

# THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 61, No. 6

557th Meeting

February 2011



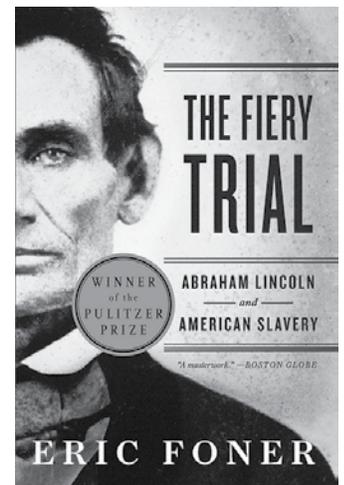
- Guest:  
**Barondess Lincoln Award**  
Eric Foner
- Cost:  
**Members: \$40**  
**Non-Members: \$50**
- Date:  
**Wednesday,**  
**February 8<sup>th</sup>**
- Place:  
**The Three West Club,**  
**3 West 51st Street,**
- Time:  
**Dinner at 6 pm,**  
**Doors open 5:30 pm,**  
**Cash Bar 5:30 – 7 pm**

**You must call 718-341-9811 by February 1<sup>st</sup>, if you plan to attend the February meeting.**

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

## Eric Foner: Winner of the Benjamin Barondess Lincoln Award for 2011

Our guest, De Witt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University, is one of this country's most prominent historians. He received his doctoral degree at Columbia and is the author of *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men, Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877*, among others. His most recent book is the Barondess Lincoln Award winner *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (winner of the Bancroft Prize, Pulitzer Prize for History, and the Lincoln Prize). His books have been translated into six different languages.



## 55th Annual Battlefield Tour October 12th–14th, 2012 Fredericksburg/Chancellorsville

Last year we used our sabers to cut our way out of Mosby's Confederacy. We now ride to join the main armies at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville October 12th–14th. Our guide will be park historian Frank O'Reilly, giving us a special sesquicentennial tour of the Battle of Fredericksburg, followed by General Lee's greatest victory—Chancellorsville. (The park has acquired new land, so you will be walking on fields you've never been on before).

So whether you wear the blue or the grey, it's time to enlist with a \$100 deposit. You can bring it to the meeting or mail it to our HQ at 139-33 250th Street, Rosedale, N.Y. 11422. For details call 718-341-9811.

## CIVIL WAR NEW YORK TOUR

Our Civil War New York tour will be held on Sunday, April 29th and will run from 10 am to 4 pm, depending on traffic.

We will visit, among other places, where Abraham Lincoln stood, and where he sat; the site of the Civil War's most unusual wedding; and the graves of some 513 Confederate and 2000 Union soldiers.

Please send a deposit of \$100 to Bud Livingston, 71-16 66th Street, Glendale, NY 11385.

Depending on attendance, the tour may cost less. If it does, you will get a refund.

## 2012 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2012

• **March 14<sup>th</sup>** •  
Fredericksburg  
George Rable

• **April 11<sup>th</sup>** •  
Grant at Shiloh  
Ed Bearss

• **May 9<sup>th</sup>** •  
Fletcher Pratt Award  
Amanda Foreman  
A World on Fire

## President's Message

For those of us in the Civil War community February is when we think of Lincoln, the man and the legend. But 150 years ago in 1862, the President was probably not thinking of his birthday on the 12<sup>th</sup> at all. There was just too much else to worry about. In fact, he had another president's birthday on his mind, that of George Washington on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. With the war either stalled, or proceeding at a snail's pace, in late January, he had directed all commands to advance against the enemy on or before the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. From General McClellan on down, most commanders would find excuses not to carry out these orders, furthering the President's frustration. But there would be one general who would not hesitate. Ulysses S. Grant would plan a campaign using naval and land forces that in less than three weeks would capture Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, more than 13,000 prisoners and casualties, and open up the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers as avenues of invasion. This at a cost of fewer than 3,000 Federals. It was sensational news for the North. "Unconditional Surrender" Grant was promoted to Major General of Volunteers, and became a household name from that point on. And yet a few days later, Mr. Lincoln would lose his twelve-year-old-son Willie to typhoid fever. Like the country itself, he would find a way to carry on, but the sense of loss was always with him. 150 years later, we still feel his loss, as we pause to remember the man and the legend.

— *Bill Finlayson*

## Book Review

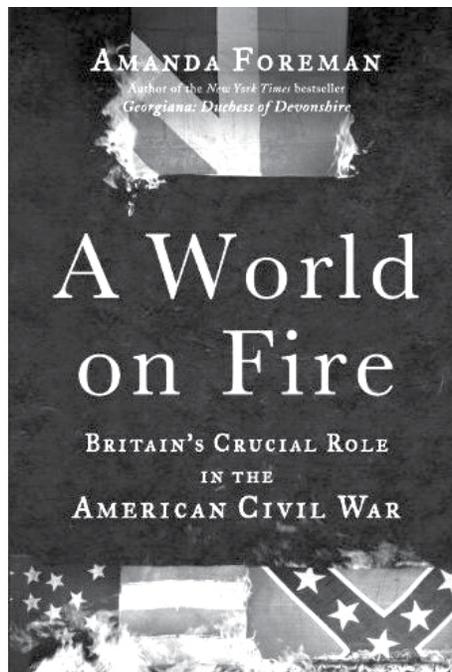
### A World on Fire

by *Amanda Foreman*

It is tempting for people reviewing *A World on Fire* to comment that it would be helpful to have taken a course in British history. It's not all that serious. Readers need not run out to the nearest college to find such a course. It could be interesting but not essential to appreciate Amanda Foreman's new book, which deals with divisions in British opinion about the Civil War. Perhaps John Russell, Henry John Temple Palmerston, William Ewart Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli are not as familiar as Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, U.S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, but the reader will get a sense of the widely divergent opinions about the struggle across the pond.

