

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 62, No. 3

564th Meeting

November 2012



• Guest:
Major Paul Belmont
Antietam: Risk vs. Reward
The Fantasies and Realities
of Financing Lee's
Gambling Habit of 1862

• Cost:
Members: \$40
Non-Members: \$50

• Date:
Wednesday,
November 14th

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

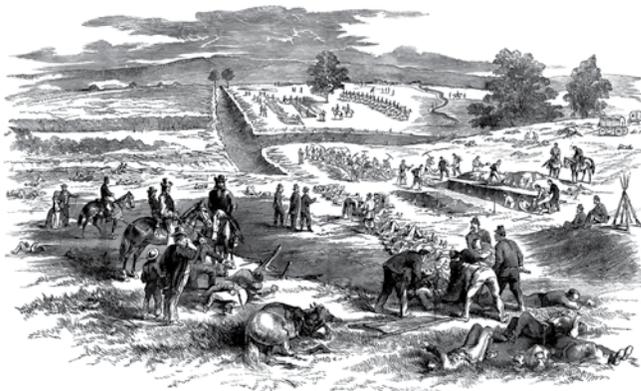
• Time:
Dinner at 6:00 pm,
Doors open 5:30 pm,
Cash Bar 5:30 – 7 pm

*You must call
718-341-9811 by
November 7th, if you
plan to attend the
November meeting.*

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

Major Paul Belmont: Antietam: Risk vs. Reward

Our November guest has been teaching history at West Point for the past three years. He earned his BA in history from VMI and his MA from James Madison University. His specialties are the Civil War and Reconstruction in Virginia and its Valley. He was commissioned in the Army in July of 2000 and has served tours in Iraq and Afghanistan with the 7th Corps Support Group and 10th Mountain Division. He appeared in the History Channel Special *Lee and Grant* as a talking head and also did historical proof editing and research for the script. He is currently working on a project involving secession at West Point.



TO MILLEDGEVILLE

Leaving the smoldering factory behind, the 154th New York marched at 7:00 am, sloshing along muddy roads. That morning the regiment passed near Turnwold plantation, the property of Joseph Addison Turner, publisher of the *Countryman*, a weekly newspaper produced on the plantation - a unique endeavor in the history of American journalism. The paper had almost 2,000 subscribers throughout the

Confederacy and was lauded by Southern editors. But for all his contemporary fame, Turner might had been lost to history had he not hired a teenaged typesetter from nearby Eatonton. At Turnwold, Joel Chandler Harris gained an intimate knowledge of plantation life, absorbed the stories and songs of slaves, plumbed Turner's extensive library, and published his first literary efforts.

From *Marching with Sherman* by Mark H. Dunkelman

2012 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2013

• December 12th •

Who was George G. Meade?
Allen Guelzo

• January 9th •

Lee/Jackson Night
William C. Davis

• February 14th •

Barondess/Lincoln Award

President's Message

November. It is a time filled with many great American traditions, not the least of which is the completion of our election cycle. We may grow weary of all the politics and electioneering, but this is the great cornerstone of our freedom. And we are reminded of those two elections of 1860 and 1864, where the stakes of our liberty were never higher and never more challenged. Next, we honor all our veterans in November. This is a good time to thank every vet that we know for their service and their sacrifice. I remember a former Round Table president telling me that as a teenager, he went to Gettysburg for the 75th reunion in 1938. He said that you could walk the streets, and just chat with thousands of veterans of the Blue and the Gray. Can you imagine that? They are all gone now, but if we could still speak to a Civil War veteran, what would we say? I'm sure that, "thank you," would be at the very top of the list.

And then there is Thanksgiving, a tradition that extends all the way to the early days of this nation. We celebrate our families, our people, and all our freedoms. It began as a regional giving of thanks, and it was President George Washington who called for the first nation-wide celebration in 1789. And in 1863 amidst the ravages of a terrible war, Abraham Lincoln signed legislation fixing the date as the final Thursday in November. It was then that it truly became the national holiday that it is today. And here at the CWRT of NY, we celebrate another tradition in November, that of our annual West Point night. This began fifty years ago during the Civil War Centennial, and we are proud to welcome back yet another distinguished member of the West Point faculty for a timely examination of the Battle of Antietam, 150 years after that terrible day.

