MONTHLY CHRONOLOGY FOR 1863

Dec. 2 - Boat expedition from the U.S.S. Restless reconnoiters Lake Ocala, Fla., and destroys important salt works, as well as machinery and supplies.

Dec. 3 - A correspondent for a Northern newspaper reports: "The hope of victory over Lee in Virginia may as well be given up, at least until next spring... Last night's dispatches say that Gen. Meade has led his army again to the old camping grounds on the line of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, where the brave fellows will probably settle to go into winter quarters."

Dec. 6 - U.S.S. Weehawken founders while tied to a buoy inside the bar of Charleston Harbor, drowning two dozen officers and men.

Dec. 7 - Navy Secretary Welles reports the Union blockade covers a distance of 3,549 statute miles and 189 harbor or pier openings along the Southern coast, and that the North's navy is made up of 34,000 seamen and 388 ships.

Dec. 7 - Seventeen Confederates, led by John C. Breine, seize the steamer Chesapeake off Cape Cod after disguising themselves as passengers, but she later is recaptured by the U.S.S. Ellia and Annie in Sambro Harbor, Nova Scotia.

Dec. 8 - Addressing the Confederate Congress in his annual message, President Davis reports that "there has been no improvement in the state of our relations with foreign countries since my message in January last" and their action "in some cases has assumed a character positively unfriendly."

Dec. 8 - The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passes a vote of thanks to Gen. U.S. Grant and orders a medal struck in his honor.

Dec. 8 - President Lincoln issues a proclamation offering amnesty to Southerners who agree to certain conditions.

Dec. 10 - Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore is reported to be using Greek fire in connection with the continued bombardment of Charleston.

Dec. 12 - The Confederate raider, John Hunt Morgan, who fled from an Ohio prison in November, is said in press dispatches to have escaped across the Tennessee River at Gillespie's Landing 60 miles from Chattanooga.

Dec. 13 - Correspondence between Rebel officials at Richmond and officers charged with distributing supplies sent for the relief of Union soldiers imprisoned there shows, the Northern press reports, that "the Rebels have acted fairly in this matter and have properly appropriated clothing and food."

Dec. 16 - The New York Times notes that President Davis, in his annual message, declared paper currency issued by the Confederate Government exceeded the wants of the community by $100,000,000 and proposed to reduce it to the desired amount by direct taxation. On a basis of the number of families in the states still subject to Confederate jurisdiction, the newspaper points out, this would mean a tax of $7,130 per family.

Dec. 21 - Confederate Admiral Franklin Buchanan writes that the Tennessee, the ironclad the Southerners are building for duty in Mobile Bay, is ready for officers, men and guns.

Dec. 22 - Raphael Semmes, the dreaded Confederate sea raider, writes from Singapore that the North's East India and China trade is so nearly broken up that ships find it impossible to get freights.

Dec. 25 - Semmes captures two ships with the C.S.S. Alabama and is told by the master of one of them: "I have had constant visions of the Alabama, by night and by day; she has been chasing me in my sleep, and riding me like a nightmare, and now that it is all over, I feel quite relieved."

Dec. 26 - A Northern journal gives this Christmas report: "The holidays are bare of news of a belligerent character. All the armies are quiet. The Army of the Potomac is paying more attention to sutlers' supplies, fresh oysters, milk, etc., than to the enemy."

Dec. 31 - Union Navy Secretary Welles writes in his diary: "The year closes more satisfactorily than it commenced... The war has been waged with success, although there have been in some instances errors and misfortunes. But the heart of the nation is sounder and its hopes brighter."

AT THIS TIME OF NATIONWIDE MOURNING, The National Commission feels personal and particular grief over the loss of its ex-officio chairman, President John F. Kennedy. Members of the Commission knew so well that Mr. Kennedy had an active, keen interest in American history. He kept closely abreast of Centennial affairs; and in his tremendously busy schedule, he almost always seemed to find the time to fill requests for special messages to be read at commemorative events.

Appropriately, if not fatefuly, his last participation in the Civil War Centennial came on the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. To those assembled at Gettysburg Mr. Kennedy sent a message, which in a sense is his epitaph:

(more)
"From the past man obtains the insights, wisdom and hope to face with confidence the uncertainties of the future. Abraham Lincoln was keenly aware of this when, a century ago, he journeyed to Gettysburg to make 'a few appropriate remarks.'

"Today, as we honor Lincoln's immortal eulogy to the dead on Cemetery Ridge, let us remember as well those thousands of American patriots whose graves at home, beneath the sea and in distant lands are silent sentries of our heritage.

