

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 59, No. 10

541th Meeting

June 2010



• Speaker:
Patrick Falci
A.P. Hill; the Man in
the Red Battle Shirt

• Cost:
Members: \$35
Non-Members: \$45

• Date:
Wednesday, June 9th

• Place:
The Three West Club,
3 West 51st Street,
3rd Floor

• Time:
Dinner at 6 pm,
Doors open 5:30 pm,
Cash Bar 5:30 – 7 pm

*You must call
718-341-9811 by
June 2nd, if you plan to
attend the
June meeting.*

*We need to know how
many people to order
food for.*

Patrick Falci

Our June guest and resident general is the CWRT-NY's best known member and the second most photographed Civil War reenactor in the country. For 17 years now, Pat has been the face of Ambrose Powell Hill. Before that he was a Civil War reenactor with the 14th Tennessee – Archer's Brigade. Pat gained fame not only for his role of A.P. Hill in *Gettysburg*, but also as director Ron Maxwell's historical advisor for both that movie and *Gods and Generals*. He has served as president of the CWRTNY thrice and he travels across the country to lecture at Civil War Round Tables, historical organizations and schools, giving presentations on a wide variety of Civil War subjects, including keynote speeches at the Grant's Tomb birthday celebration (2003), R.E. Lee Bicentennial Celebration (2007), Arlington National Cemetery (Confederate Memorial Service – one of the keynote speakers, 2009). He is on the Advisory Council of the National Civil War Museum and has won fourteen different awards from Civil War groups throughout the nation including Commission of Colonel, Commonwealth of Kentucky and the U.D.C. Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal/S.U.V. Commanders Award (2003).



The Battle of Prairie Grove

On Sunday, December 7, 1862, two armies collided at an obscure Arkansas hamlet named Prairie Grove in a desperate battle that effectively ended Confederate offensive operations west of the Mississippi River. One army was led by Thomas C. Hindman, a zealous secessionist who had single-handedly revived the Confederate war effort in the Trans-Mississippi. The other was headed by James G. Blunt, a brash Kansas abolitionist who liked nothing better than personally leading his troops into battle, pistol in hand. After month of intricate maneuvering punctuated by five battles in three states, the armies met one last time at Prairie Grove. The costly day-long struggle was a tactical draw but a key strategic victory for the Union, as the Confederates never again seriously attempted to recover Missouri or threaten Kansas.

One of the heroes of the battles of Prairie Grove, Francis Herron, is buried in Calvary Cemetery, right off the Brooklyn/Queens Expressway, in Queens.

Essay Contest

This is also the meeting where we present awards to the winners of the annual Essay Contest we co-sponsor with the Gilder Lehrman Institute. The institute contacts its associated high schools throughout the country and requests submissions of essays on a Civil War topic of their choice.

After the entries are winnowed down by the schools, Gilder Lehrman and the CWRT-NY committee (chairs Caroline Luther and Marty Smith) choose the top 10 essays. At the June meeting, we introduce the winners and their families to the round table.

2010 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2010

• **September 15th** •
John C. Waugh
Lincoln and McClellan

• **October 13th** •
Dan Sutherland
Guerrilla Warfare

• **November 10th** •
TBA

President's Message

June brings an end to another year at the Civil War Round Table of New York. It has been a great year. I want to thank our Vice President of Programs, Judith Hallock, for arranging for the wonderful list of speakers. And I know she will have just as great speakers next year. I also want to thank all of the Officers, Board Members and volunteers for supporting all of our activities this year. The operation of the Round Table could not have continued without your support.

I want to wish all members a safe and happy summer, and hope to see all of you back in September. Just a reminder: the September meeting will be held on September 15th, the third Wednesday of September, because of the Jewish Holidays.

— Charles Mander

Book Review

Pursuit: The Chase, Capture, Persecution and Surprising Release of Confederate President Jefferson Davis

by Clint Johnson

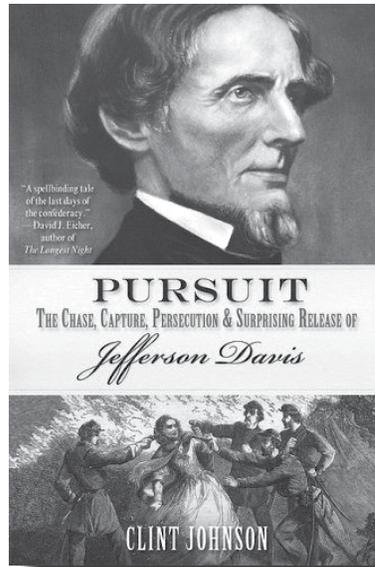
Jefferson Davis, admire or despise him, is one of the most psychologically fascinating characters in American history. Clint Johnson has drawn from Official Records, personal papers, diaries, and contemporary documents to produce an accurate, swift, narrative that includes many revelations.

