

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

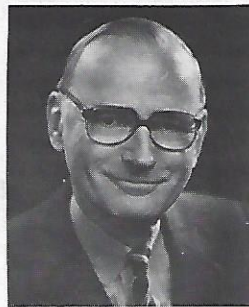
Volume XLV, Number 5

Chicago, Illinois

January, 1985

Brooks Davis on The Union Veteran and the Grand Army of the Republic: Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty

In his second inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln looked forward to the Reconstruction period as he exhorted the people of the North with the words. . . "let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves and with all nations." Lincoln's hopes bore fruit in the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic on April 6, 1866 in Decatur, Illinois. On January 11, 1985, Brooks Davis, our past president and honorary life member, will narrate the history of the G.A.R. and will weave into his remarks the post-war career of his grandfather and the story of G.A.R. Post #87, Paxton, Illinois (Brooks' home town). As students of the Civil War period, Brooks feels that we have neglected the lives of the participants prior to and after the war. His address will represent an attempt to redress that omission.



J. Brooks Davis

The G.A.R. was founded by Benjamin F. Stephenson, a Springfield, Illinois physician who had served as a surgeon with the 14th Illinois Infantry. Stephenson, impressed with the desirability of a veteran's association which operated for the mutual benefit of its members and for the aid of soldiers' widows and orphans, gathered together a small group of friends to form the nucleus of an organization at Springfield in the spring of 1866. After the first G.A.R. Post was established in Decatur, a state convention was held to form the Department of Illinois and recognize the chartering of 39 Posts. Membership was open to honorably discharged soldiers, sailors and marines of the Union armed forces who served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865.

At the first national encampment of the G.A.R., held at Indianapolis on November 20, 1866, ten states and the District of Columbia were represented. Its first commander was the "hero of Belvidere", Stephen A. Hurlbut, and he was succeeded by General John A. Logan, who would serve three successive terms. Logan's successor was General Ambrose E. Burnside; later commanders would be men of relatively minor military reputation.

In 1868, it was Logan who named May 30th as a special day for honoring the graves of Union soldiers and



437th Regular Meeting

J. Brooks Davis

on

The Grand Army of the Republic

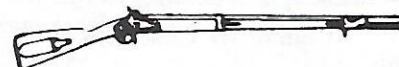
Friday, January 11, 1985

Chicago Press Club

410 N. Michigan

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$13.00 per person



Meeting site

We will return to our regular meeting site, the Chicago Press Club, 410 N. Michigan, for the January meeting. The Press Club is on the lower level. Take the stairs at the rear of the lobby, just to the right of the entrance to the Wrigley Building Restaurant.

the G.A.R. had charge of Memorial Day celebrations in the Northern states for many years. After World War I, the American Legion took over this duty.

The G.A.R. quickly attained a pre-eminent place among the veterans' organizations formed at the close of the war, but even so, its membership grew with relative slowness. Between 1881 and 1882, however, it rose from 87,718 to 131,900, and in the next eight years the increase was rapid. The peak was reached in 1890, when 409,489 members were reported. By 1900 membership dropped to 276,612; in 1920 it stood at 93,171; in 1937, 3325 members were reported. To Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minnesota devolved in 1953 the distinction of being the

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

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

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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 Ward C. Smidl, 1104 Whipoorwill Lane, Palatine, Illinois 60007.



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one survivor of the armed forces who "gave the last full measure of devotion," as expressed by President Lincoln. Woolson passed away in 1956.

At an early date in the history of the G.A.R., partisan purposes were forbidden, but for many years the organization was a powerful political force. Its unremitting efforts for pension increases and other benefits for veterans and their dependents led both parties to bid for its support by these means, and its members generally were disposed to vote for the highest bidder. By 1900, however, declining membership and the emergence of new national issues had had their effect, and the G.A.R. had ceased to be a dominant force in politics.

Early in its history the G.A.R. gave rise to or attracted to itself auxiliary societies. Most important of these were the Women's Relief Corps (organized on a national basis in 1883), the Ladies of the G.A.R. (1886) and the Sons of Union Veterans (1881).

