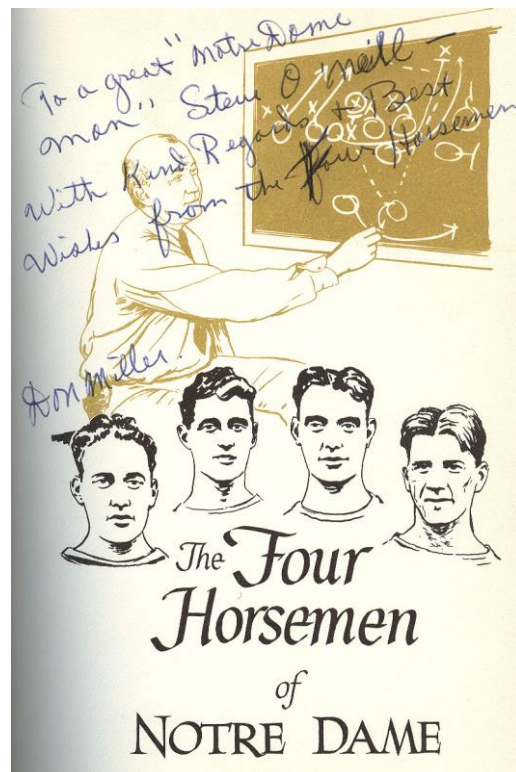


It was the autographs more than the history that first attracted me to the series of books written for the Hinckley and Schmitt football luncheons in the 1950s. A copy of “The Four Horsemen of Notre Dame” that was auctioned on Mastronet in April 2004 was signed by all Four Horsemen, Harry Stuhldreher, Don Miller, Jim Crowley, and Elmer Layden, and by Hall of Fame members Ernie Nevers, Red Grange, and Joe Guyon. In my collection I have a copy signed by Don Miller:



A copy of “Thorpe of Carlisle” that I was able to purchase had autographs of former Bears Hunk Anderson and Ed Healey, as well as former Cardinals Paddy Driscoll, Duke Slater, Wilfred Smith, and Fred Gillies. In another book, “77 Grange of Illinois” I found autographs of Grange, Grange’s teammate from Illinois, Wallie McIlwain, and football official

Bobie Cahn. It seemed that whatever this Hinckley and Schmitt football luncheon was all about, it certainly attracted an interesting cross section of football stars from Chicago pro teams and college teams in the region.

As far as I know, there are five books in the series published over five years:

Gipp of Notre Dame, 1954

Thorpe of Carlisle, 1955

Grange of Illinois, 1956

Eckersall of Chicago, 1957

Slater of Iowa, 1958

Four Horsemen of Notre Dame, 1959

All books have James A. Peterson listed as the author, and the Grange book states it is published for the Nineteenth Annual Hinckley and Schmitt Football Luncheon, which means the luncheons began in 1938. Many questions came to mind – Why were the luncheons held? Who was James Peterson? Who or what was Hinckley and Schmitt? And what was the draw that brought all these great football players together?

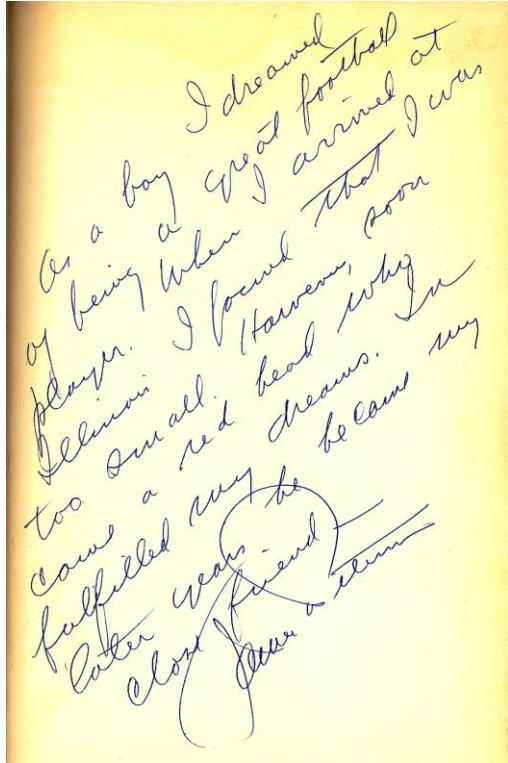
The easiest question to answer was in regard to Hinckley and Schmitt, now a national merchant wholesaler of bottled water. The company had its roots in Chicago. Otis Hinckley had been a store delivery man for

