# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXXIV, Number 4 | Chicago, Illinois | December, 1973


# Philip J. Hohlweck On Berdan's Sharpshooters

Philip J. Hohlweck, president of The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, takes as his subject one of the famous "fighting regiments" of the Civil War, Berdan's Sharpshooters, at the Friday, December 14, 1973, meeting of The Civil War Round Table at the Chicago Bar Association, 29 South LaSalle Street.

Philip J. Hohlweck

At the beginning of the Civil War, Hiram Berdan of New York proposed to organize from the states at large an organization of expert marksmen. His proposition was accepted and he was commissioned colonel of the First Regiment of United States Volunteer Sharpshooters. A Second Regiment was also organized. They were armed largely with breech-loading weapons, notably the Sharps rifle, although some companies had target rifles with telescopic sights. Almost a separate branch of service, they won fame at Chancellorsville and also at Gettysburg, where their fire held off Longstreet's forces for a crucial forty minutes. Berdan's tactics is credited with a change in Confederate line of battle whereby artillery was placed behind infantry rather than in line with it. The Sharpshooters served throughout the war in all campaigns of the Army of the Potomac.

Phil Hohlweck has been a member of the Milwaukee Round Table for 19 years, and has edited its "General Orders" for six years. He was elected president at the September 20 meeting. He is a member of the Company of Military Historians, a past president of the Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin, 1970-71, and a member of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, of the Milwaukee County Historical Society, and of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters.

326th REGULAR MEETING

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Philip J. Hohlweck,

President, The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee,

on

Berdan's Sharpshooters

* * *

Friday, December 14, 1973

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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 — NOW.

**Executive Board Meeting, preceding the December 14 meeting, at the Chicago Bar Association at 4 p.m.**

## LETTERS

Eleanor Smith (she has a daughter in Richmond) reports later news of J. Ambler Johnston: "Back in his own house, he was spry as ever in speech and wit in July. His beloved retainer of 50 years standing was ruling the roost. Her first sergeant is a delightful nurse who took care of J. Ambler in the Nursing Home and just came along with! The nurse said he could walk in his walker if he would, but he held court during all his waking hours and had no time for practice. He has an electric chair on the stairway, which means he is up and down for meals, and all over the house. I have a hunch he also uses the walker, as the nurse is a rather determined female."

Addenda: "I'm glad Pete got his way. It is a relief to know that John Wayne didn't have to win the West single-handed."

## HEAR YE ! ! HEAR YE ! !

## ALL MEMBERS OF THE ROUND TABLE!!

Start looking in your bookcases, clean your attic or basement or wherever you keep those good old Civil War books that you don't want or need anymore. Get in touch with Brooks Davis for our book auction. The quicker we get them, the quicker we can get on with the sale. Any type of Civil War artifacts will be welcome. Remember, your donation is tax deductible.

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

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




Membership requirement is an interest in the Civil War and its era. For information address Donald Sikorski, 41 W. 55th Place, Westmont, Ill. 60559, phone 312 WO9-5604.

## *from the Editor's pen*

Frank L. Klement at the November meeting took as his text, "History is written to justify that which has happened," and proceeded to debunk the Civil War menace of "Copperheadism." The "dirty tricks" of Watergate were close akin to those of the 1860s—Joseph Medill of the Chicago Tribune urging Lincoln to "hit below the belt and kick like thunder" and James B. McCullogh promising a Candidate Smith of Ohio to "get up some stories to tell about your opponent, whoever he may be." Clement C. Vallandigham might have won the governorship of Ohio, despite his exile, had it not been for widely printed letters that were completely lies and forgeries.

Klement can find no evidence that there were any Knights of the Golden Circle north of the Ohio River. The Order of American Knights and the Sons of Liberty similarly had little substance. All were bogeymen to aid Republicans and the organization of the Union League. Maryann Pitman, whose testimony against the OAM was accepted, was a liar, a fake, and a fraud, and "Lt. Raleigh, CSA" is unidentifiable. "Copperhead" was a smear word, implying the snake that struck without warning.

