

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 69, No. 10

641st Meeting

January 2021



- Guest:
Ty Seidule
Fellow, International Security Program
- Date:
Wednesday, January 13th
- Place:
Zoom
- Time:
at 7:00 pm

You must email cwrtnyc1@gmail.com or call 718-341-9811 by January 11th if you plan to attend the Zoom meeting. An email link will be sent to members prior to the meeting.

Ty Seidule

Fellow, International Security Program

Ty Seidule is a fellow in New America's International Security program. He is professor emeritus of history at West Point. His latest book *Robert E. Lee and Me: A Southerner's Reckoning with the Myth of the Lost Cause* will be published by St. Martin's Press in January 2021. The book challenges the myths of the Confederate legacy that still infect the nation. He is the Chamberlain Fellow at Hamilton College.

After thirty-six years in uniform, Seidule retired from the U.S. Army as a brigadier general in 2020. He served in the U.S., Germany, Italy, Kenya, Kosovo, Macedonia, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. Seidule is the creator and co-editor of the largest digital enhanced book in any field, the award-winning *West Point History of Warfare*. Three of his books won distinguished writing awards including the *West Point History of the Civil War*. His video lecture, "Was the Civil War About Slavery?" has more than 30 million views on social media. Seidule is a graduate of Washington and Lee University and holds a Ph.D. in history from the Ohio State University.

Dues are due

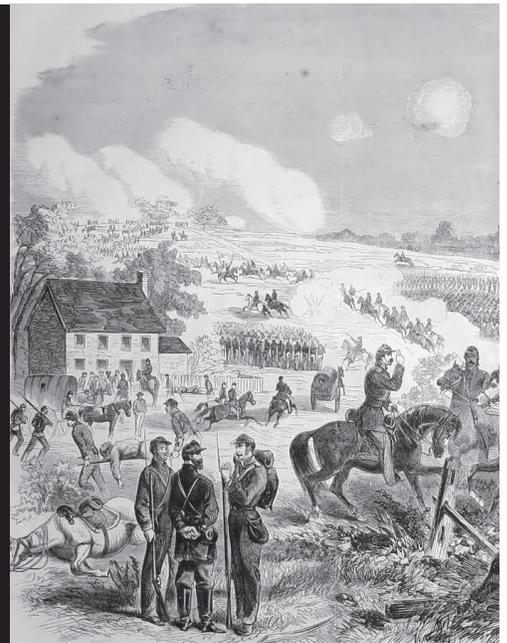
If you haven't already paid your dues, please send your checks in now. After October, the price rises to \$60. If we don't hear from you by January 1, we will be obliged to drop your name from our mailing lists. Sorry about that. We now have three yearly dues categories:

	Individual	Family	
Basic	\$40	\$80	
Silver	\$70	\$95	
Gold	\$120	\$170	
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 Connors and Sullivan | 7408 Fifth Ave. - Suite 2 Brooklyn, NY 11209 | Att: Cathey



2021 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2021

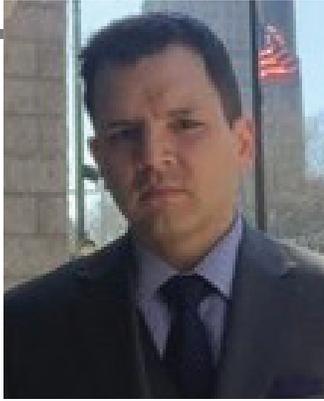
• January 13th (Zoom) •
Ty Seidule

• February 10th (Zoom) •
Barondess-Lincoln
Award Winner

• March 10th (Zoom) •
Jerome Preisler

President's Message

First and foremost, I want to wish everyone a happy New Year. Welcome back. While we are still dealing with the coronavirus, we do now have a vaccine and the means to end this global pandemic. Hopefully, we will be able to resume normal operations starting in September. In the meantime, we have an impressive roster of guest speakers lined up for our Zoom meetings.