White Rock and George Schmitt worked at a drug store in the Palmer House Hotel. In 1888 they teamed up to distribute White Rock water directly to Chicago customers, adding many kinds of spring and bottled waters through the years, and pioneering water cooler service to offices downtown in the Windy City. Although bottled water seems a necessary commodity today, during the depression it took some persistent and imaginative marketing to keep the company afloat.



James A. Peterson was little harder to track down – but he showed up in Jim Carroll's book about Red Grange and thanks to Maynard Brichford, Illinois University Archivist Emeritus, I obtained copies of some of his correspondence with Robert Zuppke, legendary football coach for the Illini. Peterson was a graduate of the University of Illinois (Law 1922) and served as lawyer to the Schmitt family and as the President of Hinckley and Schmitt from the mid 1930s to the mid 1960s. He was an avid

supporter of Illinois football and a great fan of Red Grange, attending nearly every game Grange played in college and pro football.



A handwritten note on a piece of yellowed, aged paper. The text is written in cursive and is somewhat slanted. It reads: "As a boy I dreamed of being a great football player. When I arrived at Illinois I found that I was too small. However, soon came a red head who fulfilled my dreams. In later years he became my close friend." There is a large, stylized flourish or signature at the bottom of the note.

In one copy of "77 Grange of Illinois"

Peterson wrote: As a boy I dreamed of being a great football player.

When I arrived at Illinois I found that

I was too small. However, soon

came a red head who fulfilled my

dreams. In later years he became

my close friend. James A. Peterson

In 1937, after Grange retired from the Bears, Peterson hired him as a sales promotion manager for Hinckley and Schmitt, reportedly for an annual salary of \$7,500. According to George Schmitt, grandson of the founder and CEO of Hinckley and Schmitt from 1965 to 1997, Grange primarily visited the downtown office managers who were buyers of the water cooler services, and served as good-will ambassador for the company. He also was master of ceremonies at the annual football luncheons.

When Grange married in 1941, Peterson suggested he set up his own business and introduced him to a friend who was successful in insurance. After taking the insurance brokers exam, Grange left Hinckley and Schmitt in 1942 to set up his own agency. Later he would say, "I was as good an insurance man as there was in Chicago. On the football field I had ten other men blocking for me, but I'm more proud of what I did in the insurance business, because I did it alone."

So Peterson's connection to Grange and Grange's connection to everyone else in football was one powerful draw to the Hinckley and Schmitt luncheons. But there was another draw, a Chicago tradition that began in 1934 and served as a major factor in the popular growth of pro-football – the annual Chicago College All Star Game. The history of that game is well told in a new book: "Football's Stars of Summer: A History of the College All Star Football Game Series of 1934-1976, by Raymond Schmidt. Peterson held the luncheons two days before the All Star Game, a time when the worlds of college and pro football came together in Chicago.

This connection was clear in a letter Peterson wrote to Zuppke in July, 1950:

*Dear Zup,*

*I would be pleased to have you as my guest at a small informal luncheon in the Crystal Room at the Palmer House on Wednesday, August 9, at 12:15 o'clock noon.*

*"Red" Grange will preside, and there will be present some other men prominent in football. The All Star Game will be the topic of conversation and I thought that you would be interested to hear the side lights from some of the experts.*

*Yours sincerely, Jim*

The Crystal Room at the Palmer House holds about 140 people, so obviously it wasn't an oversized affair and everyone would have the opportunity to meet the honored guests. It was a promotional event for Hinckley and Schmitt with their important Chicago business clients invited to mingle with prominent football men. In the 1950s Jim Peterson began doing research and writing the books that provided a wonderful souvenir of the event.