Brooks' activities have brought him honors and made him a respected figure in industry, as well as religious and historical associations. Manager of the Chicago showroom of Baker, Knapp & Tubbs for the past 14 years, he is a recipient of the Industry Award by the American Society of Interior Designers, and is a past president and founding member of the Decorative Trades Association. A former treasurer and chapter warden of the Cathedral Church of St. James, he currently serves as Chairman of the Restoration Committee of that church. His ties to the G.A.R. are strong, as he served as Camp and Department Commander of the Sons of Union Veterans. Born in Paxton, Illinois, he graduated from the University of Illinois and served in the U.S. Navy in World War II. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of both Lincoln College, Lincoln, Illinois and the Lincoln Academy of Illinois. He has been called upon to speak to schools, as well as civic and historical associations, and has addressed our own group and other Round Tables of the Midwest. His wife, Betsy, has shared his support of our activities and has served on our Board of Trustees.

Now on display at the Fredericksburg Battlefield Visitor Center are copies of 28 unpublished paintings, drawings and sketches of Civil War scenes in and around Fredericksburg. Included are: a watercolor depicting the opening engagement at Spotsylvania on May 8, 1864 (the only known depiction of the fight on the Spindle Farm; eight watercolors done just after the War by George L. Frankenstein, one of which is the only surviving view of the Tapp cabin at the Wilderness; several pencil sketches by a member of the 24th New Jersey showing Chatham, the Battle of Chancellorsville, and the Rappahannock River dam; and three sketches of desolation in the city of Fredericksburg by John A. Elder.

Restoration work is now underway at Fort Fisher State Park in North Carolina. Almost \$15,000 in the form of legislative appropriations and private donations will go toward recreating one of the gun emplacements at the fort. It is hoped that replicas of eight-inch naval guns can eventually be purchased and mounted in the emplacements.

Ed Bearss, our good friend and Battlefield Tour guide, recently received the Bruce Catton Award of the District of Columbia Civil War Round Table for his "outstanding contribution to a broader public understanding of the Civil War."

December meeting

The 436th Regular Meeting of The Civil War Round Table was held at the Hotel Continental on December 14, 1984 with 95 members and guests in attendance. Our speaker was David D. Finney who described the events leading to the accidental shooting and subsequent death of "Stonewall" Jackson. Early in his talk, David pointed out that there are several outstanding sources which reconstruct the events leading to Jackson's death. These include: Kyd Douglas' *I Rode With Stonewall*; Freeman's *Lee Lieutenants*; and Vol. VI of *The Southern Historical Society Papers*.

In the spring of 1863, the Army of Northern Virginia was preparing for another campaign against the Army of the Potomac. On April 27, 1863, the Union Army moved first, crossed the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers at several locations, and prepared to trap Lee's Army in the classic maneuver of the double envelopment. Although heavily outnumbered, Lee reacted with characteristic boldness. He assigned Jubal Early to defend Fredericksburg and delay the Union I and VI Corps. With the remainder of his army, Lee made contact with the main body of the Army of the Potomac on May 1, 1863, at a hamlet named Chancellorsville. After the initial engagement, the Union army halted.

On the morning of May 2nd, Jackson proposed a daring plan to Lee. Leaving Lee with 18,000 men to divert the attention of the Union Army, Jackson would take his command of 26,000 men, march 26 miles to flank the Union right, attack it, and "roll it up." Lee assented to Jackson's proposal.

At 5:15 p.m. on May 2nd, Jackson's command, with Rhodes' Division in the lead, attacked the Union XI Corps and drove it back several miles. As the attackers themselves became disorganized, Jackson ordered A.P. Hill's Division forward to relieve Rhodes' Division. While enroute, units of Hill's Division were attacked by a desperate charge of the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry, which was quickly repulsed.

As Hill's Division went into the line, Jackson rode forward to reconnoiter. He and his party rode east on the Orange Plank Road, and then turned north on Bullock Road where the 33rd North Carolina was manning a picket line. Now it was dark and difficult to distinguish friend from foe. Also, the Confederate troops in this area were previously attacked by the 8th Pennsylvania and were apprehensive about a party of approaching horsemen.

When Jackson and his party were near the area held by the 18th North Carolina, that unit opened fire at a range of 30 yards. Jackson was hit by three rounds and several members of his party were killed or wounded. Jackson was given first aid, and A.P. Hill was quickly summoned. Taking a sip of whiskey from a flask, Jackson told Hill to assume command, but not to tell the troops that he was wounded. The fire from the Confederate line now attracted Union artillery and rifle fire, and in the darkness a stretcher party evacuated Jackson to a field hospital.

