MONTHLY CHRONOLOGY FOR 1865

Feb. 1 - Secretary of State Seward leaves Washington for City Point to confer with the Confederate peace commissioners who appeared on Jan. 29 in front of the lines at Petersburg, Va.

Feb. 2 - After receiving a telegram from Secretary Seward, President Lincoln leaves by special car from Annapolis to board a government vessel waiting to convey him to Fortress Monroe.

Feb. 3 - Empress Carlota protests to Empress Eugenie against any further reduction of French forces and asks for more troops in Mexico to fight the Jurists, opening a haven for Confederates who flee the country to avoid Union rule.

Feb. 4 - Lincoln and Seward return to Washington after conferring for four hours with the Confederate commissioners on board a ship in Hampton Roads in a peace effort the press reports as a failure.

Feb. 5 - The Confederate guerilla leader, Harry Gilmer, sent by Gen. Jubal Early to direct independent activities in the area around Moorefield, W. Va., is surprised and captured in bed on the second floor of a home by a party dispatched on his trail by Gen. Phil Sheridan.

Feb. 6 - Union forces engaged in the Petersburg Campaign are attacked by Gen. John Pegram's division while reconnoitering toward Dabney's Mills, and Pegram is killed.

Feb. 7 - President Davis submits the report of the peace commissioners to the Confederate Congress, revealing that the North had refused to negotiate except on its own terms, including unconditional submission and acceptance of legislation for the emancipation of the slaves.

Feb. 8 - Gen. R. E. Lee is assigned to overall command of all Confederate armies.

Feb. 9 - Jurist General Porfirio Diaz, with 4,000 men, is captured by French Marshal Bazaine at Oaxaca, Mexico.

Feb. 9 - A large crowd gathers in a church at Richmond to bear prominent leaders, including President Davis and some of the peace commissioners, report on the situation, warn of danger, and swear to back the Confederacy to the end.

Feb. 10 - Lincoln reports to Congress on the peace efforts, giving in detail the successive steps taken but making no comment.

Feb. 11 - Gen. U. S. Grant visits Washington to testify before the Committee on the conduct of the war, reporting that the exchange of prisoners is to be carried on at the rate of 3,000 a week until the entire number held by one side or the other is exhausted.

Feb. 16 - James H. Seddon, appointed Secretary of War for the Confederacy on Nov. 21, 1862, resigns that position on account of his health.

Feb. 17 - As Union troops push into Columbia, S. C., after it had been surrendered by the mayor, fire breaks out, destroying over half the city before it is extinguished by the Federals, but the Confederates charge that the invaders had deliberately set it.

Feb. 17 - Charleston, S. C., is evacuated by the Confederates and the Union flag is raised over Fort Sumter for the first time since April, '61.

Feb. 18 - John Yates Beall, ardent Confederate from Virginia serving in the Confederate Navy, is hanged as a spy, drawing strong protests from exchange authorities in Richmond.

Feb. 18 - Raphael Semmes, recently returned from England months after the sinking of his dreaded Alabama and honored with a rear-admiralty, is appointed to command the James River Squadron, succeeding Flag Officer John K. Mitchell.

Feb. 21 - Young Jesse McNeill, son of the guerrilla leader John Hanson McNeill, fatally wounded the preceding summer, guides a small band of men into Cumberland, Md., at 3 a.m. and captures Union Generals Ben Kelley and George Crook from their beds in separate hotels.

Feb. 22 - Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston is given command of all troops in the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, succeeding Gen. W. J. Hardee.

Feb. 22 - Fort Anderson in North Carolina is captured, opening the way for Union troops to capture Wilmington, hastily evacuated by the Confederates.

Feb. 27 - Blocked for months in his efforts to move his army up the Shenandoah Valley to break the Virginia Central Railroad at Charlottesville and then join Grant in a final assault on Richmond, Sheridan for the third time starts his troops marching southward. He finds the guerrillas comparatively quiet through lack of leadership, with the senior McNeill dead, Gilmer in prison, and Mosby recuperating from a wound.
OWING TO PRESSING legislative matters arising in the Congress this spring, Sen. A. Willis Robertson has been forced to cancel his acceptance of an invitation to address the delegates at the May 1-4 National Assembly. In a letter to National Commission director James Robertson, the Virginia legislator stated that his declination came of necessity and "with genuine regret." The program committee is now investigating possibilities as to a replacement for Sen. Robertson.

DR. HERMAN BLUM of Philadelphia, who recently attained octogenarian status, last month received a new honor to add to his many laurels. The Lincoln Civil War Society of Philadelphia bestowed on Dr. Blum an achievement citation in recognition of his work in the fields of American history and scientific research. Two miniature statues of Abraham Lincoln were presented to the well-known collector, historian and founder of the Blumhaven Library and Gallery.

IN ADDITION TO BEING a recognized authority on Civil War prisons, Dr. Frank Byrne of Creighton University also possesses an historical sense of humor. Last month Mrs. Byrne gave birth to the couple's first child. Frank (who is one of the National Commission's bibliography compilers) announced the event with a 6 x 9-inch broadside: "Soul-Searing Suffering!!! Of a Civil War Centennial Prisoner!!! The Henry Wirz Camp, United Confederate Veterans of Andersonville, Georgia, Proudly Announces the Publication of: 'Inside Yankeeedom'; or, Nine Months' Imprisonment at the North; Being a History of Hellish Hardships, Including Cramped Quarters, Vile Rations, and Forced Marches through the Yankee Capital Endured by Anne Louise Byrne of the Rebellious Infantry. Also a Particular Account of the Prisoner's Daring Escape at Omaha, Nebraska Terr., on December 29th 1964, When This Victim of Atrocious Abuse Was Reduced to a Weight of 6 Pounds, 9 Ounces, And a Height of 21 Inches."

THE MARYLAND CWCC completed its Centennial activities and closed its headquarters as of January 31. The Maryland program, which was both varied and valuable, attracted nationwide attention on many occasions. Its commission members and associates are deserving of high praise. Former executive director Park W. T. Loy of the Maryland CWCC may now be contacted at 55 E. Irvine Ave., Hagerstown, Md.

FORT McALLISTER, A CENTURY LATER

The National Commission's October, 1964, newsletter contained a set of three photographs of Fort McAllister, Ga., before restorative work began. Shown above are three recent photographs of the fort following its renovation. At left is one of the restored "hot-shot" ovens. No trees or grass were inside the fort at the time of the Civil War.

The center photograph is of a restored personnel "bomb-proof." The passageway at right leads to a small room used as a headquarters. The beams and timbers were of "live oak," a very heavy and long-lasting wood. The new headquarters and museum building at the fort is shown at right. Fort McAllister is a facility of the Georgia Historical Commission. It is situated south of Savannah at Point Genesis on the Ogeechee River, and it can be easily reached via highways US 17 and Georgia 63.

The National Commission is indebted to the Georgia CWCC for the use of these photographs.