Here is a copy of a program from the 1954 luncheon listing all of the guests:

**18th Annual Hinckley & Schmitt  
Football Luncheon  
Wednesday August 11, 1954**



# 18th Annual Hinckley & Schmitt Football Luncheon

Wednesday August 11, 1954

- Harold "Red" Grange  
Travelers Insurance, University of Illinois,  
played in 1923, 1924, and 1925, Camp's All-  
American
- Eugene P. Marcott  
Manager, City Hall Square Building
- C. F. Schwartzwalder  
Manager, La Salle Wacker Building
- Bobbie Cahn  
John Hancock Insurance, University of Chi-  
cago, Professional Football League
- R. M. Walrath  
Manager, Board of Trade Building
- Roy Krueger  
Vice President, Browne & Storch, Inc.,  
Building Managers
- Bernard J. McDonnell  
Attorney at Law
- John W. C. Carlson  
Manager, Brooks Building
- ✓ Heartley "Hunk" Anderson  
Production Steel Company of Illinois, Uni-  
versity of Notre Dame, played in 1918, 1919,  
1920, and 1921
- Walter Jasper  
Manager, Otis Building
- Tug Wilson  
Athletic Commissioner of Big Ten, University  
of Illinois
- John R. Fryer  
Manager, Home Federal Savings Bank  
Building
- B. M. Marcom  
Manager, State & Madison Building
- † Lou Gordon  
Wholesale Meats, University of Illinois,  
played in 1927, 1928, and 1929, All-Ameri-  
can, Green Bay Packers, Cardinals, and  
Bears
- A. L. Sommers  
Manager, Continental Illinois Bank Building
- Frederick "Ojay" Larson  
Building Contractor, University of Notre  
Dame, played in 1918 and 1920
- Thomas P. Quinn  
Manager, Bell Savings Building
- David C. Lee  
Manager, Washington Dearborn Building
- Russell Root  
Chief Law Division, Sanitary District
- Robert Skinner  
Manager, Michigan Ohio Building
- Roger Kiley  
Presiding Judge of 3rd Division, 1st District,  
Illinois Appellate Court, University of Notre  
Dame, played in 1919, 1920, and 1921,  
Camp's All-American
- Charles Callahan  
Director of Sports Publicity, University of  
Notre Dame
- George Quidd  
Manager, Equitable Building
- Dean Vail  
Attorney at Law, Sidley, Austin, Burgess &  
Smith
- D. Russell Palmer  
Manager, Utilities Building
- Orr Goodson  
Manager, Insurance Exchange Building
- H. T. Slayton  
Assistant Vice President, A. Rubloff & Com-  
pany
- John Alexander  
Alexander Lumber Company
- Winston S. Porter  
Manager, Butler Building
- Clarence Jennett  
Vice President, The First National Bank of  
Chicago
- H. F. Pocock  
Manager, Monroe Building
- Latham Castle  
Attorney General, State of Illinois
- Oscar W. Cagann  
Manager 520 North Michigan Building
- David H. Armstrong  
Attorney at Law
- John O'Connor  
Manager, Carbide and Carbon Building
- J. W. Bellenger  
Manager, Republic Building
- Chester Wynne  
Attorney at Law, Dickson, Dickson &  
Wynne, University of Notre Dame, played  
in 1920 and 1921
- T. J. Mullen  
Manager, 5 North Wabash Building
- George S. Allen  
Vice President, Harris Trust & Savings Bank
- L. V. Lindgren  
Manager, Wrigley Building South
- Julien Collins  
Investment Banker
- Joseph F. Strub  
Manager, Chicago Title & Trust Building
- Lee E. Daniels  
Youth Commissioner, State of Illinois, Foot-  
ball Official
- G. A. Raddell  
Manager, Metropolitan Building
- Leslie N. Jones  
Assistant to the President, Illinois Bell Tele-  
phone Company
- F. Erlenborn  
Manager, State of Illinois Building
- J. Gordon Smith  
Manager, Randolph Towers Building
- Elmer T. Stevens  
President, Chas. A. Stevens & Co.



