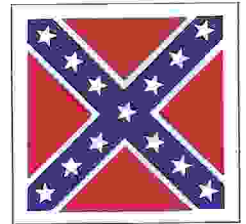


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE.

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LX, Number 10

Chicago, Illinois

June 2000



592nd REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

**JOHN Y. SIMON ON
"LINCOLN AND GRANT: THE
COMMANDER IN CHIEF AND
THE CHIEF COMMANDER"**

★★★★★

Friday, June 9

★★★★★

**HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA
350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET**

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$25 - Members \$30 - Nonmembers

Entrees:

*London Broil
or Catch of the Day*



PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by **MONDAY, June 5**, by calling registrar Carole Le Claire at 847-698-1438. People who attend without having made a reservation will pay a \$5 walk-in charge. If you make a reservation and then find you cannot attend, please call to cancel or you will be billed for a dinner.

PARKING: 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 \$3 with a validated parking sticker.**

JOHN Y. SIMON

~ on ~

"Lincoln and Grant: The Commander in Chief and the Chief Commander"

GRANT DID WHAT LINCOLN APPROVED

BY BARBARA HUGHETT

Abraham Lincoln's long search for an effective general was finally successful with the emergence of Ulysses S. Grant. Upon naming him the commanding general, Lincoln claimed that "Grant is the first general I have had." In spite of attacks on Grant's character by the jealous and malicious, the president supported him, saying, "I can't spare this man, he fights."

The concept of commander in chief developed gradually under the Constitution. When Lincoln had to exercise military powers in a war-torn country, there was considerable doubt about the extent of this authority. It was as commander in chief, rather than president, that Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, and with a new consciousness of authority he controlled the commanders of his armies.

The idea that when Grant became general in chief in March 1864 he was given extraordinary powers by President Lincoln deserves reconsideration. When Grant did what Lincoln approved, some thought that the conduct of the war had been placed in new hands. Grant knew better, and the working out of this unusual relationship between the two leaders deserves explora-



John Y. Simon

tion. On June 9, John Y. Simon will address The Round Table on the subject of "Lincoln and Grant: The Commander in Chief and the Chief Commander."

John Y. Simon is a longtime friend and a favorite speaker of the Chicago Round Table. A native of Highland Park, Illinois, he earned his bachelor's degree at Swarthmore College and his master's and doctoral degrees at Harvard University. During the summers of his undergraduate years, he worked as a stockboy in the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop.

He taught at Ohio State University, began editing *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* in 1962, and in 1964 moved to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where he is professor of history,

as well as editor of the *Grant Papers* and executive director of the Ulysses S. Grant Association. Simon's Grant project continues to be noted both for its prodigious output and for its qualities. He is the dean of documentary editors, a founder of the Association for Documentary Editing, and a spokesperson for the craft before groups ranging from committees of the United States Congress to interested students.

In addition to his diligence as an editor, he is a prolific writer. More than sixty

(continued on page 3)

Reservations by
June 5

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817
Chicago, Illinois 60605
Phone: 847-698-1438
www.thecwrt.org

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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 Membership Committee, 601 South LaSalle Building, Suite C-817, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION UPDATE

BY MARY MUNSELL ABROE

The CWRT Contributes to Preservation Enterprises in Virginia and Tennessee: Within the past month, The Civil War Round Table of Chicago has made the following preservation donations: \$500 to the Central Virginia Battlefield Trust; \$250 (membership dues) to the Kernstown Battlefield Association; \$500 to Rippavilla/Spring Hill, Tennessee; and \$500 to the Carter House, Franklin, Tennessee. Thanks to all whose efforts and generosity made these donations possible.

Antietam National Battlefield Acquires Joseph Poffenberger Farm: The March 2000 issue of the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF) newsletter announces that the National Park Service at Antietam recently bought the 120-acre Joseph Poffenberger farm in the battlefield's northern sector. The purchase was made possible through the NPS Land Acquisition Program, with \$385,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund providing the financing.

In September 1862, the Poffenberger farm included a small part of the North Woods as well as corn fields, row crops, and pasture land. The barn served as the site of a pre-battle meeting of Joseph Hooker and his staff, and the farm was the staging area for Hooker's I Corps assault that opened the battle of Antietam. The farm also acted as Hooker's headquarters during the contest.

The Park Service's plans for the property include stabilizing the agricultural lease in order to conserve the historic landscape. It is possible also that the new "Cornfield" trail will pass through the farm. After the farm buildings are assessed for condition and integrity, the Service will decide upon their future use.

