

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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February 1994

Robert V. Remini on "Henry Clay, Slavery, and the Coming of the Civil War"

by Barbara Hughett

Many people, in the decades preceding the Civil War, foresaw the possibility of such a conflict unless the issue of slavery was settled. Foremost among these individuals was Henry Clay of Kentucky who tried, throughout his long public career, to find the means to avoid secession and civil conflict. His efforts to stave off the dissolution of the Union over slavery included the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and earned him the nicknames, "The Great Pacifier" and "The Great Compromiser."

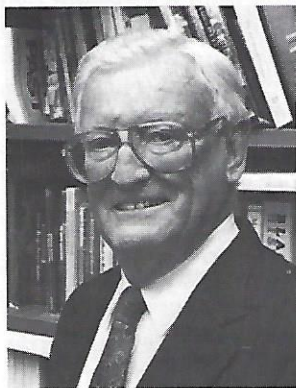
Clay, who was one of the founders of the Whig party, served several terms in the United States House of Representatives, three times as Speaker. He was United States Senator from Kentucky from 1831-1842, and from 1849-1852. He served as secretary of state under John Quincy Adams from 1825-1829, and was several times a candidate for President of the United States.

Henry Clay was a hero of Abraham Lincoln's; it is said that as a young man, Lincoln was a Clay man and "all but worshipped his name." Indeed, Lincoln's initial ideas about abolition came directly from Henry Clay. In his 1852 eulogy of Clay, Lincoln called him his "beau ideal of a statesman," stressed Clay's devotion to the cause of liberty, and repeated Clay's stern warning to proslavery advocates.

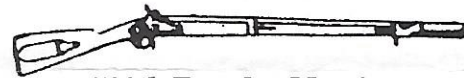
Clay's last years in the Senate were focused on an effort to work out a compromise between the slave-owning states and the free northern states. The Compromise of 1850—which prevented secession and civil war at that time—was one result of his efforts. On February 11, Henry V. Remini will address The Round Table on the topic of "Henry Clay, Slavery, and the Coming of the Civil War." In

his address, he will contend that had secession occurred in 1850, the South would have won its independence.

Robert V. Remini is professor of history and research professor of humanities at the University of Illinois Chicago, and is director of the Institute for the Humanities at UIC. He received his bachelor's degree from Fordham University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University. He has been the recipient of many awards and



Robert V. Remini



528th Regular Meeting

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Robert V. Remini on "Henry Clay, Slavery, and the Coming of the Civil War"

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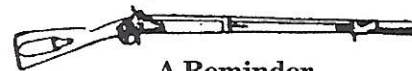
Friday, February 11, 1994

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Holiday Inn Mart Plaza
350 North Orleans Street
Buttons—15th floor

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
\$20.00 per person

Entree: Roast Sirloin of Beef, Orange Roughy, or Fruit Plate



A Reminder

Please make your reservation by Wednesday, February 9. Mail the enclosed postcard or call the book shop at (312) 944-3085.

If you are driving and coming from the south, turn left into the Mart Plaza lot just after crossing the river on Orleans. From the north, turn right from Orleans on Hubbard, left on Kingsbury, right on Kinzie, and left into the Mart Plaza lot. Parking is free.

honors, including a Guggenheim Fellowship (1978-79), the Silver Circle Award for Teaching Excellence (1981), the George Washington Medal of Honor of the Freedom Foundation (1982), the American Book Award for Non-Fiction (1984), and the Chicago Foundation for Literature Award for Non-Fiction (1985).

Remini is a member of numerous professional organizations and has written many articles for scholarly publications. His books include *Martin Van Buren and the Making of the Democratic Party* (1959), his five-volume biography of Andrew Jackson (1977-1984), additional works on Andrew Jackson, and *Henry Clay: Statesman for the Union* (1991).

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

357 West Chicago Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60610

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 Dan Weinberg, 357 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610.

The Thirteenth Annual Midwest Civil War Round Table Conference will be held on April 29-30 in Indianapolis. Speakers will include former Round Table President Daniel Weinberg; Alan Nolan, our 1994 Nevins-Freeman honoree; 1989 Nevins-Freeman recipient, Mark E. Neely, Jr.; Jerry Russell; John Hennessy; Ted Savas; and David Long. The theme of the conference, which will be held at the Holiday Inn-Airport, is "Abraham Lincoln." The cost is \$85, not including hotel room charges. For information, contact the Indianapolis CWRT, 3816 Clubhouse Court, Greenwood, Indiana 46142.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

☆ UPDATE ☆

by David Richert

The Civil War Fortification Study Group, formed last June in Lexington, Kentucky, seeks to educate the public on earthworks and permanent forts through scholarly research and publication, and also to identify and preserve earthworks. According to Dale Floyd, president of the group, "there's been very little study of fortifications in general. A lot of people just don't understand their use. There hasn't been enough published on them."

