RALPH G. NEWMAN TO RECEIVE NEVINS-FREEMAN AWARD—JUNE 13, 1975

"It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this." Abraham Lincoln said that on a somber occasion over one hundred and eleven years ago, but what better words could describe the gala event which will be held on June 13, 1975, in the G.A.R. Rooms of the Chicago Public Library. That evening the Civil War Round Table of Chicago will honor its founder, and thus the founder of Round Tables everywhere, Ralph G. Newman, by presenting to him its most prestigious indication of respect and gratitude, the Nevins-Freeman Award. The very criteria of eligibility for the award, scholarship, literary achievement, and contributions to the study of Civil War history, have been the standards which have guided the course of our recipient's professional career.

At the age of twenty-two Ralph Newman established a general bookshop in the old Daily News building on LaSalle Street in Chicago. The selection of this site for his establishment proved to have a significant effect on Ralph's life, for two of his early customers were Daily News employees Carl Sandburg and Lloyd Lewis. Through their influence and friendship, the shop's inventory became more and more specialized in offering books on Lincoln and the Civil War. Finally, in 1940, the sale of items on other fields was discontinued and the shop was renamed the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop. That same year the Round Table was born as Ralph organized the many customers who were in the habit of gathering in the shop to discuss their common interest.

Since that time, Ralph has been much more than just a member or officer of the Round Table. He has been its leader, the guiding light who has moved it into such areas as the awarding of graduate fellowships in Civil War history, the establishment of a Civil War Research Center, and, most recently, the founding of the Nevins-Freeman Award. His bookshop, having been moved many years ago to 18 E. Chestnut Street, remains our headquarters, a gathering place of warm hospitality where good companions can meet to share the events of 1861-1865.

Ralph's achievements too, like the Round Table's, have grown far beyond the beginnings in the bookshop. He has authored, co-authored or edited nine books, including "The American Iliad", "The Civil War Digest", and the recently published "Abraham Lincoln, His Story in His Own Words". In addition to the honorary degrees and special degrees he has received from seven universities, he serves as trustee of Lincoln College and of Lincoln Memorial University. Among the countless positions he has held are Vice-Chairman of the Illinois Civil War Centennial Commission, President of the Illinois State Historical Society, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Ford's Theater Society, and, of course, Presi-
peges of "Killer Angels" this feeling had completely disappeared, to be replaced by total engulfment as we found ourselves transported to the side of the spy James Harrison as he travelled the roads of Maryland and Pennsylvania to reach Longstreet. Again and again, page after page, as we planned with Longstreet, observed with Freemantle, marched and fought with Chamberlain, died with Armstead, we realized the vicarious dream of every Civil War student: we were there! Through the words of the author, the battle was real. We could hear the guns, see the lines attack and retreat, talk and think with men whose names are legendary.

But the ability to paint such a vivid picture with sentences on a page is not what makes Mr. Shaara and his book unique, nor is it why we applauded his success. To laud one who has such talent is the job of the literary critic, and that we are not. Instead, we of the Round Tables are historians, amateurs to be sure for the most part, but historians nonetheless. Thus, the regard we have for Mr. Shaara because of his work is of a different base. Simply put, we respect him because he knows the battle and, in painting his word picture, he has been faithful to that knowledge. It is the highest praise we can offer and Michael Shaara deserves it.

True, in the book there are minor historical discrepancies, but they are few and certainly do not detract or distract. Overall, it is obvious that the author has done his homework; his research would, we think, even satisfy a Neevins or a Freeman. "The Killer Angels", fiction though it purports to be, surely belongs in the library of every student of the Civil War, alongside the works of Coddington and Tucker. For, although this book may not definitively tell you the military details of what happened on July 1-3, 1863, it does tell you how it felt to be there. In the long run, isn't that just as important?

1976 BATTLEFIELD TOUR

At its meeting held just prior to the May meeting, the Executive Committee selected as the site of the 1976 Battlefield Tour the Manassas-Antietam area. Tentative plans call for one day at 1st and 2nd Bull Run and another day at Antietam. Among the possible locations for visits on the remaining days are Monocacy, Balls Bluff, Chantilly, Aldie, South Mountain, and the Washington defenses. Committee chairmen have been selected to immediately begin work on the details. With the Bi-Centennial celebration in full swing on the eastern seaboard by next May, members may want to plan extended vacations to include the Battlefield Tour as well as other historic places of interest in the Washington area.

