MONTHLY CHRONOLOGY FOR 1865

Mar. 1 - A torpedo sinks the Harvest Moon, flagship of Real Admiral John A. Dahlgren, in Georgetown Bay while he sits waiting for breakfast. The vessel goes down in less than five minutes, but only one life, that of the wardroom steward, is lost.

Mar. 1 - Confederate President Jefferson Davis proclaims Mar. 10 a day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer.

Mar. 2 - Union Gen. Phil Sheridan's forces, after moving with little difficulty up the Shenandoah Valley from near Harpers Ferry, attack the remnants of Jubal Early's army near Waynesboro, Va., and scatter it, capturing men, flags, guns and supplies, but missing Generals Early, Long, Wharton and others, who manage to escape.

Mar. 4 - The 38th United States Congress adjourns after an all-night session marked near its close by passage of the all-important Army Appropriation Bill.

Mar. 4 - After a rain storm of several hours, the inaugural procession, moving over streets deep in mud arrives at the Capitol shortly before noon, and President-elect Lincoln, who has been on Capitol Hill all morning, and Vice President-elect Andrew Johnson are escorted to the Senate chamber to be sworn into office.

Mar. 4 - U.S. transport steamer Thom is sunk by a torpedo in Cape Fear River in North Carolina, the crew barely escaping.

Mar. 5 - A man named Thomas Clemens arrives in Washington from Alexandria and is arrested by police after boasting that he had planned to assassinate Lincoln during the inauguration.

Mar. 5 - The New York Times says in an editorial: "We have a president who will be faithful to the end, let what betide."

Mar. 10 - Maximilian protests that Marshal Bazaine squanders funds "constantly and light-heartedly" and involves the Mexican Imperial Government in costly enterprises.

Mar. 14 - Destruction by the Confederates of the ram Neuse, anchored in the Neuse River near Kinston, N.C., is reported in Federal dispatches.

Mar. 15 - Intense antagonism is aroused against Maximilian because of the placement of French customs officials to collect all revenues at Mexican ports on the Pacific and the Atlantic.

Mar. 16 - Unusual activity in the lines of Gen. Lee around Richmond gives rise to rumors in Washington that the Confederate capital is to be evacuated.

Mar. 17 - The coast survey steamer Bibb, returning to Charleston after surveys along the bar, is damaged by a torpedo and beached.

Mar. 18 - The Federals succeed in raising the ironclad ram Albemarle, sunk at Plymouth, N.C., in the fall of 1864 by a torpedo fired from a small boat by a party led by Lt. Wm. B. Cushing.

Mar. 18 - The Confederate Congress adjourns sine die at 3 p.m.

Mar. 19 - Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, trying to keep the Federals under Sherman from joining forces with Gen. Schofield and Terry, launches several desperate attacks at Bentonville, N.C., and then withdraws his troops to a position protected by a swamp, where he remains until the 21st and then retires toward Smithfield.

Mar. 20 - Union Gen. George Stoneman, with 4,000 cavalry and a battery of artillery, moves north from Wilkesboro, N.C., on a raid into Southern Virginia designed to aid Sherman's campaign, but the move is too late to be of much value.

Mar. 25 - Lincoln, who had left Washington for City Point on Mar. 23, gets a view of Rebel lines around Petersburg by starring from the parapet of a fort during a visit to that area.

Mar. 25 - Hoping to shorten Grant's lines and release troops to be sent to the aid of Johnston in North Carolina, Lee captures Fort Stedman near Petersburg, but later is forced to give it up after losing about 3,500 men, 1,900 of them prisoners.

Mar. 27 - The guerrilla chieftain, Mosby, once more back with his Rangers after an absence of more than two months while recuperating from a wound, is ordered by General Lee to watch the country west of Gordonsville, Va. The message says in part: "Your command is all now in that section."

Mar. 29 - Marking the start of the Appomattox Campaign, Grant, sensing that Lee is planning to move southward in an effort to join up with Johnston, especially in view of the failure of the attack on Fort Stedman and the arrival of Sheridan's cavalry on the Petersburg front, orders an attack on the right of the defenses.
Dr. James Robertson, executive director of the National Commission, is shown presenting the Commission's Gold Medallion to President Lyndon B. Johnson in special ceremonies held February 12 in the East Room of the White House.

