

THE CHARGER



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

SEPT. 2020

VOL. 44 #1

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Message from the President – Steve Pettyjohn Cleveland Civil War Round Table 2020-2021 Program Year

Dear Roundtable Members:

I am writing to be sure you get important updates regarding our new program year and our new meeting location. Our new Program summary including our schedule is included with this letter. Please check it out.

Our next meeting, September 9, will be via ZOOM, an internet remote technology. Please send an email to clecwr@gmail.com if you want to participate in our meeting. If you don't have this technology, you can download it from the internet for free. If you have questions about this, please email clecwr@gmail.com.

When we resume our regular meetings, we will be at the Holiday Inn on Rockside Road in Independence. This move was driven by the Covid-19 pandemic as we could no longer rely on Judson Manor. We have been working with management to ensure that we meet all guidelines for Covid-19 meetings. When we start regular meetings later this fall, the cost of dinner meetings remains \$35.

Please be on the lookout for emails from our new email address, clecwr@gmail.com. They will be sent through an email application called MailChimp. Please check your email spam folders for past emails we have sent over the summer. Include Cleveland Civil War Round Table as a contact with our new email address.

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Please consider signing up for Facebook or Twitter as we have accounts on both and can update them with information more rapidly than through the website. Create your account and either friend Cleveland Civil War Round Table on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. You don't have to pay attention to anything else associated with those apps except follow what we are doing and posting for your benefit. If we decide to live stream our presentations, we may do so through Facebook.

Our annual dues are payable this September. Dues are \$60 this year and are used to fund our programs and speakers. Please make out your check to the Cleveland CWRT and send it to Bob Pence at 1419 Honeygold Lane, Broadview Heights, OH 44147.

Very truly yours,

Steve Pettyjohn
President

Cleveland Civil War Round Table 2020-2021 Program Year

Dear Round Table Members,

I am writing to share some details regarding our upcoming programs for the 2020-2021 season. The theme for this year is "The War and Memory" and I hope that you will agree that we have some exciting and interesting speakers lined up for the year.

We kick off with A. Wilson Greene at our new home at the Holiday Inn on Rockside Road in Independence. His presentation will be on "Petersburg – The Lost Opportunity." He will discuss how U. S. Grant conducted one of the greatest military maneuvers in American history only to have what should have been war winning results frustrated by a combination of factors. Wil Greene is a distinguished Civil War Historian and activist. He has written the definitive book on Petersburg "A Campaign of Giants" for which he is uniquely qualified. After a career in the National Park Service, Greene was one of the founders of what is now the American Battlefield Trust and served as its first executive director. He was also the founding executive director of Pamplin Historical Park and the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier, near Petersburg [which we will visit on our field trip]. Greene is the author of seven books and more than 20 published articles on Civil War and Southern history.

On the 150th anniversary of his death, our October speaker turns to the story to the post war reaction to the death of Grant's greatest adversary – Robert E. Lee. Codie Eash will present 'Pray for Oblivion to His Memory': Frederick Douglass on the Legacy of Robert E. Lee. While Lee

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was being elevated to the level of a deity by the time of his death in October of 1870, others did not share that view including Frederic Douglass, the formerly enslaved social activist, newsman, and army recruiter. Douglass's criticisms of Lee's morality and prowess provide valuable insight to an alternative view of an icon, and serve as a reminder that modern debates over collective memory of the conflict and its principal players are embedded in unfinished conversations among the wartime generation itself. Codie Eash serves as Visitor Services Coordinator at Seminary Ridge Museum, Gettysburg, and is a 2014 graduate of Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a bachelor degree in communication/journalism and held a minor in history. He is very active in the Civil War community including the Emerging Civil War group of young historians.

On Veterans Day, November 11, we will be privileged to spend "An Evening with U.S. Grant." Recreating this very underappreciated American hero will be historian Dr. Curt Fields. Many people consider Dr. Fields to be the leading interpreter of Grant. He was the official General Grant for the Sesquicentennial celebrations of: Ft. Donaldson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Appomattox. Fields is the National Park Service representative for Grant. He has portrayed the commanding general of the Union Army in films, posters and re-enactments. Fields is the same height and body style as the general and represents a true-to-life image of the man as he would have looked. He does extensive research in order to share an accurate portrayal. His presentations are made in the first person, quoting from memoirs, articles and letters the general wrote, statements he made in interviews and first-person accounts of people who knew the general or were with him and witnessed him during events. "It's eerie. Dr. Curt Fields becomes Gen. Ulysses S. Grant . . . and history comes alive," said James Goff, professor and chair of the Department of History at Appalachian State University.

