

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLX, Number 4

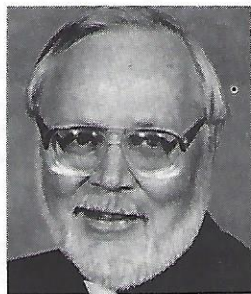
Chicago, Illinois

December, 1989

Armin G. Weng on "The Gods of War and the Prince of Peace"

by Barbara Hughett

In most wars the people, institutions, and governments warring against each other invoke the support of God, or the gods, in their cause; they usually maintain that God is (or the gods are) on their side. Thus, most wars reflect in some way the "holy war" concept. It is this concept that makes war an acceptable means of settling disputes and differences in the hearts and minds of many people. In a civil war a new and tragic element is added: countryman fights against countryman; governments are divided against each other, so that former friends and political allies suddenly become mortal enemies. Institutions are torn asunder as regional or state loyalties become greater than the loyalties to the institutions which once bound great masses of people together.



Armin G. Weng

During the American Civil War this happened within many previously national institutions. What happened within the churches of the United States provides an excellent illustration of the divisiveness of a civil war. In the years just preceding the armed outbreak in 1861 and in the war years themselves, once nationwide denominations were torn apart by the partisanship of sectional strife. Though the central issue was slavery, it was not the only issue which entered into the shattering of denominational ties. When the war was over, the reconciliation of the shattered denominations was long in coming. It has only been during the past ten to twenty years that some church bodies which had once been one have found, finally, that the strife of the middle nineteenth century no longer can keep them separate.

The experience of American churches was not a single experience. Although some churches never divided organically, other denominations divided into regional churches, either as a result of the causes of the war or as a result of the war itself. Baptists, for example, divided as early as 1840 over the issue of slavery. While they held together until after the war had begun, Lutherans and Presbyterians were among those who found the stress of civil war more than the denominations could manage. Some churches were minimally affected by the internal strife, such as the historic "peace churches," those of Anabaptist heritage from the time of the Reformation, including the Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren. The strongly abolitionist Quakers remained bound together by a resistance to warfare of any



486th Regular Meeting

Armin G. Weng

on

"The Gods of War and
the Prince of Peace"

Friday, December 8, 1989

Quality Inn

Halsted and Madison

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
\$15.00 per person

Entree: Roast Sirloin of Beef Bordelaise,
Baked White Fish, or Fruit Plate

Please note: In order to guarantee a meal, reservations must be made by noon the Thursday before the meeting.



Executive Committee Meeting

President Richard McAdoo has announced there will be an Executive Committee meeting on December 8 at 5:00 p.m. at the Quality Inn. All officers, current committee chairpersons, and past presidents are urged to attend.

sort. In all of this, from the time of the Missouri Compromise and the subsequent rise of the abolitionists through the bitter years of struggle, people of good will on both sides invoked the same God, using nearly interchangeable prayers to seek blessings on the causes for which they fought. On December 8th, Reverend Armin G. Weng will address The Civil War Round Table. His topic will be: "The Gods of War and the Prince of Peace."

Retired from the active ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Armin G. Weng is an instructor at the American Institute of Commerce in Davenport, Iowa. He taught American history and religion at Unity Catholic High School on Chicago's south side prior to
(continued on page 4)

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
18 East Chestnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: (312) 944-3085

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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.



The newsletter staff and officers of The Round Table wish all members and their families a joyous holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year.

According to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Chicago branch of the National Archives, where Abraham Lincoln's Federal case records are housed, has discovered 122 Lincoln-related cases. This information will become part of *The Lincoln Legal Papers*, a documentary history of Lincoln's 24-year legal career which is being compiled for publication.

Battlefield Preservation Report

by Mary J. Abroe

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of Civil War battlefields for those of us who visit them is their essential irony: they are peaceful landscapes whose tranquility in the present belies their bloody baptism of fire. The quiet beauty of two such places—Antietam and Cedar Creek—is noteworthy, yet recently they were recognized for a distinction of a different and doubtful nature: both were cataloged in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places. The Save Historic Antietam Foundation and the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation must have our support—*moral* as well as financial—if they are to continue their efforts to protect these sites. Please write to them (SHAF: P.O. Box 550, Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782/CCBF: P.O. Box 229, Middletown, Virginia 22645) for specifics on what you as an individual can do. Collectively, we spend thousands of dollars adding to our libraries and artifact collections and inestimable numbers of hours studying the Civil War. Nonetheless, all the books and minie balls in the world cannot provide insights into the Civil War experience with the unique power of the battlefield landscapes themselves. If we do nothing while they are "bulldozed for dollars," we soon may find ourselves "all dressed up" for a battlefield tour with virtually no place to go.

