

including Prosecutors, Correction, Probation, Parole, and members of other related agencies.

I took part at the regular annual gang conference.

The Thirteenth Annual National Gang Violence Conference offered the most current information regarding gangs, gang trends, investigation and information-gathering techniques. The instructors were specialist in gang-related topics. The general sessions, sections and the optional class on basic gang awareness covered the most typical conferences topics.: gangs and drugs, asian gangs, black street gangs, hispanic street gangs, skinheads/hate groups, sociology of gangs, officer safety and motorcycle gangs. It was a target point in my research project.

The international gangs, for example the dangerous outlaw motorcycle clubs, such as the Hell's Angels-HAMC- although originally from California, US, now have developed international networks of chapters or branches around the world. Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Austria and Switzerland all have chapters of the organization, which retains its headquarters in Oakland, California. In addition to profit-oriented illegal activities such as manufacturing and distribution of metamphetamin, and other drugs, HAMC has been known to shelter fugitives from one country to another. The HAMC has grown from a small group of gang members to a multinational criminal organization with over 1300 members. It has more than 100 chapters worldwide. Expansion of this OC organization makes threat to former socialist countries, regarding money laundering and infiltration into legitimate

business in the first place.

I am very eager to continue my studies and believe there is a great need for a global oriented approach in dealing with gang-related and organised crime issues. I also believe that we need to apply more fundamental international study and focus to this increasingly global phenomenon.

To this date, I have enjoyed the benefits of the International Law Enforcement Academy professional base. I finished the ILEA in 2000 and its director was one of the persons who recommended my application for the Fulbright grant.

Earlier I was one of the members of the International Task Force which was established by the FBI in Budapest some years ago. One of my colleagues arrived from Los Angeles. I supported him professionally during his existence in Budapest. In spite of these facts I had difficulties in keeping contact the FBI in Los Angeles. To reach the goals of my work I need in future stronger cooperation and support of the FBI as well.

Recently I belong to the International Law Enforcement Cooperation Centre at Hungarian National Police. This Centre incorporate the Interpol National Office, Europol National Unit, International and EU Integration Department, Front office and liaison officers(both national and international), plus the SECI National Focal Point.

The Fulbright Scholar Program has been a wonderful opportunity, it has enriched my scientific background, practical experience and has been both professionally and personally rewarding.

Jefferson Davis's Hungarians: Soldiers of Hungarian Birth in the Confederate Army with a Case Study

István Kornél Vida

University of Debrecen,

North American Department

Institute of English and American Studies

4010 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.

vidaik@yahoo.com

www.unideb.hu

University of Maryland

College Park, MD 20742, USA

www.umd.edu

Adviser: Leslie S. Rowland

As a Fulbright postgraduate grantee I conducted research in one of the most neglected areas of Hungarian-American links and contacts: the first major wave of Hungarian political immigrants, who sought refuge in the United States after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848/49 and their participation in the American Civil War. This subject has been dealt with by only three amateur historians, who often applied unhistorical approaches and their works served not historical purposes but as a device to create cohesion in the dispersed Hungarian-American community and justify its presence in America. Therefore, an objective analysis of the subject is yet to be accomplished, which is the ultimate goal of my doctoral dissertation. The comprehensive summary of my investigations would go much beyond the scope of this paper, therefore, I propose here to write just about a tiny fragment of them: the life of Hungarians in the Antebellum South and their involvement in the Civil War on the Confederate side. To illustrate the difficulties a researcher has to face, I also include a case study: a summary of my investigations about the career of Estván Béla, Hungarian cavalry colonel, who served in the Confederate army.

"[...]Exile is the Emptiness – for however much you brought
With you, there's far more you have left behind.
Exile is the Ego that shrinks, for how you can prove
What you were and what you did?
Exile is a Song that only the singer can hear [...]"

Anon. *Song of Exile*

Upon reading the three existing works of the subject, those interested in the Hungarians' involvement in the American Civil War, can easily come to the conclusion that soldiers of Hungarian origin supported only the Northern cause and wore the blue uniform of the Union army. The three amateur historians (Eugene Pivány, Edmund Vasváry and Tivadar Ács), who entertained the subject, paid very little attention to the Hungarian immigrants who chose to settle down South of the Mason-Dixon line, and devoted at the outmost a single chapter in their books to the Hungarian soldiers in the Confederate army.⁵⁵

There are two possible reasons for this negligence. The overwhelming majority of the official documents of the Confederate government – including those of the War Department – were destroyed, when the capital, Richmond, Va. was abandoned towards the end of the Civil War; the remaining ones – regimental rosters, pay-rolls etc. – do not make the identification of Hungarians easier either, as the soldiers' country of birth was generally not written down

by the recruiting officers. However, there was another reason as well. To the Hungarian-American historians, the fact that several Hungarians supported the secession from the country, which provided shelter to them after the defeat of the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848/49, seemed to weaken the legitimacy of the Hungarian-American community.

Therefore, historians, who would like to study the history of people of Hungarian origin in Dixie and the Confederate Army, have no other option, but virtually start from the scratch. The subject of this paper is a just a tiny fragment of a work-in-progress research project, the intended end-product of which is the first comprehensive study of scholarly quality of the first major wave of Hungarian immigrants to the U.S. in the 1850's in general, and the Hungarian involvement in the American Civil War in particular. Here I take the career of one participant, Béla Estván, as a case study, because it is not only adventurous, but shows the difficulties the researcher of the subject has to face as well.

