

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

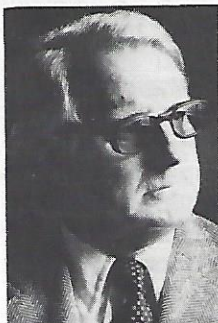
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Chicago, Illinois

May, 1980

DR. WALTER L. BROWN ON ALBERT PIKE'S CONFEDERATE SERVICE

Although Albert Pike's career in the service of the Confederacy was rather short-lived, it was an unusual one. He negotiated treaties of alliance with the tribes of the Indian Territory west of Arkansas and north of Texas, was commissioned a brigadier general and commanded the department of the Indian Territory, and led an Indian force at the battle of Pea Ridge in March, 1862. After a quarrel with his superiors in Little Rock and Richmond in the spring and summer of 1862, he resigned his commission and left the army. Describing Pike's unusual Confederate service at The Round Table meeting on May 9 will be a man who has studied Pike at great length—Dr. Walter L. Brown, Professor of History at the University of Arkansas.

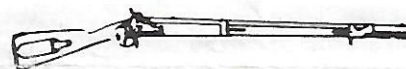


DR. WALTER BROWN

Albert Pike was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1809. He was a many-sided character who is remembered for his accomplishments as a brilliant teacher, poet, author, lawyer, editor and exponent of Freemasonry, rather than as a brigadier general of the Confederacy. An avowed Whig and anti-secessionist, he was a prominent lawyer and large land owner in Arkansas in 1861, and cast his lot with the South rather than desert his friends and his property. Prior to that he had taken a creditable part in the Mexican War.

His Civil War career was an unfortunate one, however, and resulted in his arrest by General Hindman and the remark by General Douglas Cooper that he was "either insane or untrue to the South." He had been commissioned a brigadier general on August 15, 1861 to negotiate treaties with the Indians west of the Arkansas River and ally them to the Confederate cause. With these Indian troops, he fought at Elkhorn Tavern (Pea Ridge), but their dubious conduct reflected, perhaps unjustly, on Pike. He later claimed they had been recruited for service only in defense of their own territory.

After much acrimony, Pike resigned on July 12, 1862; his resignation was accepted on November 5, 1862. He lived in semi-retirement during the balance of the war, and afterwards was regarded with suspicion by both the north and the south. He was indicted for treason by the United States authorities, but was subsequently restored to his civil rights. During the remainder of his life he devoted his attention to writing legal treatises and expounding the morals and dogma of the Masonic order. He died in 1891.



391ST REGULAR MEETING

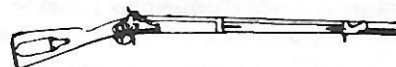
DR. WALTER L. BROWN ON ALBERT PIKE'S CONFEDERATE SERVICE

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1980

Chicago Bar Association
29 South LaSalle Street

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

An important Executive Committee Meeting will be held at the Bar Association at 5:00 p.m. on May 9, just prior to the regular meeting. Among the items on the agenda are the site of the 1981 Battlefield Tour, the selection of Honorary Award Life Members, and the budget. All current officers, trustees, and committee chairmen, as well as all past presidents, are urged to attend.

Dr. Walter L. Brown, a native of Texas, took his B.A. in history at Texas A&M College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in history at the University of Texas. He joined the History Department at the University of Arkansas in 1954. His specialty is the history of the South, with a research interest in Arkansas as a southern state. Dr. Brown has published articles on Albert Pike and Arkansas history, as well as a history of Arkansas for use as a textbook in the public schools. In addition, he has served as editor of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* since 1958. He is currently working on a book on presidential reconstruction in Arkansas and hopes to publish a biography of Pike, on whom he wrote his doctoral dissertation.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chesnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: (312) 944-3085

OFFICERS

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Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968

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Terms expiring in 1980: Dennis D. Donnellan, J. William Gimbel, Jr., Irwin Levin, Daniel R. Weinberg.

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- 400th Regular Meeting Festivities Robert G. Walter
- Confederate Purple Heart Custodian Brooks Davis

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 60067.



About one year ago, we reported on the Shenandoah Valley Round Table's battle with the town of Grottoes which planned to construct a sewage disposal plant on the Port Republic Battlefield. The plant was intended to encourage industrial development in the area and was to be built on the ground from which Jackson directed the battle on June 9, 1862, which climaxed his Valley Campaign. Now comes word from the president of that Round Table that he has heard nothing more of the proposal. Apparently, the matter is dead.