Georgia Purchases 500-plus Acres at Resaca: As reported in the May 2000 edition of *Civil War News*, the state of Georgia recently concluded the acquisition—at a price of \$2.36 million—of 505 acres in the core of the Resaca battlefield, site of one of the first major actions of Sherman's 1864 Atlanta campaign. General obligation bonds issued by Georgia and \$1 million from the Robert G. Woodruff Foundation (established by the late corporate head of Coca-Cola) will finance the buy, with lesser sums coming from the Land and Wa-

ter Conservation Fund; the Civil War Preservation Trust; the Georgia Civil War Commission; and the local Friends of Resaca.

Resaca has been considered one of the nation's largest and most well-preserved but unprotected battlefields. The parcel being purchased encompasses almost all of the extant Confederate trenches. The state also is acquiring a conservation easement on sixty adjacent acres that will protect 90 percent of the existing Federal fortifications. Another provision of the deal gives Georgia the right of "first refusal" if owner Scott Fletcher, a Dalton (Georgia) textile tycoon, opts to sell additional acreage of the 1,200 upon which the state initially set its sights. There are a number of other battlefield landholders besides Fletcher; local preservationists, however, are encouraged by the fact that the owner of the most important remaining position, a four-gun Confederate lunette that witnessed some of the contest's most brutal combat, is a proven advocate of preserving the field.

This acquisition is a major preservation success and, equally as important, an example of state government and local citizens stepping up to the plate and getting the job done. Without the active involvement of Georgia Governor Roy Barnes, former Senator Sam Nunn, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the grass-roots support of Georgians themselves, this victory would not have happened—regardless of the national pressure that was brought to bear on the situation. Can those of us who witnessed the degradation of the Stones River and Franklin battlefields and learned about the potential for more of the same on the recent battlefield tour anticipate similar commitment and results from the state of Tennessee?

Gerald J. Prokopowicz, director of public programs at The Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana, will address the annual luncheon of the Stephen A. Douglas Association, at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 3. His topic will be "Stephen A. Douglas and the Presidential Campaign of 1860." The cost is \$30 per person. To make reservations, contact David Richert, 312-558-6900, extension 119, drichert@ajs.org.



MAY MEETING

BY LARRY GIBBS

"The Civil War in Depth: Stereoptic Views of the Conflict" was the title of Robert Zeller's very interesting and unusual presentation, given on May 12 before 121 members and guests at the 591st regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. His vivid narrative of the war was accompanied by a three-dimensional slide show. Each person was provided with special 3-D glasses which made the scenes come alive. An award-winning freelance writer, Zeller showed scenes published in his book, *The Civil War in Depth* (1997). Another volume of 3-D Civil War photographs will be published this fall.

Zeller began by reminding us that 70 percent of all Civil War photographs were taken to be seen in three dimensions. "From 1860 to 1920, the stereoptic viewer was the premier entertainment in the country," he stated. "The 3-D photos were more than a novelty. They were entertaining, informative, interesting, and engrossing." The 3-D format was set aside as elementary once more elaborate entertainment technologies, such as motion pictures, radio, and television, came into being. Zeller said that three-dimensional photography had become "one of the last great secrets of the Civil War."

A variety of scenes were shown, including interiors of Fort Sumter in 1863, slave quarters in Alexandria, Virginia, various army camps, and a soldier getting a haircut in Savage Station, Virginia. The wide selection of photographs provided the audience with a realistic view of Civil War life. These scenes were the first visages of the reality of warfare shown to the 1860s American public.

"Mathew Brady was the greatest entrepreneur of Civil War photography because he thought the war photos would sell," Zeller told his audience. At the Battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862), Alexander Gardner, a protegee of Brady, took the first great series of photographs in U.S. history. Included in this series was the famous photo of the bloated dead soldiers lying in front of the Dunker church.

The Gettysburg battlefield was a popular site for Civil War photographers. Brady and Gardner differed in their approach to the hallowed ground and the dead soldiers. Gardner arrived at the battlefield two days after the battle, while Brady didn't come until two weeks later. Gardner concentrated on getting shots of dead bodies still lying on the

battlefield. The impact of these scenes remains profound: the dead at the entrance of Evergreen Cemetery, the Rose wheatfield, the slaughter pen, and the indelible Rebel sharpshooter at the Devil's Den.

Brady's views were mostly panoramas and landscape views. Summarizing, Zeller commented that "Gardner was grim, while Brady was heroic. Taken as a whole, the results of these two famous photographers were dramatic and stirring."