On December 9, we will round out the calendar year with a trip to Gettysburg courtesy of Kelley Boyer Sagert who will present "Wells Waite Miller and the 8th OVI." Those of us who have made the two field trips to Antietam over the last decade know that the 8th Ohio played a major role in breaking Confederate resistance at the Sunken Road. Ms. Sagert will tell the story of how the 8th Ohio less than a year later helped break the back of the Pickett-Pettigrew charge at Gettysburg. Ms. Boyer is an Emmy Award nominated writer from Lorain, Ohio. She writes frequently on historical topics, including the Underground Railroad and the Civil War.

The subject of the Dick Crews debate in January will be "Hollywood Goes to War [the Civil One]: What movie or TV production has had the greatest impact on how we view the events surrounding the Civil War?"

On February 10, we will return to Gettysburg as Phil Spaugy presents "The 19th Indiana Color Guard at Gettysburg." Phil Spaugy is a member of the 19th Indiana Vol. Inf. Reg. of the North-South Skirmish Association and former holder of several offices including National Commander of the North South Skirmish Association.

March is women's history month and we will be fortunate to have Dr. Tamika Nunley presenting highlights from her latest book in a presentation titled: "At the Threshold of Liberty - enslaved and free African American women in Wartime Washington, D.C.: Mobilizing, Emancipation, Citizenship, and Identity."

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Tamika Nunley, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of American history at Oberlin College and Conservatory. She has made frequent appearances on C-SPAN and CNN.

In April, we will return to Cleveland for a presentation on the history and significance of our very own Soldiers and Sailors monument. Speakers will include Ted Prasse, President, Tim Daley, Executive Director, Ellen Connally, vice-chair, The Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Cleveland, Ohio

We wrap up in May with the legendary Vicksburg historian Terry Winschel discussing the civilian side of the Vicksburg siege titled "Shut Up As In A Trap: Citizens Under Siege at Vicksburg." Terry Winschel is the retired Historian at Vicksburg National Military Park; Author of Vicksburg is the Key, Triumph & Defeat: The Vicksburg Campaign, Vols. I and II, Civil War Diary of a Common Soldier, and Vicksburg: Fall of the Confederate Gibraltar.

See you in September as we get our new Program Year launched!

Steve Pettyjohn stevepcwrt@yahoo.com

President

NEWS ABOUT THE PETERSBURG FIELD TRIP



Dear Cleveland CWRT Members,

I am writing to let you know that the Petersburg Field Trip has been postponed. After consulting over the last week with our guide, the Petersburg NPS and Pamplin Park, I concluded that conditions are too conditional for us to try and make the trip in September. There are several pandemic "hot spots" in Virginia that may spread to the Richmond-Petersburg area which would scuttle the trip. Rather than have to cancel at the last minute, I thought it would be best to reschedule and try again in the Spring of 2021.

We are rescheduling the trip for April 29 through May 2, 2021 [these dates include travel days]. We haven't done a spring trip since I have been a member so I thought it would be worth trying. Our guide, Pamplin Park, and our hotel are all agreeable to these changes and are sending revisions to our initial contracts. I hope these dates are agreeable with you as they are hopefully after Easter/Spring Break time, before Mothers Day and prom/graduation season.

I would suggest you cancel your hotel reservations at this time. We will either refund your deposits or keep them on file for the spring. Please let me know your choice.

I want to thank all of you for your faith and interest in making the trip. We had 14 paid deposits with a month left to go so it would have been a viable and fun trip for the club. I hope all of you will be able to make the trip in the spring.

Last, please confirm receipt of this and let us know about your deposit.

Steve Pettyjohn, stevepcwrt@yahoo.com

President

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"Baldy" Smith by Dennis Keating

William F. Smith, known as "Baldy", 1864 was a controversial figure among Union officers. A West Point graduate, he was first assigned to the staff of Ben Butler at Fort Monroe, Virginia. He then became a colonel of the 3rd regiment of Vermont volunteers (being born in St. Albans, Vermont). Smith participated in the first battle of Bull Run, the Peninsular campaign, South Mountain and Antietam.

