

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLX, Number 6

Chicago, Illinois

February, 1990

Private Viewing of "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln"

by Barbara Hughett

The Chicago Historical Society, on February 4th, will open the most extensive exhibition in its 133-year history. "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln" completes the Society's new American History Wing which was inaugurated in September of 1987 with the installation of "We The People: Creating A New Nation, 1765-1820." Together, these two permanent exhibitions present a compelling and comprehensive documentation of American history from the Revolution to the aftermath of the Civil War. Occupying 3,600 square feet, "A House Divided" features more than 600 objects from the Society's collection. On February 9th, The Civil War Round Table will hold its regular monthly meeting at the Historical Society and will be given a private viewing of the exhibit.

The material in "A House Divided" examines the major political and social forces of mid-nineteenth century America—the institution of slavery; the fierce sectionalism of free and slave economies; the territorial expansion of the country; the emergence of a strong two-party system; and the massive destruction and suffering caused by the Civil War. Artifacts on display include: Abraham Lincoln's death bed; the table at which Grant and Lee signed the terms of surrender at Appomattox; political campaign posters; John Brown's Bible; a section of the wall from Richmond's Libby Prison; slave shackles and tags; a first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); a printing press which belonged to Illinois abolitionist Elijah P. Lovejoy; the letter Lincoln wrote to Stephen A. Douglas suggesting the terms for their 1858 debates; a painting of the Chicago Zouaves Drill Team; and the table and chair Lincoln used when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

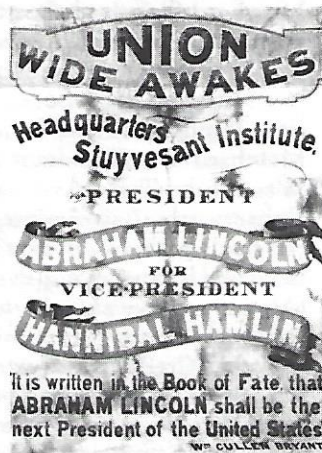
The exhibit is divided into eight sections: "Lincoln's America," "Slavery," "The Slavery Controversy," "The Impending Crisis," "Raising the Armies," "The First Modern War," "War, Politics, and Society," and "Aftermath." Abraham Lincoln and other less well-known men and women of the era provide the human perspective against which the unfolding of events are explored.

Eric Foner, DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History at Columbia University, and Olivia Mahoney, the Society's associate curator of decorative and industrial arts, are the exhibition's curators. They have been assisted by historians and museum experts from across the country. "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln" attempts to offer fresh insights into one of the most critical periods in the history of America.

Volunteers Wanted!



FOR COMPANY A,
OF THE ORIGINAL
IRISH VOLUNTEERS,
Col OWENS, 2d REGIMENT OF
BAKER'S BRIGADE.
Head Quarters, 421 Walnut Street.
PAY AND RATIONS BEGUN WHEN ENROLLED.
JAMES DUFFY, Captain.



UNION WIDE AWAKES
Headquarters
Stuyvesant Institute,
PRESIDENT
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
FOR
VICE-PRESIDENT
HANNIBAL HAMLIN.
It is written in the Book of Fate, that
ABRAHAM LINCOLN shall be the
next President of the United States.
W. CULLEN BRYANT

1860s political campaign memorabilia courtesy of The Chicago Historical Society



488th Regular Meeting

"A House Divided:
America in the Age of Lincoln"

Friday, February 9, 1990

Chicago Historical Society
Clark Street at North Avenue
5:30 pm: Gift shop open for purchases
6:00-7:00 pm: Cocktails and hot and
cold hors d'oeuvres
7:00-9:00 pm: Private viewing of exhibit
\$15.00 per person
Please make reservations early.

Available Parking

Pay lots: Wells & North and Wells & Eugenie
Metered lot, free after 6:00 pm:
1700 block of North Clark



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

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

Officers

President Richard W. McAdoo
Senior Vice President David R. Richert
Vice President Joseph L. Wischart
Vice President Mary Munsell Abroe
Secretary Marlan H. Polhemus
Treasurer Hal Ardell
Assistant Secretary Kurt Carlson
Assistant Treasurer Keith Rocco
Inspector General James Soens
Registrar Dale Weitman
Newsletter Editor Barbara Hughett
Contributing Editors Mary Munsell Abroe,
C. Robert Douglas, David Richert
Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968

Board of Trustees

Terms expiring in 1990: Wayne Anderson, Luann Elvey, L. Bradford Gregg, Robert J. Schell

Terms expiring in 1991: John M. Coverick, Sr., Robert Girardi, Steven Horton, Dale Weitman

Committee Chairmen

Battlefield Tour Mary Munsell Abroe
William J. Sullivan
Nevins-Freeman Margaret April
Membership Daniel R. Weinberg
Hospitality Robert Schell, Barbara Hughett
Nominating William J. Sullivan
Publications/Archives Jerry Warshaw, Glen Wiche
Honors Don Anderson
Battlefield Preservation Robert Girardi
Tape Record Librarian Hal Ardell
Fiftieth Anniversary Paul Klinger
House Steve Horton
Picnic Paul Kleckner

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, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, IL 60611.



