acted within the discretionary orders Lee gave him and so the fault lay with Lee when he was deprived of the eyes of his Army during this important campaign.

Inefficient command structure and poor staff work caused long delays in getting troops up in time to overpower the fast moving Federal Army. Ewell's failure to act on the 1st resulted from Lee's not ordering him to do so. At 5 P.M. on July 1, as Longstreet observed the last of the Federals assembled on Cemetery Ridge, he advised and even argued with Lee, not to attack. He again urged his plan of going around the Federal left to interpose the Army between the Federals and their Capitol. Lee's reply was, "If the enemy is there tomorrow, we must attack him." Marshall then went on to relate Longstreet's translucent attitude and obvious unwillingness to attack which led to the delay on the 2nd and the poorly organized charge on the 3rd. However, Lee's affectionate respect for his corp commander's ability prevented him from censuring Longstreet. Because his adrenalin was flowing and his overconfidence in his Army was unchanged, Lee did not change his plans. At 3 P.M., July 3rd, the long Gray line swung out suddenly across the Emmitsburg Road as battleflags fluttered and snapped. They marched on into the waiting Union guns to uphold Lee's ideas.

Marshall's presentation of an old conflict was admirably done with clear stated facts. He made you feel "you were there."

TO THE CAMP FOLLOWERS (LADIES)

Elmer Underwood, the "archivist" of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop and one of the most respected members of the Round Table, will speak before the Camp Followers at our next meeting on April 12. Elmer has been one of the real leaders and builders of the Round Table since 1950 and has served in almost every post and capacity.

His subject which should be of particular interest to the women of today, is "The Moon Sisters." They were Southerners who moved to Ohio, retained their Confederate sympathies, and constantly worked in every way against the Union.

Be sure to make your reservation for what should be a fine presentation by calling Margaret April at 787-1860. The meeting will be held at the Book and Bottle.

At the March meeting, Roberta Krolick gave an outstanding account of the Southern women's strength and determination as they withstood Sherman's devastating and degrading "March to the Sea." The humiliation and hardships these women endured were clearly described by Roberta as she related excerpts from their diaries and letters. The celebration of Margaret April's birthday capped a most enjoyable evening.

In addition to his scheduled appearance before the Decatur Round Table on July 2, 1974, at which he will discuss Union General Jefferson C. Davis, our president, Gordon Whitney, has been invited to speak to the Milwaukee Round Table on April 25, 1974. His topic on the latter occasion will be the Battle of Nashville. Gordon is just one example of the many fine speakers who are members of the Round Table. If you know of any other Round Tables, clubs, organizations or school groups who would like to hear a talk on a Civil War subject, please contact the Newsletter and we will be happy to suggest someone who will be perfect for their requirements.

The speaker at the annual Ladies Night at the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table, held on March 21, 1974, was Betsy Ross Davis, lovely wife of our Past President, J. Brooks Davis. Betsy, a guiding light of the Campfollowers since that group's inception, was the first woman to address the Cincinnati Round Table. Her topic was "Kiss and Tell, or the Ladies Talk About the War," a glimpse of the lives, through their own words, of four of the most fascinating feminine personalities of the times, Louisa May Alcott, Constance Gary, Mary Todd Lincoln, and Varina Howell Davis.

On February 12, 1974 our fellow battlefield tour campaigners, Will and Elizabeth Plank, celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. A party was held in their honor on February 16, 1974 at the Hudson Valley Nursing Home in Highland, New York where Will is convalescing from his recent illness. Unfortunately he still cannot speak, but is able to read and walk with the aid of a brace. Will would certainly enjoy hearing from his many old friends in the Round Table, so drop him a line or a card.

Also on the agenda for the April meeting is the report of the Nominating Committee on the slate of officers for the coming year. Elections will take place in May and the installation of the new officers will occur in conjunction with the Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner in June.



THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Caldwell, James Fitz James. *The History of a Brigade of South Carolinians, Known First as "Gregg's" and subsequently as "McGowan's Brigade."* Dayton: Morningside Bookshop, 1974. Paper, \$7.50; cloth \$12.50

Cartland, Fernando G. *Southern Heroes, or, The Friends in War Time.* With an introduction by Benjamin F. Trueblood; and, *The Conscript Quakers*, by Ethan Foster; with a new introduction for the Garland edition by John W. Chambers and David Osher. New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1972. 2 vols. in 1. Reprint of two works issued separately in 1895 and 1883 respectively. \$30.00

Catton, Bruce. *Gettysburg: The Final Fury.* N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974. Slipcase. \$8.95

Cleaves, Freeman. *Rock of Chickamauga; the Life of General George H. Thomas.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Reprint of edition published in 1948. \$15.00

Country Beautiful. *Civil War; the Years Asunder.* Waukesha, Wis.: Country Beautiful [1973]. \$15.95

Degler, Carl N. *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the Nineteenth Century.* New York: Harper & Row, 1974. \$10.00

Dowdey, Clifford. *The Land They Fought for: The Story of the South as the Confederacy, 1832-1865.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press 1973. Reprint of 1955 issue. \$19.00