After Ambrose Burnside re-organized the Army of the Potomac, Smith was named commander of the 6th Corps. Burnside ignored Smith's advice against attacking at Fredericksburg and after the disaster Smith criticized Burnside. Burnside then proposed dismissing Smith and other officers who had criticized him. Lincoln rejected this proposal and relieved Burnside of command.

Left adrift for awhile, Smith commanded brigades of the New York National Guard and Pennsylvania militia in repulsing J.E.B. Stuart's attack on Carlisle, Pennsylvania during the Gettysburg campaign. His command then participated in the unsuccessful pursuit of Lee's retreating army back to Virginia.

In September, 1863, Smith was sent West to William Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland, which was trapped in Chattanooga following its defeat at Chickamauga. As its Chief Engineer, Smith proposed opening a supply line but this didn't happen until U.S. Grant arrived and relieved Rosecrans of command. Smith's "Cracker Line" was credited with saving the army from starvation.

Following the army's triumph at Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain, Grant went East and Smith followed. He was appointed to command the 18th Army Corps in Ben Butler's Army of the James. After Butler's unsuccessful Bermuda Hundred campaign, Smith's Corps was transferred to the Army of the Potomac and participated in its disastrous defeat at Cold Harbor.

Grant then ordered Butler to lead an attack on Petersburg as he led the Army of the Potomac across the James River. Despite Butler's forces greatly outnumbering P.G.T. Beauregard's small force then defending the city, Smith in charge hesitated to attack on June 15, 1864. The chance to capture Petersburg then was lost. Smith went on medical leave. Upon his return on July 19, Grant relieved Smith of his command, ending his Civil War role as a field commander. The reason for his dismissal remained unclear.

Smith's postwar career included his becoming New York City's Police Commissioner and President of the Police Commissioner Board.

Reference

Ohio Civil War Central: "Commonly known as "Baldy", Major General William F. Smith was a prominent officer in both theaters of the American Civil War: <https://www.ohiocivilwarcentral.com/entry.php?rec=1367>

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The Barlow-Gordon Incident at Gettysburg by Paul Siedel

There is an old saying that accentuates the fact that many times truth is stranger than fiction. The American Civil War produced many such incidents one being the amazing Barlow-Gordon incident at Gettysburg and its aftermath twenty years later.

General John Barlow was a native of Brooklyn, New York, and according to Ezra Warner, in his book "Generals in Blue," Barlow moved to Brookline, Massachusetts shortly thereafter where he spent his childhood. He attended Harvard and graduated with a law degree; he was admitted to the bar and practiced until the outbreak of the Civil War. Barlow entered the service as a private in the 12th New York; he reentered as a lieutenant in the 61st New York and was promoted to brigadier general in September 1862. During the first days fighting at Gettysburg Barlow's brigade was part of the U.S. XI Corps which was driven back through Gettysburg, and it was then that Barlow was struck in the back by a mini ball. He lay paralyzed on the ground convinced he was going to die. Then Confederate General John Brown Gordon seeing a fellow officer on the ground dismounted and knelt by the severely wounded Barlow.

General John Brown Gordon was born in Upson County Ga., studied at the University of Georgia, and when the Civil War began he was operating several coal mines in the northwest part of that state. He organized and was elected captain of a unit called the "Raccoon Roughs." Once again according to Warner "he fought superlatively on every field in which the Army of Northern Virginia participated except when he was absent because of wounds." During the first day at Gettysburg he led a brigade in General Early's division of Ewell's Corps in the Army of Northern Virginia. Ewell's Corps drove the U.S. XI Corps through the town, and this is where General Gordon ran upon the severely wounded Barlow. Gordon gave Barlow some brandy and water and asked if there was anything he could do. Barlow told Gordon he thought he was going to die and would he notify his wife. He did so and that night Mrs Barlow came back behind the lines and took charge of her husband who unbeknownst to Gordon did survive. Later in the War during the siege of Petersburg Barlow heard of the death of a Gordon in the Confederate Army. He took it for granted it was the Gordon who administered to him at Gettysburg. So it went for another twenty years until a charity banquet was held in Washington D.C. to raise money for the presidential election. By this time Barlow had entered politics and had been elected to office in the state of New York, had served as United States marshal and had initiated the prosecution of the "Tweed Ring" in New York City. Gordon by this time had returned to Georgia and was residing in Atlanta. He had been elected U.S. senator from Georgia and would later be elected governor of the state. Upon sitting down to dinner at the banquet they both recognized each other's names from their wartime service. Gordon smiled and asked Barlow if he was any relation to the Barlow that was killed at Gettysburg. I am he! He said as he smiled and are you any relation to the Gordon who saved my life and was later killed at Petersburg? I am he! He shouted across the table. The two remained fast friends for many years. Barlow died in 1896 and is buried in Brookline, Massachusetts, Gordon died in 1904 and is buried in Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta.