First of all, it is essential to say a couple of words about the Hungarians living in the Southern states around the time of the outbreak of the Civil War. (When I refer to the 'South' thenceforward, I have the would-be states of the Confederate States of America in mind.)

55 These three books are: Eugene Pivány, *Hungarians in the American Civil War*. (Cleveland, 1913); Edmund Vasváry. *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes. The Participation of Hungarians in the American Civil War.*, (Washington, D.C., 1939); Tivadar Ács: *Magyarok az észak-amerikai polgárháborúban 1861-65.* [Hungarians in the North-American Civil War 1861-65.] (Budapest, 1964.) Hereafter cited as: Ács, *Magyarok*.

1. Hungarians in the Land of "Dixie"

By making use of the geneological research aid software named *Heritage Quest Online*, which makes all the census data accessible and allows us to search for the country of birth in the database, which is the only possible way to confirm one's nationality, in the Census of 1860, we can find 1,141 Hungarian household heads in the United States. About 11% per cent of them settled down in the Southern States, and in these family units there were 310 people, including those under-age and the elderly. The two centers of Hungarians in the Confederacy were Louisiana (New Orleans was the only possible major Southern port of entry for immigrants) and Texas. More than half of the Southern Hungarians lived in these two states, whereas in most of the others one can find sporadic Hungarian presence, particularly in Mississippi and North Carolina.

The majority of them were single males in their early thirties. Most of the married had non-Hungarian spouses, which is not surprising at all, considering the fact that there were hardly any single females in this first wave of Hungarian immigrants.

It is worth examining the occupation patterns of Hungarians as well. 37 per cent of them worked as skilled craftsmen (in the food-preparing industry, or as construction and metal workers), one out of five earned his living from agriculture as farmers or agricultural laborers; and the rate of white-collar workers (clerks, members of business life, bankers etc.) reached similar proportions. 10 per cent

had academic professions (professors, teachers, physicians, lawyers), and an equal number of Hungarians worked in the service sector.

In order to be able to place the Hungarians on the contemporary social spectrum, we have to investigate the real and personal estate properties of Hungarians. As far as real estates are concerned, there were huge differences, as some had only a couple of tens of dollars worth property, whereas the value of László Újházy's estate in Texas was above \$10,000. On a per capita basis, the average Southern Hungarian was worth \$2,344, consecutively, considerably poorer than the average Southerner (\$3,978). This was partly due to the fact that the Southern society was less receptive towards people of foreign birth than that of the North, and not a single Hungarian had a job linked directly to the plantation system, which proved the most profitable sector.

2. Hungarians in the Confederate Army

As a Fulbright visiting researcher in Washington, DC, I have carried out research in the National Archives and the Library of Congress, investigated the service records of the Civil War, the rosters of the individual regiments and the pension files – and I have come to the conclusion that the earlier-mentioned works about the subject are riddled with errors and misconceptions, no wonder that German historian Martin W. Öfele, in his recent book dealing with the German

soldiers in the U.S. Colored Regiments, called for a comprehensive study of the Hungarian involvement in the conflict, which “has so far received only scarce attention in historical literature.”⁵⁶

On the basis of my research, I have found 106 confirmed Hungarian participants in the Civil War, and I established that earlier historians had exaggerated this number a whole lot. (Ács, for instance, estimated that there were 5,000 Hungarian soldiers in the Civil War, whereas the total number of people of Hungarian birth living in the US was considerably lower at the time.⁵⁷)

13 per cent of the Hungarian soldiers sprang to arms in support of the Confederate cause, among them 5 officers (two colonels, one captain and three 2nd lieutenants). This number is considerably higher than it was suspected earlier. It is, therefore, worth examining their possible motivations for joining the Confederate army.

Some of them must have felt sympathy with other law-abiding people who felt contempt for the Federal Government’s failure to afford loyal Southerners aid and support. They did not want to be treated as cowards in their local communities either. Moreover, the love of adventure was undoubtedly in the heart of every volunteer. Some historians argue that the Confederate Conscription Law, which

was passed in May 1862, meant a change in the attitude of the foreigners, as many thought that this measure had been oppressive and despotic. However that may be, all but one Hungarians enlisted before May 1862, and what is more, upon the expiration of their terms of service, all of them re-enlisted, which shows their determination and commitment to the cause.

As far as the institution of slavery is concerned, most European immigrants were in general anti-slavery, at the same time they were also against the recognition of the Negro. In San Antonio, TX, where there were very strong links between the German and the Hungarian community, a resolution was adopted declaring slavery an evil, and its removal absolutely necessary, but they held it the problem of the individual state in which the Federal Government should not interfere.

Many Southerners saw a parallel between their cause and that of the Hungarians’ back in 1848/49. A Confederate captain explained it to Emeric Szabad, a Hungarian prisoner-of-war that “he found it incomprehensible how a Hungarian could fight with the d---d Yankees against the Southern people who were fighting for what Hungarians had fought for in 1848.”⁵⁸

The motivations of some others were described by historian Ella Lonn as follows, “Sometimes voluntary enlistments came from men so out of sympathy

56 Martin W. Öfele, *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops, 1863-1867*. Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 2004. My gratitude goes to Irene and Mickey Schubert for sending me a copy of the book.

57 Ács, *Magyarok*, p.23.

58 Quoted in Stephen Beszedits, *The Libby Prison Diary of Colonel Emeric Szabad*. (Toronto: B&L Information Services, 1999.), p. 75.

with the cause that their presence in the Confederate States army can be only explained by the phrase ‘drifting along with the tide’.”