In bestowing this special award, Robertson stated: "This Medallion is presented to the President not merely because he is Honorary Chairman of the United States Civil War Centennial Commission, but more especially because in his long political career Mr. Johnson has personified the words of Generals Grant and Lee inscribed on this medallion: 'Let us have peace,' and 'Consciousness of duty faithfully performed.'"

The medal is a solid gold replica of the Commission's Centennial Medallion. Only two others have been struck, and they were presented to Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy.

PLANS FOR THE EIGHTH and final National Assembly are nearing completion. Co-sponsors for this year's meeting are the National and Illinois Centennial Commissions. Below is the tentative schedule of events as compiled to date by the program committee.

The Assembly will be held in Springfield, Ill., May 1-4, 1965. Headquarters for the meeting will be the Leland Hotel. For room reservations, all interested persons should contact Miss Louise Murphy, Association of Commerce and Industry, 325 E. Adams St., Springfield. All other inquiries relative to the meeting should be addressed either to National Commission headquarters or to Miss Mary Lynn McCree, Illinois CWCC, Centennial Building, Springfield.

A registration desk will be located on the 2nd floor of the Leland. Registration hours are: Friday (April 30), 5-9 p.m.; Saturday through Monday (May 1-3), 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Those who arrive on Friday, April 29, will be treated to two events. The Franklin Insurance Co. will sponsor a reception, followed thereafter at 8:30 p.m. by a special presentation of Mark Van Doren's new play, "The Last Days of Lincoln." The Southern Illinois University Players will perform the drama in the Centennial Building Theater. Admission is free to assembly delegates.

The agenda for Saturday morning (May 1) will concentrate on Lincoln's Illinois. An open house and slide-and-lecture session will precede a special luncheon at which Glenn H. Seymour will be principal speaker. Walking tours of Lincoln's home and other historic spots in Springfield will occupy the early afternoon hours.

At 3:30 p.m. on Saturday the National Assembly's official sessions will begin. Drs. John Y. Simon and Frank E. Vandiver will discuss the publication projects for the papers of Ulysses S. Grant and Jefferson Davis, respectively. The Chicago Civil War Round Table will host a reception later in the afternoon. At 7 p.m. the day's activities will conclude with a banquet at the Holiday Inn. Gov. Otto Kerner of Illinois will head a list of dignitaries who will attend. Special music is planned, and playwright Mark Van Doren has agreed to deliver the major address.

Sunday morning (May 2) is being left open to allow delegates to attend the church of their choice. A 12:30 p.m. brunch will then be held at the Leland. James Robertson of the National Commission is tentatively slated to be main speaker at this session. The afternoon will be devoted to a bus tour of the village of New Salem. Delegates will receive dinner at the state park, after which a well-known figure will speak. A special performance of "Lonesome Train" will be staged for the delegates before the return to Springfield.

Monday's full schedule begins with a 9 a.m. panel discussion on causative factors of the Civil War. Participants will be Drs. Avery O. Craven (Wisconsin), Richard N. Current (Wisconsin), and Harold M. Hyman (Illinois). Following a coffee break, a second panel will round out the morning's activities. Gov. Kerner will be principal speaker at a noon luncheon. Sen. Paul H. Douglas (D-Ill.) is also scheduled to make an appearance at this latter affair.

"Where We Stand in Civil War Scholarship" will be the theme of Monday afternoon's panel. Delegates will hear the views of Paul M. Angle, National Commission chairman Allan Nevins, and others. Gov. Kerner will then host a pre-dinner reception. A banquet in the ballroom of the Hotel St. Nicholas will follow. Speaker for that event will be announced later. (more)
PRES. JOHNSON SPEAKS ON LINCOLN - Approximately 110 persons were invited to the White House February 12 for a luncheon and program honoring Abraham Lincoln. (See story elsewhere in this newsletter.) The day's events began in the historic East Room, where, after receiving the National Commission's Gold Medallion, the President addressed the assembled guests and news media. In the photograph above, members of the National Commission and Mrs. Johnson are seated on the two front rows. Noted actors Sidney Blackmer (white-haired gentleman in the 2nd row just to the left of center) and Royal Dano (leaning forward immediately above Mr. Blackmer's head) are recognizable.

