

# THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER

Vol. XI, #8 Bulletin of the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table April 1997



**Richard Moe on the Life and Death of the 1st Minnesota.** Mr. Moe, traced the history of this famous regiment, from its being the first volunteers to be offered to the Federal government to the "charge that saved the Union" at Gettysburg, July 2, 1862. To those who did not attend they missed an entertaining speech. We look forward to having Mr. Moe back for a future visit.

## Next Meeting

Thursday April 10, 1997 at the Yankee Dinner. 6 PM Social Hour with dinner at 7 PM. Choice of Swiss Steak or Roast Turkey The main entree is served with Caesar Salad, Biscuits, fresh vegetables, potatoes or rice with the chicken along with coffee or tea. Price is \$16.00 a person. Please write your menu choice, name and the name of any guests on the enclosed card and mail it ASAP

## Program

**David E. Long, author of The Jewel of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln's Re-election and the End of Slavery, and professor of History at East Carolina University will be our speaker in April. Professor Long graduated from Ohio State University in 1969 and earned a law degree from that institution in 1972. After a successful career as a prosecutor in the Florida State Attorney's Office, he decided to change careers in order to facilitate his interest in American History, earning a Masters from Florida State University in 1990 and a Ph. D. from that same school in 1993. His**

President - Clyde Cherberg - Vice President - Dr. William Trier - VP Programming - Pat Brady - VP Bulletin - Jeff Rombauer - Treasurer - George Hood - Assistant Treasurer - Tom McCarthy - Secretary Marc Duval - Circulation - Carole Murray - Directors W. H. Bennett, Jr. - Sue Crichton - Jim Dimond - Donald Larson - Rachel Roberts - Lin Russell - Rick Solomon - Past President - Don Murray

## Thanks

At our March meeting, we once again had an overflow crowd to hear the excellent presentation by author

topic for the evening will be on Lincoln & the Emancipation Proclamation.

## This Month in the Civil War

On April 10th, 1865 the most famous General Order in the history of the Army of Northern Virginia was prepared and issued by Gen. Robert E. Lee. "After four years of arduous service marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, The Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. . . You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed . . . I bid you an affectionate farewell."

## HUMORS OF THE CAMP FIRE

It is related that a gentleman from some Northern city entered Mr. Lincoln's private office in the spring of 1862 and earnestly requested a pass to Richmond. "A pass to Richmond!" exclaimed the President. "Why, my dear sir, if I should give you one it would do you no good. You may think it very strange, but there's a lot of fellows between here and Richmond who either can't read or are prejudiced against every man who totes a pass from me. I have given McClellan and more than two hundred thousand others passes to Richmond, and not a darned one of 'em has yet gotten there.!"

*Confederate War Journal 1893.*





## NEW BOOKS

Two new books on Confederate generals have appeared in local bookstores this past month. First, the long awaited new biography of "Stonewall" Jackson by James I. Robertson, Jr. **Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend** has been published by Macmillan. [New York, 1997 Pp. xxiii, 950 \$40]

This work has already received high praise in the New York Times Book Review and should become the standard biography of Jackson for years to come. The other new biography is **Stonewall of the West: Patrick Cleburne & The Civil War** by Craig L. Symonds. [Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997 \$35] Considered one of the South's finest division commanders, Cleburne met his death at the Battle of Franklin in November 1864.

### Books Seeking Home

Deon Sinsel, the grandson of the late Col. Richard Sinsel is seeking a good home for books from his grandfathers collection. Available at reasonable prices are a number of Civil War books, books on railroad history and fire fighting. Among the civil war books are a complete set of Images of War, a set of Touched by

## GOD SAVE THE SOUTH.

By Reuben Nason

GOD bless our Southern land!  
Guard our beloved land!  
God save the South!  
Make us victorious,  
Happy and glorious;  
Spread Thy shield over us;  
God save the South!

God of our sires, arise!  
Scatter our enemies,  
Who mock Thy truth;  
Confound their politics,  
Frustrate their knavish tricks:  
In Thee our faith we fix;  
God save the South!

In the fierce battle-hour,  
With Thine almighty power,  
Assist our youth;  
May they, with victory crowned,  
Joining our choral round,  
With heart and voice resound,  
"God save the South!"