Zeller's narration increased our understanding of the photographs and of the war. Two action photos were taken during the war: the subjects were Thaddeus Lowe and his reconnaissance balloon and the *Intrepid*. Timothy O'Sullivan shot an interesting sequence of photos of Union General Ulysses S. Grant. The various exposures showed him as he was leaning over to consult with General George Meade in a Virginia church yard during the 1864 Overland Campaign.

We learned that some photos were handpainted after the war. We saw some of those photos and the colors remain vivid. We were shown the work of photographers who went with black infantry regiments and of those who accompanied General William Tecumseh Sherman on his famous "March to the Sea."

Abraham Lincoln, certainly the most dominant personality of the Civil War era, was photographed 130 times—thirty times in 3-D. With the lines etched deeper in

his face as the conflict raged, a viewer can see the tortured anguish that the Civil War inflicted on Lincoln. Fittingly, some of the last slides illustrated the last sacrifice Lincoln made for his country—his assassination on April 14, 1865—with scenes from his funeral train. Zeller also showed some of the pictures taken of Civil War veterans at reunions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These illustrated the beginning of unity and the healing process following the nation's bitter fratricidal conflict.



SUMMER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

President-elect Bruce Allardice has announced that the summer meeting of the Executive Committee of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago will be held on Saturday, July 8, at the Notre Dame High School, 7655 Dempster, in Niles, beginning at 9 a.m. Coffee and rolls will be served. The Executive Committee consists of all past presidents and all incoming officers and committee chairs for the 2000-2001 term. All are urged to attend this very important planning meeting. Committee members will receive additional information in the mail. To add items to the agenda, contact Bruce at 847-948-7000, extension 613 (during the day), or by e-mail at:

bruce.allardice@westgroup.com

JOHN Y. SIMON (from page 1)

of his articles have appeared in professional journals. Among other works, he is the editor of *The Personal Memoirs of Julia Dent Grant* (1975; reprinted 1995) and the co-editor of *Ulysses S. Grant: Essays and Documents* (1981) and *The Continuing Civil War: Essays and Documents in Honor of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago* (1992).

Dr. Simon's many awards include the Distinguished Service Award of the Association for Documentary Editing (1983) and the 1985 Nevins-Freeman Award of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago. He is a very popular speaker on the lecture circuit.

John Simon has appeared before our Round Table on a number of occasions over the years. He delivered the main address at our Fiftieth Anniversary dinner, titled "Fifty Years of The Civil War Round Table." He was the principal eulogist at the memorial service for our late founding member Ralph G. Newman in 1998.

It is interesting to note that this is the *third* time in recent years that John has addressed a regular meeting of this Round Table on the date of June 9! His topic five years ago, in 1995, was "Forging a Commander: Ulysses S. Grant and the First Year of the Civil War." His topic six years prior to that, in 1989, was "Edward D. Baker, Ball's Bluff, and the Politics of Command."

THE NEW BOOKS

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Secrist, Philip L. *The Battle of Resaca*. Mercer U. Press. 1998. \$20.00.

Slate, Jim and John Alexander. *Firestorm at Gettysburg: Civilian Voices June–November 1863*. Schiffer Publ. Ltd. 1998. \$39.95.

Simon, John Y. *New Perspectives on the Civil War: Myths and Realities of the National Conflict*. Madison House Publishers. 1998. \$27.95.

Simon, John Y. *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife: An Autobiography by Mrs. John A. Logan*. Southern Illinois U. Press. 1998. Pbk. \$19.95. Original of 1913.

Stevens, Michael, ed. *As If It Were Glory—Robert Beecham's Civil War from the Iron Brigade to the Black Regiments*. Madison House Publishers. 1998. \$28.95.

www.mrlinconswhitehouse.org — a new website sponsored by The Lehrman Institute, is open for visitors. The site focuses on Lincoln's White House and the people who lived, worked, and visited there, and the events which transpired there. It includes profiles on six family members, sixteen Cabinet members and vice presidents, twenty-one generals, seventeen members of Congress, eighteen staff members, and over two dozen other visitors and their interactions with Mr. Lincoln. Virtual visitors can witness the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation and Mr. Lincoln's funeral. They can seek a pardon or promotion or attend one of Mary Lincoln's public receptions.

We are sad to announce the death of longtime member Frank Lynch. He suffered a massive heart attack on May 6 in Franklin, Tennessee, during The Round Table's annual battlefield tour. He was rushed to a hospital in Tennessee, but he never regained consciousness. Frank died on May 11. One of his sons, Daniel, had accompanied him on the tour and was with his father when he suffered the heart attack. A practicing attorney since 1950, Frank had retired in 1998. A memorial service is scheduled for 11 a.m. on June 16 at St. Clement's Catholic Church, 642 Deming, in Chicago. Our deepest condolences go to his wife and family.