BELL I. WILEY, 1906-1980

Noted Civil War historian and Honorary Award Life Member of The Round Table, Dr. Bell I. Wiley, died on April 4 in Atlanta. He was 74.

Bell Wiley was well-known to all students of the Civil War. He authored, co-authored or edited 24 books, most of them about the relatively unknown people of the War—the privates, the plain people, and the women back home. In addition, his byline appeared on numerous book reviews and articles, and he lectured widely both in this country and abroad.

Dr. Wiley was born in Halls, Tennessee, in 1906, and attended Asbury College, the University of Kentucky, and Yale University, receiving his Ph.D. from the latter in 1933. He taught at Mississippi Southern College, the University of Mississippi, Louisiana State University, and, from 1949 until his retirement in 1974, at Emory University where he was Charles Howard Candler Professor of History.

During the Civil War Centennial, Dr. Wiley was chairman of the executive committee of the National Civil War Commission. He also served as chairman of the advisory board of the National Historical Society, on the National Archives Advisory Council, and on the editorial boards for the U.S. Grant and Jefferson Davis Associations.

In June, 1978, Dr. Wiley received The Round Table's Nevins-Freeman Award. Those who attended the award dinner had the great pleasure of hearing him offer his "Reminiscences of a Civil War Historian," in which he described his childhood in middle Tennessee and how, in a sense, he grew up with the War since his maternal grandfather was a private in the Army of Tennessee and his grandmother told him stories about his grandfather's experiences. Growing up among plain people, Wiley said, gave him an interest in the common people of the past. One place to find out about them, he discovered, was to study the Civil War. Soldiers away from home wrote letters setting down their experiences. And, because war was the most dramatic event in the peoples' lives, the letters were saved and are available for study.

Dr. Wiley also discussed his research for several of his books, including *The Negro in the Civil War*, *The Life of Johnny Reb*, and *The Life of Billy Yank*. All in all, it was a fascinating glimpse into the mind of a man whose career as a Civil War historian spanned 50 years. More importantly, however, the evening provided a wonderful opportunity for many long time members to greet an old friend, and for newer members to make a new friend. He will be sorely missed by all.

It has come to our attention that Dorothy M. Kunhardt, co-author with her son Philip of *Twenty Days*, a history of Lincoln's assassination and the days of national mourning that followed, and *Mathew Brady and His World*, died December 22 at the age of 78. In addition to being a Lincoln scholar, Mrs. Kunhardt was the author of numerous best-selling children's books.

A recording of "Lion of Whitehall," William H. Townsend's memorable address to The Civil War Round Table in 1952 on the tempestuous career of Cassius M. Clay, is now available on a two-record set. It may be ordered from H. Joseph Houlihan, 224 Clinton Road, Lexington, Kentucky 40502. The price of \$13.50 per set includes mailing charges.

APRIL MEETING

Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., a place made famous by the assassination of Abraham Lincoln there in 1865, was the subject of remarks by Ralph G. Newman when he addressed the 120 members and guests who attended The Round Table meeting on April 11. However, although the story of the assassination was an important part of his talk, Ralph's main focus was the building itself—from its beginning as a church in 1833 to its eventual reopening as a theater in 1968.

Ralph began by taking note of Lincoln's love of opera and the theater. "Opera and theater rests me," Lincoln once said. "I am better able to bear my cross afterwards." He attended Ford's a total of ten times—the tenth was the fatal night of April 14, 1865. Following his assassination, the theater was closed, and remained shuttered as a theater for 100 years. This fact, Ralph said, was tragic both for the Theatre and the country.

From 1833 to 1859, the building on the site of the present day Ford's Theatre was the First Baptist Church. When the church moved to new quarters, the building was leased to John Ford for use as a concert hall. Ford, in turn, rented it to musical groups. He was, Ralph said, testing the market for music and theater in Washington. His main competition was Grover's Theater on E Street. Ford spent \$10,000 to renovate the building and opened it in March, 1862, as Ford's Atheneum. Grover was unable to open his own new National Theater until a month later. Interestingly, both theaters still exist today.