Floyd, who works as senior historian with the congressional Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, feels the existence of earthworks on a battlefield adds immeasurably to the interest. "When you've got a trench it's a lot more tangible," he says. In discussing the groups' research efforts, Floyd says "No one knows what's out there. The last few years we've really been surprised by the number we've found. I've been surprised by a few — like one in Tennessee in a cow pasture that looked basically as if the soldiers walked out yesterday." The group is unlikely to publish an inventory of heretofore unknown earthworks for fear they would be destroyed by metal detectors.

The study group publishes a quarterly newsletter, *The Parapet*, and an annual journal, *Civil War Fortification*. For further information about the group, or Civil War earthworks, contact Secretary-Treasurer Paul Hawke, 235 Carter Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30317.

The Lee Headquarters Trust is seeking funds to restore and interpret the house in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, that Lee used as a military headquarters and hospital in September and October 1861. Built in 1840 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1992, the site also contains soldiers' graves, Civil War earthworks, and inscriptions on several interior walls written by both Union and Confederate soldiers.

The Headquarters Trust was approved by the state to receive \$160,000 in historic preservation funds from the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, provided it raises sufficient matching funds. About \$40,000 in matching funds are still needed. To learn more about the trust, or to make a tax-deductible donation, write Lee Headquarters Trust, PO Box 386, Ronceverte, West Virginia 24970.

Jessamine County, Kentucky, has received a federal grant of \$751,000 to restore, preserve, and manage the Camp Nelson area. The plan includes the purchase of land, the development of an information center, museum and walking trails, and the restoration of fortifications. Camp Nelson National Cemetery, part of the site, was established for the burial of soldiers who died at Camp Nelson from illness or disease or as a result of training accidents. In the late 1860s, nearly 1000 Union soldiers' remains were brought to Camp Nelson from Perryville, where they had died in battle.

The Monnett Battle of Westport Fund of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City was honored recently by the Jackson County Historical Society for its preservation efforts in the Byram's Ford district. The district is part of the group's project to preserve the Big Blue battlefield, which figured in the 1864 Battle of Westport.

❖ JANUARY MEETING ❖

by Barbara Hughett

Against a grim backdrop of carnage on an unprecedented scale, something remarkable happened in Civil War America. Somehow, the war inspired art—not only the hasty wood-block illustrations that newspapers produced before the invention of photo engraving, but also a virtual tidal wave of paintings. Harold E. Holzer and Mark E. Neely, Jr., spoke before 134 members and guests on January 14, at the 527th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. Their topic—also the title of their recently-released book—was “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: the Civil War in Art.”

Neely began the presentation with a slide of a painting of the Crimean War done by British artist Joseph Paton, in 1856—the year that war ended. “Home” depicts the return home from the war of a corporal in the Scotch Guards. On the floor by the chair in which he is sitting, he has placed his walking stick and his trophy from the war—a Russian soldier’s spiked helmet. The corporal has apparently dropped into the chair exhausted, and is being greeted by his wife and aged mother. A small baby in a crib is in the background. (Neely remarked that the Crimean War was a very brief conflict.) This painting was immensely popular in England; a critic called it “the best work the late war has called forth.” Queen Victoria gave a copy of the painting to Prince Albert as a Christmas present.

The next slide shown was of an engraving called “Home From Andersonville,” done by American printmaker William Sartain in 1870. “Sartain knew that Lee’s troops didn’t fight with spiked helmets, so he took that off the floor and, just to ensure a new national orientation, he put a framed lithograph of U. S. Grant on the wall. So we know this is a Union home to which the soldier is returning. This engraving shows that nineteenth-century American art was way behind European art, and it tended to slavishly copy it.” There are several inaccuracies in the American engraving, including the soldier’s appearance: he is much too healthy-looking to have recently survived Andersonville’s atrocities.

Neely said that it was in viewing photographs of the era that he and Holzer gained more respect for paintings. He illustrated this point by showing several early photographs of Abraham Lincoln. Calling Lincoln “a difficult subject,” Neely said he really appears to be a “hayseed” in most of these photographs, which are sometimes referred to as “prairie primitives.”