A memorial service will be held for former Round Table President Paul I. Kliger on June 11 in Louisville, Colorado. As reported in our April issue, Paul died on March 14. For information about the service, contact Paul's widow, Ruth Kliger, 825 S. Willow, Louisville, Colorado 80027, 303-661-0734.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

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.

In addition to The Round Table history and *The Continuing Civil War*, the essays from the Fiftieth Anniversary Proceedings, the following items are available at each monthly meeting: Lapel pins, Mugs, Meeting Tapes, Civil War Buff posters and T-Shirts, CWRT T-shirts, polos, and sweatshirts.

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

SILENT AUCTION

A silent auction is held at each monthly dinner meeting, for books donated by late Round Table founding member Ralph G. Newman. The minimum bid is \$5 per book, with a minimum rise of \$1 per bid. Five minutes after the conclusion of the speaker's presentation, bidding will close and the last highest bid is the winner of each book. Proceeds go to benefit battlefield preservation.

NEWS ITEMS

According to an item in *The Old Liner*, the newsletter of the Baltimore Civil War Round Table, the baseball cap worn today can trace as one of its ancestors the kepi. Baseball historians say that the idea of a crowned hat with a front bill came from the basic design of the Civil War kepi.

Longtime member Charlie Shields, who suffered a stroke several months ago, is now continuing his recuperation at the Salem Village Nursing Home, Room 114, 1314 Rowell Avenue, Joliet, Illinois 60433. Cards, letters, and visits would be very much appreciated. Former President Brooks Davis visited Charlie recently and reported that he is in good spirits and said that they'd had an interesting discussion on some Civil War topics.

Trustee Bing Owens has developed a website which he calls the "United States Battle Field Preservation Bookstore." With the sponsorship of amazon.com, pets.com, and drugstore.com, he has thus far raised \$125 for battlefield preservation. He divided the \$125 donation between the Civil War Trust and the organization raising the *Hunley* submarine. To reach the site, click on www.geocities.com/bingowens/history.html.

Thanks go to the members who have donated books for our monthly raffle, the proceeds of which go to benefit battlefield preservation: Don Anderson, Ralph and Marcia De Falco, and Dan Weinberg. (If we have missed mentioning any donors, please contact the newsletter editor, and we will recognize those members in the September issue!)

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, unless otherwise indicated.

June 9: John Y. Simon, "Lincoln and Grant: The Commander in Chief and the Chief Commander"

September 8: Thomas Lowry, topic to be announced

October 13: Charles P. Roland, Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner

November 11 (Saturday): All-day 60th Anniversary Seminar and Banquet

December 8: Gordon Rhea, "The Overland Campaign"

January 12: Terry Winschel, "The Vicksburg Campaign"

February 9: Jack Welsh, "The Medical Histories of Civil War Generals"

March 9: Mark Bradley, "The Surrender in North Carolina"

April 20: Richard McMurray, topic to be announced

May 2-6: Annual Battlefield Tour, Antietam

May 11: Anne J. Bailey, "The Recruitment of African-American Troops"

June 8: Leslie Gordon, "General George Pickett"

NEW MEMBER

Pat Traynor, 1085 Bald Eagle Drive, #E403, Marco Island, FL 34145, 941-642-0594

The last living founder of The Civil War Round Table (and thus of the Round Table Movement), Elmer Gertz, died on April 27. See special attachment to this issue.

60 The Civil War Round Table of Chicago has begun making plans for a 60th Anniversary Celebration. An all-day symposium and gala evening banquet will be held on Saturday, November 11, 2000. At the January Executive Committee meeting, a 60th Anniversary Committee was formed, with Marvin Sanderman as its chairman. An all-star cast of speakers will include Stephen Ambrose, Jean H. Baker, Edwin C. Beears, Lance Herdegen, and Marshall D. Krollick.

Elmer Gertz
September 14, 1906-April 27, 2000

And Then There Were None ...
by Barbara Hughett

Elmer Gertz, the last living founding member of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago—and thus of the Civil War Round Table Movement—died on April 27, after a valiant struggle against debilitating illness which was an inspiration to all who loved him. He would have been 94 in September. Elmer wanted very much to recover and to attend the 60th Anniversary festivities The Round Table is planning for November 11, and I really believed he might make it. During my visits to him in the hospital, he asked me about it on several occasions and indicated a strong desire to be there to celebrate with us.