Not far from Antietam battlefield the historic town of Harpers Ferry faces its own preservation issues. When Harpers Ferry National Historical Park was established in 1944, it was situated in an isolated river valley; at the time it was assumed that the area's rural character would endure indefinitely and its historic sites thus would remain untouched. Presently, however, residential and commercial development threatens to engulf significant Civil War resources in or near Harpers Ferry and to spoil the area's scenic integrity. In order to identify historic and scenic sites essential to the park (but outside its boundaries) and to devise sound land-use planning strategies for preserving those sites, the National Park Service has been conducting a special boundary study since February; it should be completed in December 1989.

Unfortunately, any plan emerging from the study for the protection of School House Ridge—site of Stonewall Jackson's troop deployment for the 1862 siege of Harpers Ferry—may come too late. The Jefferson County (West Virginia) Commission (JCC) already has zoned School House Ridge for residential development, and developers appear determined to build "Harpers Ferry Estates" on this last remaining unprotected part of the 1862 battlefield in spite of opposition from the Harpers Ferry Town Council. Final approval of the project's plot, however, has not yet been given by the Jefferson County Planning Board. Those against development on School House Ridge hope to pressure the JCC into taking back its zoning decision temporarily—at least until completion of the boundary study spells out the consequences of development and presents land-use alternatives that consider both the importance of protecting vulnerable historic resources and the economic needs of the local community. (It should be noted that the latter two concerns are not mutually exclusive.) In the meantime, those desiring that the Jefferson County Planning Board delay its final decision on "Harpers Ferry Estates" until the boundary study is completed should address their concerns to the JCC, P.O. Box 250 Courthouse, Charles Town, West Virginia 25414.

November Meeting

by Barbara Hughett

By the spring of 1864, the Army of the James, under the command of General Benjamin F. Butler, was one of two Federal armies in Virginia, the other being the Army of the Potomac, commanded by General George Gordon Meade but under the strategic leadership of General Ulysses S. Grant. Butler and Grant met in April and agreed upon a plan in which Butler and his Army of the James would land between Richmond and Petersburg, march upon Richmond, and invest the city from the south. General Robert E. Lee would be forced to fall back because supplies into the Confederate capital would be cut off. Grant, with the Army of the Potomac, would be in close pursuit. They would meet ten days after the beginning of the assault, invest Richmond from the north and south, scoop it out of the Confederacy, and capture part, if not all, of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. "The Bermuda Hundred Campaign of 1864" was the topic of Dr. Herbert Schiller's address on November 10th when he spoke before 101 members and guests at the 485th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. Dr. Schiller, a pathologist, is laboratory director of the National Health Laboratories in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. While working on his book, *The Bermuda Hundred Campaign*, he attended Wake Forest University, and received a Masters of Arts degree in history from that institution in 1987. His interest in the Bermuda Hundred campaign began when he was in Richmond during his medical residency in the late 1960s.

On May 5th, the Army of the James, adhering to the plan worked out by Butler and Grant, ascended the James River, executing the largest amphibious landing undertaken by American forces until World War II. By May 6th, Butler had troops occupying City Point and two forts along the James, as well as having over 20,000 men on the Bermuda Hundred peninsula, located between the James and Appomattox rivers. At the time of the Federal landing, the Confederates had only 5,000 men defending both Richmond and Petersburg. Their commander, General P.T.G. Beauregard, who was being transferred from Charleston, had not yet arrived on the scene. Because they were so concerned with Grant's going into the Wilderness, the Confederate command hadn't paid much attention to what was going on along the James. Had Butler moved quickly and with concentrated force, he might have smashed into the Confederate capital with scant opposition; but he fumbled. Instead of striking fast with his maximum force, he advanced cautiously with detached units.