Although publicly in extreme denial, Davis's private letter to Braxton Bragg of March 30, 1865, several days before the fall of Richmond, confessed, "we both staked everything...and lost all." At the same time, he was urging his commanders to adopt his delusional plan to march from Virginia and North Carolina to the trans-Mississippi to unite the Confederate forces there.

According to Frederick Seward's 1916 memoir, President Lincoln said, "I should not be sorry to have them (the Confederate leaders) leave the country, but I should be for following them up pretty close, to make sure of their going." Johnson tells of Davis's strange, meandering "escape" from Richmond, accompanied by the gold in the Confederate treasury, which was slowly dissipated and never quite accounted for. Despite Lincoln's wishes, President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of War Edwin McMasters Stanton made sure that Davis was vigorously pursued by Union cavalry and he was caught in Georgia on May 10, 1865 and taken to Fort Monroe, Virginia, where he remained in prison for two years.

Johnson deftly explains the convoluted legal process that eventually freed Davis. Gerrit Smith, the abolitionist, and one of John Brown's "Secret Six,"

Continued on page 4



THE DISPATCH



Founded January 24, 1951

The Dispatch is published monthly, except July and August, by

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.,

139-33 250th Street,
Rosedale, N.Y. 11422
Telephone CWRT/NY at (718) 341-9811

During business hours.

OFFICERS

President Charles Mander
V.P. Programs Judith Hallock
V.P. Operations William F. Finlayson
Secretary Rochelle Schumer
Treasurer John J. Sheehan

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terms Expiring 2010

Len Rehner
Harold Holzer

Terms Expiring 2011

Steve Basic
Terry McCarthy

Terms Expiring 2012

Patrick Falci
Martin Smith

Editor E.A. (Bud) Livingston
Copy Editor Joan McDonough
P.R. Martin A. Smith
Merchandise Paul Weiss
Web Master Charles Mander

<http://www.cwrtnyc.org>

June/July during the Civil War

1861

June 3 – Mary Todd’s old beau, Stephen Douglas, dies at 48. She liked him in her youth but he liked politics more so she settled on someone a lot taller.

June 30 – *CSS Sumter* eludes the *USS Brooklyn* and the blockade. Strange as it seems, the Rebel seamen refer to the Brooklynites as Damn Yankees.

1862

June 12 – J.E.B. Stuart (my friends call me Jeb) rides rings around Fighting George’s army on the Peninsula. (paene; Latin for almost; insula; Latin for island = peninsula = almost an island)

July 11 – A major impediment to winning the war in the west is removed. Henry Halleck is ordered to Washington as General-in-Chief to advise President Lincoln.

1863

June 9 – The flamboyant Jeb Stuart gets the shock of his life as Alfred Pleasonton and the rejuvenated federal cavalry (it only took two years) surprise him at Brandy Station.

July 1 – A couple of bumps in the road. John Buford’s cavalry bumps into A.P. Hill’s boys at Gettysburg and the ball begins for three days of the effusion of blood.

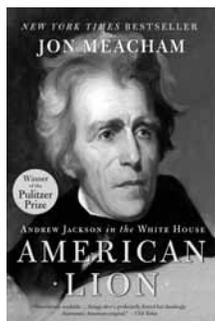
1864

June 2 – In a realistic yet cynical twist, sewing classes begin in Grant’s army as his men start to attach their names and addresses on the back of their uniforms. This will make them easy to identify when their bodies are found.

July 17 – Joe Johnston’s minuet with W.T. Sherman ends near Atlanta as Jefferson Davis introduces a new dance partner to Uncle Billy. John Bell Hood, the Confederate’s most bellicose general, begins a wrecking job on the Army of Tennessee.