*The Songs and Ballads of the Southern People*  
1861-1865

Fire, as well as 20 volumes of Civil War History Illustrated bound in cloth. Also available are a large number of civil war bullets. If you are interested please call Deon at 206 - 778-2356. We would like to thank Deon for his generous donation of 6 boxes of historical magazines [Civil War History Illustrated, Blue & Gray, Military History, etc.] which will be added to our raffle.

### Reenactments

As the weather starts to improve the Washington Civil War Association, the host organization for reenactments in the State of Washington has published a list of upcoming events in their News letter *The Dispatch*. The following events will be held in April and May 1997.

- April 5th & 6th 1997 Mose Lake Reenactment at Grant Co. Fairgrounds - for information call Jim Salinas 509-766-1250
- April 26-27 McIver Park, Or - NCWC
- May 14-16 Graham School Event - for information call Dave Lambert 360-847-5331
- May 16-17 Pasco School Event for information call Glen Allison 509-545-5400
- May 17-18 Armed Forces Day - Fort Lewis WA -for information call Ken Morgan 360-456-0917
- May 24-26 Ft. Steilacoom, WA WCWA - for information call Ken Morgan 360-456-0917

### Preservation News

The National Museum of Civil War Medicine, 48 E Patrick ST., P.O. Box 470, Frederick, MD 21705-0470 is raising funds to restore a 22,000 square foot building in the heart of historic Frederick, to house a center for the study and interpretation of Civil War medicine. More than 3,000 medical artifacts from the collection of Dr. Gordon Dammann provide the nucleus of the museum. For additional information write to the address given above or call Burton K. Kummerow, (301) 695-1864 or Fax (301) 695-6823.

### In Memorium

We note with regret the passing on March 21, 1997 of original PSCW round table founder and long time board member J. Tate Mason. Dr. Mason was a graduate of the University of Washington and earned his medical degree from the University of Virginia. He served in the Navy during World War II and returned to Seattle in 1949. He worked at the Virginia Mason Clinic from 1949 until his retirement in 1978 from that facility. After 1978 he was Chief of Urology at Harborview and maintained an office there until 1996. On behalf of the entire membership of the round table we would like to offer our condolences to his family.

### Officers Needed

We are still looking for volunteers to serve as officers and board members for next year. If you are interested please contact Lin Russell or Jeff Rombauer by April 20th.



"the last measure of an exhausted government"

# Civil War Book Notes

## "A New Birth of Freedom"

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, the stated goal of the North was the re-establishment of the Union, not the freeing of slaves. During the early months of the Lincoln administration, it continued to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act and pledged noninterference with that institution. Congress adopted a resolution in the summer of 1861 asserting that the North fought only to preserve the Union. But the pressure of war slowly began to change that policy. At Fortress Monroe, in Virginia, General Benjamin Butler coined the word "contraband" to refer to the status of slaves, who had fled to that post, and whom he refused to return to their masters. After the Union defeat at First Bull Run, the U.S. Congress passed the First Confiscation Act which allowed for the freeing of slaves who had worked directly on building Confederate fortifications. Efforts to go beyond these tentative first steps were quashed by the Lincoln administration, as in the case of Fremont in Missouri or the attempt by Secretary of War Cameron to call for the freeing of all slaves in December 1861. Disenchantment with the progress of the war led many Northerners to call for a more vigorous attack on the institution of slavery. In March 1862, an additional article of war was added by Congress which prohibited the use of Union troops to return slaves to their masters. In April 1862 Congress passed an act to emancipate the slaves in the District of Columbia, while President Lincoln pushed a plan for compensated emancipation in the border states. A second confiscation act was passed by Congress in July 1862 which declared all fugitive blacks behind Union lines to be free, authorized the president to use escaped slaves as soldiers and would punish any Confederate who did not lay down his arms within 60 days by liberating his slaves.

Throughout 1862 President Lincoln's ideas on emancipation were evolving. By mid July 1862 he had come to the conclusion to issue a proclamation as commander in chief of the union forces that would base emancipation on executive war powers and military necessity. In a famous cabinet meeting on July 22, 1862, Lincoln read a draft of this proclamation to his cabinet. At the suggestion of Secretary of State Seward, it was decided to delay the issuing of the proclamation until after a union victory so that it would not be construed as a sign of weakness. And so on September 22, 1862, after McClellan defeated Lee at the Battle of Antietam, the proclamation was released stating that "As of January 1, 1863 all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then thenceforward and forever free." For those members interested in reading more on this subject the following books and articles are recommended.