Ford's Atheneum presented first-rate companies and stars, but then tragedy struck. A fire caused by a defective gas meter broke out and gutted the interior—some felt this fulfilled a prophecy since Ford had been warned when he first took over the building that it was sinful to turn a church into a theater. Ford decided to build a new theater on the site, however, and, despite the War, he had no trouble getting building materials. He also purchased more land so he could build a bigger building.

The cornerstone of the new building was laid in February, 1863, and it opened in August (the cost was \$75,000). It was a large house and its magnificent interior elicited considerable praise. Boxes 7 and 8 were designated as the Presidential box—a movable partition separated the boxes. When the president was going to attend, a sofa and rocker were brought from Ford's quarters for the box.

From August, 1863 to April, 1865, the theater presented some of the finest plays and performers available. On April 14, 1865, the city was gay and filled with anticipation. The War had ended and the town was full of soldiers. Lincoln had accepted an invitation to attend the theater that night and special handbills were prepared announcing the fact. The gaiety was coupled with a sense of religious mystery since it was Good Friday. All in all, a gala evening was looked forward to.

Lincoln arrived at the theater late, about 8:30. Then, during the third act, about 10:20, he was shot (Ralph displayed a Derringer just like the one Booth used). Booth picked a time when he knew the audience would be laughing. But, although muffled, the shot was distinct. Major Rathbone, who was in the box with the Lincoln's, grappled with Booth, but Booth dropped to the stage; his spurs hooked in the flag draping the box and he fractured his leg in the fall. However, he dragged himself off the stage to a back door and escaped.

Lincoln died the next morning and the theater was immediately closed. However, Mathew Brady was permitted to photograph the interior, documenting the way it looked, and

minute measurements were made throughout the building. This, of course, aided in the restoration.

Ford received permission to reopen the theater after the conspirators were hanged in July, 1865. However, he received a letter threatening to burn the theater if it reopened. Thus, the play was cancelled and ticket holders' money refunded. Shortly thereafter, the theater was taken over by the government for use as an office building (Ford eventually received a total of \$100,000 for it). The quartermaster general began conversion; when the interior was torn out the souvenir hunters went wild.

The building was used by the pension office and the third floor by the surgeon general as a medical museum. Then, in 1893, a 40 foot section of the front of the building collapsed, killing and injuring many. Its career as an office building was ended. (There is a legend, Ralph explained, that the collapse was at the moment of Edwin Booth's death, but it was actually two days later).

In the 1930s the building was turned over to the Department of the Interior which opened a museum of sorts. But, during the first 90 years after its closing as a theater, there was little thought of restoring it. As Ralph explained, Congress did not want to create a monument to murder. However, it did finally provide funds for an engineering report and in 1959 funds were voted for restoration reports, research, drawings, etc.

This work began in September, 1960, and in 1964 President Johnson signed an act for the actual restoration (\$2 million). The work began in January, 1965, it was completed in 1968 and the building was dedicated—an all star cast, headed by Helen Hayes, appeared at the opening. For Ralph, who was involved in the restoration, it was a "thrilling evening". Ralph then became chairman of the board of the Theatre and the Ford's Theatre Society was established. Their goal, Ralph said, was to present modern theater (modern plays were what was presented in Lincoln's day).

In concluding, Ralph explained that the restoration of Ford's Theatre was not intended to recall a moment of fate, but to recreate those moments when Lincoln found respite from the cares of his office. It was to be a living memorial to the man and a tribute to Lincoln's love of the theater.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

At the April meeting, Ward Smidl, a member of the Nominating Committee, announced the following proposed slate of officers for the 1980-81 year:

President	Robert G. Walter
Senior Vice President	Robert H. Franke
Vice President	Marvin Sanderman
Vice President	Donald E. Anderson
Secretary	Marvin Goldsher
Treasurer	J. Robert Ziegler
Assistant Secretary	Bernard Paprocki
Assistant Treasurer	Daniel R. Weinberg
Trustee	Margaret April
Trustee	Robert C. Grossman
Trustee	Helmut Waedt
Trustee	Karl Sundstrom

The election will be held during the May meeting, at which time additional nominations for any of the above offices may be made from the floor. Installation of the new officers will be part of the program at the Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner on June 13. Four current members of the Board of Trustees, J. William Gimbel, Jr., James Girman, Paul Kliger, and Richard Percy, will remain in office for the coming year as they complete their two-year terms.



THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Elson, Henry W. *The Civil War through the Camera*. Text by Henry W. Elson. New York: Arno Press, 1979. \$25.00. Reprint of the edition of 1912.