Then he showed three photographs taken in one sitting in one afternoon, on February 9, 1864, by Anthony Berger in Mathew Brady’s Studio in Washington, D.C. “In this one sitting, we got the model for the profile for the Lincoln penny; the five-dollar-bill pose; and one of the most beloved domestic images in nineteenth-century America—the photograph of Lincoln and his son Tad examining not a book, but an album showing samples of Mathew Brady’s photographs for sale.” The real reason these photographs are so superior to all others of Lincoln, Neely asserted, was the presence in the studio of an artist, Francis B. Carpenter, who composed these portraits for his own use as models for future paintings. After realizing what a difference the “painter’s eye” had made in this instance in the photographer’s studio, Neely said that “we decided that Civil War painters were not getting the kind of respect they deserved.”

Holzer showed some examples of landscape art of the Civil War. “Landscape art,” he said, “provided an opportunity for American artists because America supposedly had the most beautiful landscape in the world . . . and to celebrate the landscape in art is to celebrate national destiny as well.” In the pre-motion-picture age, good landscape art could produce audience phenomena. In 1859, for instance, Frederick Edwin Church’s painting, “The Heart of the Andes,” attracted 12,000 paying visitors to a small gallery in New York City, in a very short span of time.

Ulysses S. Grant was fascinated by an “urban landscape” of Union headquarters at City Point, Virginia. Supposedly, when he first viewed the painting—in which it was said he could pick out his own tent and identify the stick figure in front of it as himself—he stood looking at it so long that he was late for a dinner which was being given in his honor by the Union League of New York.

In showing the final slide of the presentation, a very rare photograph of artist James Walker at work on his Lookout Mountain canvas, Holzer urged that we “keep in mind what a nineteenth-century editor said of such paintings and the men who created them: ‘A noble army of artists has been a part of it all, and their faithful fingers have made us a part also.’” “We think,” he added, “they still make us feel a part of it, 130 years later.”

Actor Sam Waterston, now appearing as Abraham Lincoln on Broadway in “Abe Lincoln in Illinois,” will give a dramatic reading at the annual Abraham Lincoln Association Banquet in Springfield on February 12. Historian Frank Vandiver will give the major address at the banquet, which will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Springfield Renaissance Hotel. Tickets are \$40 each.

At 1:30 p.m. that afternoon, the annual Abraham Lincoln Symposium will take place in the Hall of Representatives at the Old State Capitol in Springfield. Speakers will include James Gilreath and Edward M. Bruner. For information about the banquet or the symposium, call 217-785-7954.

Other Lincoln’s Birthday activities in Springfield include the Lincoln Heritage Lectures at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, from 9:30 a.m. until noon at the Lincoln Home Visitor Center. This year’s lectures will be given by John Y. Simon, Harold Holzer, and Roger Fischer. For information on the Heritage Lectures, call 217-492-4150.

The Third Annual Kankakee Valley Round Table Civil War Symposium will take place on March 26 in Bourbonnais, Illinois. Speakers will include Edwin C. Bearss, Dennis Frye, and Gordon Dammann. For additional information, call Steve Goodknecht, at 815-939-3568.

Round Table Secretary and Inspector General Bruce Allardice will have his first book published by LSU Press in the fall of 1994. Titled *Other Generals in Gray*, the book is a biographical dictionary of Confederate generals, intended to be the companion work to Ezra Warner’s classic *Generals in Gray*. Bruce is also the author of an article on General Robert C. Tyler, the “unknown” Confederate general, which is due to appear in an upcoming issue of *Civil War Times Illustrated*.