One of the longest-lasting myths in connection with the Civil War that “Yankees recruited foreign mercenaries to do their fighting.” The *Richmond Examiner* declared that the Union army was composed mainly of “the riff-raff of Germany and Ireland” and many Southern historians accepted the idea that “the majority of Yankee soldiers were foreign hirelings.”⁵⁹ Indeed, among Hungarians – similarly to the sons of other nations – there were soldiers of fortune. George Klapka, former commander-in-chief of the Hungarian army during the Hungarian War of Independence, offered his services for a bonus of \$100,000 in cash and a salary of \$25,000 per annum as the commander-in-chief of the Union forces.⁶⁰ In a letter to Ellen Ewing Sherman, William Tecumseh Sherman described another Hungarian, Anthony Vallas, professor of mathematics and philosophy at the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, as a “foreigner who doesn’t care [too much about] the Confederacy, but will follow his immediate self-interests,” and referred to him as a “hypocritical foreigner who would serve the Devil for his pay.”⁶¹

59 Quoted in James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and the Reconstruction*. (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., 1982.), p. 358.

60 George B. McClellan, *McClellan’s Own Story: The War for the Union*. (New York: Charles L. Webster Co., 1887), p.143.

61 Sherman to Ellen Ewing Sherman. Nov.3, 1860

William Harris wrote the following about Col. Adolphus Adler, Hungarian engineer-in-chief of the Wise Legion in the Confederate Army, who was imprisoned at Richmond for not carrying out orders of his superiors-in-rank and was accused of Northern sympathies and was thence sentenced to death: “he would have turned Turk, Secesh, and Unionist alternately, in order to escape his portending doom.”⁶²

In this second part of my paper, I propose to take one of the “Southern” Hungarian’s career as a case study, and examine whether he can be considered a soldier of fortune who was indeed “drifting along with the tide” or he was an ardent supporter of the Confederate cause.

3. International Fraud or Southern Hero?: Col. Béla Estván, Hungarian Cavalry Officer in the Confederate Army

At the centennial of the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1961 the Kossuth Foundation resolved to commemorate the participation of Hungarians in the War Between the States and published a booklet titled *Béla Estván: Hungarian Cavalry Colonel in the Confederate Army* written by András H. Pogány. This book

and December 1860. In *Sherman’s Civil War: Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman, 1860-65*. (Eds. Brooks D. Simpson and Jean V. Berlin) (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p.4 and p. 39

62 William Harris, *Prison-Life in the Tobacco Warehouse at Richmond*. (Philadelphia: G.W. Childs, 1862.)

was entirely based upon Estván's own *War Pictures from the South* and the author hardly added anything to the facts in the Hungarian officer's book. Although the volume is rather thin, it is riddled with errors. (For instance, Pogány claims that George B. McClellan became the commander-in-chief of the Confederate Army!)⁶³ However, Pogány's gravest mistake was taking everything for granted that Estván had stated, in spite of the fact that even his contemporaries doubted the validity of most of Estván's statements. Merton E. Coulter voiced his own opinion of the Hungarian as follows: "There is some reason to believe that Estvan was a fraud, and was never in the Confederate army. His account is of little value since most of it is not about personal experiences, but is an attempted history of the Confederate military campaigns."⁶⁴

Edmund Vasváry, an ardent student of the history of the Hungarian-American community and author of *Lincoln's Hungarian Heroes*, also mentioned Estván among the Hungarians who supported the South in the War between the States in his articles published serially in the monthly of the William Penn Fraternal Association between 1961 and 1964. Yet, he himself

63 András H. Pogány, *Béla Estván: Hungarian Cavalry Colonel in the Confederate Army*. (New York: Kossuth Foundation Inc., 1961) Hereafter cited as Pogány, *Béla Estván*; Béla Estván, *War Pictures from the South* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1863); Pogány, *Béla Estván*, p. 6.

64 Merton E. Coulter, *Travels in the Confederate States*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1948), pp.90-91.

called for further research, which, he indicated, "would be able to discover some favorable testimony about the life of this mysterious and elusive individual."⁶⁵ My own findings, summarized here, support the conclusion that Estván was a Münchhausen-figure, a soldier-of-fortune who made use of every opportunity to advance his own position without caring much for which side he supported.

Little is known about Estván's early life. According to Pogány, he was born in 1827, although in the Census of 1860 the date of birth he gave was 1815.⁶⁶ Pogány managed to identify a family of lesser nobility in Hungary named Estván, but cannot give proof of the fact that the person under our scrutiny was indeed the descendant of that particular family.⁶⁷ Béla became an officer of the Imperial Army of Austria-Hungary and later he wrote that he had "served the king of Hungary for fourteen years."⁶⁸ He served in Italy under Radetzky as a captain of cavalry and participated in the Italian campaign of 1848. Having

65 Edmund Vasváry, "Lincoln and the Hungarians" in William Penn Fraternal Association: Pittsburgh, PA. 1961-64. p. 30.

66 Pogány, *Béla Estván*, p. 5. Pogány possibly gained this information from the Catalogue of the Library of Congress; *The Census of 1860*. Richmond, VA. National Archives, Washington, D.C., m-653.

67 Pogány, *Béla Estván*, p. 4. He refers to the following book: Béla Kempelen, *Magyar nemes családok* [Hungarian Noble Families]. (Budapest, 1911)

68 Béla Estván to Jefferson Davis. June 10, 1861. National Archives, Washington, D.C., Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. M-437, Reel 3, f1378.

heard of the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution, he returned to Hungary and Governor Kossuth appointed him colonel of cavalry.

