

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 64, No. 3

584th Meeting

November 2014



• Guest:
Captain Mark Ehlers
Ben Butler's
Black Battalions

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

• Date:
Wednesday,
November 19th

• 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

Note change of date

*You must call
718-341-9811 by
November 12th, if you
plan to attend the
November meeting.*

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

Captain Mark Ehlers Ben Butler's Black Battalions

Our guest comes to us from West Point where he is a teacher of history. He has a BA (2004) and an MA (2005) from James Madison University, in Harrisonburg, Va. (*The Color of Courage: White Soldiers Response to Black Troops During the Civil War*), and he has a PhD (2011) from Louisiana State University US Army Advanced Civil Schooling Program (A Legitimate Empire: Napoleon and American Expansion 1803-1850).

He is also the author of *Ben Butler's Black Battalion* in *Paths to Innovation* (ed. Nick Sambaluk), *The 54th Massachusetts* in *The Encyclopedia of Civil War Daily Life*, and *Seeing the Elephant: Milliken's Bend, La. 1863*, War and Society 25, No. 1.

He has also lectured on the following subjects: R.E.Lee and West Point; The USCT in the Army of the James; and White Reaction to Black Soldiers at the Battle of Ocean Pond.

Beast Butler

As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subjected to repeated insults from the women calling themselves 'Ladies,' of NEW ORLEANS, in return for the most scrupulous NON-INTERFERENCE AND COURTESY on our part, it is ordered hereafter when any female shall by word, gesture, or movement, insult or show contempt for any OFFICER OR PRIVATE of the UNITED STATES she shall be regarded and held liable as A WOMAN OF THE TOWN plying her vocation.

By command of

MAJ, GEN BUTLER

15 May 1862 General Order No. 28



2014 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2015

• December 10th •

Thaddeus Lowe and the Civil War
Balloon Corps
Kevin Knapp

• January 8th •

The Death of Stonewall Jackson
Chris Mackowski

• February 11th •

Barondess Lincoln Award

President's Message

Grant's grand strategic plan has worked! With Meade holding Lee fast at Petersburg, Sherman's capture of Atlanta, Sheridan's victories in the Shenandoah, Farragut's neutralization of Mobile Bay—the Union armies and navies have boosted the North's confidence, and Abraham Lincoln has won re-election in November of 1864. And yet there is so much more to come as Sherman begins his famous "March to the Sea," and Confederate John Bell Hood moves North into Tennessee only to destroy his own great army first at Franklin and then at Nashville!

The purpose of my President's message is threefold.

If you attended our September meeting, you had the pleasure of enjoying the provocative and challenging discussion of the marvelous **Ed Bonekemper** on Ulysses S. Grant. If you didn't attend, you missed a great meeting.

If you attended our October meeting with **Peter Cozzens**, you had one of the preeminent Civil War historians, in the country, an author who, Civil War Magazine says, wrote "not one but two" of the 100 greatest books ever written on the conflict. Again, if you missed this meeting, it's really a shame.

If it was possible to get 100 percent of our members to attend every meeting, that would be phenomenal. In truth, it isn't. But if you haven't made every effort you can to come and join us, you are letting these **wonderful, golden opportunities** pass you by that just cannot be reproduced.

Please—for your own self-interest, intellectual curiosity, emotional satisfaction, intuitive leaps, plus a great meal, and perhaps the ability to gain a more profound understanding of this incredible conflict—make every effort you can to attend our **November 19th Meeting** at The 3 West Club.

Yes, we've had to change the date to the "third Wednesday" in November. Please join us as we continue the Round Table's tradition of "**WEST POINT NIGHT**." Come hear **Captain Mark Ehlers** discuss "Ben Butler and his Black Battalions" on our new night, Wednesday, November 19th! Don't miss it.

Call 718-341-9811 right now and reserve your place. See you there!

— Marty Smith

PS: As our Treasurer reminds me, "**Dues Are Due!**" If you haven't already sent them in, it's time to do it. If you have sent in your membership dues, thanks so much for your generosity! The Round Table appreciates it greatly.

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

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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	
Basic	\$50	\$70	
Silver	\$60	\$85	
Gold	\$110	\$160	
Out of Town	\$25	\$35	(75 miles or more)
Student	\$25		

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

71-16 66th Street, Glendale, NY 11385

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

November during the Civil War

1861

9 – Union troops capture Beaufort, S.C. without firing a shot. But is it Bee you fort, or Bow fort?

19 – The quote of the day courtesy of the minutes of the Confederate Congress:
“Liberty is always won where there exists the unconquerable will to be free.”
J. Davis

1862

5 – Good old Burn who insists he is not qualified for such a job, replaces G.B.McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. There are mistakes and there are mistakes.

8 – Ben Butler, the South’s least favorite general, in his farewell to New Orleans (which he cleaned up) shuts all the breweries and distilleries in town.

