

# THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 65, No. 3

594th Meeting

November 2015



• Guest:  
**West Point Night**  
**Sherman L. Fleek,**  
**Lt. Col. US Army (Ret).**

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

• Date:  
**Wednesday,**  
**November 11<sup>th</sup>**

• 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  
November 4<sup>th</sup> if you  
plan to attend the  
November meeting.*

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

## **West Point Night** **Sherman L. Fleek,** **Lt. Col. US Army (Ret).**

### **Wesley Merritt**

Our November guest is a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, and a military historian. Born at Hill Air Force Base, he was raised in Layton, Utah. He specialized in Mormon military history, especially the history of the Mormon Battalion during the Mexican-American war.



He served as an aviator, Special Forces officer, and historian in several command and staff positions. His last duty in the Army was chief historian for the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C., when he retired. He served as command historian of Walter Reed Medical Center from 2007 to 2009. In May 2009 he assumed the position as historian for the Military Academy at West Point.

## **The Underground Railroad in NYC**

In a gripping narrative published earlier this year, Eric Foner’s masterful *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* explored New York’s ambivalence toward the South and the Civil War, its role in rescuing –and returning– escaped slaves, and introduced readers to some forgotten key protagonists, including Sydney Howard Gay.

In *Secret Lives of the Underground Railroad in New York City: Sidney Howard Gay, Louis Napoleon and the Record of Fugitives*, Don Papson and Tom Calarco further document Gay’s role as an abolitionist, the meticulous two-volume journal he kept



of fugitives flowing through the offices of the National Anti-Slavery Standard, and the largely unheralded contribution made by blacks like Gay’s agent Louis Napoleon.

“Our primary mission,” the authors write as the Civil War sesquicentennial winds down, “has been to recognize the work of Sidney Howard Gay and Louis Napoleon, to reveal how the Underground Railroad operated in New York and conclusively demonstrate that the Underground Railroad was neither a legend nor a myth, but a daily reality.”

Sam Roberts From the *NY Times* 4/19/15

## **2015 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2016**

• **December 9<sup>th</sup>** •

Edward Bonekemper  
The Myth of the Lost Cause

• **January 13<sup>th</sup>** •

Jonathan Horn  
The Man Who Would Not  
be Washington

• **February 10<sup>th</sup>** •

Barondess Lincoln Award

## President's Message

Author Tom Fleming's informative presentation on how the "The Great Divide" between Washington and Jefferson echoed down through the years, shaping the political differences which ignited the Civil War, and the reception it received from our members in attendance, insured the success of our October meeting. Thank you all!

Those of us who are interested in the continued success, (or, indeed, survival) of historical societies like Civil War Round Tables, are usually concerned about our membership being generally older, and how to recruit younger participants.

Charles F. Bryan, President Emeritus of the Virginia Historical Society, in a recent article, had a slightly different take on the issue. Referring to a 1998 study that showed the majority of people did not enjoy history until later in life because people are, basically, building their careers and families before then. He wrote, in part:

"People 50 and over make up the largest audience watching history related television programming. They join historical societies and attend the programs they offer. More than 65% of the visitors to history museums and historic sites are at least 50 years old. The largest number of readers of non-fiction books are in the 50 plus range."

"What does this all mean? For one, history organizations should relax about not attracting a younger constituency. As the Baby Boomer generation reaches senior status in ever increasing numbers, interest in history should experience a boom of its own."

As a museum colleague of mine observed, "For many people, history is like beer. It's an acquired taste. It just takes time to cultivate."

Optimistic? Maybe, but I think any metaphor reflecting favorably upon beer and Baby Boomers is worthwhile.

See you on Veteran's Day for West Point Night (another winning pair!).

*Paul Weiss*

## 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 Paul Weiss  
V.P. Programs Michael Connors  
V.P. Operations Patrick Falci  
Secretary Pat Holohan  
Treasurer Bud Livingston

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Term Expiring 2016*

William Finlayson  
Judith Hallock

*Term Expiring 2017*

Dan McCarthy  
Joan McDonough

*Term Expiring 2018*

Beth Connors  
Martin Smith

Editor E.A. (Bud) Livingston

Copy Editor/  
Club Liaison Joan McDonough  
P.R. Martin Smith  
Merchandise Paul Weiss

Email: [cwrtnyc1@gmail.com](mailto:cwrtnyc1@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://www.cwrtnyc.org>

## Dues are due

If you haven't already paid your dues, please send your checks in now. After October, the price rises to \$60. If we don't hear from you by January 1, we will be obliged to drop your name from our mailing lists. Sorry about that.

**We now have three yearly dues categories:**

	Individual	Family	
<b>Basic</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$70</b>	
<b>Silver</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>\$85</b>	
<b>Gold</b>	<b>\$110</b>	<b>\$160</b>	
<b>Out of Town</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$35</b>	(75 miles or more)
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$25</b>		

New members please add \$10 initiation fee

You may choose any appropriate amount to send in, but it will be greatly appreciated if you are able to remit the amounts in the second or third categories.

**Send dues to Treasurer Bud Livingston**

**616 South Orange Avenue, Apt. 6G, Maplewood, N.J. 07040**

**Do not include your dues and dinner payment on the same check.**

## November During the Civil War

### 1861

1 – Old Fuss and Feathers steps down and youthful, dynamic, cocksure, G.B.McClellan assumes command as general-in-chief of the army. He declares that he can do it all. It never happens.