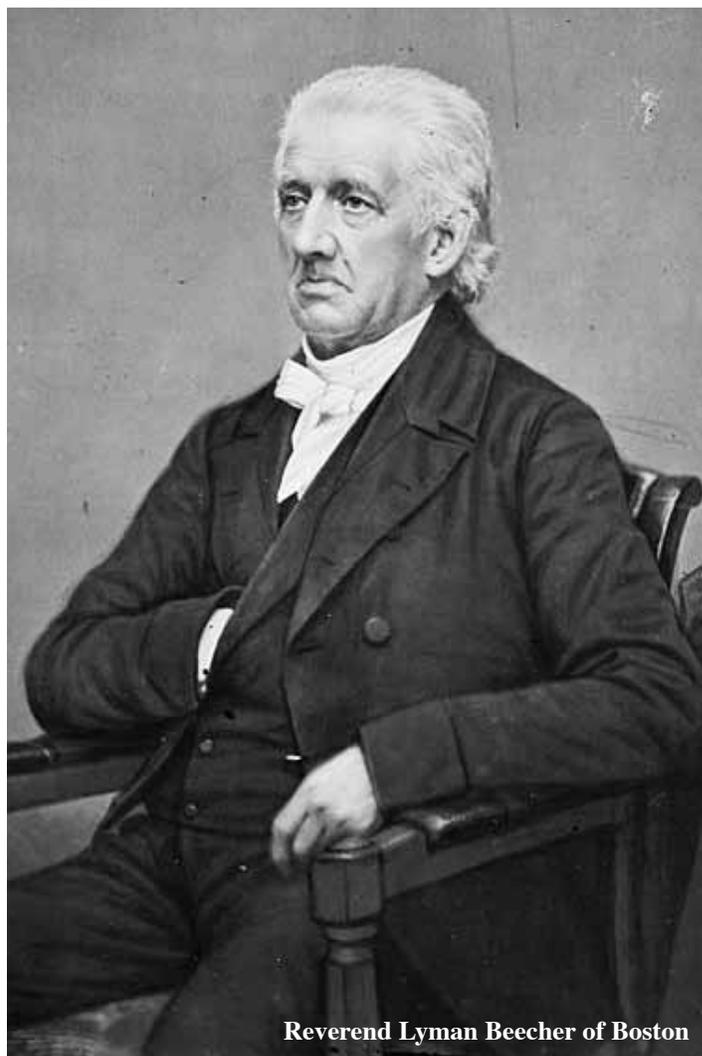
Some Famous Children

In early 1827 Reverend Ezra Stiles Ely of Philadelphia, called for the formation of a “Christian party in politics.” While many religious figures pursued large moral causes such as the abolition of slavery, many others sought to impose a narrower religious agenda on the rest of the nation. In early 1829, Ely wrote to President Andrew Jackson to pass along a letter from the Reverend Lyman Beecher of Boston, one of the great ecclesiastical figures of the age, asking that Jackson not ride on Sundays en route to Washington. Ely and Beecher hoped, they said, that “no Christian ruler of a Christian people should do violence to his own professed personal principles.” Jackson, shrewdly, did not travel on Sunday on the way to the capital unless he was on a steamboat. He would accede that far but no further. He fought corruption in the public sphere with political means and left the church free to do what it could by persuasion, not by fiat.



From *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House* by Jon Meacham

If you are not familiar with Lyman Beecher, perhaps you know something of two of his children: Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe.



Reverend Lyman Beecher of Boston

Continued from page 2

pledged bail for Davis. So did Horace Greeley and Cornelius Vanderbilt. All were incensed at the government's cruel incarceration of the Confederate president.

The government's case against Davis was weak: secession didn't meet the Constitutional definition of treason. "The U.S. government was violating prisoner Davis' rights under the Constitution. That fact was growing increasingly and embarrassingly clear even to the average reader of a daily newspaper.

Though this was obviously a case for a federal court, Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase wanted no part of it. He managed to extricate the government from this morass but by modern day standards, Chase's actions in November 1868 would be highly unethical and perhaps illegal – if what he had done had become public. According to Charles O'Connor, Davis's attorney, 'Chase rigged the case...by meeting exclusively and privately with some of Davis's attorneys and telling them what defense of Davis he would accept.' Once in court, O'Connor was essentially reading from a script provided by the Chief Justice of the United States. On December 25, 1868, Andrew Johnson issued a blanket amnesty that finally included Davis."

Students of the Civil War will be rewarded by this well told

tale of government chicanery and Davis's commitment to a truly lost cause.

By Michael Wolf



New Recruits

James Moore, a retired teacher, who is a descendant of a member of the 13th Brooklyn



THE DISPATCH

**THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
OF NEW YORK**

139-33 250th Street, Rosedale, N.Y. 11422