After the Hungarian forces laid down their arms at Világos in 1849, Estván had to leave the country in order to escape persecution and – similarly to many of his comrades – sought refuge in England. The exact date when he left for the United States is not known, but it is highly probable that he sailed for the "Land of the Free" in 1850-51 right before or during former Hungarian Governor, Lajos Kossuth's tour of the country. None of the sources mention him as a member of Kossuth's escort and the reasons why he wound up in Richmond, Virginia are not clear either. That notwithstanding, in his letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis in 1861, he wrote that he had been the citizen of the city for eight years, so since 1853.⁶⁹

The most mysterious part of Estván's adventurous career was yet to come. In his book he boasted of having participated in the Crimean War and called himself the Hero of Sebastopol. No sources support the validity of these statements. As a matter of fact, Hungarian refugees in the United States were organizing an expeditionary force which was to sail over to Europe and help the Turks against the Russians.⁷⁰

69 Béla Estván to Jefferson Davis. June 10, 1861. National Archives, Washington, D.C., Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. M-437, Reel 3, f1378.

70 The reason for this was the fact that Turkey had afforded asylum to the Hungarian political refugees who

There is no evidence to prove that organized Hungarian units participated in the war, although there were some individuals who did. None of them, however, sided with the Russians, except for Col. Estván if his claims can be believed. Nevertheless, one clue shows that at least some credit could be given to Estván's words. The would-be Union Commander-in-Chief, Gen. George B. McClellan was present in the Crimean War as a military observer and it is possible that he met the Hungarian adventurer there. It is known that he had shown great interest in the Hungarian fight for freedom against the Habsburgs back in 1849 and asked to be sent to Hungary as a military observer, but his plan came to nothing because of the victory of the joint Austrian and Russian forces. He might have met Estván there and this might provide an explanation to the surprising fact that, when his *War Pictures* was published for the first time in Britain in 1863, Estván dedicated it to McClellan, in spite of the fact that the Hungarian colonel had served in the Confederate Army. (The 1864 issue was dedicated to the soldiers of both armies.)

After the Crimean War Estván returned to the United States and settled down in Richmond. There is only sporadic reference to his Pre-Civil War years. Hermann Schuricht in his significant book on the Germans living in Virginia writes the following, not too flattering lines about Estván: "He (the so-called

left Hungary after the defeat of the War of Independence by Austria and Russia. *The New York Times* (November 17, 1853.)

Count) lived there (in Richmond) upon the earnings of his two ladies, his wife and his sister-in-law, who gave lessons. (...) He himself was a very good-looking jovial man and knew how to play the part of an upright Austrian country nobleman to perfection.”⁷¹ The Census of 1860 indeed supports Schuricht’s claims. One can find two ladies living in Estván’s household: Marie Estván, 25, and Laura Lacey, 22, both of whom made their living as French teachers. Béla and Marie had a two-year old daughter, Mary.⁷²

However, we can just guess what sort of enterprise he was involved in. Ella Lonn, one of the foremost scholars of the field, states that Estván reached prominence in the Virginia militia and, mainly due to his experience gained in European battlefields, obtained a colonelcy by the time of John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry in 1859.⁷³ According to Pogány, Estván took part in the suppression of the rebellion as well.⁷⁴

There is a 5-page sheet music titled *Chicora, the original name of Carolina; Chicora, the Indian name of Carolina* from 1861 in the possession of the Rare Book, Manuscript and Special Collections Library of the Duke University in

Durham, South Carolina, on which the name of C. B. Estvan is mentioned as the publisher. It is dedicated to the patriotic ladies of the Southern Confederate States of North America, so we have every reason to believe that Estván was a rather enthusiastic supporter of the Confederate cause.⁷⁵ The outbreak of the Civil War found the Hungarian in Richmond, the would-be capital of the newly-born Confederate States of America. Estván states in his book that he served as a commander of cavalry in the Confederate Army, and participated in a number of engagements including the first battle at Bull Run and Fair Oaks. Estván belonged to Longstreet’s staff in the battle of Seven Pines and Gaines’ Mill and claimed that he was the one who changed the outcome of the latter engagement.

A glorious military career. The only problem is that no evidence of any sort can be found which validates his statements. No Confederate commander mentioned his name in their memoirs and letters, and there is no trace of him in the *Official Records of the Civil War* either. Considering this fact, no words will be wasted here upon the military deeds of which he boasts in his book. Instead, I suggest that we take a look at the documents which can be found in the archives and try to ”take the measure” of Estván on the basis of these.

⁷⁵ *Chicora, the Original Name of Carolina; Chicora, the Indian name of Carolina*. Barhamville, South Carolina, 1861. Conf. Music #132, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

⁷¹ Hermann Schuricht, *History of the German Element in Virginia*. (Baltimore, 1898-1900). pp. 88-89. Hereafter cited as Schuricht, *History*

⁷² *The Census of 1860*. Richmond, VA. National Archives, Washington, D.C., M-653.

⁷³ Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*. (The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), p.175. Hereafter cited as Lonn, *Foreigners*

⁷⁴ Pogány, *Béla Estván*, p. 7.

In his *War Pictures* Estván writes the following about his alleged enlistment: “circumstances led me to take service in the confederate army – my long residence in the Southern States being, however, the main inducement thereto.”⁷⁶ His unwillingness is emphasized elsewhere too: “It was now 13 years that I had been away from my native home and now, drawn into the whirlpool of events, I found myself, almost against my will, serving in the ranks of a foreign army, and fighting for a cause, with which neither my head nor my heart could thoroughly sympathize.”⁷⁷

However difficult Estván found it to identify with the Confederate cause, on June 22, 1861 he wrote the following letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis:

To His Excellency

The undersigned most respectfully begs have to [sic] offer his services to his Excellency the President of the Southern Confederate States.