Dr. Hunter McGuire arrived at the hospital and quickly noticed that Jackson was in severe shock. With the assistance of two other physicians, McGuire examined Jackson's wounds. One round was lodged in the general's right hand, a second had struck the left forearm, and a third round had hit the left arm below the shoulder and severed the main artery. At 2:00 a.m. on May 3rd, Jackson was given chloroform, and Dr. McGuire amputated the left arm.

On May 4th, Jackson was evacuated by field ambulance. Travelling on the Brock Road, the party passed through Spotsylvania Court House before arriving at the

Chandler House near Guinea Station. Dr. McGuire examined Jackson's wound on May 5th and found no complications. On the morning of May 7th, Jackson awoke complaining of nausea, ordered his servant to apply cold, wet towels to his stomach and not to inform Dr. McGuire.

However, when Dr. McGuire examined Jackson again, he discovered the general had pneumonia. Dr. McGuire then administered morphine and "cupped" Jackson's chest, which was a common medical procedure in the 19th century. Dr. David Tucker, a Richmond physician whose specialty was treating pneumonia cases, was summoned, but the end was near as Jackson's condition deteriorated.

By this time, Jackson's wife and infant daughter had arrived. On Sunday morning, May 10th, Jackson awoke in a stupor. His doctors informed him that he wouldn't live another day and the general calmly awaited his death. At 3:00 p.m., Dr. McGuire recorded Jackson's final words, "Let us cross over the river, and rest under the shade of the trees"; he pronounced him dead at 3:15.

Jackson's remains were taken to Richmond to lie in state, and over 20,000 mourners paid their last respects. Ten senior Confederate officers, including James Longstreet and George Pickett, served as pall bearers. General Lee, on hearing of Jackson's death said "I have lost my right arm." After the funeral service, the coffin containing Jackson was transported to Lexington, where V.M.I. cadets served as an honor guard, and General Jackson was buried, as he wished, in the little cemetery above the town.

The exhumation of Jackson's body

In 1891, 28 years after his death, the body of General Thomas J. Jackson was moved about 55 yards from its original burial site in the family plot at the Lexington, Virginia, cemetery to a place beneath the Valentine statue of Jackson which now marks the grave. The exhumation was reported by *The Lexington Gazette* in its edition of July 2, 1891. Here is *The Gazette's* account.

"The remains of General T. J. Jackson were taken up from the grave in which they had lain since 1863 on Thursday, June 25th, and placed in the crypt prepared for them under the monument to be unveiled to his memory on July 21st. The work of disinterment was commenced at 3:30 p.m. under the supervision of Captain J. C. Boude, as the representative of the Memorial Committee; Mr. E. J. Layburn, who had charge of work, and Mr. W. C. Charlton, the sexton of the cemetery.

"There were present beside those mentioned above. Charlie Charlton, M. W. Paxton, J. A. R. Varner, J. H. Campbell, Robert Lee Hyatt, and three colored men, Joe Humbles, Isaac Miller, and Sam Jones.

"At 5 p.m. the heavy iron casket was raised from the grave. The earth had lain loose above it. The roots of the surrounding trees had entwined themselves about it and between it and the surface. The box into which it had been lowered had rotted away and except in the case of a few frail fragments was hard to distinguish from the earth which originally surrounded it. The casket was earth colored and heavily rusted but otherwise well preserved. The handles had apparently their original strength.

"Before the casket was finally sealed in the crypt it was opened and the remains inspected, that the fact that they had remained undisturbed might never be questioned. The plate which covered the face was carefully removed, and lying below was seen the skull revealing the fine shaped

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THE NEW BOOKS

(compiled by Dick Clark)



Beatty, John. *The Citizen-Soldier, or, Memoirs of a Volunteer*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1983. 401 p., \$19.95. Original of 1879.

Caffey, Thomas E. *Battle-fields of the South: From Bull Run to Fredericksburgh: By an English Combatant*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1984.

Civil War Monitor. Review of Current Periodicals. Vol. 1, no. 1. February 1984. Every two months. \$15.00. Editor: Joseph L. Harsh. Box 1862, Centreville, VA 22020.

Cooper, Alonzo. *In and Out of Rebel Prisons*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1983. Original of 1888. \$19.95.

Dawes, Rufus R. *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*. Dayton, O: Morningside Bookshop, 1984. \$30.00. Original of 1890.