"Lincoln and others did indeed give us 'a new birth of freedom,' but the goals of liberty and freedom, the obligations of keeping ours a government of and by the people, are never-ending. "On this solemn occasion let us all re-dedicate ourselves to the perpetuation of those ideals of which Lincoln spoke so luminously.

"As Americans, we can do no less."

THE DEMAND FOR COPIES of the student handbook on the Civil War was such that the National Commission's entire first printing of 50,000 copies lasted less than three weeks. Orders poured in from all fifty states and seven foreign nations. Twenty-nine state commissions each requested quantities ranging from 500 to 1,000 copies for distribution in their areas. Some of these bulk orders have not as yet been filled; it has also become necessary to forward to pertinent state commissions many individual requests received at National Commission headquarters.

A second printing of the handbook should be ready for nationwide distribution commensurate with the appearance of this newsletter. However, it too is expected to have only short-lived existence. Over 8,000 orders awaited the second printing. In addition, CBS Television made mention of the booklet on a recent coast-to-coast program. Orders resulting from the latter will no doubt carry distribution past the 100,000-copy mark.

LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG ADDRESS received elaborate and solemn homage in ceremonies held November 17-19 at Gettysburg, Pa. Marking the first two days of observances were speeches and discussions by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Prof. David Donald of The Johns Hopkins University, Prof. Robert Bloom of Gettysburg College, Judge Raymond P. Alexander, Allistair Cooke, Archibald MacLeish, and Congressman Fred Schwegel of Iowa.

The climax of the program came on the afternoon of November 19, when an estimated 8,000 persons gathered in the national Cemetery. There ex-President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Governor William W. Scranton, and Publisher E. Washington Rhodes delivered short speeches on the impact of Lincoln's words. Famed contralto Marian Anderson rendered two well-known hymns. Two of the more moving moments in the 50-minute ceremony came when the Valley Forge Military Academy band presented a special arrangement of "Taps," and the U. S. Marine Band played "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" while Judge Michael A. Musmanno recited the immortal Address.

HONORS FOR A HOOSIER SOLDIER

More than 300 persons recently gathered in Hartsville, Indiana, for the dedication of a marker over the grave of Pvt. Barton W. Mitchell. It was this soldier in the 27th Indiana Infantry who on September 13, 1862, discovered the discarded copy of Lee's Special Orders 191. From this valuable find McClellan moved against Lee and the battle of Antietam Creek resulted. The dedicatory program held at Hartsville was under the direction of Miss Mildred Murray, past state regent of the Daughters of the Union. In the photograph on the extreme left, Maj. R. F. Rose and his son Warren, direct descendants of Pvt. Mitchell, unveil a plaque to Mitchell's memory on the town square of Columbus, Indiana. Members of the reactivated 19th Indiana Volunteers (right) fire a salute over the grave and new headstone in the Hartsville cemetery.
"...WE HERE HIGHLY RESOLVE..."

Shown here are solemn moments in the November 19 commemorative program at the Gettysburg National Cemetery.

In the top photograph, Pennsylvania Governor William W. Scranton speaks on the significance of Lincoln’s remarks at Gettysburg. Seated on the front row are (left to right): the Rt. Rev. Earl M. Honaman, Sufferer Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese, Harrisburg; Miss Marian Anderson; John C. Bell, Jr., Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court; ex-President Dwight D. Eisenhower; Lt. Gen. Milton B. Baker, chairman of the Gettysburg Centennial Commission; Justice Michael A. Musmanno of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court; Lt. Gov. Raymond P. Shafer; E. Washington Rhodes, president of the National Newspaper Publishers Association; and the Rev. Joseph P. Kealy, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, Gettysburg.

Gen. Eisenhower (bottom photograph) officially re-dedicates the cemetery before movie cameras and an attentive audience.

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION continues to move ahead with its proposed annotated bibliography of books on the Civil War. In the past month, three additional compilers were added, leaving only two of fifteen sections still unfilled. Invitations are already out for editors of the remaining sections. Co-editors of the bibliography are Drs. Allan Nevins, Bell I. Wiley and James Robertson. The following is a tentative list of section titles and compilers:

GENERAL WORKS: Dr. Daniel W. Hollis, University of South Carolina.