28 – The Southern Congress admits Missouri to the Confederate States of America. Theoretically, that is. Thanks to the Blairs and a feisty Nathaniel Lyon, the Show-Me state stays in the Union.

### 1862

9 – Ambrose Burnside of the Side Burns takes over command of the Army of the Potomac. Woe tidings will follow shortly.

29 – Prince John Magruder, CSA, takes over the district of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Poor ground for his theatrics.

### 1863

2 – President Lincoln receives an invitation to make “a few appropriate remarks” at the dedication of the new National Cemetery at a small town in Pennsylvania.

11 – MG B.F.Butler assumes command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina and orders the arrest of anyone annoying loyal citizens by “opprobrious and threatening language.”

### 1864

2 – Secretary of State Seward warns the mayor of New York City of rumors from Canada that Confederate agents plan to set fires on Election Day. This prediction is only off by 17 days as the Confederates try to burn down NYC on the 25th.

7 – The Confederate Congress meets for the last time (although they don’t know this) and President Davis comments that despite many problems, the outlook was not discouraging. Sure.

## The Election of 1864

Lincoln was faring well in most cities in the North, except in New York State, where McClellan was winning every city but Rochester, and in Detroit and Milwaukee, with their heavy ethnic populations. He was faring poorly with Catholic immigrants everywhere. These newcomers to America, working men mainly, had little sympathy with a war for black freedom. Protestants were going largely for Lincoln.

Lincoln, as expected, was carrying the agricultural areas inhabited largely by the native-born. He was winning the vote of skilled urban workers and professionals. McClellan was drawing his heaviest vote from among immigrant proletariat in the big cities and in some rural areas with strong foreign majorities.

When it was all over and all the votes were counted, Lincoln would win by a 411,428 margin over McClellan - 2,213,665 to 1,802,237. In the electoral vote he would win by a devastating 212 to 21. McClellan would carry only three states, New Jersey, Kentucky, and Delaware.

The hurt for the Democrats didn’t stop there. The election was to leave the North with but one Democratic governor, Joel Parker, in New Jersey. Even Horatio Seymour had been defeated in New York – “cheated out of the vote,” Manton Marble [The New York World] insisted. The Republicans were also in control of most of the state legislatures, giving them the power to name U.S. senators and further tighten their grip on Congress.

But on the presidential level it was not the rout it would appear. The Democrats were a singed cat, the appearance of a disaster far worse than it actually was. More than four million voted, and Lincoln was winning fifty-five percent of the popular vote. But it had not been a cakewalk. The president had won but 350,000 more votes than he had in 1860, when it had been a four-way race. A shift of 80,000 well placed votes in certain key states would have thrown the election to McClellan. The country still seemed to lean Democratic, with thousands of their number defecting to vote for the Union.

From *Reelecting Lincoln* by John C. Waugh

## Query

What do the following Civil War notables have in common?

Henry Ward Beecher  
George Washington Cullum  
Abram Duryee  
Edward Ferrero  
Robert Selph Garnett  
Henry Halleck  
Schuyler Hamilton  
Fitz-John Porter  
Henry Slocum

Answer on page 4

## NEW Recruits

**Jo Bidner** from Brooklyn  
**Anne Costello Coyne** from Manhattan  
**Linda Burke**, also from Manhattan

## Some Ex-Confederates in NYC Politics After the Civil War

On January 1, 1875, the *New York Times*, covering the incoming administration of Mayor William H. Wickham, a Tammany Democrat, reported without editorial comment Wickham's announcement of the appointment of Burton N. Harrison as his private secretary and chief clerk. The newspaper identified Harrison as the former secretary to President Jefferson Davis of the Confederate States of America. Indeed, Harrison had been captured with Davis by Federal troops during May 1865. Released from captivity early the next year, Harrison assisted Davis's counsel in efforts to secure the imprisoned Confederate president's freedom. Charles O'Connor, Davis's chief defender and a prominent New York Democrat, and Davis's wife, Mrs. Varina Howell Davis, advised Harrison to study law with a view to gaining admission to the New York bar, which he quickly did. Harrison subsequently served not only as secretary to Mayor Wickham, but (briefly) as chairman of Tammany's general committee. He also played roles in various presidential campaigns from 1876 through 1896.

The *Times* drew attention to the elevation of J. Fairfax McLaughlin to deputy county clerk. It attributed McLaughlin's rise to the patronage of Major William Quincy, a Confederate war veteran and fellow New York City office-holder. According to the newspaper, Quincy, "an early secessionist," had served in the Confederacy's

army throughout the war, mostly on the staff of General James Longstreet, but also for a brief time at Libby Prison, in Richmond. Although Quincy had not behaved as badly toward Union prisoners as the notorious Henry Wirz, at Andersonville Prison, the *Times* claimed, he had been "very dictatorial and offensive in his treatment of them." After the war, the article concluded, Quincy, "like many other Confederate officers," had come to New York City "to seek his fortune in the Tammany ranks." Quincy served as an order of arrest clerk in the sheriff's office and as secretary of the Tammany Hall general committee.

Excerpted from *Revenge of the Carpetbaggers: a Note on Ex-Confederates in New York City Politics After The Civil War* by Samuel T. McSeveney (Vanderbilt University)

New York History January 1992.

Some more of this intriguing subject in future *Dispatches*

### Answer

**They are all permanent residents of Greenwood Cemetery.**

**Cullum was Halleck's adjutant and married Halleck's widow. She and Schuyler Hamilton were grandchildren of Alexander Hamilton.**



# THE DISPATCH

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE  
OF NEW YORK

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