Fuld, George and Malvin Fuld. *U.S. Civil War Store Cards.* [N.P., The Civil War Token Society, 1972]. \$27.50

Grant, Ulysses S. *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant.* Volume 5: April 1-August 31, 1862. Edited by John Y. Simon; Assistant editor, Thomas G. Alexander. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press [c1973]. \$15.00

Harrington, Fred H. *Fighting Politician, Major General N.P. Banks.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Original of 1948. \$11.00

Katz, William Loren. *Slavery to Civil War, 1812-1865.* New York: Watts, 1974. \$4.95. (Minorities in American History, vol. 2)

Kean, Robert Garlick Hill. *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean, Head of the Bureau of War.* Edited by Edward Younger. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972. Original of 1957. \$12.00

Kerksis, Sidney C. *Plates and Buckles of the American Military 1795-1874.* Kennesaw, Georgia: Gilgal Press, 1974. \$25.00

Lindsey, David. *Americans in Conflict: The Civil War and Reconstruction.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin [1973, c1974]. Paper \$3.95

May, Robert E. *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press [1973]. \$10.00

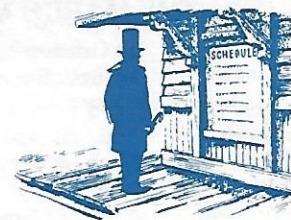
Miller, Elinor and Eugene D. Genovese, compilers. *Plantation, Town, and County; Essays in the Local History of North American Slave Society.* Edited by . . . Urbana: University of Illinois Press [1974]; \$10.95

Oates, William C. *The War between the Union and the Confederacy and its Lost Opportunities with a History of the 15th Alabama Regiment and the Forty-eight Battles in which it was engaged . . .* Introduction to the new edition by Robert K. Krick. [Dayton, O.] Morningside Bookshop, 1974. \$20.00. Original of 1905.

Pessen, Edward. *Riches, Class, and Power before the Civil War.* Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath [1973]. \$7.95

Ranck, James Byrne. *Albert Gallatin Brown, Radical Southern Nationalist.* Philadelphia: Porcupine Press 1974. \$15.00. Reprint of issue of 1937.

Russell, G. Darrell, Jr. *Lincoln and Kennedy: Looked at Kindly Together.* New York: Carlton Press [1973]. \$3.50



BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

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

April 12: Robert Womack on the Battle of Stone's River.
May 2, 3, 4, and 5: Annual Battlefield Tour to Chattanooga and Chickamauga.

May 10: Albert P. Scheller on The Red River Campaign.

June 14: Installation of Officers Dinner and presentation of Nevins-Freeman Award to Bruce Catton — Ladies welcome.

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

Stern, Philip Van Doren, Editor. *Prologue to Sumter; the Beginnings of the Civil War from the John Brown Raid to the Surrender of Fort Sumter, Woven into a continuous Narrative.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press [1974]. \$19.75. Reprint of issue of 1961.

Tarbell, Ida M. *The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln.* With a new introduction by Paul M. Angle. Cranbury, N.J.: A. S. Barnes, 1974. \$10.00

Tredway, G. R. *Democratic Opposition to the Lincoln Administration in Indiana.* [Indianapolis] Indiana Historical Bureau, 1973. \$10.00

Tucker, Glenn. *High Tide at Gettysburg; The Campaign in Pennsylvania.* [N.P. Morningside Bookshop, 1973]. New, revised edition. \$9.00

Vandiver, Frank E. *Judal's Raid: General Early's Famous Attack on Washington in 1864.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972-3. Original of 1960. \$10.50

Vandiver, Frank R. *Mighty Stonewall.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Original of 1957. \$22.50

Villard, Henry. *Lincoln on the Eve of '61: A Journalist's Story.* Edited by Harold G. and Oswald Garrison Villard. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Original of 1941. \$7.75

Ward, James A. *That Man Haupt.* A Biography of Herman Haupt. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973. \$11.95

Wellman, Manly Wade. *Rebel Boast: First at Bethel—Last at Appomattox.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Original of 1956. \$14.25

Wilson, LeGrand James. *The Confederate Soldier.* New edition edited by James W. Silver. Foreword by Bell I. Wiley. [Memphis] Memphis State University Press [1973]. \$7.00

Wilson, William Lyne. *A Borderland Confederate.* Edited by Festus P. Summers. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973. Original of 1962. \$9.25

One of the most important discoveries in the field of Civil War history was announced last month by scientists from Duke University. The Federal ironclad Monitor has been located resting upside down on the ocean floor fifteen miles south of the Cape Hatteras lighthouse. Identification of the ship was confirmed through the use of underwater television pictures and photographs. Unfortunately, the two hundred foot depth and two-knot current make diving in the area extremely dangerous. The hull of the ship appears to be intact, but the famous round turret seems to have fallen off when the Monitor foundered. It will be remembered that she sank on December 31, 1862 in a gale as she was being towed to Charleston to participate in the blockade of that Confederate port.