➤ **Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867: Selected from the Holdings of the National Archives of the United States. Series I Volume I: The Destruction of Slavery.** Ira Berlin, Barbara J. Fields, Thavolia Glymph, Joseph P. Reidy, & Leslie S. Rowland. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

This excellent collection of documents and the introductory material that accompanies them is essential to an understanding of how slaves were the prime movers behind securing their own liberty.

➤ **Lincoln on Black and White: A Documentary History.** Arthur Zilversmit, Editor. Malabar: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1983.

Another excellent collection of documents, this time focusing on Lincoln and his views on slavery and emancipation.



➤ **The Emancipation Proclamation.**

John Hope Franklin. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1963.

An well written summary of the evolution and impact of the emancipation proclamation by a noted historian.

**Lincoln and the Negro.** Benjamin Quarles. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962.

One of the leading authorities in Afro-American history traces the development of Lincoln's thought in relation toward Negroes.

➤ **Lincoln and Black Freedom: A Study in Presidential Leadership.** Wanda Cox. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981.

In this study Professor Cox attempts to answer some nagging questions. "Was Lincoln, indeed, impelled to emancipation by civil rights for Freedmen by the irresistible logic of a deeply rooted belief? As president did he lead or lag in respect to black freedom?"

**The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation.** Robert F. Durden. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972.

Using extracts from journals, letters, speeches, and newspapers, the author traces the passionate debate that occurred in the last months of the Confederacy, whether the South should initiate a program of emancipation in order to raise black troops to fight for the lost cause.





# LETTERS HOME: EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

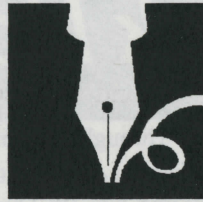
In the news lately there has been much controversy over the use of political offices to raise contributions to political parties in this country. But these so called abuses are nothing compared to the method of rewarding political support in 19th century America, the infamous "spoils system". Whenever the White House changed hands after a presidential election from one political party to the other, Washington D.C. was overrun by a huge migration of office seekers hoping for a position in the new administration. Enterprising individuals could purchase a "blue book" of all appointed government jobs with their salaries to help them target their dream job. The Lincoln administration was no exception to the turmoil caused by these job seekers. The White House was plagued in the early days of March and April 1861 with numerous Republicans seeking their just rewards for helping elect Lincoln. Patronage problems would continue to vex Lincoln throughout his administration as various factions of the Republican party sought their share of political plums.

Some office seekers sought nothing for themselves, but sought positions for others. Such was the case with W. D. Phelps, an "old line Whig" from Peoria, Illinois who had served with Lincoln in the 1840 Illinois State Legislature. Like the President, Phelps had joined the Republican party in the mid 1850's, and when asked in 1860 if he wanted a position in the new administration, turned it down. But in the fall of 1862, Phelps traveled to Washington D.C. and secured an appointment for his son, Wm. Edward Phelps as US. Consul to St. Petersburg, Russia. In the winter of 1864 Edward Phelps hoped to come home on a leave of absence, but was turned down by the State Department. In an effort to help his son, the elder Phelps traveled to Washington in January 1864. The following letter is a report of that journey.

St. Nicholas Hotel, New York  
January 19, 1864

W. E. Phelps  
U.S. Consul, St. Petersburg.

My Dear Son. Your perceive by my heading where I am. the why I will explain. I believe I have already told that I acceded to your wishes for "Leave of Absence". Being unable to leave home I forwarded your request to Mr. Lovejoy<sup>1</sup> with an urgent request that if might have diligent attention and the weight of his own personal influence to help it through but up to



the 11th inst. had heard nothing of it when feeling a little relieved from the business cases which come always and in some aspects this year more than previously heavy. On the 12th of January I left for Washington, found Lovejoy who had presented the application for you and one