I served the king of Hungary for fourteen years as a captain of cavalry and fought the victories in Italy under Radetzki.

Governor Kossuth of Hungary appointed me afterwards to Colonel of cavalry and served him in that capacity for two years. For the last eight years I have been a citizen of Richmond Virginia.

Being widely known amongst my countrymen and hoping to meet with ultimate success, I should be highly

⁷⁶ Estván, *War Pictures*, iii.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Lonn, *Foreigners*, p. 58.

flattered if his Excellency would give me the permission to furnish me with the necessary means to establish a foreign Legion.

I refer to Hon. [illegible name] of Charleston.

I have the honor to remain Your Excellency’s most obedient servant: C. B. Estván⁷⁸

Upon reading these lines one hardly has the impression that Estván was not more than willing to offer his services to the Confederate cause. But even so, barely a fortnight after the first letter Estván wrote another one to Davis:

His Excellency, President
Jefferson Davis.

I, the undersigned most respectfully submit to your Excellency the following plan which if it should meet your approbation will be carried into execution as soon as I am furnished with the necessary permission.

I propose to raise in the states of Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky recruits for two foreign regiments: one of cavalry and one of infantry which if formed will be subject to the command of Brigadier General Wise.

The two regiments would be mustered in for the duration of the war; – the soldiers to be allowed to elect their officers captains included.

In [illegible] you will please allow

⁷⁸ National Archives. M-437. Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109. Reel 3, f1378.

me to give some details of my military life:

I have served fourteen years as captain of cavalry in the Austrian army and afterwards as colonel under Gov. Kossuth in Hungary.

For the last eight years I have been a citizen of Richmond Virginia.

I have the honor to remain

Your Excellency's most obedient servant: B. Estván⁷⁹

Davis handed over both letters to Confederate Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker, who inquired of opinions of Robert E. Lee and other military leaders in Richmond.

These two letters are the only documents which reveal some direct connection between Estván and the military apparatus of the Confederate States. It cannot be confirmed that Estván had been commissioned as his name cannot be found in any of the rosters of regiments. Therefore, one cannot escape approaching all his statements in *War Pictures* with extreme caution, especially the parts about his own role. Even his contemporaries could not agree on how much his analyses of the events of the Civil War can be taken for granted. *The New York Herald*, for example, wrote that Estván had started a military school in Richmond, consequently, he undisputedly was a military expert.⁸⁰ As opposed to this, his reviewer in *The New York Times* wrote that Estván was “unimportant as a historian and

probably insignificant as a commander” and “his claims as a military critic are not likely to be accepted by either side.” In conclusion, he maliciously remarks that “[Estván] gazes on the battlefield with the calm indifference of the woman who witnessed the conflict between her husband and a bear,” which is the “correct temperament of a soldier, but it is also the characteristics [sic] of a mercenary.”⁸¹

There is, however, another documented side to Estván's career: together with Louis Froehlich, Estván embarked on making cavalry sabers and bayonets in Wilmington, North Carolina.⁸² As early as January 20, 1861, their firm (Froehlich&Estvan or C.S. Arms Factory) had a contract with the state of North Carolina and made 61 cavalry sabers and 133 saber bayonets which three days later was followed by an order for another 35 cavalry sabers and 97 saber bayonets; the two orders combined were worth of \$5,267. Between January 20, 1861 and March 1, 1862 the firm produced 479 cavalry sabers, 1054 saber bayonets and a couple of artillery bayonets. In 1862 cavalry sabers cost \$24.50 apiece, whereas for the saber bayonets the Ordnance Office of North Carolina at Raleigh paid \$10.50 apiece. Confederate Secretary of War J.P. Benjamin received a letter dated March 11, 1862, from Henry T. Clark on behalf of the Nineteenth North Carolina Cavalry Volunteer Regiment from Raleigh, N.C., in which he complains that the regiment

is just partly armed and is “yet without sabers, although we spared neither effort nor money. We engaged from the Eastvan & Froelich [sic] sword factory at Wilmington, and paid high prices, but three-fourths of the swords proved worthless.”⁸³ It was around then when the firm started to face serious financial difficulties. So much so that on April 23, 1862, *The Weekly Standard* of Raleigh published an ad seeking people who had claims against Froehlich&Estvan or C.S. Arms Factory were sought.⁸⁴ It seems very probable that Estván quit very soon thereafter.⁸⁵ Ella Lonn also confirmed this by stating that Louis Froehlich continued making swords alone at Kenansville, N.C. after his unsuccessful venture with Estván. He employed about 15-20 hands in his manufactory which was closed down in 1864.⁸⁶

No other details of Estván's Civil War career can be supported with documents. In *War Pictures* he states that after 18 months of campaigning with the Confederate Army he got yellow fever and resigned his commission.⁸⁷ In the eyes of Ella Lonn his resignation was rather due to the fact that promotion for

the foreign-born was not easy at all in the Confederate Army. She wrote that “probably this slowness of recognition had much to do with Estván's disgruntled attitude toward the Confederacy and ultimate departure in the midst of the war.”⁸⁸ Confederate President Jefferson Davis said to a visitor in Richmond: “Our service offers but little inducement to the soldiers of fortune, but a great deal to the men of principle.”⁸⁹ Hermann Schuricht offered an entirely different explanation for Estván's leaving the Southern states: “When the Civil War commenced, he pretended to have recruited in North Carolina a regiment of Lancers and was authorized to draw from the Ordnance Department the necessary equipage” which he took to North Carolina and sold there. He also said that Estván tried to gain popularity in the North by claiming that he had deserted, gone to Washington, D.C. in full Confederate uniform and, according to him, Estván was even received by President Lincoln.⁹⁰ No records support any of his statements. Whatever Estván's real reasons for leaving the Confederate States might have been, on September 13, 1862 he applied for a passport to the authorities in Washington and left America for Britain soon after.⁹¹