Funeral services, attended by several hundred people, were held at the Weinstein Brothers Memorial Chapel in Wilmette on May 1. Media coverage included a front-page article and an additional article in the *Chicago Tribune*, an article in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, an article in the *New York Times*, and an item in *Time* magazine's "Milestones" section. Interment was at Memorial Park in Skokie.

Elmer was 34 years old back on December 3, 1940, when the sixteen founders met for the first meeting of The Civil War Round Table. The founders had no idea they were starting a worldwide movement which would be thriving nearly sixty years later. They were just doing something they loved to do: studying an era they cared about, an era they believed held lessons which could benefit those in the present. Pervading all of this was their feeling that the study of history is not only beneficial, but great fun as well.

At that time, Elmer was just beginning his illustrious career as a nationally-renowned attorney and a champion of worthy causes. Often he was the defender of the "underdog." The cases he took on invariably reflected his deep convictions about the rights of the individual person, *whomever* he or she might be.

In the years after The Round Table's founding, Elmer became a very prominent civic and cultural leader. He was a delegate to the 1969 Illinois Constitutional Convention and chairman of its Bill of Rights committee, a founder of the George Bernard Shaw Society, a founder of the Public Housing Association, and a chairman of several veterans' housing committees over the years. He once received mail addressed simply to "Mr. Housing." He received Israel's Prime Minister's Medal in 1972. Up until his hospitalization this past January, for heart bypass surgery and a subsequent stroke and bouts with pneumonia, he was an adjunct professor at the John Marshall Law School—still teaching classes into his 90s.

Elmer Gertz was the eighth president of The Civil War Round Table (1952-1953). Highlights of his tenure were the first battlefield tour to Gettysburg in June, 1952, William H. Townsend's moving oration on "Cassius Marcellus Clay" at the October 1952 meeting, and the third battlefield tour, which traveled to Richmond and during which Chicago Round Table members were the guests at the home of

(continued on other side)

the esteemed biographer of Washington and Lee—and friend of then-President Eisenhower—Douglas Southall Freeman. This would be Dr. Freeman's last public address; he died five weeks later. Elmer was The Round Table's representative at Freeman's funeral.

He addressed The Round Table four times and was a participant in Round Table panel discussions or symposiums on six occasions. Even in recent years, he continued to attend our monthly dinner meetings often. The Civil War Round Table held a very important place in Elmer Gertz's heart. A couple of months ago, Round Table President Charles Bednar brought a tape player with earphones and a number of tapes from past meeting addresses for Elmer's use in the hospital—to help him combat the boredom of long hours in a hospital room. I recall Elmer's face lighting up as we listened to a tape of an address he gave in the 1960s. During my last visit to Elmer, five days before his death, Chuck and I listened with him to a tape of an address I give on the Round Table Movement, which includes many mentions of incidents in the early days of the Chicago group, dear to Elmer's heart. We listened to the entire talk with him, as I held Elmer's hand while Chuck manipulated the tape player. It will remain a very precious memory, I am sure, to both of us.

Elmer is the author of fifteen books, including *A Handful of Clients* (1965), *To Life* (1974), and *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.: The Story of a Landmark Case* (1992). The latter is the story of his successful libel suit against the John Birch Society, the result of which caused the Supreme Court to modify the law in that area. He had a strong, flexible mind; throughout his long life, he never stopped learning and growing.

He was devastated in 1997 by the loss of his beloved Mamie. Characteristic of Elmer, he dealt with his grief by doing something positive—by writing a book about her, *Remembering Mamie*, and then he went on with life. In it he wrote, "This is not farewell, my imperishable Mamie. I will have you in my mind and heart forever."

I believe it is important for us, the present generations in the Round Table Movement, to respect and even emulate some of our founders—especially Elmer, who defended and represented and always identified himself with what Abraham Lincoln called "the common man." Material things were not important to Elmer, as was noted in his eulogies on May 1. His priorities were of deeper, more enduring human and spiritual values.

You will be in our minds and hearts forever, Elmer. We send our most heartfelt condolences to the Gertz family.

Postscript: Interestingly, Elmer Gertz died on April 27, 2000, the anniversary of the birth of Ulysses S. Grant (in 1822). In another curious coincidence, the next-to-the-last Civil War Round Table founding member to die, Ralph G. Newman, died on July 23, 1998, the anniversary of the death of Ulysses S. Grant (in 1885). Their ties to the American Civil War continued to their deaths.