for his brother at Callao. In company with him I visited the Asst. Secretary<sup>2</sup> who said there had been a circular issued from the Department against leaves of absences to any of our representatives abroad as the times were very critical and the country had suffered from the easy course pursued by the Government toward such representations. Mr. Lovejoy and I consulted the next day to visit the Secretary and bring the matter to an issue. I on my part resolving that unless I got a favorable answer I would make my appeal to the President and ask his intervention as an act of personal friendship. Well, the time came round and we went to the State Department and without difficulty obtained an audience. Mr. L. introduced me and we were invited to seats (very pleasantly) When Mr. Lovejoy then asked that Mr. Phelps and himself having each a similar favor to ask him called etc. and immediately stated our case. The Secretary using in a most emphatic manner declared "and not for Son or brother can any such request be granted. The condition of the country is most critical. Piratical expeditions are fitting out all over the world and the country needs every man at his post. Recently when the Charleston<sup>3</sup> was run into Halifax our consul was home on leave - when we desired to investigate the pretense that the rams<sup>4</sup> building in English waters were for the Pasha of Egypt our minister at London telegraphed our consul but could get no response - the consul was home on leave and the minister had to send a special agent to Egypt to ascertain the facts. We know not in what part of the world these pirates may appear and diligence in the previous becomes a first duty. "But I replied St. Petersburg is a very safe point - the season very effectively precludes any such attempts in those northern seas besides the consulate in the hands of the Secretary of Legation would be as efficient to make any such questions as through the Consul remained." Said



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Mr. Seward. There too are you mistaken. Your son is one of our best consuls. Let me tell you what occurred but yesterday. The Russian Minister<sup>s</sup> came in here and wished to know if I was willing that there should be a contribution for the sick and wounded in our hospitals sent from St. Petersburg (or the Russian people) that there was a disposition to give such an expression of their sympathy and he wanted my views. Mr. Seward] said I told him to say to his people not from me but as an opinion of his own that such a remembrance (not as from the Government) by the Russian people would be kindly received and that if any such thing was attempted to send it by all means through our consul at St. Petersburg, who was a sober, sensible business man and would do it right but not to send it through the legation and then turning to Lovejoy he said "it wouldn't do to let Clay<sup>6</sup> have any thing to do with it as he would spoil it. Some further remarks were made of Clay which I will not attempt to record. I made a discovery and it was a proud one to me that you were valued in your position and that Mr. Clay was not. I was I am proud of my son. I pray God may not visit me for it.

Well the interview with the Secretary had in a measure broken down my purpose of appealing to the Pres. and after consulting the matter with Lovejoy I concluded to let it rest for the present and now I am on my way to see your Uncle Augustus who is regarded as failing and have stopped here to write you. I spent the Sabbath at Baltimore with Mr. Brooks . . . Chauncy Brooks has one son in the rebel army and two in the Union army is now a through Lincoln man. Maryland will be the first state to emancipate. The war will open in the spring with vigor. Volunteering is progressing so well under the stimulus of National, State, County etc., bounties that I think all the quota or nearly all will be full in the next six weeks without a draft. The country is full of recruiting officers and Veteran officers and soldiers who are re-enlisting during the war and are home on leave. The confederates are especially dishearten but will yet do some hard fighting before they surrender but the rebellion is regarded as reeling and that it can never strike more than one or two severe blows.

Lovejoy thinks with me that it would be unwise for you to come home with any view of the army. 1st Because you are in a position to be equally if not more useful 2nd Because the desirable places are obtained for men who have earned their own by their bravery and exposure and 3rd (and especially for an ambitious man) because those who would be so inclined would say of you "he came after he thought the danger was up." Anxious as I am to see you I should be more anxious for "Your return" if Mr. Seward had represented you as worthless to the Government. I know not how much allowance to make for his possible desire to flatter a Father, if that was his purpose he certainly succeeded for I came away with a prouder step than I entered the richly furnished rooms of the Premier and my thoughts have run out enquireingly for some post of higher honor and greater involvement which fidelity skill and good judgment in your present place might secure to you in the second administration of "Honest Old Abe". Still I would not have you only on official favor. It is asked - it is mirage - It must not be trusted. I even tremble for fear that my own act in launching you on the sea of politics so early and cutting loose your cables with my own hands was not an act of pride which will bring its own retribution and for which Father & son may both have to take up a lamination. Still I have confidence, I still think I did right under the circumstances and I pray that your fidelity to your Government, to the cause of truth & justice, to yourself and the world may demonstrate the wisdom of my decision in this premis.