James I. (Bud) Robertson was recently given the **Townsend-Hamilton Award** by the Kentucky Civil War Round Table. The award was established to recognize outstanding contributions to the field of Civil War history.

A reminder: Please submit *any* Round Table memorabilia you may have to the 50th Anniversary Committee. The Committee will pay for the copying of the materials and will return all photographs. When submitting photographs, try to identify as many people as possible. Bring these items to a meeting or send them to Jerry Warshaw, 748 Hinman Ave., Evanston, IL 60202.

Battlefield Preservation Report

by Mary Munsell Abroe

One significant trend of recent Civil War historiography has been increased attention to the war in the West; Thomas Connelly, James McDonough, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and other authors have attempted to redress what they see as the long-standing scholarly neglect of that decisive theatre. In somewhat similar fashion, outspoken preservation advocate Robert Meinhard laments that western battlefields have been the "forgotten ones," both in terms of public awareness and effective activism. Dr. Meinhard's concern for western fields in no way equates to a lack of concern for those in the East; he emphasizes that urban sprawl—the greatest current threat to battlefield integrity—knows no geographic bounds. However, he argues that perils to eastern fields receive the most publicity, due at least in part to the fact that the mass media is centered in the East. During a November interview, Dr. Meinhard discussed the present status of several western sites in his ongoing effort to draw attention to the contemporary plight of all the battlefields.

A retired professor of history (Winona State University, Minnesota) and frequent battlefield visitor, Robert Meinhard is a consultant on preservation issues to Civil War Round Table Associates and the National Parks and Conservation Association. His views on the state of western fields perhaps can best be summarized as "there's good news and bad news, and even the good news isn't all good." On the positive side, he noted that Pea Ridge is ideal in terms of site integrity, Shiloh is isolated and pristine, and Wilson's Creek is in relatively good shape. Unfortunately, his report on the latter two was not one of unqualified optimism. Development is becoming problematic at Wilson's Creek and also at Shiloh, where "rural junk sprawl and tacky kinds of development" on park borders—especially in the northeast corner—detract from the historic and scenic ambiance. Dr. Meinhard was most disturbed about conditions at Vicksburg and Stones River. Urban encroachment constitutes a major preservation issue for the park at Vicksburg, as does the erosion that threatens entrenchments and fortifications. As for Stones River, development in the Murfreesboro area "has caused the park to suffer tremendously over the past fifteen years." Dr. Meinhard stated that the situation at Stones River "is an example of the worst that can happen to a battlefield site in terms of the protection of its integrity."

In the western theatre as in the eastern, much has been lost already. Robert Meinhard's "report card" on the western fields only underscores the pressing need for cooperation within the preservation community, and also for the formulation of a comprehensive, long-range battlefield preservation strategy. Much as we might wish, we cannot save everything; however, we can let go of parochial concerns and join with others in establishing priorities and realistic goals. By doing so, we not only try to preserve a crucial piece of American history for the future; we also make a much-needed positive statement about our own values as individuals and as a people.

One final note—concerning the continuing saga of Johnson's Island, Ohio, site of a Civil War cemetery and the vestiges of a prison for Confederate officers. Thwarted in his desire to build a huge planned-unit development that would do irreparable harm to the area, Carl Zipfel has submitted new plans—for a subdivision of single-family

(continued on page 4)

January Meeting

by Barbara Hughett

Chicago in the 1860s was a community of some 110,000 people, nearly half of them foreign-born. The largest ethnic groups, the Irish and the Germans, were mostly of the working classes, earning 75¢ to \$1.25 a day. But there was a substantial upper class in Chicago as well. The wealthy businessmen of the city, in April of 1861, *donated* (not loaned) \$300,000 to the federal government for the war effort. The city was host to two national political conventions in the 1860s—the Republicans in 1860 and the Democrats in 1864. "Heartland of Freedom: Chicago During the Civil War" was the topic of former Round Table president Bill Sullivan when he addressed 132 members and guests at the 487th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table.