Our guest speaker this month for our Lee/Jackson night is none other than Brigadier General Ty Seidule (Ret.), who was a professor in West Point's Department of History for nearly two decades. Prior to his retirement in 2020, he served for more than 35 years as an U.S. Army officer with command and staff positions in the United States, Italy, Germany, the Balkans, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. During the Cold War, he was a tank platoon leader in Germany. Professor Seidule graduated from Washington and Lee University and holds a Ph.D. from the Ohio State University. When he retired, he became the first professor emeritus of history in West Point's history. He currently serves as the inaugural Joshua Chamberlain Fellow at Hamilton College in Clinton NY.

His will be discussing his latest book, Robert E. Lee and Me, which will be published in 2021 by St. Martin's Press. The book is the perfect discussion point for our Lee/Jackson night and Professor Seidule will explain how his own opinions about Robert E. Lee have transformed throughout his life. From his southern childhood to his service in the U.S. Army, every part of his life reinforced the Lost Cause myth. He grew up faithfully believing that Lee was the greatest man who ever lived, and that the Confederates were underdogs who lost the Civil War with honor. Now, as a retired brigadier general and Professor Emeritus of History at West Point, his view has radically changed and we will be able to hear about it on Wednesday, January 13th, 2021 via Zoom. I look forward to seeing you all virtually. Thanks.

KRIS J. KASNICKI

Question of the month:

What Charleston shipping and banking firm had an English subsidiary that acted as the unofficial depository for Confederate finance overseas?

from: *Civil War Trivia and Fact Book by Webb Garrison*

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Civil War Events During the Month of January 1863

- January 1** Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation goes into effect
- January 2** The Battle of Stones River concludes
- January 9 to 11** The Battle of Arkansas Post (Fort Hindman), Arkansas
- January 12** Skirmish at Lick Creek, Arkansas
- January 17** Lincoln approves Congressional resolution authorizing the Treasury to issue \$100,000,000 in new notes in order to pay Union soldiers and sailors. President Lincoln also calls for regulation of the national currency
- January 22** Union Major General Ambrose Burnside's "mud march" ends in failure
- January 25** Burnside relieved of the command of the Army of the Potomac and replaced with Major General Joseph Hooker
- January 31** Confederate ironclads temporarily break the blockade in Charleston Harbor



National Currency Act of 1863

Local and sectional loyalties tore the country apart in 1861. The National Currency Act of 1863 was part of Congress's attempt to stitch it back together.

The National Currency Act of 1863 created the national banking system and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

The immediate challenge was meeting the costs of a civil war that vastly exceeded anything the government had confronted before. As the war ground on, the challenge of keeping the troops paid and provisioned became a crisis that rivaled the military challenges on the battlefield.

Congress acted on several fronts. Taxes were raised. Assets, especially land, were sold. Fiat currency—the unsecured paper known as green backs—was printed and used to pay

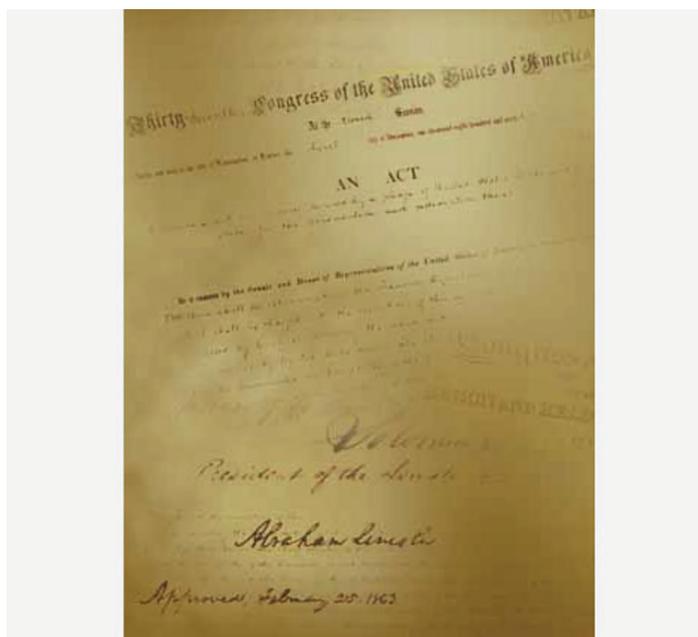
the troops and their suppliers. And the government borrowed. But in the face of military reverses that raised doubts about the government's prospects and permanence, bond sales faltered.

