

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 65, No. 5

596th Meeting

January 2016



• Guest:
Jonathan Horn
Robert E. Lee

• Cost:
Members: \$50
Non-Members: \$60

• Date:
Wednesday,
January 13th

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

• Time:
Dinner at 6:00 pm,
Doors open 5:30 pm,
Cash Bar 5:30 – 7 pm

*You must call
718-341-9811 by
January 6th if you
plan to attend the
January meeting.*

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

Jonathan Horn Robert E. Lee

Our January guest, a graduate of Yale University, is an author and former White House presidential speechwriter whose latest book, *The Man Who Would Not Be Washington* made the *Washington Post* best seller list. Jon has appeared on MSNBC, PBS Newsletter, C-Span and BBC radio. His writing has appeared in the *Washington Post*, *The NY Times* Disunion series and other outlets.

He lives with his wife, Caroline, in Bethesda, Maryland.



The Guns of 1865

(General W.T.) Sherman decided to abandon Atlanta and strike out for the coast, and chose Judson Kilpatrick to command the cavalry division that would lead the way as the Yankee army cut a 60-mile-wide-swath of destruction to Savannah and the sea.

Kilpatrick had two regiments armed with Spencer rifles, the 8th Indiana Cavalry, formerly the 39th Mounted Infantry, and the 92nd Mounted Infantry, in his two brigades. The vast majority of Sherman's infantrymen carried Springfield or Enfield muzzle-loading rifle-muskets, but repeaters were scattered through the army's ranks, including Spencer rifles in the 46th Infantry and Henry rifles in the 66th Illinois Infantry.

Repeating rifles proved very useful, even critical, to Union tactical success on occasion during the Atlanta Campaign, and they were soon in action during "The March to the Sea." On

November 22, Kilpatrick's troopers reached the outskirts of Griswoldville, site of a factory manufacturing bronze-framed revolver knockoffs of the Colt 1851 Navy.

Joe Wheeler's horsemen initially repulsed a federal cavalry probe, but then the Yankees were reinforced by B.G. Charles C. Walcott's infantry brigade, including the Spencer-wielding 46th Ohio. The Buckeyes threw up log breastworks and delivered a blizzard of bullets into the ranks of a Georgia militia assault intended to dislodge them, and the attack collapsed with heavy casualties. The revolver factory was soon ablaze.

From *American Rifleman* March 2015, by Joseph Bilby

Thanks to Sherlockian Ron Fish

2016 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2016

• February 10th •

Baroness Lincoln Award
Lincoln and the Jews

• March 9th •

David Kincaid
Union and Confederate
Irish songs

• April 13th •

Judge Andrew Napolitano
Lincoln and the Constitution

President's Message

January - the New Year is usually a time for new starts or new beginnings. This was often the case during the harsh winters of the Civil War, even when hopes for peace seemed far away.

In January 1862, Edwin Stanton was named secretary of war (replacing Simon Cameron) and successfully managed that most difficult of cabinet posts until the war was won – and after.

In January 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all the slaves in the states still in rebellion “thenceforth and forever free.”

In January 1864, the XIII Amendment, ending slavery everywhere in the United States, was first proposed in the Senate.

In January 1865, General Robert E. Lee was named Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate States Army (not all new beginnings are successful – here, too little, too late).

It is also a New Year (65, well on the way to 66) for our club. So, HAPPY NEW YEAR! And all the best from us to you and yours. While we are not preparing any new beginning, we are reaffirming our commitment to continue to bring you the best Civil War authors and speakers, in a congenial environment, to enhance your experiences in learning about the war and its huge impact - past, present, and future - on our nation's history.

Already, we have enjoyed and been edified by the presentations of LTC Ralph Peters, Thomas Fleming, LTC Sherman Fleek (from West Point), and Ed Bonekemper. This month (our annual Lee/Jackson Night) will see Jonathan Horn speaking about R.E. Lee, the subject of his provocatively entitled book, “The Man Who Would Not be Washington”. (Pick up your phone RIGHT NOW and call (718) 341-9811 to reserve your place!)

The following months will see the honoring of the year's best work on Lincoln with the Barondess Lincoln Award, and the year's best Civil War book with our prestigious Fletcher Pratt Award. David Kincaid will entertain us with songs originally from Ireland that were adopted for their own use by both sides during the war. Later in the year, Judge Andrew Napolitano will give us his educated view of President Lincoln and the contentious issue of habeas corpus. Please make your plans now to join us, every second Wednesday of the month, for a marvelous experience of wining, dining, and the “great Civil War”!

Take care, and see you soon!

Paul Weiss



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January During the Civil War

A Look at the Civil War From a Very Different Perspective

1862

10 – The first auction of confiscated cotton taken from Port Royal, S.C. was held in NYC. Our term “fair to middling” comes from a description of cotton.

19 – The Virginian, George Thomas, shows his loyalty to the Union as he whips the near-sighted Felix Zollicoffer at Mill Springs, Ky.