Once in England, Estván wrote his *War Pictures from the South*, which saw three

79 National Archives. M-437. Letters Received by the Confederate Secretary of War. RG 109., Reel 4, f475.

80 *The New York Herald*. (July 29, 1863).

81 *The New York Times*. (July 19, 1863.), p. 3.

82 For the firm see, L. Froehlich & B. Estvan. National Archives. M-346. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms. Roll #287.

83 *War of the Rebellion. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. 128 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1880-1901.) Series IV. Vol. 1., p. 987.

84 *The Weekly Standard* (April 23, 1862.)

85 For the firm's contracts with the Ordnance Office at Raleigh, see, National Archives. M-346. Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens and Business Firms. RG109, Roll #327.

86 Lonn, *Foreigners*, p. 333.

87 Estván, *War Pictures*, p. 175.

88 Lonn, *Foreigners*, p. 166.

89 Quoted in *ibid.* p. 33

90 Schuricht, *History*. 2:88-89.

91 National Archives. M-1371: Registers and Indexes for Passport Applications. Roll #03, No. 8325.

editions within slightly more than a year.⁹² This shows its relative success, although even the contemporary American press was divided over the book – Northern and Southern alike. Of course, the Confederate press treated him as a deserter and a foreign mercenary. The *Daily Richmond Examiner* described him in these words: “In these war times, they [the deserters] are plentiful under the uniform of military officers. Estván, the soi-disant count, who ran to the North after playing out his calls here, was one of a particular class.”⁹³ *The New York Times* reviewer of his book was hardly less critical, claiming that Col. Estvan belongs to the large class of warriors who can “be sharked up for any enterprise that hath a stomach in’t. [...] We should prefer that he stood up more manfully either for the North or the South.”⁹⁴ Estván’s impartiality is what was particularly emphasized by *The North American Review*. His reviewer adds, “His book seems to us eminently wise in its judgements and opinions, is in its tone friendly to the people of the North.”⁹⁵

This is the point where most sources finish Estván’s story. Schuricht suggests

that he revisited his old fatherland, Austria, and he was arrested and prosecuted as a criminal in Vienna.⁹⁶ No sources again support these claims. There are, however, other details concerning the Hungarian’s career which have been revealed only recently.

In the summer of 1864 the Emperor Maximilian arrived in Mexico, intending to create a new imperial order in the country. He enjoyed the military and financial support of Napoleon III, but he soon had to face grave financial difficulties as the French emperor lost interest and gradually withdrew his support. He also found an avowed enemy in the person of President Andrew Johnson, who wanted to get rid of the French as soon as the Civil War in the United States was over. The Monroe Doctrine became a subject for public discussion and the American public demanded its enforcement.

Maximilian decided to meet this challenge by counter-propaganda. He sought recognition and he did not think that he was playing a losing game. He established an agency in New York, which served as the center for imperial intrigue and propaganda. In 1865 the emperor appointed Luis de Arroyo consul general for the Mexican empire. His primary task was to secure recognition by the United States.⁹⁷

It was in his New York office that Arroyo was visited a number of times by Béla Estván. Arroyo recalled that “he gave the

92 *War Pictures from the South* was first published in Britain by Warner and Routledge in 1863. Under the same title in the United States it was published by D. Appleton in 1863, which was soon followed by the German translation under the title *Kriegsbilder aus Amerika. Von B. Estvan, oberst der cavalerie der Conföderirten armee* published in Leipzig by F.A. Brockhaus in 1864.

93 *Daily Richmond Examiner*, February 5, 1864.

94 *The New York Times*, July 19, 1863, p.3.

95 *The North American Review* Vol.97, Issue 201, (October 1863), pp. 583-584.

96 Schuricht, *History*. 2:89.

97 Robert W. Frazer, “Maximilian’s Propaganda Activities in the United States, 1865-1866,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol.24, No.1 (Feb., 1944), pp. 4-5. Hereafter cited as Frazer, “Maximilian”

impression that he was a man of some consequence, and spoke encouragingly of the imperial prospects of recognition.”⁹⁸ He was told by Estván that he had been the special correspondent for the *New York Herald*, and was sent to Mexico by James Gordon Bennett in October 1865. He managed to secure an audience with the emperor and later he summed up his motivations: “(...) despite my seventeen years of absence from my homeland I still preserved a deep affection for the imperial Family of the House of Habsburg, I took the opportunity with vivid interest to indirectly serve an imperial Prince, thus redeeming the political debt which I still had to pay to the Austrian House from previous years.”⁹⁹

Upon reading these lines we fully have to agree with historian Robert W. Frazer, who remarked that “it was doubtful that he desired to serve an imperial prince as much as he wished to serve Béla Estván.”¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, Estván’s plan of subsidizing the American press was backed both by Maximilian and Arroyo. The emperor retained Estván for two years at \$ 5,000 a year. In addition, the Hungarian was provided a whopping \$40,000 a year for expenses, which was still only half of what Estván had hoped for.¹⁰¹ Estván

returned to New York and his task was to prepare the material furnished by others for publication. He had to account for his expenditures at the end of each month, which displeased him very much. Whatever his feelings about these restrictions, he got down to opening offices in Washington and New York at once and employed several assistants. He spent only on this more than \$40,000 during the first year. In addition, his budget called for an additional \$35,000, well above the sum provided for that year.¹⁰²

Both Louis Borg, head of the Mexican consulate, and Maximilian’s agent, Mariano Degollado were amazed by Estván’s budget. They hesitated to provide the Hungarian with additional sum he requested. Finally they agreed to give him \$7,500, but refused to give him more.