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One can't help but wonder how many personal stories of this kind were written during the war but were never documented. One such story which until it is documented is just legend is the story an old African-American told in the 1930s about the time he assisted Custis Lee and Robert Lincoln in a game of golf on the Army-Navy Country Club. Or about the time that Edwin Booth saved Robert Lincoln from a speeding locomotive by hauling him back onto the platform and out of harms way.

Yes, truth many time is stranger than fiction and many times the documentation is not discovered until many years later. Will we ever know everything about the American Civil War or anything else. All one has to do is read some of the diaries and personal letters from the vets of any war. They create many more questions than answers. After reading some of these personal histories the final answer to the above question in my opinion is a resounding NO!



General John Barlow



General John Gordon



You may be interested in Samantha Bee's take on Confederate monuments. You can see it here:

Samantha Bee, Full Frontal you tube on Confederate Monuments:
"The Amazing Disgrace: Our Country's Racist Symbols"

<https://youtu.be/btaJNZ2XyK0>

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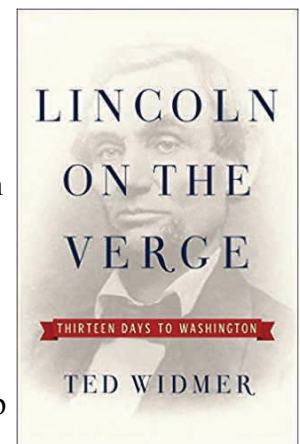
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Book Review - by Dennis Keating

Ted Widner. *Lincoln on the Verge: Thirteen Days to Washington* (Simon and Schuster)

Ted Widner has been a speechwriter, is a Distinguished Lecturer at Macaulay Honors College at the City University of New York, and a journalist who created the Disunion feature on the Civil War at the New York Times. In this book published in April, he has detailed President-elect Abraham Lincoln's train journey in February, 1861 from Springfield, Illinois to Washington City for his inauguration. This historic trip was to introduce this new President to a nation divided by slavery that led to the secession of the Southern states that formed the Confederacy. During this time, Jefferson Davis would become its President and would take a parallel train trip from Montgomery, Alabama to its new capital of Richmond Virginia.



Underlying Lincoln's 13-day train trip as huge crowds greeted him enroute was the threat of assassination by Southern sympathizers. Heroes who prevented a planned attack in Baltimore (known as "Mobtown") included detective Allan Pinkerton and his female operative Kate Warne, his bodyguard Ward Hill Lamon, and Samuel Felton, President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad. The huge cast of characters throughout Lincoln's epic journey included past and future presidents and the lameduck James Buchanan, Frederick Douglas, Walt Whitman, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Winfield Scott. Each chapter is preceded by selections from Homer's *The Odyssey*.

Lincoln was accompanied by his family and his secretary John Hay. Lincoln's poignant farewell from Springfield on February 11 included "I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return" (p. 120). Lincoln would return in 1865 after another long train ride. Widner captures Lincoln's growth as the future leader of a country facing its greatest crisis and his devotion to its democratic ideals from its creation embodied by the Declaration of Independence.

Widner devotes a chapter to each major stop on Lincoln's trip. On February 15 it was his arrival in Cleveland from Pittsburgh (following Cincinnati and Columbus). As rain turned to snow, Lincoln's party was accompanied by the Cleveland Grays, fire companies, and marching bands to his hotel. As always, huge crowds made his passage difficult. He addressed a crowd of 10,000 from a balcony of his hotel. As his special train departed for Buffalo in the morning, warnings came from Pinkerton about assassination plots in Baltimore, where he would have to transfer through its streets to board the train for the capital.

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Even as he spoke, plans had been made to foil his would be assassins by sending him in disguise on a special train that would take him through Baltimore in the middle of the night. Accompanied by Kate Warne, with the code name "Nuts", and protected along the way by railroad workers and the Pinkerton detectives, Lincoln successfully evaded the plots on his life.