One of the purposes of the national banking legislation introduced in December 1862 was to stimulate bond sales and generate a rush of cash for the hard-pressed U.S. Treasury. The legislation would create the first national bank charter. Applicants would have to meet minimum capital standards, pass muster with the system's administrative officer (designated the Comptroller of the Currency), and be willing to buy U.S. bonds to be deposited with the Comptroller as security for the new national currency. Supporters of the legislation promised that tens of millions of dollars would be raised annually for the war effort through such bond sales; in the end, the wartime take amounted to a fraction of that.

Some members of Congress supported the national banking legislation as a simple act of patriotism. But the legislation's leading proponents—President Abraham Lincoln, Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase, and Ohio Senator John Sherman—saw the legislation not only as a way to tap the North's wealth and win the war but also as a means to assure the future greatness and permanence of the United States.

At the heart of their vision was a safe, sound, and reliable banking and monetary system. The OCC would write uniform rules that would apply to all national banks and send examiners into the banks to make sure those rules were being followed. The national currency itself would be identical except for the name of the issuing bank and the signatures of its officers. The idea behind the system was simple, but the system's impact on commerce, public confidence, and national unity would be profound.

Taken from the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency website



Answer:

John Fraser and Company

LITTLE GIFFEN

BY FRANCIS ORRAY TICKNOR
(1822 – 1874)

Out of the focal and foremost fire,
Out of the hospital walls as dire,
Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene,
(Eighteenth battle, and he sixteen!)
Spectre! Such as you seldom see,
Little Giffen, of Tennessee.

“Take him- and welcome!” the surgeons said;
“Little the doctor can help the dead!”
So we took him and brought him where
The balm was sweet in the summer air;
And we laid him down on a wholesome bed-
Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

And we watched the war with abated breath-
Skeleton boy against skeleton death.
Months of torture, how many such!
Weary weeks of the stick and crutch;
And still a glint of the steel-blue eye
Told of a spirit that wouldn't die.

And didn't. Nay, more! In death's despite
The crippled skeleton learned to write.
“Dear Mother,” at first, of course; and then
“Dear Captain,” inquiring about the men.
Captain's answer: “Of eighty-and-five,
Giffen and I are left alive.”

Word of gloom from the war, one day;
“Johnston pressed at the front, they say.”
Little Giffen was up and away;
A tear-his first-as he bade good-by,
Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye.
“I'll write, if spared!” There was news of the fight;
But none of Giffen. He did not write.

I sometimes fancy that, were I king
Of the princely knights of the Golden Ring,
With the song of the minstrel in mine ear,
And the tender legend that trembles here,
I'd give the best on his bended knee,
The whitest soul of my chivalry,
For Little Giffen, of Tennessee.

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Attn: CWRTNY Membership
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The Devil's Own Work