Estván made extensive use of propaganda in New York, whereas in Washington he was more interested in developing personal contacts and planning petty intrigues. According to his own account, he managed to bribe – among others – three New York newspapers and paid \$750 each to the *Herald*, *Tribune* and *Times*. However, none of the three published articles favorable to the empire, save some sporadic ones in the *Tribune* which was probably rather due to Horace Greeley’s opposition to the administration.¹⁰³ Therefore, it is not at all unlikely that Estván pocketed the subsidies himself.

98 Arroyo to Castillo, October 24, 1865. Hausarchiv, Archiv Kaiser Maximilians von Mexiko, Karton 146, Arroyo, fol. 76. Library of Congress facsimiles from Austrian archives. Hereafter cited as Arroyo, Hausarchiv.

99 Quoted in Frazer, “Maximilian”, p. 19.

100 Ibid.

101 Estván to Fischer, January 12, 1867, Hausarchiv,

Archiv Kaiser Maximilians von Mexiko, Karton 144, Berichte von B. Estvan aus New-York, fols. 685-687. Hereafter cited as Estvan, Hausarchiv.

102 Frazer, “Maximilian”, pp. 20-21.

103 Frazer, “Maximilian”, p. 22.

The Hungarian spent most of his time in the capital trying to form acquaintanceships. For example, he became acquainted with the leaders of the Fenian movement and soon boasted that he had won almost a million voters for the empire.¹⁰⁴

Estván fought vigorously for a free hand as far as the expenditure of money was concerned, but his pleas were rejected. When one of his installments failed to arrive, he turned to George Francis Train, one of his Fenian acquaintances, and a candidate for the U.S. Senate from Nebraska, for aid and was lent \$15,000; in return he gave Train a bill of exchange on the imperial government. Estván's drafts, however, returned unpaid and he could not turn Maximilian's order into cash either.¹⁰⁵

Arroyo was not satisfied with the output of Estván's bureau. A number of articles treating the Mexican question appeared in the press, but most of them were partisan in nature (the Republicans were for the peaceful settlement of the question, whereas the Democratic press favored measures against the empire), and not the product of the Hungarian and his assistants. In April, 1866 Arroyo finally decided not to provide Estván with additional funds. Estván was forbidden to call himself an employee of the imperial government and he could not make offers and concessions concerning Mexico. The documents regarding his activities were sent to the imperial foreign office, and the press campaign was terminated. He followed Castillo, who was in Europe with the Empress Charlotte, to Paris and

104 Estván to Castillo, February 23, 1866. Estvan, Hausarchiv, Karton 144, fols. 629-631.

105 Frazer, "Maximilian", pp. 24-25.

Rome, but he could not achieve anything. He returned to New York, but his part in Maximilian's propaganda activities had ended.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, the emperor's days in Mexico were numbered. In May 1867 he was captured by the soldiers of Juarez and – despite the objections of European diplomacy – he was executed on June 19.

Soon thereafter, on July 6, *The New York Times* published an open letter to the editor written by Béla Estván, who titled himself as director of the Imperial Bureau of Mexico in the United States. In this letter, Estván accused the United States Government of a "reprehensible and self-dishonoring hesitation" and questioned why the United States failed to defend the life of Maximilian. He remarked that it was the United States which forced France and other European powers to leave Mexico referring to the Monroe doctrine and should have had "the moral power, supported by an invincible military force, to protect, in the interest of our modern civilization, the life of a Christian Prince, from whom it had taken the means of self-protection and even of escape." The Hungarian called it the last act of his official duty to the murdered Emperor to give this solemn protest to the American people.¹⁰⁷

Not much is known about his life thereafter. At the end of 1867 he wrote a letter to Cassius Marcellus Clay, the American ambassador to Russia, from London.¹⁰⁸

106 Frazer, "Maximilian", p.27.

107 *The New York Times* (July 6, 1867)

108 Estván to Cassius Marcellus Clay, Dec. 13, 1867.

Cassius Marcellus Papers Special Collection, Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum of the Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.

This indicates that soon after the tragic end of Maximilian he returned to Europe. It is not clear how well Clay and Estván knew each other, but the informal parts of the letter show that they had been acquainted with each other for some time. It is not clear either what Estván was doing in St. Petersburg, Berlin and London.