Recommended related reading is *The Lincoln Conspiracy: The Secret Plot to Kill America's 16th President and Why It Failed* by Brad Meltzer and Josh Mensch, published in May.

Widner provides an Epilogue which includes Lincoln's obsession with death during and after his visit to the captured Richmond. He also briefly recounts the dead Lincoln's journey (with the corpse of his son Willie by his side) back home.

Widner's account reflects his admiration for Lincoln. Despite the already known outcome of Lincoln's ride to his First Inaugural, the suspense surrounding his safety equals the other aspects of his trip, especially its interaction with the many citizens who saw and interacted with him.

HISTORY : The Assassination Redux

MORE ON THE COMPLICITY OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT AND ITS SECRET SERVICE BUREAU IN THE ASSASSINATION AND ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATIONS OF APRIL 14, 1865, IN WASHINGTON

By John C. Fazio

The issue of who, ultimately, bears responsibility for the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, the near assassination of Secretary of State William H. Seward, and the attempted assassinations of Vice President Andrew Johnson, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and Lieutenant-General Ulysses S. Grant, at least, on the night of April 14, 1865, in Washington, is a delicate one. It has been said that "Truth, like a bastard, comes into the world, never without ill-fame to him who gives her birth" (Thomas Hardy) and that "All great truths begin as blasphemies" (G. B. Shaw). Accordingly, after the publication of *Decapitating the Union: Jefferson Davis, Judah Benjamin and the Plot to Assassinate Lincoln*, in 2015, by McFarland, which, of course, postulates the ultimate responsibility of the Confederate government and its Secret Service, I received a thinly disguised phone call from a fellow in Virginia who told me that he had begun work on a book about the events of April 14 and was told in no uncertain terms by persons in Virginia, who, he said, refer to themselves as "Mosby men" and their state as "Occupied Virginia", that he should in no way tie Mosby to the assassination of Lincoln. I naturally reminded him of the First Amendment, and he naturally acknowledged its relevance, but he said he was merely passing on what he had been told and that he thought I ought to know about it. Well, I did in fact modify the relevant passages in the later edition of the book, so that

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they were somewhat more civilly worded, but ultimately I put greater stock in the First Amendment than in the admonition. Still, the episode does illustrate the sensitivity of some people on the issue, particularly our Southern brethren. Though the book has received excellent reviews and though my PowerPoint presentation on the subject (*The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*) has always been well received, I have been told that my evidence is circumstantial (as if that were a weakness; it isn't), that the highly educated and super-refined Southern aristocrats who were the Confederate government leaders and upper-level Secret Service operatives would never even dream of committing such a heinous act as regicide and certainly would have nothing to do with such low lifes as Booth, Powell, Herold, Atzerodt, Arnold and O'Laughlen, and even that my arguments were "destroying a culture". Why, then, do I persist, especially when we consider that we are many generations removed from the events of that fatal and fateful night and that they therefore have little or no relevance now? Because one can say that about any historical event that is generations removed from our time. Why bother studying history at all if we are going to use contemporary relevance, and only contemporary relevance, as justification to do so? As historians, we are, or in any case we should be, in thrall to that elusive will-o-the-wisp known as truth. If we are not, then we should find something else to do--a different vocation or avocation. Recall that it was Lincoln himself who said that history isn't history unless it is the truth. So let us carry on in spite of discomfort to some and in spite of arguments about the nature of the evidence, the scruples of political leaders, the destruction of cultures and contemporary relevance.

It sometimes happens that compelling evidence for a postulate is in front of our eyes, and has always been in front of our eyes, but is nevertheless overlooked or ignored. The postulate, of course, is that the Confederate government and its Secret Service were complicit in the assassination and attempted assassinations of Lincoln and the other Federal officeholders previously named. The evidence I refer to is in the transcripts of the trial of the conspirators that was held in May and June, 1865, coupled with knowledge we have of the Confederate response to the Wistar and Dahlgren-Kilpatrick Raids against Richmond in February and March, 1864. I have known about this evidence for a long time, but I realized its significance and its relevance to the postulate only recently. Here is the evidence, which, in my judgment, rises to the level of proof that Confederate leaders would not shrink from diabolical deeds if they offered them any chance of winning the war, including regicide.