The 8th National Assembly officially ends Tuesday, May 4, with a mid-morning memorial service at the Lincoln Tomb marking the centennial of the martyred president's interment. This program is being arranged by the Illinois CWCC, and it is hoped that President Lyndon B. Johnson will take part in the ceremonies. Plans are also underway to try and arrange an informal luncheon for state and national commission officials, who possibly will be meeting together for the last time.

The Chicago CWRT earnestly hopes that Round Tables from across the nation will join with other delegates to this National Assembly. The Chicago group invites inquiries relative to the meeting. The address to write to is 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, 11.

It should be emphasized that some of the above events are subject to change in time and content. Appropriate announcements will be made of all major alterations in the program. In the meantime, persons who plan to attend this National Assembly should make room reservations at once. The number of available rooms at the headquarters hotel is limited.

VIRGINIA will wind up its highly successful commemoration of the Centennial on April 9 with simple but solemn ceremonies at Appomattox. The 2 p.m. program will include official dedication by the National Park Service of the recently restored court house, music by the Quantico Marine Base band, and an address by noted historian and National Commission member Bruce Catton. This centennial observance is under the joint sponsorship of the Virginia Commission, the Appomattox Civil War Centennial Committee, and the National Park Service. A large attendance is expected.
SPRINGFIELD SCENES

Pictured above are two sights in Springfield, Ill., that will become familiar to delegates attending the Eighth National Assembly, May 1–4, 1965. At left is the Leland Hotel, which will be headquarters for this final annual meeting of Centennial officials and enthusiasts. The hotel is situated in the heart of downtown Springfield.

At right is the imposing edifice that towers above the graves of Abraham Lincoln, his wife, and three of their children. Known as the Illinois Tomb State Memorial, the monument stands on a commanding eminence in Springfield's Oak Ridge Cemetery.

PRESIDENT AND MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON were hosts at a special Lincoln Day luncheon held February 12 at the White House. Among the 110 invited guests were members of the National Commission, representatives of state commissions, Lincoln scholars and enthusiasts, and such noted Lincoln actors as Raymond Massey and Royal Dano. The program began in the East Room. Vice-President Hubert Humphrey introduced National Commission director James Robertson, who in turn presented the President with the Commission's Gold Medallion. Following luncheon in the State Room, the President and Mrs. Johnson conducted the guests on an informal tour of the White House. The day's program ended at the Lincoln Memorial, where Mr. Johnson placed a wreath at the imposing statue of the nation's 16th chief executive.

IN COOPERATION WITH the Rhode Island CWCC, Gen. Harold R. Barker has completed a volume entitled "History of the Rhode Island Combat Units in the Civil War." Copies are now available. Interested persons should contact Gen. Barker at R. F. D. 1, Pascoag, R. I.

DANVILLE, VA., will be the site April 3–10 of ceremonies commemorating the city's role as "Last Capital of the Confederacy." It was to Danville that Jefferson Davis, his cabinet, and many of the Confederate governmental agencies fled upon the fall of Richmond. For a week the Southern government functioned at Danville while hoped and prepared for a rendezvous at that southern Virginia town of the armies of Lee and Joseph E. Johnston. Following the news of Lee's surrender, Davis and his followers left Danville and headed southward. The city's commemoration of that historic week will include displays, costumes of the period, a parade, and a special ceremony on April 3 at which National Commission director James Robertson (a native of Danville) will be principal speaker.

MEETING OF PRESIDENTS

President Johnson stands in meditation after placing a wreath before the world-famous statue of Abraham Lincoln in Washington. Members of the national and state centennial commissions, plus a select group of Lincoln scholars, enthusiasts and actors, accompanied the President in special buses from the White House to the Lincoln Memorial for this simple ceremony on the 156th anniversary of Lincoln's birth.