BIOGRAPHIES, MEMOIRS, COLLECTED WORKS OF IMPORTANT LEADERS AND KEY PERSONALITIES: editor to be named

MILITARY ASPECTS -- MOBILIZATION, ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPLY: Dr. Archer Jones, Virginia Polytechnic Institute

MILITARY ASPECTS -- CAMPAIGNS: Dr. Warren Hassler, Jr., Pennsylvania State University

MILITARY ASPECTS -- SOLDIER LIFE: Dr. James Robertson, U. S. Civil War Centennial Commission

THE UNION -- GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Dr. Rodney C. Loehr, University of Minnesota

THE UNION -- STATE AND LOCAL STUDIES: Dr. William E. Parrish, Westminster College

THE UNION -- ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS: editor to be named

THE CONFEDERACY -- GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Dr. Martin Abbott, Oglethorpe University

THE CONFEDERACY -- STATE AND LOCAL STUDIES: Dr. Malcolm C. McMillan, Auburn University

THE CONFEDERACY -- SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: Dr. May S. Ringold, Clemson College

THE NEGRO: Dr. Dudley T. Cornish, Kansas State College at Pittsburg

DIPLOMACY: Dr. Norman Ferris, Middle Tennessee State College

THE NAVIES: Dr. Thomas Wells, Northwest Louisiana College

PRISONS AND PRISONERS: Dr. Frank Byrne, Creighton University.

The National Commission heartily welcomes any suggestions readers may have regarding the compilation and publication of this bibliography.
A NEW PUBLICATION from the Tennessee Civil War Centennial Commission has just rolled from the presses. Entitled "Directory of Monuments and Memorials in Tennessee," the 93-page work contains not only pictures of, but also inscriptions on, each and every one of the Civil War monuments in Tennessee. This handsome volume is available at a cost of one dollar, postpaid, from the Tennessee CWCC, G-5 Library and Archives Building, Nashville 3.

RECOGNITION AND ADDED DUTIES were recently accorded two Centennial stalwarts. Adam G. Adams, personable chairman of Florida's Civil War Centennial Commission, was first named to the Florida Library and Historical Commission and then elected chairman of that new agency. In addition to supervising the Florida State Library and taking the lead in all state historical projects, this commission also absorbs the duties and activities of the Florida CWCC. Farther north, Herman Blum, who needs no introduction to Lincolnites and Civil War students in the Middle Atlantic States, was recently appointed by Governor William Scranton to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. This well-deserved assignment insures Mr. Blum’s continued and active interest in the Field of Civil War history.

DAVIS HOME TO HOUSE LIBRARY

PLANS FOR A RESEARCH LIBRARY at "Beauvoir," the Biloxi, Mississippi, home of Jefferson Davis, are now well-advanced. W. A. Blackledge, manager of the shrine, is earnestly seeking books on Davis and the Confederacy for the new depository. Persons wishing to donate or loan such volumes to this library should contact Mr. Blackledge at "Beauvoir." The former Confederate president’s home faces the Gulf of Mexico on Biloxi’s West Beach Boulevard. The city itself is a year-round tourist attraction. Historically speaking, Biloxi has been under eight different flags.

GEORGE W. HILL, director of the Texas Centennial Commission, is also the new chairman of the Confederate States Conference. He succeeds John A. May, chairman of the South Carolina Commission, who had presided over the Conference since its formation in 1960.

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

Pictured at right is downtown Atlanta, Georgia, as it appeared after Federals occupied the city in September, 1864. In less than one hundred years, Atlanta has risen to become one of the metropolitan giants of the South.

The Seventh National Assembly of the U. S. Civil War Centennial Commission, and the annual conclave of Civil War Round Tables, will be held jointly in Atlanta, June 10-13, 1964. Headquarters will be the Atlanta Americana Motor Hotel, Spring Street and Carnegie Way.

THE THIRD ANNUAL AMERICAN HISTORY WORKSHOP, under the sponsorship of the New Jersey Civil War Centennial Commission, will be held Saturday, December 14, on the campus of Rutgers University. Noted Author Earl Schenck Miers is this year’s program coordinator. Among the many planned exhibits will be an elaborate display of the recently discovered papers and Civil War memoirs of General Robert McAllister. At the first of two afternoon sessions, four Princeton professors will discuss "Unanswered Questions Posed by the Civil War." The second session will treat of New Jersey’s role in the Civil War." Participants include Richard McCormick of Rutgers, Robert M. Lunny of the New Jersey Historical Society, and James Robertson of the National Centennial Commission. Prof. James W. Silver of the University of Mississippi will speak at an evening banquet.