President-Elect Jerry Edelstein has announced that the annual summer Executive Committee meeting will be held on August 2, 1975 at 11:30 A.M. at The Book and Bottle, 17 East Chestnut Street, Chicago. Reminders will be mailed but all new officers, trustees and committee chairmen, as well as past presidents should mark their calendars and plan to attend.

It is with deep sadness that we must report the death of the noted Civil War and Lincoln historian Paul M. Angle. Mr. Angle, former director of the Chicago Historical Society and Honorary Life Member of the Round Table, passed away at the age of 74 on May 11, 1975. A native of Ohio, Mr. Angle was graduated from Miami University at Oxford, Ohio before receiving his masters degree from the University of Illinois in 1924. Thereafter, he also served as executive secretary of the Abraham Lincoln Association, historian of the Illinois State Historical Library, and secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society. In addition to countless articles and book reviews, Mr. Angle's literary achievements included the authorship or editorship of many books, such as "The Lincoln Reader", "Mary Lincoln, Wife and Widow" (with Carl Sandburg) and "Here I Have Lived: A History of Lincoln's Springfield".
MAY MEETING

The popularity of our founder, Ralph G. Newman, and his well-founded reputation as a speaker were once again demonstrated as the largest audience in many years was in attendance on May 9, 1975. One hundred and six members and guests were present to hear Ralph describe "Abraham Lincoln's Incredibly Funerals," Just prior to his remarks, the Round Table's election of officers for the coming year was held. As usual, the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee, which was reported in the May Newsletter, was approved without opposition.

Ralph then began his discussion by taking us back to Ford's Theater on the night of April 14, 1865. He reminded us that the President had previously attended performances at Ford's eight times since the theater was rebuilt after a fire in 1863. On that fatal Good Friday evening, Lincoln and his party had arrived at 8:30, after the play had already begun, to occupy the box which had been personally decorated by Henry Ford, the owner's brother. It was, of course, in that box that the assassination took place.

After the shooting, the President's body was carried to the Petersen House across the street. As word of the tragic event spread, a surging crowd soon gathered, making access to the house difficult for the arriving governmental officials. As soon as they arrived on the scene, Surgeon Edwin Stanton took charge of the situation. As the doctors tended the dying Lincoln in the little rear bedroom, Stanton set up a command post in the front sitting room. There he organized a dragnet in an attempt to capture the conspirators. He also ordered short-hand clerks to immediately take testimony from those who had witnessed the occurrence in the theater. When the Vice-President arrived, Stanton, knowing Mrs. Lincoln's dislike for the Tennessean, suggested that Johnson not stay and the latter complied with the request.

At 7:22 A.M., despite the attention of ten doctors, the President died. Stanton immediately met with the widow and together they planned the funeral. On the next day, Easter Sunday, the body rested in a second floor bedroom at the White House as mourning bells tolled, buildings were draped in black, and ministers delivered hastily rewritten sermons expressing the nation's grief. On Tuesday, the doors of the White House were opened and twenty-five thousand mourners filed past the body. On the next day at 11:00 A.M., six hundred invited guests attended the funeral service in the Green Room, but Mrs. Lincoln and Tad were too upset to be present. The eulogy was delivered by the Rev. Phineas D. Gurley of Washington. After the services, the cortège moved down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol rotunda where three thousand people per hour viewed the remains.

On Friday morning, April 21, the eight-car funeral train left Washington with the body in the last coach. It was to follow in reverse a route similar to the one taken by the then newly-elected president in 1861. That first day there was a stop in Baltimore before arriving in Harrisburg at night. Saturday and Sunday were spent in Philadelphia and the following two days in New York. Thereafter, stops were made in Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis and Chicago. In each place the body was removed from the coach and ceremonies were held. In addition, as the train moved slowly through the countryside between cities, thousands lined the sides of the tracks.

By the time the entourage finally reached Springfield on May 3, the train had been viewed by over seven million people, while one and a half million had passed by the remains. During the trip, the weather had been strongly foreboding with frequent rainstorms. In the Illinois capital, a funeral service was held by Bishop Simpson and, after the rereading of Lincoln's second inaugural address, the martyred President was at last laid to rest after nineteen days of ceremonies and national mourning.

