MONTHLY CHRONOLOGY FOR 1864

Feb. 1 - Confederate General Thomas L. Rosser, winding up his raid through West Virginia, captures the guard at Patterson's Creek, bringing off 1,200 cattle, 500 sheep, and 30 prisoners.

Feb. 1 - A Union Army expedition, supported by two warships and aimed at capturing an enemy camp and a quantity of tobacco, is hampered by fog and repulsed near Smithfield, Va., with the loss of the gunboat Smith Briggs.

Feb. 2 - A Confederate boat expedition led by John Taylor Wood, grandson of President Zachary Taylor, using boats shipped by rail from Petersburg, Va., captures and destroys the U.S.S. Underwriter, anchored in the Neuse River near New Bern, N.C.

Feb. 3 - Richmond newspapers received in the North report that General Lee has issued an order putting his men on reduced rations and exhorting them to endure patiently the hardships occasioned by this reduction, which he hopes will be only temporary.

Feb. 3 - Union gunboats silence Confederate batteries at Liverpool, Miss., on the Yazoo River as naval forces begin an expedition to prevent enemy troops from following Gen. W. T. Sherman's rear on a projected expedition to Meridian, aimed at strengthening the Federal hold on Vicksburg by destroying the railroads and resources of central Mississippi.

Feb. 7 - The Confederate garrison at Richmond, warned by a Union deserter, drives off cavalry and infantry under Gen. Isaac J. Wistar sent against the city from Fort Monroe. Each Union soldier is equipped with matches, files and other items needed to release the Federals held in the prisons of the Confederate capital.

Feb. 9 - Joseph Lenty, an English refugee who has worked in Richmond for four years, brings the North its first news that the Confederates are making torpedoes which resemble pieces of coal, a device that is blamed for several unexplained explosions during the remainder of the war.

Feb. 9 - One hundred and nine Union prisoners, after spending weeks secretly digging at night a tunnel under the street beside Libby Prison in Richmond, make their escape, but 48 of them are recaptured before reaching the North.

Feb. 10 - the dreaded raider C.S.S. Florida escapes to sea from Brest, France, where she has been laid up for repairs since August.

Feb. 11 - Confederate Guerrilla Harry Gilmor, with 28 men, derails a B. & O. express train from Baltimore near Martinsburg, W. Va., robs its passengers and escapes with its mail bags, departing just in time to avoid a loaded troop train from the west.

Feb. 17 - The Confederate submarine H. L. Hunley becomes the first vessel of her kind to sink an enemy ship in combat by destroying the U.S.S. Housatonic off Charleston. In so doing, the underwater craft sinks for the third time, drowning her entire crew and bringing to 20 the number of men who perished in her.

Feb. 18 - The Confederate Congress adjourns until May, after naming April 8 as a day of fasting and prayer.

Feb. 20 - Federal troops under Gen. Truman Seymour, after taking Jacksonville, Fla., as a base, are attacked near Olustee and routed, with heavy losses on both sides.

Feb. 22 - The Richmond inquirer warns: "If Grant defeats Johnston, Georgia and Alabama are open to him, and Mobile will fall without a struggle."

Feb. 23 - Farragut, in preliminary action leading toward the battle of Mobile Bay, bombards Fort Powell for three days with mortars on light-draft vessels, but the action is little more than a waste of ammunition.

Feb. 28 - Three thousand Union cavalrymen under Gen. Judson Kilpatrick move off after dark from Stevensburg, near Culpeper, Va., trailing 300 other horsemen led by young Col. Ulric Dahlgren, son of Admiral John A. Dahlgren. Their destination is Richmond, where they plan to burn the city and release Federal prisoners.