On April 12, 1861, Southern forces firing on Fort Sumter had commenced the American Civil War. President Lincoln's call for 75,000 militia elicited a positive response from the states of the North, including Illinois. General Richard Kellogg Swift, commander of the militia for the military district headquartered in Chicago, received a telegram from Illinois Governor Yates advising him to raise and equip a force to fortify Cairo, Illinois—a spot of strategic importance for the North. Located at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, Cairo was the key to trade further south. Or, as Secretary of War Cameron put it, "Illinois, by its shape, is a dagger pointed toward the heart of the South." With great speed and considerable improvisation, nearly 400 men were raised, equipped, and dispatched to Cairo via the Illinois Central Railroad.

They crossed the Big Muddy River, with General Swift asserting his leadership and bravery by going over ahead of his men. Action came soon. They interdicted a steamer passing down the river toward St. Louis, bearing ammunition for the rebels. The initial shot of the Civil War in the West was fired by a gun trained by Lieutenant John Rudolph Botsford, of the Chicago Light Artillery. "Be it remembered," Bill noted, "that the first shot fired in the West for the Union was a Chicago shot from a Chicago cannon, trained by a Chicago boy of the Chicago Light Artillery."

The war was a bonanza for the manufacturers of Chicago, creating jobs for thousands of people. Many women came out of their usual domestic role to become nurses, join the industrial workforce, or do various sorts of work to aid the men at war and the wounded. In 1863 a "Vegetables for Grant" program was initiated, wherein Chicagoans grew vegetables in their gardens to be sent to the troops in the field and the men in the hospitals.

The Northwestern Sanitary Fair, a benefit for the Sanitary Commission (a forerunner of the Red Cross), opened in October 1863 in Bryan Hall, across the street from the court house (now the site of City Hall and the County Building). Organized by Jane Hull and Mary Livermore, it combined a state fair, an art exhibit, an industrial display, and a giant restaurant. Mary Livermore persuaded Abraham Lincoln to donate the original draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to be sold at the fair. The 14-day event was highly successful, raising \$86,000 for the cause.

Not all the proceeds from the fair, however, went to the Sanitary Commission. \$3,000 was sent to a brick building across the street from the tomb of Stephen A. Douglas. The Soldiers Home of Chicago, established in 1862, provided the kinds of services that USOs would later supply.

The Home, which continued to operate until 1869, was sold in 1870 to the Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet who turned the sturdy building into an orphanage, adding wings over the years. The original building still stands—unmarked—today, as part of the St. Joseph Carondelet Child Center. Thus, from 1870 through the present time, children occupy the rooms which once housed the heroes of Shiloh and Vicksburg.

Chicago during the Civil War was a place of excitement and patriotism. Here, as elsewhere in the North, the citizens were largely behind their government and army in their efforts to suppress the rebellion and preserve the Union. Its young men enlisted in the armed forces with enthusiasm and a sense of mission. In reminiscences after the war's end, Chicago's General Alexander McClurg commented on these young men. "They longed to stay at home and to enter upon their life work," he said, "but something higher and nobler beckoned them to the field where the life and integrity of their beloved country must be fought for in bloody battles."

Moments in Round Table History

February 16, 1951: 100th meeting, with Robert Selph Henry speaking on "Rehearsal in Mexico: Trial by Battle of Civil War Leaders."

February 19, 1965: Tour of the Chicago Historical Society and viewing of the film "The Red Badge of Courage."

February 14, 1969: "Grand Review Ball," featuring the First Brigade Band and the honoring of past presidents.

February 13, 1970: Testimonial to Bruce Catton, with the first dinner party held at the Chicago Public Library for nearly a century.

February 13, 1981: Gerhard P. Clausius speaks on "The Drama of Mary Todd Lincoln."

February 17, 1984: Ralph G. Newman, Marshall Krollick, William Sullivan, James Vlazny, and Gordon Whitney recreate the "Senate Confrontation, November-December, 1860."

February 14, 1986: Mark E. Neely, Jr. speaks on "Lincoln and Douglas: A Relationship to Consider."

February 20, 1987: Ralph G. Newman speaks on "Robert T. Lincoln in the Civil War."

February 10, 1989: James M. McPherson speaks on "Lincoln and Liberty."

Round Table vice president Mary Abroe will speak to the South Suburban Civil War Round Table on February 15th. Her topic will be "Battlefield Preservation." The meeting begins at 8 pm at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Matteson. For further information, call Larry Gibbs (708/957-4662).

Milwaukee CWRT members (and our speakers in October 1988) Lance Herdegen and William J.K. Beaudot were recently the subjects of a feature article in the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. They were interviewed regarding their new book, *Gettysburg: The Charge on the Railroad Cut* which is being published by Morningside Press.

The Illinois State Historical Library celebrated 100 years of collecting and preserving the history of Illinois on November 25th.

The New Books compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Amadon, George F. *Rise of the Ironclads*. Publishing Histories Publ. Co., 713 S. Third W., Missoula, MT 59801. pbk. \$9.95.