As we share in these traditions, let us give pause to remember our great democracy, our veterans, our rich history, and all of our blessings. There is much to be thankful for as yet another November rolls around, once again.

— *Bill Finlayson*

SOME DOUBT ON GEORGE THOMAS

Some voices in the South remained skeptical of George Thomas's ability to contribute to his cause in any meaningful way. In the June 13, 1863, edition of *Southern Illustrated News*, a query regarding the Second Cavalry of prewar days led to a harsh assessment of the man who had been its major. "Major Thomas was a Virginian," the writer noted, employing the past tense to the identification, "and belongs to the "Black List" of old army men native-born to the South who adhered to the Lincoln Government." Then, perhaps conveniently forgetting the Mill Springs campaign and its decisive results, he added sarcastically, "He is a General now in the Yankee army, if we are not mistaken, but he has achieved nothing which causes his name to be much known in the war."



From *George Thomas As True As Steel* by Brian Steel Wills

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November during the Civil War

1861

7 – U.S. Grant “demonstrates” down the Mississippi at Belmont and his troops “see the elephant” for the first time in the war.

13 – On hearing that guests have been waiting for his return from the theater, and after ascertaining that it is only the president and the secretary of state, George B. McClellan deems it better to go to bed than to meet with them.

1862

5 – Tired of “shoveling flies across the barn,” President Lincoln replaces the man who “could do it all,” [Little Mac] with someone who can’t seem to do anything [Big Ambrose].

17–18 – The *San Jacinto*, of The *Trent* Affair fame, waits to fight it out with the *Alabama* off the Island of Martinique, but Raphael Semmes has better things to do and eludes the Union warship.

1863

9 – The theater-loving president sees *The Marble Heart* starring the current heart throb, J.W. Booth.

21 – At long last, President Lincoln says he has something to give to every body (a mild case of smallpox).

1864

8 – Delaware, Kentucky and New Jersey to McClellan. The rest elect Lincoln once again.

25 – Confederate terrorists terrorize New York City as they set fires in hotels and even in P.T. Barnum’s Museum. One perp, Robert Cobb Kennedy, is caught, tried, and hanged at Fort Lafayette and is buried in an unmarked grave at Fort Hamilton.

New Recruits

Mark and April Sepanski who collect Civil War memorabilia



Dues are due

If you haven’t already paid your dues, please send your checks in now. After October, the price rises to \$50. 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
First Category	\$40	\$60
Second Category	\$50	\$75
Third Category	\$100	\$150

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. Out-of-towners (75 miles or more) and students (full or part time and under 25) pay \$15.00 unless you are covered by your parent’s payment. If you joined up between January and March 2012, you owe only \$15.00. If you joined up in April, May, or June, you get a freebie.

Send dues to Treasurer Bud Livingston
71-16 66th Street, Glendale, NY 11385
Do not include your dues and dinner payment on the same check.

THE LEADERS OF LEE'S ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

The cannon roll past.

The endless lines of the infantry begin.

A.P. Hill leads the van. He is small and spare

His short, clipped beard is as red as his battleshirt,

Jackson and Lee are to call him in their death-hours.

Dutch Longstreet follows, slow, pugnacious and stubborn,

Hard to beat and just as hard to convince,

Fine corps commander, good bulldog for holding on,

But dangerous when he tried to think for himself,

He thinks for himself too much at Gettysburg,

But before and after he grips with tenacious jaws.

There is D.H. Hill – there is Early and Fitzbugh Lee-

Yellow haired Hood with his wounds and his empty sleeve,

leading his Texans, a Viking shape of a man,

With the thrust and lack of craft of a berserk sword,

All lion, none of the fox.

When he supersedes

Joe Johnston he is lost, and his army with him,

But he could lead forlorn hopes with the ghost of Ney

His big-boned Texans follow him into the mist.

From *John Brown's Body* by Stephen Vincent Benet

If you have never read it, you should.



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