Two important points to remember. This book is not intended to emulate the excellent works by Howard Jones and others that study Civil War diplomacy (See his most recent book *Blue and Gray Diplomacy*). And one must keep in mind that England, as the United States, was undergoing a political revolution that led to realignments. During this period, changes would lead to the elimination in each

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## February during the Civil War

### 1862

6 – Flag Officer Andrew Foote (the teetotaler) beats U.S. Grant (allegedly the inebriate) to Fort Henry, and his gunboats pound the fort into surrender.

16 – N.B. Forrest, made of sterner stuff than John B. Floyd and Gideon Pillow, says in contempt of the behavior of his commanding officers, that he didn't join up to surrender. In bitter cold weather he leads 700 of his men out of the fort and heads for Nashville.

### 1863

5 – The Army of the Potomac's new commander, Joe Hooker, gives his boys a boost with furloughs, better food, and corps badges.

14 – Billy Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, does not receive a Valentine from Mrs. L. She despises him and he returns the compliment. He doesn't like Lincoln's children, either.

### 1864

9 – Union prisoners escape from the hell hole of Libby Prison, in Richmond. Fifty-nine reach Union Lines; the balance are recaptured or drown.

17 – The watchman of the USS *Housatonic* spies “something” approaching his ship. The “something” is the *Hunley* and with its spar torpedo it sinks the Union vessel and goes down herself to Davy Jones Locker.

### 1865

1 – Sherman's Bummers enter South Carolina, where it all began, and Uncle Billy writes to Henry Halleck, “I almost tremble at her fate, but feel she deserves all that seems in store for her. “ And South Carolina howls.

17 – Sherman's reputation as the most hated man in the south is forged as Columbia, S.C. burns down.

## NANCY HANKS LINCOLN'S GRAVE

According to Lincoln expert Edward Steers, Jr., Lincoln's mother's grave is marked with a sonnet. Lincoln had nothing to do with it nor did he speak about it. The current stone on her grave was placed there in 1879. It was paid for by Peter E. Stuebaker, second vice president of the Stuebaker company. He contacted Rockport Postmaster L. W. Gilkey and sent \$50 to buy the best available stone.

Stuebaker wished to remain anonymous. The stone reads:



**Nancy Hanks Lincoln**

**Mother of President Lincoln**

**Died Oct 5, 1818**

**Age 35 years**

**Erected by a friend of her martyred son 1879**

From *the Surratt Courier* June 2011

## ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S INDISCRETIONS

Today, we think of Robert Todd Lincoln as dignified and serious, as a man who adhered religiously to the rules of decorum and propriety. This was clearly not the case during his student days at Harvard, however. During Robert's junior year, President Lincoln received letters from two Harvard presidents reporting on his son's indiscretions: “smoking in Harvard Square” and being “on intimate terms with some of the idlest persons in his class,” resulting in his falling behind in course work. It is not known if Lincoln ever replied to these letters, since no record survives. It's hard to imagine that the “Prince of Rails” did not receive a stern word or two of advise from his father, considering how much the self-taught president valued education.

From *The Lincoln Forum* Spring 2011

## CONFEDERATE SYMPATHIES IN MARYLAND

William Charles Love, another Chaptico resident, had the distinction of being the only man in St. Mary's County to vote for Abraham Lincoln during the 1860 election. Afterward, Love shot his way out of an ambush at Plank Bridge near Leonard town as he started home.

In neighboring Charles County five brave souls voted for Mr. Lincoln. One, Nathan Burnham, was told by a citizen's committee to leave the country by January 1 or he would be “escorted” out.

From *the Surratt Society Courier* September 2011

*Continued from page 2*

instance of the Whig Party. New parties would fight the issues of the latter part of the 19th century (the British split stemmed from disputes over economic matters).

Ms. Foreman, who has done her research on the war, places great reliance upon reports from America by correspondents for British newspapers to develop the picture of public opinion about it. It can help to explain the divide in British policy which mirrors the divide manifested by those whose opinion counted. The Reform Act of 1832 had not added that many people to the voting rolls and the House of Lords was still a major factor, so we are dealing with customary forces but under new labels.

This is a well-written, well researched, contribution to the literature of the Civil War period and significant because it deals with one of the most important questions that confronted each side-what would be the attitudes and role of major European powers? It doesn't totally resolve the questions but it is a valuable asset in looking at the Civil War as an international issue. The reader will find it to be one of the most interesting books on the Civil War era in recent years.

*By Tom Ryley*



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OF NEW YORK

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

## FREEDOM AND SLAVERY

In the Northern states during the Revolutionary era, the situation was different. Minute slave populations there aroused little worry about the dangers of emancipation. Many northern slave holders voluntarily freed their slaves, as did some in Virginia, and each of the Northern legislatures adopted laws either abolishing or gradually phasing out slavery within the boundaries of its own state. The Southern legislatures did not. In short, the Revolutionary era turned American minds to liberty and thereby etched the line between liberty and slavery deeper into the landscape of American culture. On the map that line now became the border where the southernmost original free state, Pennsylvania, met the northernmost original slave state, Maryland, a boundary that took its name from colonial surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon. Thus, the intellectual dichotomy over slavery birthed a tangible geographical division. The Mason-Dixon Line would be the demarcation between bondage and freedom.

*This Great Struggle* by Steven E. Woodworth