From Yorktown to Santiago by Lt. Col. W. H. Carter. (History of 6th U.S. Cavalry). State House Press. 1989. \$24.95. Original of 1900.

Graber, H.W. *A Terry Texas Ranger*. State House Press. 1989. \$19.95. Original of 1916.

McCutcheon, Kenneth P., ed. *Dearest Lizzie: The Civil War Letters of Lt. Col. James Maynard Shanklin*. Friends of Willard Library, 21 First Ave., Evansville, IN 47710. 1988. \$20.00.

Rozier, John, ed. *The Granite Farm Letters: The Civil War Correspondence of Edgeworth and Sallie Bird*. University of Georgia Press. 1988. \$24.95.

Trotter, William R. *Silk Flags and Cold Steel: The Civil War in North Carolina. Vol 1: The Piedmont*. Piedmont Impressions, Inc. 1988. \$19.95.

Trudeau, Noah A. *Bloody Roads South: The Wilderness to Cold Harbor, May-June 1864*. Little, Brown. 1989. \$19.95.

Wright, John, compiler. *Compendium of the Confederacy. A Bibliography of the Confederacy*. Broadfoot Publ. Co. 1989. \$150.00.

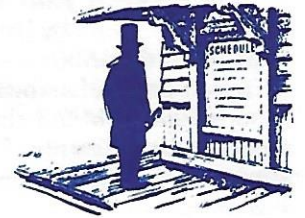
The Rebel Yell, newsletter of the Jackson, Mississippi Civil War Round Table, reports that a bill has been introduced in Congress which may pave the way for National Battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley. Vermont Senator James Jeffords is seeking \$150,000 for a study of the "suitability and feasibility" of adding as many as nine battlefields in the Valley to the park system. At present, the Park Service has no Civil War sites in the Valley.

A "Campaigning with Lee" seminar, directed by James I. (Bud) Robertson, will be held in Blacksburg, Virginia on June 16-23. For information, contact Dr. Ray Jones at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, (703) 231-5241.

(continued from page 2)

homes and docks—to the Ottawa County Regional Planning Commission. That body presently is considering the project. Bill Stark of the Cleveland CWRT indicates that the new design will obliterate the remnants of one of two earthen forts and other remains on the site. There is also concern that the historic boundaries of the prison stockade have not been determined correctly by Zipfel's contract archeologist. In the meantime, the Ohio Historical Society and Ed Bearss of the NPS are preparing a report on Johnson's Island for the National Historic Landmarks Commission, but the report will not be finalized until late this spring. Moreover, the granting of NHL status—which is not itself warranted—will not necessarily stop development. For further information, contact Bill Stark, 3937 W. 224th St., Fairview Park, Ohio 44126. To voice your concerns about the preservation of Johnson's Island, contact the Ottawa County Regional Planning Commission, 315 Madison, Port Clinton, Ohio 43452.

BULLETIN BOARD



Future Meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Quality Inn, Halsted and Madison, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

February 9: Chicago Historical Society, "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln."

March 9: Michael Andrus on "General Edward 'Allegheny' Johnson."

April 13: Richard McMurry on "Confederate Journalism."

May 3-6: Annual Battlefield Tour, The Maryland Campaign of 1862.

May 11: William Parrish on "Confederate Governors."

June 8: Jerry Rodgers, topic to be announced.

New Members

Roger E. Bohn, 2S 644 Devonshire Lane, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, 708/858-2956

John F. Petty, 319 Elm St., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, 708/858-0673

Edward R. Theobald, 7104 Grand Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60516, 708/963-1547

Change of Address

A. A. Rayner, Jr., 6901 Oglesby, Apt. 5-c, Chicago, IL 60649

The Seventeenth Annual Symposium and Banquet of the Abraham Lincoln Association will be held in Springfield on Monday, February 12th. The afternoon symposium will feature addresses by Pulitzer Prize winning author James M. McPherson and Harvard University's William E. Gienapp, with comments by Mark E. Neely, Jr. Mortimer Adler will speak at the evening banquet, offering a philosopher's perspective on the Lincoln theme.

Other events in Springfield that day, in honor of Lincoln's birthday, include the presentation of the Lincoln Heritage Lecture Series, sponsored by the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. This year's lectures will be given by former Round Table president Dan Weinberg and Richard N. Current. The program begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Visitors Center. For further information on these events, call the Abraham Lincoln Association (217/782-2717) and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site (217/492-4150).

Lars Gjertveit, president of the American Civil War Round Table of Norway, is seeking information about Norwegians living in the Southern states prior to or during the Civil War. He would also like to know about Confederate soldiers of Norwegian background from states other than Texas. If you have such information or know of someone who does, write Lars at N-4692, Rysstad, Norway.