It wasn't until May 12th, a week after the landing, that Butler got his main force on the march to Richmond. By that time, Beauregard had arrived with reinforcements from the Carolinas and was ready to meet any attack Butler might attempt. At 4:45 in the morning on May 16th, in a dense fog following four days of steady rain, the Confederates attacked near Drewry's Bluff, eight miles south of Richmond. Casualties were heavy, and Butler ordered the Federal forces to withdraw back to the peninsula. The Confederates entrenched their line and sealed off Butler's army, in Grant's words, "as if they had been in a bottle strongly corked."

In addition to Butler's ineptitude, the failure of the Federals can be attributed to the ineffectiveness of his two chief subordinates, General William F. ("Baldy") Smith and General Quincy Gillmore. Smith, who had graduated near the top of his class at West Point in 1845, had felt that

he would be replacing Meade as commander of the Army of the Potomac: he believed that Grant had, more or less, promised him this position. But, after meeting with Meade in March, Grant had changed his mind. Bitter about this, at the same time Butler was developing his plans, Smith was scheming for independent command of a force to invade northeastern North Carolina. Gillmore, who had graduated first in his West Point class and was an expert in the use of rifled artillery, proved to be tardy, close-mouthed, and uncooperative in his dealings with Butler. He had remained in South Carolina until the last minute, in spite of repeated messages from Butler urging him to leave sooner. He didn't arrive in Virginia until the night of May 4th, when all the Federal troops were in their vessels about to ascend the James the next morning. Thus, he missed all the planning sessions for the campaign.

Butler explained his actions by saying that he drew back on the 16th because he had kept his part of the plan. He had landed on the 6th; ten days later he was south of Richmond, but Grant was nowhere to be seen. His men had been fighting in the rain for four days and he felt it was time to pull back. Dr. Schiller noted that there were at least three successes achieved by Butler's forces: (1) Federal troops occupied the Bermuda Hundred peninsula and City Point; (2) A large railroad bridge was destroyed, preventing Petersburg from being reinforced for several days; (3) The 17,000 men the Confederacy sent to help Beauregard were prevented from joining Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. Dr. Schiller concluded his talk with this observation: "The real goal of the campaign was the investment of Richmond from the south. And in this Butler failed. Bruce Catton described this fiasco as probably the greatest of the missed Federal opportunities. I think that if there had been a real commander who had done what the plan had envisioned, it would probably have altered the course of the war and it would not have lasted nearly as long as it did."

Moments in Round Table History

December 3, 1940: First meeting of The Civil War Round Table at the Bismarck Hotel, with Percival G. Hart speaking on "Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign."

December 14, 1965: Silver Anniversary meeting at the Knickerbocker Hotel, with General Mark Clark speaking on "America's Wars" and Win Stracke performing "Songs of the Sixties." Publication of The Round Table Muster Roll.

December 8, 1966: Special meeting honoring Gilbert Twiss, founding newsletter editor, with Frank Klement speaking on "Valandigham and the Civil War."

December 15, 1968: Round Table discussion aired on Chicago television.

December 10, 1971: Special meeting celebrating the publication of *The Civil War Day By Day* with author E.B. Long speaking on "The War Beyond the River."

The Rebel Yell, newsletter of the Jackson, Mississippi Civil War Round Table, reports that singer Bobby Horton has released a new cassette tape of Civil War music. "Homespun Christmas Songs," featuring popular 1860s Christmas music, is available for \$8.50. Previously, he has recorded "Homespun Songs of the CSA" and "Songs of the Union." The new tape may be ordered from Mr. Horton at 5245 Beacon Drive, Birmingham, Alabama 35210:

The New Books

compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Howard, William A., ed. *A History of the 44th Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, 1861-1865* by Captain Eugene Arus Nash. Morningside Bookshop. 1988. \$40.00. Original of 1911.

Howe, Thomas J. *The Petersburg Campaign: Wasted Valor June 15-18, 1864*. H.E. Howard, Inc. 1988. \$16.95.

McAulay, John D. *Carbines of the Civil War, 1861-1865*. Pioneer Press, P.O. Box 684, Dept. BE, Union City, TN 38261. 1981. Pbk. \$8.95.