Joseph H. Nash  
Favor-Ruhl & Company, Inc., University of  
Notre Dame, played in 1928 and 1929

O. W. Kidder  
Manager, Baumgartner Building

Arthur G. Lorentz  
Manager, First Federal Building

Terry Brennan  
Coach of Notre Dame Football Team, Univer-  
sity of Notre Dame, played in 1945, 1946,  
1947, and 1948

W. J. Schoeninger  
Manager, Lytton Building

Harold S. Cowen  
Manager, 203 North Wabash Building

Lawrence H. Whiting, Sr.  
President, American Furniture Mart, Univer-  
sity of Chicago, played in 1911

S. E. Young  
Manager, Association Building (YMCA)

Irving Feldinger  
Manager, Adams & Franklin Building

W. W. McIlwain  
International Harvester, University of Illi-  
nois, played in 1922, 1923, and 1924

Walter C. Finn  
Manager, Michigan Square Building

Harry A. Stuhldreher  
Assistant to Vice President, U. S. Steel Corp.,  
Pittsburgh, Pa., University of Notre Dame,  
One of the "Four Horsemen," played in  
1922, 1923, and 1924, All-American

Gerard E. Hausen  
Manager, Stewart Building

William R. Burns  
Manager, One North La Salle Building

Franklin Stransky  
Attorney at Law

Peter K. Lannon  
Assistant Manager, North American Building

Murray Smith  
Director of Fuel Purchases, Commonwealth  
Edison Company

Philip Hoops  
Manager, 33 North La Salle Building

Lowell W. Boggs  
University of Indiana, played in 1920 and  
1921, Tackle 1920 Indiana

Hugh C. Michels  
Manager, Chicago Real Estate Board  
Building

Harry C. Murphy  
President, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy  
Railroad Company

Thomas J. Lally  
Manager, 109 North Dearborn Building

Harry Kipke  
President, Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Chicago,  
Inc., University of Michigan, played in 1921,  
1922, and 1923, Camp's All-American

Hugh H. Wellin  
Manager, De Paul Building

William C. Gorgas  
Director, Furniture Club of America, Univer-  
sity of Chicago, played in 1917

H. McGlasson  
Manager, Garrick Building

Frederick "Duke" Slater  
Judge Municipal Court, University of Iowa,  
played in 1919, 1920, and 1921, Camp's  
All-American

Victor Bredberg  
Manager, Champlain Building

Frank Korch  
WGN, Chicago Bears Football expert

W. A. Adams, Jr.  
Manager, 127 North Dearborn Building

William J. DeCorrevont  
Austin High School, Northwestern University,  
played in 1939, 1940, and 1941.

Charles L. Strobeck  
Manager, Sterling Insurance Building

C. I. Cole  
Manager, 39 South La Salle Building

Herbert F. Steger  
Insurance, University of Michigan, played  
in 1922, 1923, and 1924

Charles S. Lott  
Manager, Westminster Building

Wilfred J. Holm  
Manager, Kemper Insurance Building

Norman C. Barry  
Judge of the Superior Court of Cook County,  
University of Notre Dame, played in 1918,  
1919, and 1920

C. J. Taylor  
Manager, Monadnock Building

Arch Ward  
Sports Editor, Chicago Tribune

C. A. Lindgren  
Manager, Midland Building

William C. Gibbons  
Manager, Transportation Building

R. G. Smith  
Manager, Peoples Gas Building

Sam Ricketts  
Ricketts Restaurant

George Von Oppen  
Purchasing, Edgewater Beach Hotel

#### **Hinckley & Schmitt Staff**

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Louis C. Thorson  
Vice President & Treasurer

Louis C. Cotie  
Vice President & Assistant Secretary

John Downes  
Vice President & Secretary

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Sales Director

C. W. Johnson  
Sales Manager

Victor Schmitt  
Sales Supervisor

Charles R. Carter  
Sales Manager

James Kaferly  
Salesman

George Schmitt

John Schmitt

The books are attractive in their own right, having a almost handmade quality about them - 8vo - over 7¾" - 9¾" tall, deckle edges, unopened pages, sepia photos , black, blue or red boards with gilt title and decoration on the front cover. Add to the gift of the book an opportunity to get autographs of legendary players and you have a very successful promotional affair, a great piece of football history, and a wonderful item for today's collector who knows a little about the history of these five volumes from the mid 1950s.