AMID ONE OF THE WORST BLIZZARDS IN YEARS, some eighty persons on the evening of January 13 attended the National Commission's symposium on Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Nine inches of snow and sleet fell on the day of the program. That this function was the only one in Washington not postponed on the evening in question, and that it did attract a good gathering in the face of meteorological adversities, are testimonials to the unbending interest of Civil War students. Everyone in attendance agreed that the papers presented by Messrs. Lowell, Niebuhr, Goodhart, Dos Passos, and Douglas--as well as comments by moderator Nevins--provided collectively one of the most stimulating and enlightening programs of the Centennial. Commission Chairman Nevins is now investigating possibilities for having the five papers published commercially in an attractive volume.
NEW COMMISSION MEMBER

As the new Director of the National Park Service, Mr. George B. Hartzog, Jr., automatically became a member of the National Commission. Mr. Hartzog is a native of Colleton County, S. C., an attorney by training, and recipient of three awards for meritorious service in the government field. He has been associated with the Department of the Interior and National Park Service since March, 1946, and Associate Director of the latter agency since February, 1963. He moved up to the post of Director of NPS upon the retirement January 1 of this year of Conrad L. Wirth.

BRUCE CATTON has been named to the National Commission's Executive Committee. Chairman Nevins made the appointment at a January 14 meeting of the Commission. Mr. Catton fills the vacancy created by the retirement on January 1 of National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth. The Executive Committee now consists of Bell I. Wiley (chairman), Mr. Catton, W. Norman FitzGerald, Jr., Sen. Ralph Yarborough, and Alvin L. Aubinoe.

REQUESTS FOR THE STUDENT HANDBOOK have all but exhausted the National Commission's supply of 100,000 copies. Printing and mailing costs have made a third edition of the booklet prohibitive. As a result, the National Commission has asked the Government Printing Office to reprint, sell, and distribute through their offices copies of the handbook. The Commission is gratified at the willingness of the Superintendent of Documents to keep the publication in print. Although the Commission will continue filling requests for the booklet as long as its supply lasts, orders after that point will have to be directed to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

APOLOGIES ARE IN ORDER to those visitors who in the past month went to the Commission's new offices and found them freshly painted but empty. Owing to a veritable series of unforeseen obstacles, the transfer of National Commission headquarters was postponed from one week to another. At this writing, all concerned can but hope that the Commission offices will be firmly established in the new bivouac by the time this newsletter appears.

AT A RECENT CEREMONY IN NORFOLK, VA., the descendants of Col. Walter H. Taylor presented that officer's voluminous and enlightening Civil War papers to the Norfolk Public Library. Taylor was General Robert E. Lee's chief of staff, and he was probably with the Confederate commander more than anyone else during the Civil War. His papers include a large number of letters written by Taylor to the girl whom he married in the last days of the Confederacy. Taylor's memoirs, Four Years with General Lee, were recently reprinted.
NEW JERSEY'S FORGOTTEN GENERAL

The New Jersey CWCC and Rutgers University Press have announced the forthcoming publication of the voluminous Civil War correspondence of Brevet Major General Robert McAllister. Although a New Jerseyan by adoption, McAllister served successively as commander of the 1st N.J., 11th N.J., Second New Jersey Brigade and, at various times during the war, temporarily commanded divisions in the III and II Corps. He still found time during the war to write approximately 400 letters home to his wife and two daughters. The letters are lengthy, detailed, and critical commentaries on both battles and leaders. James Robertson, Executive Director of the National Commission, is editing the collection, which will be published in one large, or two regular-size, volumes.

THE PRISON ROUND TABLE AT RICHMOND, VA., now has a "brother organization." Under the impetus and leadership of Jim Murfin and his ever-active Hagerstown CWRT, a new Round Table has just been formed at the Maryland Institute for Men at Roxbury. The initial membership numbered twenty-eight men. The group meets each Friday evening and, because of its proximity to Sharpsburg, has named itself The Antietam Civil War Round Table. This new organization earnestly requests to be placed on the mailing lists of all Round Tables and gladly welcomes any literature for its library. All correspondence should be directed to The Antietam CWRT, The Maryland Institution for Men, c/o Mr. Robert W. McCooley, Box 2000, Route 3, Hagerstown, Maryland.