The New Books

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



- McCorkle, John. *Three Years With Quantrill*. Written by O.S. Osborn. U. of Oklahoma Press. 1992. \$18.95. Original of 1914.
- McMurry, Richard M. *John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence*. U. of Nebraska Press. 1992. Pbk. \$9.95. Original of 1982.
- Mundy, James H. *Second to None: The Story of the 2nd Maine Volunteers, "The Bangor Regiment."* Harp Productions, Scarborough, ME. 1992. \$34.95.
- Nesbitt, Mark. *35 Days to Gettysburg: The Campaign Diaries of Two Enemies*. Stackpole Books. 1992. \$22.95.
- Nolan, Dick. *Benjamin Franklin Butler: The Damnedest Yankee*. Presidio Press. 1992. \$24.95.
- Osborne, Charles. *Jubal: The Life and Times of General Jubal A. Early, CSA, Defender of the Lost Cause*. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. 1992. \$29.95.
- Potter, Jerry O. *The Sultana Tragedy: America's Greatest Maritime Disaster*. Pelican Publ. Co. 1992. \$19.95.
- Quaife, Milo M. *Growing up in Southern Illinois 1820 to 1861 From the Memoirs of Daniel Harmon Brush— with The Civil War Years of Col. Daniel H. Brush, 18th Ill. Inf.* by John Y. Simon. History & Roster of 18th Ill. Inf. Crossfire Press. 1992. \$24.95; pbk. \$12.95.
- Rolle, Andrew. *The Lost Cause: The Confederate Exodus to Mexico*. U. of Oklahoma Press. 1992. Pbk. \$14.95.
- Scott, William F. *The Story of a Cavalry Regiment: The Career of the Fourth Iowa Veteran Volunteers From Kansas to Georgia 1861-1865*. Press of Camp Pope Bookshop. 1992. \$40.00. Original of 1893.

Hardtack, the newsletter of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table, reports that the most famous Confederate to be buried in the city's Crown Hill Cemetery may be William Blythe, who is the great-grandfather of President William Clinton.

"**The Civil War: A Nation Divided**," an exhibit of fifty original Civil War prints, will open on February 1 at the Elmhurst Historical Museum, 120 East Park Avenue in Elmhurst. Regular gallery hours are 1-5 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. For information, call 708-833-1457.

The history of The Round Table, *The Civil War Round Table: Fifty Years of Scholarship and Fellowship*, by Barbara Hughett, is available for \$30 per copy. You may purchase the book at the monthly meeting or order it from Morningside Bookshop, 260 Oak Street, Dayton, Ohio 45401 (1-800-648-9710). Add \$2.50 for postage and handling.

Schimmelfennig Boutique

In addition to The Round Table history, the following items are available at each monthly meeting:

- Lapel pins \$3.00 each, two for \$5.00
- Mugs \$2.00 each, two for \$3.00
- Meeting tapes \$7.00 each
- Civil War Buff posters \$10.00 each

Proceeds from the sale of these items go to support the programs of The Civil War Round Table.

BULLETIN BOARD



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street (Buttons, 15th Floor), the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

February 11: Robert Remini on "Henry Clay, Slavery, and the Coming of the Civil War"

March 11: General Gordon R. Sullivan on "The Wilderness" (This meeting will be held at the Union League Club)

April 8: Major Frank K. McKenzie, USMC, on "Combined Operations Against Charleston"

May 5-8: Annual Battlefield Tour—Shenandoah Valley

May 13: Robert K. Krick on "Lawyers, Politicians, and Clerks: The Regimental Command of Lee's Army"

June 10: Stacey Allen on "New Discoveries at Shiloh"

New Members

- Robert Biester, 337 Cayuga, Elmhurst, IL 60126, 708-941-0629
- Lincoln C. Cobb, 39 Elm Ave., Highwood, IL 60040, 708-433-8204
- Elias Crim, 4938 N. Mozart, #2, Chicago, IL 60625, 312-769-4039
- Aubrey Ed Fuller, P.O. Box 394, Highland Park, IL 60035-0394, 708-432-6949
- Robert E. Hamilton, 9101 S. Hoyne, Chicago, IL 60620, 312-239-6450
- George E. Sweeney, 861 East Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068, 708-823-0042
- Herb Trace, 747 Michigan, Evanston, IL 60202, 708-475-3461
- Lyndon J. Whitlock, 2840 Sugar Pine Circle, Northbrook, IL 60062, 708-272-4275

Changes of Address

- Troy Denkinger, 1318 W. Lunt Ave., #302, Chicago, IL 60626
- George Linhart, 283 E. Junction Ave., Livermore, CA 94550, 510-294-9101

Frank G. Rankin 1906-1994

Longtime member Frank G. Rankin, a founder of the Louisville, Kentucky, Civil War Round Table, died on January 20, at his home in Louisville. He was an early leader in the historic preservation movement, and served on the Kentucky Historic Preservation Review Board. Frank Rankin was instrumental in encouraging the LCWRT's involvement in the preservation of the Perryville battlefield, which ultimately led to national interest in the Civil War site. He had an extensive Civil War library and was an authority on the life of Confederate General John Hunt Morgan. Former Round Table President Brooks Davis represented The Civil War Round Table at a memorial service in Louisville on January 28.