

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 67, No. 8

619th Meeting

April 2018

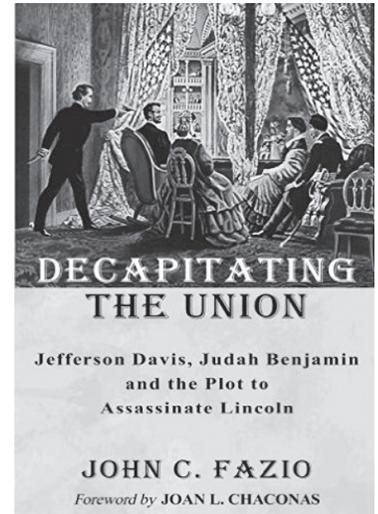


- Guest:
John Fazio
Decapitating the Union
- Cost:
Members: \$50
Non-Members: \$60
- Date:
Monday,
April 9th
- Place:
The Three West Club,
3 West 51st Street
- Time:
Dinner at 6:00 pm,
Doors open 5:30 pm,
Cash Bar 5:30 – 7 pm

You must call 718-341-9811 by April 2nd if you plan to attend the April meeting. We need to know how many people to order food for.

John Fazio Decapitating the Union

Our April guest holds a BA and JD from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. A retired lawyer, he is a member of the Cleveland CWRT, the Lincoln Forum, the Surratt Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society. He teaches Civil War history at Chautauqua Institution, frequently speaks on the war and other subjects before Roundtables and other groups and is the author of *Decapitating the Union: Jefferson Davis, Judah Benjamin and the Plot to Assassinate Abraham Lincoln*.



Last Known U.S. Slave Ship Appears to Have Been Found

A year before the Civil War, an Alabama businessman set out to win a bet with friends. The international slave trade had been outlawed for decades but he wagered he could smuggle slaves from Africa to the United States without being caught.

To prove it could be done, the businessman, Timothy Meagher, bought an 86-foot-long sailboat, the *Clothilda*, and hired its builder to trek to West Africa. Under the cover of night in July 1860 the *Clothilda* returned to the waters off Alabama with 120 slaves, carefully navigating the tributaries around Mobile to evade the authorities.

But a few miles north of Mobile, the captain and crew grew concerned that the authorities were on their trail. They unloaded the slaves and set the boat on fire on the muddy banks of the Mobile Tensaw Delta, the evidence of their illicit voyage, and the

last known American slave ship, never to be found.

Until now.

A reporter in Alabama said in an article published on Tuesday that he may have found the wreckage on the shore of a swampy island in the delta, thanks to the same weather system that produced a winter “bomb cycle” weeks ago.

The conditions caused extremely low tides in the area, allowing the boat to reveal itself: charred beams forming the shape of a vessel with almost the same exact dimensions of the *Clothilda*.

“That’s why I went looking when I did. You would not have been able to see it on a normal low tide; it would have all been under water,” said the reporter, Ben Raines of AL.com. Mr. Raines, an investigative reporter, is the son of Howell Raines, a former executive editor of the *New York Times*.

Excerpted from the *NY Times* article by Matthew Haag & Niraj Chokshi 1/24/18

2018 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2018

• **Monday May 14th** •
Fletcher Pratt Award
Ron Chernow for *Grant*

• **Monday June 11th** •
Patrick Schroeder
The Appomattox Campaign

• **Monday September 10th** •
Ed Bearss
On Everything

President's Message

This past month we heard from Ulysses S. Grant (also known as Dr. Curt Fields) who had previously mentioned that he did not wish to see Jefferson Davis put on trial and certainly not executed.

This month, we will hear from the opposite side as attorney John Fazio, makes the case why Jefferson Davis should have been indicted for his part in the murder conspiracy that killed Abraham Lincoln.

In May we eagerly await the presentation of the Fletcher Pratt award to Ron Chernow for his work on Grant.

In May we will also have our tour of Green-Wood Cemetery. Tickets will be \$35 and will include a two-plus hour tour of the cemetery and a boxed lunch. The tour will be conducted on an old fashioned trolley which will make stops at the monuments of General Thomas Francis Meagher, Fighting Tom Sweeney, General Henry Halleck and General Henry Slocum, among others.

We will assemble at Green-wood Cemetery gates before 1:00 p.m. The gate is located on 25th Street and 5th Avenue in Brooklyn. There will be plenty of free parking available.

For reservations call (718) 238-6500, ask for Adriana or Monica.

Checks should be made payable to the Civil War Round Table in the amount of \$35. Please register before March 31st.

Again, any further questions, please call (718) 238-6500.

MICHAEL N. CONNORS

61st ANNUAL BATTLEFIELD TOUR

Join Us As We Conclude Our Journey With...

The Appomattox Campaign: Lee's Retreat...Grant's Pursuit!

Thursday to Sunday, October 11-14, 2018

This year the Round Table will conclude its four-year Virginia journey as we travel the bloody roads South to RICHMOND, PETERSBURG AND—FINALLY—APPOMATTOX! The Round Table's 61st Annual Tour Guides include MIKE GORMAN from the Richmond National Battlefield and PATRICK SCHROEDER AND ERNIE PRICE from the Appomattox National Battlefield. They will complete the dramatic story of April 1865 as we walk in the actual footsteps of Lincoln, Grant, Lee and the hundred thousand soldiers who fought, died and suffered to bring peace to the greatest conflict in American history.