THE FARDEST ADVANCE ACROSS INDIAN TERRITORY by any Federal force during the Civil War will be commemorated February 13 by the Oklahoma Civil War Centennial Commission. On that date a century ago, an all-day fight occurred near Atoka in the Indian Territory between forces under Federal Colonel W. A. Phillips and Confederate General D. H. Cooper. The Confederates retired at the end of the day's engagement; lacking reinforcements, the Federals withdrew the next morning to Fort Gibson. The battle site, along the banks of the Middle Boggy River, is owned by the Oklahoma Historical Society. In addition to ceremonies planned on February 13, an attractive cachet will be applied to all outgoing letters mailed on the battlefield during the ceremony. Those wishing the cachet may forward as many covers, stamped and prepared for mailing, as they desire to the Oklahoma CWCC, 1108 Colcord Building, Oklahoma City.

"THE ANGEL OF MARYE'S HEIGHTS"

This statue, soon to be cast in bronze, will remind Americans of one of the most heart-warming incidents of the Civil War. During the battle of Fredericksburg, and at great risk to his life, Confederate Sgt. Richard Kirkland made several unauthorized trips onto the battlefield in order to give water to wounded and dying Federal soldiers. Hundreds of muskets were leveled at him, but not one shot was fired. This statue of Kirkland and an unnamed Federal soldier will be erected on the Fredericksburg battlefield near the locale where Kirkland performed his extraordinary services. The state commissions of Virginia and South Carolina (where Kirkland was born) are sharing the cost of the monument. Felix de Weldon, creator of such monuments as the "Flag-Raising at Iwo Jima," is preparing the work.
VERMONT CIVIL WAR HEMLOCKS, INC., a new organization of Civil War gun and uniform enthusiasts, is seeking additional members. Although the group is as interested in preserving Vermont's wartime history as it is the weapons and equipment of the period, it welcomes inquiries from across the nation. The person to contact is Mr. A. R. Fisher, 28 Sumner Avenue, St. Johnsbury, Vermont.

A DATE CHANGE for the centennial observance of the battle of Mansfield, Louisiana, has been announced by De Soto Parish CWCC Chairman J. A. H. Slawson. The commemoration will take place April 4-5, instead of April 8, as previously announced. The re-dating was made necessary in order to accommodate a large number of Texans who plan to attend the program. The battle of Mansfield was a turning point in Banks' 1864 Red River Campaign. Speakers, parades, memorial services, tours and arms demonstration will highlight the two-day affair. For further information, contact the Mansfield Battle Centennial Committee, P. O. Box 85, Mansfield, Louisiana.

THE CIVIL WAR ON TV

Viewers of WAVY-TV in Norfolk, Va., are now receiving and enjoying a weekly, half-hour program on the Civil War. Writer, producer, and single star of "The Last Full Measure," as the program is called, is Marine Lt. Col. Richard H. Kern. Although his primary job is Communications-Electronics Officer of the Norfolk-based Atlantic Fleet Marine Force, the Colonel finds ample time to pursue his favorite hobby: studying and talking about the conflict of the 1860's. Those who watch "The Last Full Measure" say that Col. Kern has cultivated his hobby to a superb point.

ANOTHER HISTORIC CIVIL WAR LANDMARK, the Old Randolph House built in 1798, is now being restored. The building is at Farmville, Va. There on the night of April 7, 1865, Grant made his headquarters; and there he wrote Lee for the first time, suggesting that they put an end to the "effusion of blood." The older part of the Randolph House, including the room where Grant wrote his famous note, will be preserved as a museum and showplace. The formal reopening of the building is scheduled for September. Farmville is 25 miles from Appomattox and 6 miles from the Sayler's Creek battlefield.

THE JOHNSON COUNTY (MO.) HISTORICAL SOCIETY announces the availability of two mimeographed publications relative to the Civil War. One is a partial listing of veterans of the Revolutionary, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars buried in Johnson and Hickory County cemeteries. The other is a statistical history of the 7th Regiment, Missouri State Militia Cavalry in the Civil War. Each booklet is priced at $1.20 per copy and may be ordered from Sherman Lee Pompey of the Johnson County Society, Warrensburg, Missouri.

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