McDonald, Archie P., ed. *Make Me a Map of the Valley: The Civil War Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer, Jedediah Hotchkiss*. Southern Methodist University Press. 1988. pbk. \$12.95.

Menge, W. Springer and J. August Shimrack, eds. *The Civil War Notebook of Daniel Chisholm: A Chronicle of Daily Life in the Union Army 1864-1865*. Orion Books. 1989.

Morton, John W. *The Artillery of Nathan Bedford Forrest's Cavalry—The Wizard of the Saddle*. The Guild Bindery Press, Box 20711 Lakeway Station, Paris, TN 38242. 1989. \$28.00. Original of 1909.

Roberts, Bobby and Carl Maneyhon. *Portraits of Conflict: A Photographic History of Arkansas in the Civil War*. University of Arkansas Press. 1989. \$34.95; pbk. \$19.95.

Silverstone, Paul H. *Warships of the Civil War Navies*. Naval Institute Press. 1989. \$36.95.

Simpson, Harold B. *Gaines Mill to Appomattox—Waco & McClellan County in Hood's Texas Brigade*. Texian Press. 1988. \$16.95.

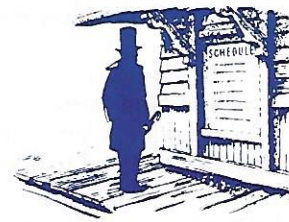
Taylor, James E. *The James E. Taylor Sketchbook. With Sheridan Up the Shenandoah Valley in 1864*. Morningside House. 1989. \$85.00.

Taylor, Emerson G. *Gouverneur Kemble Warren: Life and Letters of an American Soldier*. Ron R. VanSickle books. 1988. \$35.00.

(continued from page 1)

moving to Iowa. A graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota (B.A. cum laude with honors in history) and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (M. Div.), he served as chairman of the Ogle County, Illinois Bicentennial Commission and as publisher and chairman of the board of editors of the 1976 *Bicentennial History of Ogle County*. In addition to serving pastorates in Muskegon, Michigan; and Lena, Oregon, Matteson, and Addison, Illinois, he also worked as a freelance writer for *The Lutheran* and the *Ogle County Life* newspaper. During his ministry in Oregon, Illinois, he was a co-founder and longtime adjutant of the Oregon Civil War Round Table. He is a 16-year member of Camp Fuller, a Rockford, Illinois reenactment organization and he and his wife Judy are currently active with the 16th Iowa in Davenport. He is the son, grandson, and great-grandson of Lutheran ministers. His family first became interested in the events leading to the Civil War when, as German immigrants to Michigan in 1855, they were influenced by the words of Carl Schurz to work and vote for Abraham Lincoln in the election of 1860.

BULLETIN BOARD



Future Meetings

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

December 8: Armin Weng on "The Gods of War and the Prince of Peace."

January 12, 1990: William J. Sullivan on "Heartland of Freedom: Chicago During the Civil War."

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 2-6: 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

Alice Cromie, 23849 W. Erhart Rd., Grays Lake, IL 60030, 708/566-8858.

Frank J. Gorecki, 562 Highland Rd., Matteson, IL 60443, 708/720-0301.

Kevin N. Jones, 858 Hinman Ave., Evanston, IL 60202, 708/475-2961.

Daniel Marcus, 1055 Jeannette St., Des Plaines, IL 60016, 708/299-6859.

Change of Address

Colleen T. Duffy, 2719 N. Pine Grove, Chicago, IL 60614.

December 6 is the 100th anniversary of the death of Jefferson Davis in New Orleans, Louisiana. A series of commemorative events are scheduled for December 2-6 at the site of the recently restored statue of the former Confederate president in New Orleans.

WETA, the public television station in Washington, D.C., will air a nine-part, ten-hour series entitled "The Civil War," which will be carried by PBS stations throughout the nation in the fall of 1990. Five years in the making, the series is said to be the most ambitious, comprehensive, and definitive history of the war ever put on film. Members of the panel of advisors for the production include Don E. Fehrenbacher, James M. McPherson, and C. Vann Woodward. Award-winning documentary filmmaker Ken Burns is producing and directing the series.

Round Table treasurer Hal Ardell reminds members that 1989-90 dues must be paid by December 1. Persons not paid by that date will be dropped from the rolls.