1863

24 – The revamped Joe Hooker sees his boys make him look better in the West than in the East as they storm their way up to conquer Lookout Mountain.

25 – George Thomas’s men get ahead of orders and push the Rebs off Missionary Ridge.

1864

4 – Uncle Billy Sherman laments, “That devil Forrest was down about Johnsonville and was making havoc among the gunboats and transports.”

8 – The two Georges - McClellan and Pendleton - get all of 21 electoral votes in an election that surprised many in that it was held at all in the middle of a civil war.

An Interesting Obituary

Jeb Magruder, 79, Nixon Aide,
jailed for Watergate, Dies.

Jeb Stuart Magruder was born November 5, 1934, on Staten Island. His father, who owned a print shop and was a Civil War buff, named him after JEB Stuart, a Confederate general.

Obituary, 5/17/14, N.Y.Times

Making Do Without a Civil War Battlefield

The Civil War seems a long way from St. Paul, Minnesota, 1,100 miles from Manassas; 1,000 miles to Gettysburg. Even the nearest battlefields, in Missouri, are hundreds of miles away.

So, if you are the Minnesota Historical Society, how do you give the ever-popular war a local twist in your offerings – particularly during the war’s 150th anniversary, which is being marked with museum exhibits around the country on almost every conceivable aspect?

Danielle Dart, a public programs specialist with the society, came up with this idea: instead of examining the brave deeds of Minnesotan soldiers during the war, talk about what happened when they returned home.

Minnesota became a state only in 1858 – three years before the war began. “This was our debut on the national stage,” Ms. Dart says, “Minnesota went big for Lincoln in 1860.” The state’s governor, Alexander Ramsey, was in Washington when Fort Sumter was fired upon. He immediately offered President Lincoln 1,000 volunteers – supposedly securing the state’s position as the first to officially offer a volunteer regiment to the Union cause, a point of pride to Minnesotans to this day.

The starting point for the Museum’s tour is Fort Snelling, built in 1819 on the banks of the Mississippi and now a historic site operated by the society. The fort was the Civil War portal for Minnesota...for 25,000 men this is where it started, and for those who survived, this is where it ended. About 20,000 returned; 2,500 of them were grievously wounded, most with missing limbs.

Here on the exposed parade ground and drafty barracks of Fort Snelling is where adjustment to civilian life began. Men would form up, get their last pay and then sit around and wait for the paperwork to be drawn up. Once discharged, they were on their own.

N Y Times March 20, 2014

Editor’s note.

There was one name conspicuously omitted from this article: A Doctor John Emerson’s slave, Dred Scott, who lived here and claimed to be free since the Wisconsin territory (home of Fort Snelling) did not allow slavery. And it would also have been nice to hear of the exploits of the 1st Minnesota, who also had a bayonet charge at Gettysburg.

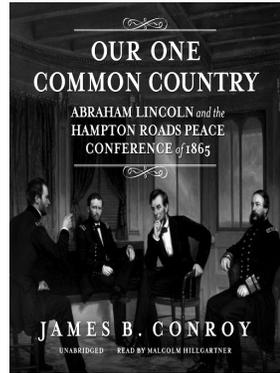
Book Review

One Common Country

by James Conroy

Early in January of 1865, with the Civil War winding down, Abraham Lincoln left the White House and headed for Hampton Roads, Virginia. On a vessel anchored in the harbor he met with representatives of the Confederacy to discuss peace and to see if arrangements could be developed which would end the conflict and terminate the rebellion. No agreement was reached and the war continued for another few months at the cost of thousands of lives.

There were enormous pressures on both sides. The situation in Mexico vexed the federal government and took up much of Secretary Seward's time. Relations with Britain were still strained and the presence of Confederates in Canada exacerbated the problem. The election of 1864 had sent Lincoln back to the White House but failed to give him the sort of supermajority he needed for his post-war plans. The battle over the 13th amendment was an omen for the president of things to come.



The South was losing and there was a well-documented split between pro-Davis and anti-Davis factions which hampered the government. Both sides had money problems but those of the Confederates were more acute.

A recitation of the pressures gives one the idea that an agreement on a “negotiated” peace would be difficult. But the Fire-eaters on both sides were strong, militant, and unbending and so it was not to be.

That there were those on the Union side who would have none of “welcoming back” the prodigal sons can be inferred from the knowledge of Reconstruction. People like Ben Wade and Thaddeus Stevens would have probably moved to impeach Lincoln had he succeeded. Some Southerners were unwilling because the war was for them a fight for a way of life and thus on a different level from most Union adherents. The abortive Hampton Roads conference was a precursor to Reconstruction and its sad chapter in American history. In short, while many referred to “One Common Country” it was not “One Common Cause.”

One Common Country is a well written, thoroughly researched book which illuminates a point in American history that many people know about but few know of. The author has done an admirable job and the reader will find it to be engrossing. Hopefully, James Conroy will find another aspect of Civil War history for a future book.

Tom Ryley



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