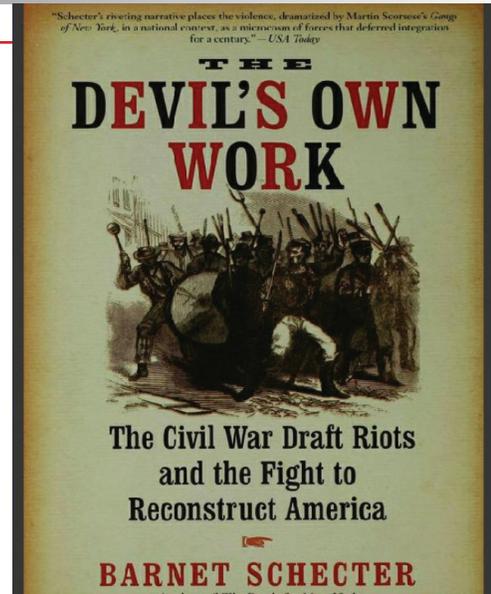
by Barnet Schecter

Reviewed by John Allan

This 2005 book deals with the full span of pre-Civil War through the end of Reconstruction, discussing how and why the 1863 Draft Riot occurred and how it influenced New York City's history in the post-War era. In fact, 7 chapters cover the pre-War politics of New York City (this is before Consolidation and pertains mostly to New York County), 8 chapters cover the Draft Riot and an equal number cover the time frame from the Riot to the end of Reconstruction. The names of the military holding sway in the area will ring bells, but not necessarily because of their Civil War records. Major General John Adams Dix (former Senator and namesake of Fort Dix); Brigadier General Harvey Brown (commanding all military units near New York Harbor); Major General Charles Sandford (Major General of the New York State National Guard); Major General John E. Wool (the oldest general in EITHER army at the beginning of the Civil War); Colonel Robert Nugent (who led the "Fighting 69th" from 1st Bull Run through Fredericksburg); and Captain Henry Roscoe Putnam (wounded at 1st Manassas; commander of what is now Fort Hancock on Sandy Hook, NJ, and descendant of the Revolution's Major General Israel Putnam). In fact, all but Putnam and Nugent were born in the 18th Century and saw service in the War of 1812 and Mexican War. The communication difficulties - and diverse opinions on how best to quell the Riot - between the New York Police, the New York militia, and the U.S. Army are also discussed.

Schecter does a good job "setting the table" and retaining an overview of the effect the Riots might have on the Union's war effort: sentiment of Northern voters with Lee's Army of Northern Virginia invading Pennsylvania and John Hunt Morgan raiding Ohio. The event diminished the thrill of a major victory at Gettysburg and the opening of the Mississippi (via the capture of Vicksburg and Port Hudson). Extant conflicts each contributed to the Riots, whether based on politics (Republican/Democrat), culture (Know Nothings/Irish and German immigrants), race (white/black) or religion (Protestant/Roman Catholic). Timing was important, too, with the emergency militia raised to counter Lee's invasion having recently departed for Pennsylvania.

The tightrope walked by those charged with quelling the Riot is also discussed. Should deadly force be used? Martial law declared? What to do with those arrested? While the paths taken by, and progression of, the Draft Riots makes interesting reading, I found the chapters on the time after the Riot through the end of Reconstruction to be equally fascinating. For example, the Draft resumed the next month, on August 19, and



"Boss" Tweed was among those selected! Needless to say, he didn't serve. In fact, about 1,000 men were called up and applied for relief. Through the efforts of Tammany Hall politicians, substitutes were found for all these men. Schecter contends these efforts stimulated the creation of bounty brokers (think "press Gangs") and bounty jumpers.

What were the punishments meted out to the approximately 450 suspects arrested during the Draft Riot? Only 75 were indicted, with half charged with any crime. Sixty-seven individuals were found guilty, with 25 receiving sentences shorter than 6 months. Most of these received lighter sentences by plea bargaining. And 10 indicted cases were dismissed for insufficient evidence. The City paid only about \$1.5 million to settle damage claims. The human cost? "Official" documents put the death toll at 105 including 6 soldiers and 3 policemen. Some 119 died if the cause of death was indirectly the result of the Riot (whatever that means...). Other documents place the death toll of persons of color at 175. This resulted in a significant reduction in Manhattan's Black population and is seen by Schecter as "a prelude to the formation of large Black ghettos in New York and other cities".

An appendix entitled "A Walking Tour of Civil War New York" includes sites in all five boroughs (perhaps "walking tour" is overly ambitious, unless including walking onto/off of MTA conveyances). When combined with the late "Bud" Livingston's wonderful article and tour in the Holiday 1996 issue of "Blue & Gray" magazine, a pretty thorough tour of what remains of Civil War New York can be made.

Schecter is also author of "The Battle for New York", covering the American Revolutionary actions in and around (modern) New York City. If you haven't read it yet, it is recommended! It does a good job of covering the City's occupation by British forces until Evacuation Day.