After the Wistar and Dahlgren-Kilpatrick Raids, which the Confederate leadership laid at Lincoln's feet, based upon Wistar's and Dahlgren's orders, especially the latter's, which called for the assassination of Davis and his cabinet and which were obtained from Dahlgren's corpse, a series of high-level meetings were held in Richmond to consider an appropriate response. The minutes of these meetings are either lost or, because of the sensitivity of the discussions and the nature of the decisions that came from them, were never taken, but it is known that the meetings were attended by the highest levels of both the political and military leadership of the Confederacy.

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What followed, *inter alia*, was the appointment by Davis of two men for service with the so-called Canadian Cabinet, already established in Montreal and other Canadian cities, i.e. members of the Confederate Secret Service who were there because they were beyond American jurisdiction and could therefore carry out their work with relatively little organized opposition from the United States government. The men were Clement C. Clay of Alabama and Jacob Thompson of Mississippi. They were sent to Montreal with drafts for \$1 million in gold (about \$2.2 million in United States greenbacks) for the purpose of carrying out "such instructions as you have received from me (i.e. Davis) verbally, in such manner as shall seem most likely to conduce the furtherance of the interests of the Confederate States of America". The men joined James P. Holcombe of Virginia, whom Davis had previously sent to Montreal in February for the purpose of carrying out "duties already entrusted", but not specified in writing. Observe that Davis's orders and instructions were so sensitive that they could not be committed to paper, even in code. It does not require an especially vivid imagination to surmise why, i.e. that they were the kinds of orders and instructions that must never see the light of day, because they called for political assassinations and plots that might cause the deaths of thousands of innocents.

Now bear in mind that these were Davis's men, following his orders and instructions and being financed by him, and that everything they did, therefore, must have been known to Davis and must have been approved by Davis. It is inconceivable that they would have carried out activities that had not been approved by Davis, that were unknown to Davis or that were contrary to Davis's wishes. With that in mind, consider the testimony of one Godfrey Joseph Hyams, who testified, under oath, at the trial of the conspirators, that he had been hired by Dr. Luke Pryor Blackburn, another member of the Canadian Cabinet, for the purpose of "disposing" (i.e. selling) of clothing which had been "infected" with yellow fever, small pox and perhaps other contagious diseases, throughout the North, for the purpose of spreading pestilence in the North. The clothing had been obtained by Blackburn from Bermuda, where there had been a yellow fever epidemic, and had been transported to the United States and was being stored in trunks. Blackburn, of course, despite being a doctor, did not know that yellow fever could not be spread by clothing, but that is beside the point. Part of this diabolical scheme involved sending "infected" shirts to the Executive Mansion (the White House) as a gift to Lincoln from an anonymous benefactor. Most significantly, Hyams testified that he not only met repeatedly with Blackburn, for the purpose (Blackburn, incidentally, promised him at least \$100,000 for his services, and possibly "ten times that amount"), but also with Holcombe, Clay and Thompson, who promised him that another reward for his services would be that he would become a "gentleman for the future instead of a working-man and a mechanic". (Hyams said he also met with Bennett H. Young, leader of the Confederate raid on St. Albans, but this is not relevant.) According to Hyams, the men "seemed perfectly to understand the business in which I had been engaged". It was Thompson who paid him (though not much) and it was Thompson who told him that he had met with Blackburn, that he had discussed the matter with him and that he had received his authority to pay Hyams. Hyams also stated that Blackburn and Holcombe had told him that the Confederate government had appropriated \$200,000 for the purpose of carrying out the scheme. Needless to say, Hyams never received more than a small percentage of the compensation that had been promised him, despite having distributed some of the clothing, though he does say that he had a

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further meeting with Holcombe and Clay before he put the matter behind him. Hyams adds that he afterwards heard that the valise that contained the “infected” shirts “had been sent to the President”. Hyams’s testimony was never impeached.

So what does all this prove, if anything? It proves that as early as the summer of 1864 the Confederate government and its Secret Service Bureau were actively plotting the murder of Abraham Lincoln, most likely because of the perceived license given by the Wistar and Dahlgren-Kilpatrick Raids against Richmond. It is also most probative of the conclusion that all the attempts on Lincoln’s life that occurred subsequent to the Raids were related to them, including the shot at Lincoln when he was riding alone toward the Soldiers’ Home in August and including, of course, the attempt that succeeded in April, 1865. It also proves that the Confederate leadership was quite willing to spread pestilence in the North, which, for all they knew, might have resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, perhaps more, of innocents, if it would further the cause of Southern independence and stave off what by this time appeared to them to be imminent catastrophe, namely the loss of their political independence, the loss of their lifestyle and culture, the loss of their wealth and property, the social upheaval attendant to the integration of almost four million suddenly free slaves into a society of five and one-half million whites, and the possible “mongrelization” of their race.