DeLeon, Thomas Cooper. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals. An Inside View of Life in the Southern Confederacy, from Birth to Death, from Original Notes, Collated in the Years 1861 to 1865*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1983. Original of 1890. \$19.95.

Edmonds, David C. *The Guns of Port Hudson: Volume Two: The Investment, Siege and Reduction*. Lafayette, La: The Acadiana Press, 1984. \$17.95.

Headley, John W. *Confederate Operations in Canada and New York*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1984. Original of 1906. \$19.95.

Kaser, David. *Books and Libraries in Camp and Battle: The Civil War Experience*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984. \$27.95.

Kingman, Eugene. *Tramping out the Vintage, 1861-1864. The Civil War Diaries and Letters of Eugene Kingman*. Edited by Helene C. Phelan. Almond, NY: H.C. Phelan, 1983. \$9.95.

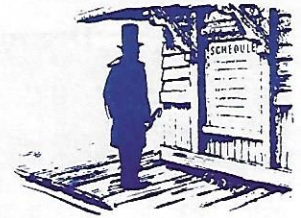
Oates, Stephen B. *To Purge This Land with Blood*. Second edition. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984. pbk \$12.95; cloth \$25.00.

Sellers, Frank. *Sharps Firearms*. Second printing, 1982. North Hollywood, CA: Beinfeld Publishing, 1982. \$39.95.

The Franklin Battlefield Restoration and Trust Committee is seeking tax-deductible contributions to purchase land surrounding the battlefield. About one million dollars is needed to purchase this land and save it from industrial development. Contributions can be sent to: Franklin Battlefield Restoration and Trust Committee, Inc., P.O. Box 1156, Franklin, Tennessee 37064-1156.

The Ohio Valley Civil War Round Table has erected a monument to Confederate General Bushrod Johnson who was born in 1817 near Barnesville, Ohio. Johnson taught school in eastern Ohio in his early years. When the war broke out, he had been living in Tennessee and joined the Southern forces. He gained fame in 1863 when his brigade broke a Union line at Chickamauga and forced Union troops back into Chattanooga.

BULLETIN BOARD



Future meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Chicago Press Club, 410 N. Michigan, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

January 11, 1985: J. Brooks Davis on "The Grand Army of the Republic."

February 8: Herman Hattaway on "How the North Won the Civil War."

March 8: Gary Gallagher on "General Stephen D. Ramseur."

April 12: William Sullivan on "The War in the Trans-Mississippi."

May 1-5: Annual Battlefield Tour to Richmond/Petersburg/Appomattox.

May 10: Jeffrey D. Wert on "The 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign."

June 14: Richard B. Harwell, subject to be announced.

New members

James Thomas Berger, 510 N. Norton Street, Mundelein, Illinois 60060 (312) 566-5655.

Anthony John Mourek, 970 N. Oaklawn Avenue, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126 (312) 279-3770.

Byron Roche, 1542 W. Sherwin, Apt. 2 South, Chicago, Illinois 60626 (312) 465-6852.

James R. Soens, 631 Monroe, River Forest, Illinois 60305 (312) 366-2579.

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head. The teeth were perfectly preserved, two were missing one each side, but they were removed in life. The hair and beard had fallen away, and the latter lay upon the uniform over the breast. The texture of the cloth was apparently well preserved, but it had turned in color from grey to blue.

"The remains of Mary Graham, Gen. Jackson's infant daughter, who was buried May 25, 1858, were then taken up, only a few small bones could be found. These, with the colored earth found about them were placed in a walnut coffin in the crypt with the casket of the father.

"A heavy limestone slab was then placed in position in front of the crypt and sealed, and the earth was filled in front of the vault.

"The vault consists of two rows of crypts one above the other. Each row contains three crypts 26 x 40 inches. All are beneath the earth's surface. The one in which General Jackson's remains and those of his infant daughter were placed was the center one in the lower row.

"At 6:30 o'clock the entire work of removal was complete, the slab was sealed and the earth filed (sic) in.

"The remains of Mrs. Julia Jackson Christian were just removed, and placed in the crypt prepared for them beside that of her distinguished father, as was originally intended."

Editor's note. The above item was provided to the Kentucky Civil War Round Table newsletter (from which it is reprinted) by fellow member of our Round Table Lowell Reidenbaugh of St. Louis.