Copperheads were Peace Democrats, largely from three ethnic groups. Irish-Americans opposed the Republican party because it was "tainted with temperence" and because it had absorbed the anti-Catholic Know Nothing party. German Catholics had the same motives, and although German protestants were divided, some were anti-Republican; for example Walther, for whom the Walther League for Lutheran young people is named, defended slavery. Butternuts, poor whites who had migrated from the South to farm left-over poor land, hated blacks and had their backwoods stills, so opposed Republican temperence. Vallandigham was their champion. Democratic leaders were opposed to the Republicans politically; they pointed to military failures, particularly those of the Army of the Potomac; they opposed the emergence of strong central government; they resented growing industrialism, fearing the growth of cities—as agrarians they were in the line of radical thought that produced the Granger, Populist, and Progressive movements. And finally they were racists, standing for white supremacy. Jefferson had believed the Black and Indian races to be inferior; his "all men are created equal" meant equal before the law. They were appalled by the many arbitrary arrests, estimated at 24,000, mostly in Maryland, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

Among the leading dissenters were Gov. Horatio Seymour of New York; Dr. E. B. Olds, editor of the Lancaster, Ohio, Leader, who provoked Gen. Burnside to arrest him and was elected state senator while in the Ohio penitentiary; Denis Mahoney, editor of the Dubuque Herald, spokesman for the Irish, and Lambdon P. Milligan of Huntington, Indiana, who was framed by fraud, and won the famous case of ex parte Milligan. Arbitrary actions of Gov. Oliver P. Morton of Indiana resulted in much dissent. Col. Henry B. Carrington, ordered to intercept Morgan's Raiders in Indiana, slept on the job, and then blamed his failure on the Knights of the Golden Circle.

### CLAUSIUS ON HURLBUT

Bob Franke, assistant editor, reports on the October meeting at which Gerhard Clausius of Belvidere, Illinois, spoke on his fellow townsman. "Lincoln's Friend, Steve Hurlbut."

Stephen A. Hurlbut was born in Charleston, S.C., lived most of his life in Belvidere, Ill., and died in Lima, Peru, in the service of his country. He came to Belvidere in 1845 to practice law. At the Illinois Constitutional Convention he met Lincoln and formed a friendship that was to affect his life. In 1855 Hurlbut helped organize a militia company in Boone City. He was an early member of the Republican Party and was elected to the General Assembly as Republican in 1858. That year he was active in Lincoln's senatorial campaign and attended the debate with Douglas at Freeport. Lincoln considered Hurlbut "the best stump speaker in Illinois." Soon after becoming President, Lincoln tapped Hurlbut to check on Unionist sympathy in Charlestown, S.C., a disappointing mission. After Fort Sumter was fired on, Hurlbut was first to enlist in Belvidere and was elected captain of the Freeport company, Company B, 15th Illinois Volunteers. He was commissioned brigadier general May 17, 1861.

Hurlbut's first assignment was to northern Missouri under Gen. John Pope. One of his first orders was to send Col. U.S. Grant to Mexico, Mo., to guard railroads. In December, 1861, Gen. Halleck recalled Hurlbut from Belvidere, where he had been recovering from dysentery, to St Louis. In February Hurlbut reported to Grant and was assigned command of a division. His division was first to arrive at Shiloh battlefield, March 18, 1862. From the Peach Orchard, April 6, the 4th Division repelled seven charges, taking heavy losses. It is

probable that one of Hurlbut's men killed Confederate Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston. On April 7 the division was in reserve, but took part in the final charge at 2 p.m. Shiloh was the high point in Hurlbut's military career. He took part in the Corinth campaign, including a Hatchie River skirmish against Van Dorn. Hurlbut was promoted major general and took command at Memphis. He organized Grierson's Raid for Grant and was proud of its success. After taking part in the Meridian Campaign, Hurlbut returned to Memphis, got the blame for Bedford Forrest's successes, and was relieved from command "unfairly because of his inadequate manpower to do the job." After three months, Hurlbut was ordered to New Orleans where he fell under a cloud involving a cotton scandal, although exonerated by Gen. Rawlins and upheld by Secretary Stanton.

Hurlbut became commander in chief of the G.A.R. in 1866. He served as minister to Columbia; and was elected to one term in Congress, although defeated for re-election. President Garfield sent Hurlbut to Chile, where he became embroiled with Judson Kilpatrick, minister to Chile, and was again involved in scandal. Hurlbut died while returning to the United States to defend himself.