To Reserve Your Place:

Send your \$100 check (made out to "CWRTNY") and your complete contact information with your home phone number, cell phone, home address and email address to: Martin Smith/CWRTNY Tour, 158 West 81 Street #24, New York, NY 10024.

As a reminder, we need you to make reservations a week before the meeting - we must notify the 3 West Club at least 48 hours (business days only) before the meeting. Because we now meet on Mondays, there is no window if you call us the weekend before. Also, if you don't show up for the meeting after making a reservation and we have called in a certain number, we may have to pay for your dinner anyway, So from now on, we're going to charge the guest rate - \$60 - if you fail to make a reservation, and if you have a pattern of not fulfilling your reservations, we may ask you to pay for dinner. Now, we understand emergencies - illness, transportation problems, etc. We just ask that you let us know as soon as possible - that might allow us to fit in a late reservation. A little consideration would eliminate some of the guesswork we're required to use every month.

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April During the Civil War

1861

14 – The formal surrender of Fort Sumter. But where did the Union troops go after this? See page 4 for the answer.

20 – The Gosport Naval Yard is evacuated and Commandant Charles S. McCauley does a poor job of scuttling the *Merrimack* which has disastrous effects on the U. S. Navy.

1862

6 – Shiloh, bloody Shiloh. Grant is not there; Sherman is in denial, and Albert S. Johnston's rebels push the Union army toward the Tennessee River.

24 – David Farragut's fleet anchors off the blazing waterfront of New Orleans, and soon the largest city in the Confederacy will be conquered.

1863

16 – David Porter's vessels successfully run the gauntlet under Confederate guns at Vicksburg.

17 – A former Illinois music teacher and his boys head south with 1,700 Cavalry as Ben Grierson confuses the Pennsylvania man in command at Vicksburg. The Pennsylvania man's grandson will, some 88 years later, be one of the founding fathers of the CWRTNY: John Pemberton III.

1864

17 – Grant orders "no distinction whatever will be made in the exchange between white and colored prisoners, something that the Confederates cannot accept.

18 – The Battle of Mansfield or Sabine Crossroads. Zach Taylor's boy, Richard, vs. Nattie Banks and you can guess what happens. The Yankees skedaddle from the onrushing rebels.

1865

4 – President Lincoln, with little protection, takes a stroll through Richmond.

6 – Sayler's Creek and the last major battle between Lee and Grant.

The Civil War Phantom Limb Phenomenon

I had severely injured the nerves and muscles of my left leg while climbing in a remote part of Norway. I needed surgery to repair the muscle tendons and time to allow the healing of nerves. During the two-week period after surgery, while my leg was immobilized in a cast, bereft of movement and sensation, it ceased to feel like a part of me. It seemed to have become a lifeless object, not real, not mine, inconceivably alien. But when I tried to communicate this feeling to my surgeon, he said, "Sacks, you're unique. I've never heard of anything like this from a patient before."

I found this absurd. How could I be "unique?" There must be other cases, I thought, even if my surgeon had not heard of them. As soon as I was mobile enough, I started to talk to my fellow patients, and many of them, I found, had similar experiences of "alien" limbs. Some had found this so uncanny and fearful that they had tried to put it out of their minds, others had worried about it secretly but not tried to describe it to others.

After I left the hospital, I went to the library, determined to seek out the literature on the subject. For three years I found nothing. Then I came across an account by Silas Weir Mitchell, an American neurologist working at a Philadelphia hospital for amputees during the Civil War. He described, very fully and carefully, the phantom limbs (or "sensory ghosts" as he called them) that amputees experienced in place of their lost limbs. He also wrote of "negative phantoms," the subjective annihilation and alienation of limbs following severe injury and surgery. He was so struck by these phenomena that he wrote a special circular on the matter, which was distributed by the surgeon general's office in 1864.

Weir Mitchell's observations aroused brief interest but then disappeared. More than fifty years passed before the syndrome was rediscovered as thousands of new cases of neurological trauma was treated during the First World War. In 1917, the French neurologist Joseph Babinski (with Jules Fremont) published a monograph in which, apparently ignorant of Weir Mitchell's report, he described the syndrome I had experienced with my own injury. Babinski's observations, like Weir Mitchell, sank without a trace.

When, in 1975, I finally came upon Babinski's book in our library, I found I was the first person to borrow it since 1918.

From *The River of Consciousness* by Oliver Sacks



Watch The Antique Road Show

It seems that Civil War items continually show up on Channel 13's premier production.

On June 2, 2017, in Harrisburg, Pa., an unusual Enfield rifle was examined by an expert who made a startling discovery. The owner said his great-great grandfather, a Union veteran, had brought it home in 1865. Upon examination, the expert mentioned that certain numbers engraved on the weapon indicated that it was made in an English workshop for the Confederate army. The expert, Tim Price, of Castle Hill Arsenal Civil War Antiques, of Nashville, Tennessee, said the weapon was captured through the blockade.

This highly unusual English-made Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle Musket, purchased by the Confederate government, was worth around \$5,000 in the retail market.

More about Enfields in a later edition.

A Great Civil War Quote

Alexander Hayes, commanding the 3rd Division, II Corps, at Gettysburg against the Pickett-Pettigrew Charge, said afterwards, "My defenses were stone walls and since Jackson is dead I think I have a claim to his title."

From *Lincoln's Lieutenants*, by Steven Sears, submitted by Paul Weiss

Are there any other good quotes out there?

Election Slate

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Answer from Page 3

They went to Fort Hamilton, in the town of New Utrecht, which was not yet a part of Brooklyn.



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OF NEW YORK

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