Grant, Ulysses S. *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*. Edited by John Y. Simon. Volume 7: December 9, 1862—March 31, 1863. Volume 8: April—July 6, 1863. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. \$35.00 each.

Hays, Louis. *History of Macon County, Georgia*. Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1979. \$30.00. Reprint of 1933 publication.

Hepworth, George H. *The Whip, Hoe and Sword; or, The Gulf Department in '63*. Edited with an introd. by Joe Gray Taylor. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979. \$14.95. Reprint of 1864 ed. with foreword, introd. and index added.

Messner, William M. *Freedmen and the Ideology of Free Labor: Louisiana, 1862-1865*. Lafayette, La.: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1978. Paper \$6.00.

Karsten, Peter, editor. *The Military in America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*. New York: Free Press, 1980. \$9.95

Lord, Francis and Arthur Wise. *Bands and Drummer Boys of the Civil War*. New York: Plenum Pub. Corp. 1979. \$22.50. Reprint of the 1966 ed.

Robertson, Mary D., editor. *The Journal of a Confederate Girl: Lucy Gilmer Breckenridge, Shenandoah, 1862-1864*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1979. \$14.00.

Smith, Elbert B. *Francis Preston Blair*. New York: Free Press, 1980. \$15.00.

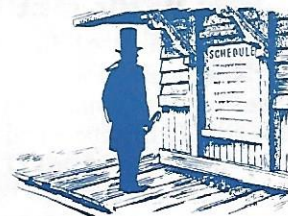
Witham, George F. *Shiloh, Shells and Artillery Units*. Memphis, Tenn.: The Author, 1980. \$22.50. 1000 numbered copies.

Wubben, Hubert H. *Civil War Iowa and the Copperhead Movement*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1980. \$17.75.

A ceremony dedicating the statue, "Young Lincoln," by the American sculptor Charles Keck, was held on April 9 at The Chicago Public Library Cultural Center. The statue, which is located in the G.A.R. Memorial Hall at the Cultural Center, was a gift of the Keck family.

Battlefield Tour participants please note: The Tour Committee had intended to include "Stonewall in the Shenandoah: The Valley Campaign of 1862," *Civil War Times Illustrated* (May, 1972) in the tour kits. Unfortunately, it is now out of print. If you have your own copy, you are advised to bring it along.

The Galena Historical Society will hold its thirteenth annual Open House on June 14 and 15 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost of \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for students includes tours through five houses. For further information, write Galena Historical Society Museum, 211 Bench St., Galena, Illinois 61036 (815) 777-9129.



BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

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

May 9: Dr. Walter L. Brown on "Albert Pike as Confederate General."

May 14-18: Annual Battlefield Tour to the Shenandoah Valley.

June 13: Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and installation of officers. Recipient of Award: Edwin C. Bearss.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Wieboldt's Men's Grill, 9th Floor, State and Madison; all members welcome.

Last Tuesday of each month: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Caravelle Motel, River Road and Bryn Mawr Avenue, Rosemont; all members welcome.

NEW MEMBER

Francis X. Golniewicz, 3620 North Harding Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60618

CORRECTIONS

The following corrections should be made on page one of your membership roster.

E.B. Long: add telephone number (307) 742-3042

Al Meyer: city, state and zip should be Lauderhill, Florida 33313. Telephone should be (305) 735-9120.

A ceremony dedicating the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier was held by Beauvoir, the Jefferson Davis Shrine, in Biloxi, Mississippi on April 19. A soldier, recently found unburied on a Mississippi battlefield, was interred in the Tomb at the Beauvoir Confederate Veterans Cemetery with full military honors. A honor guard composed of members of various Civil War re-enactment groups conducted the funeral services; music was provided by the Biloxi High School Band.

An exhibit of useless objects, titled "The Nation's Attic," went on display recently at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Included are such items as a fine-wire bust of General Grant, crafted by Mrs. Juanna de la Vega of Lima, Peru, for display at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, trimmings from Lincoln's hearse, and a napkin used by Napoleon. The exhibit runs through September 15. (A short story about the exhibit, with pictures of some of the items, appears in the April *Smithsonian* magazine.)

RESERVE THE DATE

JUNE 13, 1980

NEVINS-FREEMAN AWARD DINNER

HONORING EDWIN C. BEARSS