Preceding the talk, Past President Ver Lynn Sprague led in the singing of a ballad (of his own composition) dedicated to the memory of Stephen Hurlbut. Its text follows:

BALLAD OF GENERAL HURLBUT

Let's all sing of Stephen Hurlbut
Filled the Rebels' hearts with fear—
How he held the line at Shiloh
Famous son of Belvidere.

Other leaders looked for shelter,
Gave their orders from the rear.
But where fighting was the fiercest—
Stood the Son of Belvidere.

Stood there in the awful orchard,
Til at last the day was saved.
Credit goes to Stephen Hurlbut,
As the bravest of the brave.

Chorus— — Let's all sing etc.

When at last the war was over
And the victory dearly won,
He returned to peace-time problems,
Hurlbut's work had just begun.

The Grand Army of the Republic
Sought a man to take command.
They selected Stephen Hurlbut—
As the greatest in the land.

Then they sent him off to congress,
And he labored there until
He convinced his fellow members
And they passed the pension bill.

Chorus— — Let's all sing etc.

Some have said he filled his pockets
But we note with some relief—
That they never, never proved that
Stephen Hurlbut was a thief.

So we'll tell how Stephen Hurlbut
Filled those Rebel hearts with fear,
How he held the line at Shiloh
Famous Son of Belvidere.

And tonight we have a speaker
Gerhard Clausius is here.
He will talk of Stephen Hurlbut
Fellow Son of Belvidere.

## TO THE CAMP FOLLOWERS (LADIES)

The Camp Followers have been off to a good start this fall with three outstanding programs starting with John Hunter of Madison, Wisconsin, telling us about the famed Haskell of Gettysburg. October's speaker was Ella Clausius reading excerpts from the love letters of a young Civil War cavalryman, who saw so much action during the war only to be lost on the ship "Sultana" on his way home. Then in November we had Mike Lerner, former president of the Round Table, who fascinated the group as he told us about Col. James Mulligan and his wife, who followed him into war as a true Camp Follower.

In December we are again looking forward to another great evening. Don Sikorski of the Round Table will be our guest speaker. Don is also the past president of the Salt Creek Round Table; is presently the Editor of their Newsletter and their corresponding secretary. His subject will be Robert E. Lee—Citizen-Soldier, emphasizing the pre-Civil War career of Lee. He offers some new insights of Lee's life—to defend his native state of Virginia; answering the major criticisms leveled against Lee regarding his decision to support the South and his abilities as a general.

It sounds like such an interesting evening and we cordially invite all Camp Followers to attend. Bring a friend along, too. Our meeting will be December 14 at 5:30 p.m. It will be held at Betty Davis's home, 18 East Chestnut St., Chicago.

Please call Margaret April at 787-1860 for reservations.

## HERE AND THERE

An Abraham Lincoln Symposium is scheduled for the Old State Capitol, Springfield, Ill., February 12 and 13, 1974. Taking part will be Christopher N. Breiseth, Sangamon State University; Don E. Fehrenbacher, Stanford University and College of William and Mary; Harold M. Hyman, Rice University; James T. Hickey, curator of the Lincoln Collection, Illinois State Historical Library; Harry E. Kelsey, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History; and Ronald D. Reitveld, California State University, Fullerton.

VISIT TO LINCOLN COLLEGE. Left to right, Paul Simon, former lieutenant governor; Mrs. Simon; Gordon Whitney, president of The Civil War Round Table; and J. Richard Stoltz, president of Lincoln College. During the CWRT Fall Tour a stop was made at Lincoln College, Lincoln, Illinois, October 12, where Paul Simon, author of "Lincoln's Preparation for Greatness," gave a talk on Elijah Lovejoy, martyred abolitionist of Illinois. President Stoltz conducted a tour of the Lincoln College Library and Museum.

# THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Aaron, Daniel. *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War.* New York: Knopf, 1973. $12.50

Bakeless, Katherine and John Bakeless. *Confederate Spy Stories.* Philadelphia: Lippincott [1973]. $4.95. For young people.