1863

7 – The Richmond *Enquirer* called the Emancipation Proclamation “the most startling political crime, the most stupid political blunder yet known in American history. Southern people have now only to choose between victory and death.” New Hampshire gets the idea for their state motto from this comment and has its license plates read, “Live Free or Die.”

26 – President Lincoln writes to his latest commander of the Army of the Potomac, “Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship.” Neither happens.

1864

11 – Missouri’s Senator John B. Henderson proposes a resolution abolishing slavery throughout the U.S. by amendment (the 13th) of the Constitution. It has rough sledding prior to passing in the House, as we found out in *Lincoln*. And Connecticut voted *for*, not against the amendment, despite what was shown in the movie.

18 – Heavy opposition to the Confederate conscription law continues in N.C., aided and abetted by Governor Zebulon Vance. Signs in Greensboro appear reading, “Hell No, We Won’t Go.”

1865

7 – Stormy Beast Butler’s adventurous military experiences come to an end. The Fort Fisher fiasco was the last straw. The Confederates weep at hearing the news. He had helped them so much.

15 – The Confederate Goliath surrenders and the CSA loses its last port for blockade runners at Wilmington, N.C.

During the Civil War, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels contributed dozens of insightful articles for the New York *Tribune* and, later, for the Viennese *Die Presse*, on political and military issues. Engels specialized on the military strategy of the Lincoln administration and that of the Confederate Jefferson Davis rebel government. Karl Marx had a more sweeping look at the conflict, from the economic development of the nation to the actions of the political and military leaders. Overall, Marx had a better grasp on the whole war. Both men saw the war as an extension of the American Revolution of 1776. Marx and Engels argued that Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation and the North’s arming of black soldiers transformed the Civil War from a purely Constitutional war to preserve the country with slavery intact, into a revolutionary war. They did not characterize the Civil War as a socialistic revolutionary war, but they believed that it advanced the cause of all workers, both white and black, by destroying chattel slavery. The revolution armed former slaves, destroyed the horrendous institution of slavery without compensation to the slave-owners, and opened the way for a struggle between the working class and the capitalistic class. As a result, our next revolution in this country will be a working-class revolution.

Marx began writing for the *Tribune* in 1852, publishing 350 articles, with Engels supplying another 125, and their jointly writing 12, until the paper terminated Marx’s employment in 1862. Due to the increased Civil War coverage, the *Tribune* pruned its European contributors to Karl Marx alone until they fired him in March 1862.

Karl Marx viewed the war, not as Southern apologists saw it (“a war of Northern Aggression”), but rather one of Southern aggression through which the planter class hoped to preserve its political dominance. Until the election of Lincoln in 1860, the vast majority of United States presidents were either slave-owners or pro-slavery. And the slave-owners dominated the Congress and the Supreme Court as well. By the mid-nineteenth century, immigration from Europe had swelled the Northern population, potentially delivering the North far more representatives in Congress. This threatened the South’s overrepresentation in Congress, based as it was on the US Constitution’s clause defining slaves as each three-fifths of a human being.

This “compromise” allowed the slaveholding states more representation than should have been allowed in the House of Representatives, even though the slaves had no rights as citizens...

[editor’s note: Marx omitted the obvious advantage to the Southern states in the electoral college]

By Donny Schraffenberger From The *Minie* News, thanks to Barry Crompton of the CWRT of Australia

A Civil War Lesson From the President

Toward the end of April, the president summoned to his office a man named John Franklyn Carter, the head of a small White House research and intelligence unit that FDR had created. Carter, a Yale graduate and a syndicated newspaper columnist, together with a staff of researchers, collected information on a wide variety of subjects for FDR, from public opinion to the president's political opponents. On this occasion, the president asked Carter to provide him with material on Civil War Copperheads, Northerners with Southern sympathies who had been critical of Lincoln and the war.

Once Carter had completed the research Roosevelt's press secretary, Steve Early, told White House reporters that, at the next presidential press conference, if they brought up the question of why Charles Lindbergh, unlike so many reserve officers, hadn't yet been called into active duty, they might get an interesting answer.

On April 25th, a reporter asked the question and FDR's ready response took the form of a history lesson. During the Civil War, he said, some men

were deliberately barred from serving in the U.S. Army because of their defeatist attitudes. Prominent among them were the Copperheads led by Ohio Senator Clement Vallandigham who made violent speeches against the administration and declared that the North could never win a conflict with the South. He was arrested and banished to the Confederacy. Vallandigham made his way to Canada, then returned to the North, where he continued agitating. Pressured to try him for treason, Lincoln decided not to. When the reporters asked if Roosevelt was equating Lindbergh with Vallandigham, the president said yes. In that same context he mentioned Revolutionary War appeasers who tried to persuade George Washington to quit at Valley Forge, arguing that the British could not be defeated. No journalist at the press conference thought to mention that the analogy between Lindbergh and the earlier defeatists was faulty in at least one aspect. In April 1941 the U.S.A. was not yet at war.

From *Those Angry Days* by Lynne Olsen

Editor's note: Vallandigham was not a senator; He represented Ohio in the House of Representatives.



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