1975 BATTLEFIELD TOUR

The efficient planning of Co-Chairmen Brooks Davis, Terry Carr and Bob Walter, the hard work of Registrar Margaret April, and the warm hospitality of the members of the Richmond Civil War Round Table all combined to make our 25th annual Battlefield Tour one of the finest ever. One hundred and twelve campaigners spent four full days enjoying the near perfect weather of springtime Virginia as they viewed the many sites of historic interest.

Upon our arrival in the capital of the Confederacy on Wednesday evening, April 30, we were escorted to our headquarters for the tour, Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge in north Richmond. The selection of the motel site was a prime example of the foresight of our tour chairman as it was conveniently located next door to the Satin Lady Massage Parlor. There many of our members were able, in the ensuing days, to gain relief from the rigors of the campaign. That first evening after dinner, we were treated to a review of what we were to see the next day, ably delivered by Bill Mallory of the Richmond Round Table. We were most fortunate to have Bill and his fellow Richmondites, Julian Bragg and John Damore, with us each day as guides, for their knowledge and companionship added immeasurably to the success of the trip.

On Thursday, we began at Massaponax Church were, thru a mix-up, there was no one to greet us and admit us to this historic building which served as both a headquarters and a hospital for the Union army. However, the day was saved as admittance was gained when one of our members exhibited a previously undisclosed felonious talent for breaking and entering. From there it was on to Guinea Station, where we toured the Jackson Shrine and Bob Krick, historian at the National Park headquarters in Fredericksburg, related for us the wartime activities in the area. We then proceeded to the North Anna and, after lunch, Cold Harbor for a description of the 1864 battle. That night, after a gracious mint julep at the beautiful White House of the Confederacy, the failures of McClellan in the Peninsula Campaign were described to us by our old friend Joe Cullen.

Friday saw the tour divided, one bus off for a day at Williamsburg while the remainder followed the route of Ambler Johnston's splendid guide book in a review of the 1862 campaign for Richmond. The latter contingent had a box lunch in the field at the Watt House, Porter's headquarters during the Battle of Gaines' Mill. Later, through the efforts of Bill Mallory and Julian Bragg, they were able to view Jackson's gun emplacements overlooking White Oak Swamp. The site is deep in the woods and therefore inaccessible unless you know

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THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)


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where to look. The groups were reunited in the afternoon at Harrison's Landing for a cocktail party at Berkeley plantation overlooking the James River. In this magnificent setting we were greeted by the plantation's present owner, Malcolm Jamieson, whose ancestor had camped on the grounds in 1862 while serving as a drummer boy in the federal army. During the party, the dual positions of host and head bartender were superbly filled by one of our Richmond Co-Chairmen, Hobson Goddin. Later that evening we were joined by Honorary Life Member and battlefield companion, Ed Bears who spoke to us about the personalities and the armies involved in the Petersburg campaign.

With Ed as our chief guide, Saturday found us first stopping at the perfectly preserved earthworks in Fort Darling on Drewry's Bluff and then visiting the Petersburg battlefield. After viewing the park headquarters and museum and such prominent spots as The Crater and Fort Stedman, we finished the day at Five Forks before heading for the hotel for Fun Night. The highlight of the latter program was a magnificent performance by Harold Howard who most convincingly portrays a young Confederate soldier enroute home at the war's end. The activities of the last day, Sunday, were curtailed by a flight schedule change by the airline, but there was still time for stops at Battle Abbey and Hollywood Cemetery before departing for home with most pleasant memories of a wonderful time had by all.

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Among other Round Tables which conducted Battlefield Tours last month were the District of Columbia CWRT, which toured Monocacy on May 17, and Richmond CWRT, which visited Round Bull Run on May 31. Also, our friends of the Springfield CWRT were invited by the Greene County Historical Society to tour, on May 31, the homes of General Carlin, Colonel Baker and Major Reno.

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The Spring quarterly issue of Chicago History, the magazine publication of the Chicago Historical Society, contains the full text of a recently discovered document pertaining to the Lincoln assassination, with an introductory note by Ralph Newman. As Ralph points out, the occupants of the front rooms on the first floor of the Peterson House, the residence to which Lincoln was taken after being shot, have been previously unknown. However, this document, a letter written May 5, 1865 by George Francis, identifies himself and his wife, Huldah, as the tenants of that two-room suite. In addition, and of even more importance, the letter goes on to describe the events of the night of April 14-15, 1865, including the comings and goings of the Lincoln family and government officials who had taken over the Francis apartment while the President lay in the little bedroom down the hall.