Baker, Lafayette C. *History of the U.S. Secret Service.* With a new preface by Herbert C. Friese, Jr. New York: AMS Press, 1973, $32.50

Connelly, Thomas L. and Archer Jones. *The Politics of Command: Factions and Ideas in Confederate Strategy.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press [1973]. $10.00

Cox, LaWanda C., compiler. *Reconstruction, the Negro, and the New South.* Edited by LaWanda Cox and John H. Cox. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press [1973]. $9.95

Cox, LaWanda C. *Reconstruction, the Negro, and the New South.* Edited by LaWanda Cox and John H. Cox. New York: Harper & Row [1973]. paper $2.95

Davis, Jefferson. *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist; His Letters, Papers, and Speeches,* Collected and edited by Dunbar Rowland. [New York: AMS Press, 1973]. $275.00. Original edition of 1923

Gerteis, Louis S. *From Contraband to Freedman: Federal Policy toward Southern Blacks, 1861-1865.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, [1973]. $11.50.

Halpine, Charles Graham. *The Life and Adventures, Songs, Services, and Speeches of Private Miles O'Reilly (47th Regiment, New York Volunteers)* . . . With comic illustrations by Mullen. From the authentic records of the New York Herald, New York, Carleton, 1864. [New York: AMS Press, 1973]. $10.00

Holmes, Robert M. *Kemper County Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Robert Masten Holmes, C.S.A.* Edited by Frank Allen Dennis. Foreword by Thomas L. Connelly. Jackson, Miss.: University and College Press of Mississippi [1973]. $4.95

Hume, John Ferguson, 1830-. *The Abolitionists, Together with Personal Memories of the Struggle for Human Rights, 1830-1864.* [New York: AMS Press, 1973]. $9.00. First issued in 1905.

James, Frederic Augustus, 1832-1864. *Civil War Diary: Sumter to Andersonville.* Edited by Jefferson J. Hammer. Rutherford, N.J. Fairleight Dickinson University Press [1973]. $8.00

Kempfer, Lester L., compiler. *The Salem Light Guard: Company G, 36th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry.* Marietta, Ohio, 1861-5. Chicago; Adams Press, 1973.

Murphy, James B. *L.Q.C. Lamar: Pragmatic Patriot.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973. $11.95

Perman, Michael. *Reunion without Compromise: the South and Reconstruction 1865-1868.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1973. $17.50

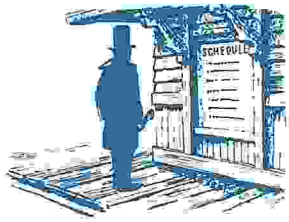
Roske, Ralph J. and Charles Van Doren. *Lincoln's Commando: The Biography of Commander W. B. Cushing, U.S.N.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press [1973]. First issued in 1957. $13.50

Smith, Charles Henry. *Bill Arp, so Called: a Side Show of the Southern Side of the War.* Illustrated by M. A. Sullivan. [New York: AMS Press, 1973]. $9.00. Original of 1866.

Starr, Stephen Z. *Jennison's Jayhawkers: a Civil War Cavalry Regiment and its Commander.* Louisiana State University Press, 1973. $12.95

Taylor, Richard. *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War.* New York: Arno Press, 1973. $13.00 Reprint of Appleton issue of 1879.

# BULLETIN BOARD




## FUTURE MEETINGS

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

December 14: Phil Hohlweck on Berdan's Sharpshooters.

January 11: Stephen Z. Starr of Cincinnati, Ohio, on "Border Ruffians, Jayhawkers and Guerrillas."

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

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: To be scheduled.

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.

### Change of Address

Meredith Parry, 13073—99th Drive, Sun City, Arizona 85351

Margo Twiss Teegeman, daughter of the late Gilbert Twiss, founder of The Newsletter, writes: I enjoyed the account of Independence Day in Centennial Park. My father always spoke highly of that piece of ground and I know he would have been pleased to hear his words used over it. Keep up your excellent paper—it is a most enjoyable vehicle for me to keep up with the doings of a fine group. Best regards to everyone."

☆ TAKE NOTICE ☆

*Ladies' Night*

FEB • 8 • 1974

AN EVENING OF DINNER AND ENTERTAINMENT

DICK BLAKE'S

A LOOK AT LINCOLN

Hear The Most Stirring Speeches - The Most Humorous Anecdotes

GREATEST INDUCEMENTS

Music by

1st BRIGADE BAND

COMO INN