No documents have been found so far which would reveal any more details of Estván's life. There is a trace, however, which may serve as a starting point for further research. In the database of WorldCat one can find a book written by – according the catalogue – B(é)la. Estván. The work titled, *Der badische Entwurf einer Wertzuwachsteuer; eine kritische Studie* [The Draft of a Value Added Tax in Baden; A Critical Study], was published in Mannheim, Germany around 1911.¹⁰⁹ However, it is highly probable that there is some confusion about the author as – according to the catalogue of the Central Library of Mönchengladbach, Germany – the author of the work is a Dr. Heinrich Peter. This name is included in WorldCat as well, labeled as the person responsible for the publication. If it is taken into consideration that Estván would have been well over 80 by 1911, and no detail in the book refers to the writer, we have no reason to suspect that the author was Estván himself, especially as the book is of highly theoretical nature and to

109 Estván, B., *Der badische Entwurf einer Wertzuwachsteuer; eine kritische Studie* (Mannheim: J. Bensheimer, ca. 1911). I would like to express my gratitude to the Interlibrary Loan staff of the Bloomington Library of IU for securing the only existing copy for me from Mönchengladbach, Germany.

our knowledge the Hungarian had no economic qualification whatsoever.

Basically that is all we know about Béla Estván. There is one more thing, however, which would be interesting to track down. In 1872 a book titled *Harry Delaware, or, An American in Germany* was published in New York, which was written by a Mathilde Estvan.¹¹⁰ It would be necessary to confirm whether she was in any kind of relationship with Béla or not. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any further detail about her life so far.¹¹¹

As one can see, there are still a number of uncertainties concerning the life and career of Béla Estván. Although several so far unknown documents have been revealed which shed light on many aspects of the Hungarian's personality, and, in my opinion, prove that Béla Estván was indeed a soldier-of-fortune, an adventurer whose primary aim was to make personal profit of every possible situation. Nevertheless, Estván was the only Hungarian participant of the American Civil War who wrote a book about what he experienced (if he did), and it became a real bestseller of the day. Every now and then, excerpts from his book are re-published in books and magazines and his *War Pictures* is really a thrilling experience to read – even if its credibility is highly questionable.¹¹²

110 Mathilde Estvan, *Harry Delaware, or, An American in Germany* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1872)

111 For basic information on Mathilde Estvan see, John Foster Kirk, *A Supplement to Allibone's Critical Dictionary of English Literature*, Vol. I. (Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co., 1891.), p.562. Unfortunately, no details of her family background are given.

112 Béla Estván, "The Yankee Wounded," in *The*

4. Concluding Remarks

Having been able to spend six months in the United States was indeed the (Ful)bright side of life for a me as a researcher. The subject of my doctoral dissertation by its nature requires investigations a considerable proportion of which cannot be carried out elsewhere, but in archives and libraries in the United States. Therefore, I have to emphasize my appreciation to the William J. Fulbright Commission for making this possible for me. Their generous support enabled me to gather enough (actually, being in the phase of writing my dissertation, I feel that more than enough) material to give an objective analysis of the Hungarians' involvement in the War Between the States, which is so much missing from the otherwise vast literature of the American Civil War. However, there is another – in my judgement – equally important aspect of the grant. Although being a university instructor teaching courses on American culture and institutions and various issues in 19th-century U.S. history, I had never had the opportunity to visit America. The importance of first-hand information about a particular culture does not need to be emphasized, and I was lucky enough to get acquainted with a lot of people, both from in- and outside the academic sphere who helped my work in many ways. Let me, therefore, acknowledge my debt to at least some of them.

I would like to acknowledge the generous

Romance of the Civil War. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903). The same article has been just recently re-published in *Skedaddle*, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (March 3, 2004), pp.1-3.

support of the Hungarian Bureau of the William J. Fulbright Commission, whose staff members provided me with all possible help throughout the whole period, which enabled me to concentrate entirely on my work. I am indebted to Prof. Leslie Rowland from the Department of History at the University of Maryland for her academic supervision. I am particularly grateful to Irene and Mickey Schubert for their kind hospitality, to Steve Beszedits for his valuable pieces of advice. Of course, I would not have been able to achieve my goals without the expertise of the librarians and archivists of the institutions which I had the opportunity to do research at, my thanks, therefore, go to them as well: The National Archives and The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., The McKeldin Library of the University of Maryland, the various libraries of Indiana University in Bloomington, IN and the Chicago Historical Society in Chicago, IL.

Since my returning to Hungary, it has always been a special occasion for me to meet fellow Fulbrighters (luckily enough, there are a number of colleagues of mine among them including the supervisor of my dissertation), and it fills me with pride to be a member of the 'Fulbright family' – as Director Huba Brückner refers to us quite affectionately. I sincerely hope that one day I will have the opportunity to return to the United States as a Fulbright visiting researcher or perhaps a lecturer.

Half year as Fulbright grantee at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Zsuzsanna Balázsné Langó

.....

Eötvös Loránd University
Department of Microbiology
1117 Budapest, Pázmány Péter sétány 1/C
mikrobiologia.elte.hu
langozsu@ludens.elte.hu

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
School of Public Health
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
www.sph.unc.edu
Adviser: Dr. Robert Wetzel

.....

As Fulbright grantee I was the last guest researcher in doctor Wetzel's team, working together with the giant of aquatic science. Unfortunately he became very ill in this period and we lost him in April 2005. He helped my life and work with frankly friendship which I never forget.

Recollection

Robert George Wetzel was born on 16 August 1936 in Ann Arbor (Michigan). His parents immigrated to the United States from Germany and as a small child he learned German before he learned English. He graduated in 1959 in Ann Arbor and got Ph.D. degree at Davis University of California. From 1965 to 1990 he taught as Associate Professor and Professor at Department of Botany and Zoology of Michigan State University.

From 1990 to 2001 he was Professor of University of Alabama and from 2001 Professor of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

For 36 years he served as secretary of International Society of Limnology and from 1994 was elected as member of American Academy of Arts and Science.

“His thoughts, and the brilliant synthesis of all aspects of lakes and streams in his writings – 23 books and 400+ publications,