And now my dear son there are some things that I would say if I had time and freedom of thought but I am anxious to pass on to Connecticut and to get Home. If you conclude to stay on and there are any things you wish sent out I will do all I can to meet your needs. If you want a wife and she will go I will send her out. I am disappointed in the object of my visit to the capital. I did not doubt I should succeed. I suppose if you resign they will accept your resignation but with my own views it does not accord. Still you are old enough and I hope are better qualified as you certainly have better opportunities of judging than myself and must decide for yourself. I have very little doubt the country



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will declare for Old Abe for four years more and with my little influence at home and your good judgment abroad you may in some way be made very useful as well as be put on a paying list - by the by Lincoln is looking very well and feels very well - greeted me cordially told a story or two of "old Whigs of Peoria" and laughed with a gusto that would have well digested a hard dinner.

Lovejoy says no young man should engage in politics unless ( a little incidentally) until he has established a good business reputation, made money enough to carry him along, safely attached the people of his district to him by helping along their favorites while he asking nothing for himself until he finally receives their support as a favor to them and not himself until the acceptances of place becomes a [illegible] of his own will to the importunities of the people. What do you think of his views? I like them some.

When I left home a very interesting state of feeling existed in our church. Quite a number of conversions occurred the week previous. Charley Melton, Ginnie Pierce, Allie Slocum, Edwin Smith etc., etc. about a dozen. I hope it was but the beginning of good things. We had the most terrible storm and cold almost shutting us off from the outside world. When I left Chicago on the 12th, the Central and the St. Louis were neither of them in running condition but it has been thawing on this side of the mountains and now has been raining hard for twenty four hours. The snow has almost all disappeared and I am finding damage and delay from the water. I learned as I came up through Chester county yesterday that Bayard Taylor<sup>7</sup> was at home. I wanted much to stop and see him but could not spare the time.

Really I must draw to a close. I will write you of small things from more particularly from home that is if I can get time from interruptions. I can board cheaper in that locality but am not half as safe from interruptions as in this great hotel. Write me often and fully of your plans. I shall be glad to advance your interests albeit I may not be wise or able to so but you have a higher and better Father who does and will care for you and will further and advance your plans pass all questions if you commit them to him in a spirit of filial

love and obedience to him and his holy keeping as about all I can do for you more. I commit you for time and eternity. Square all your actions by the rules he has given you and you are safe.

Most affectionately your father

W. D. Phelps.

<sup>1</sup> Owen Lovejoy [1811-1864] was the brother of Elijah Lovejoy, killed by an anti-abolitionist mob in Alton, Illinois in 1837. Owen went on to become the most noted abolitionist in Illinois. In 1856 he was elected to Congress and served until his death March 25, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick William Seward [1830-1915] served as assistant Secretary of state for his father and was most likely the person Phelps and Lovejoy met with.

<sup>3</sup> Phelps has the name of the ship wrong here. The *Chesapeake* was a costal steamer seized by Confederate sympathizers in December 1863, with the hopes of turning the boat into a Confederate raider. She was recaptured by U.S. Naval vessels in Canadian waters December 15, 1863. For a full history of the affair see Robin W. Winks Canada and the United States: The Civil War Years.

<sup>4</sup> The "Laird Rams" were two ironclad ships contracted to be built for the Confederate States of America at the shipyards of William Laird and Sons Company in England. In an attempt to prevent seizure of the two ships by the English government, an attempt was made to show that they were being built for the ruler of Egypt. The ruse failed and the ships were bought for the British navy.

<sup>5</sup> Baron Edouard De Stoeckl was appointed the Russian Minister to the United States in 1857. He first came to Washington in 1841 as attache or secretary of legation. In 1854 he was elevated to Charge d'Affaires. Stoeckl served as the Russian Minister through the Civil War until 1868. It was under his charge that Alaska was sold to the United States.

<sup>6</sup> Cassius Marcellus Clay [1810-1903] a long time opponent of slavery was appointed Minister to Russia in 1861. He returned to the United States in 1862 to accept a major generalcy, but was reappointed as Minister to Russia in 1863.

<sup>7</sup> Bayard Taylor [1825-1879] was a prominent 19th century American author. He served as Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg in 1862-1863.

If you have letters or diaries from soldiers who fought or served in the Civil War and would like to share it with the round table please submit a transcript to Jeff Rombauer, 22306 255th Ave SE, Maple Valley WA 98038