If there are still those who are disposed to argue that it is possible that Davis knew nothing about the yellow fever plot and, specifically, the plan to assassinate Lincoln with "infected" shirts, consider that there is a letter in existence, which survived the flames, from Confederate Secret Service agent Kensey Johns Stewart (also a member of the Canadian Cabinet) to Jefferson Davis, in which Stewart mentions Hyams and the yellow fever plot and pleads with Davis to desist from the same on the grounds that it could not possibly find favor with God. A copy of the letter is set forth below. It is most significant that Stewart’s plea fell on deaf ears, because four months after his letter the trunks were still full and the plot was still on, according to Hyams.

Couple the foregoing facts with these facts:

When John Surratt, Booth’s right hand and co-conspirator, was asked by fellow Papal Zouave Henri Beaumont de Ste. Marie, in Italy, whether or not Davis had had anything to do with Lincoln’s assassination, Surratt answered: "I am not going to tell you", which, of course, is as good as an affirmative answer, because it tells us that Surratt knew and that Davis *was* involved; otherwise he would have simply answered “No; he had nothing to do with it” or “I don’t know”.

According to Eli Evans, one of Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin’s biographers, John Surratt was Benjamin’s most trusted courier. According to Henri Beaumont de Ste. Marie, Surratt made almost weekly trips to Richmond to meet with Benjamin. It is inconceivable that Benjamin and Surratt did not discuss Surratt’s plotting with Booth.

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Thomas Harbin, a top Confederate Secret Service Agent, knew Booth well, meeting with him both before and after the assassination. After the war, when it was safe to do so, he spoke of his activities as a Secret Service agent and, among other revelations, said that he reported directly to Davis. It is inconceivable that Davis and Harbin did not discuss Harbin's plotting with Booth.

Thomas Harney's aborted mission to Washington, in early April, 1865, is well documented. The purpose of the mission was to assassinate Lincoln by luring him into a wing of the White House and then blowing it up. As many other Federal officeholders as possible were to be lured into the same place at the same time and thus suffer the same fate. The mission was aided at every step by trainmen, post commanders, guides, other agents and John Mosby himself. It could therefore not have been carried out without the knowledge and approval of Davis and Benjamin, at least.

and what conclusion shall we come to?

If there is anyone who still believes that Davis, and therefore Benjamin, his right hand, were not complicit in Lincoln's assassination, please tell me why.

Here is Kensey Johns Stewart's letter to Jefferson Davis:

To His Excellency
Jefferson Davis President C.S.A.

Toronto C. W.,
Dec. 12th '64
box 660

Dear Sir:

As I conceive that the reasons for fulfilling the work undertaken still exist and are even more cogent, I wish to advise you that notwithstanding the miserable failures of many late enthusiasts, and the vigilance and anxiety occasioned thereby, our own plans can be carried out upon two conditions: 1st sufficient time: 2nd that you will put a stop to all these comparatively useless annoyances which do not produce a desire for peace so much as a thirst for revenge. Your Excellency is aware that when a negro is slightly chastened, he hates you, but a just and thorough whipping humbles him. I am aware that temporary vigilance and consequently

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diversion of forces from other plans, has been occasioned; but not only is this temporary, but it tends to increase the centralization of power in the hands of our enemy, who thus finds us playing into his hands, indeed, when I have seen the character of agents employed, and the impious nature of their work, I have taken the liberty of saying that you have not ordered, and will not endorse the work of these men. For I cannot regard you as capable of expecting the blessing of God upon, or being personally associated with instruments & or plans such as I described below. As our country has been and is entirely dependent upon God, we cannot afford to displease him. Therefore, it cannot be our policy to employ wicked men to destroy the persons & property of private citizens, by inhumane & cruel acts. I name only one. \$100.00 of public money has been paid here to one "Hyams", a shoemaker, for services rendered, by conveying & causing to be sold in the city of Washington at auction, boxes of small-pox clothing. As I mean this not for injury of the well meaning party who planned it, nor of the person who paid the money, I wish no other notice taken of it, than that such things be discouraged. There can be no doubt of the causes of the failure of such plans. It is only a matter of surprise that, God does not forsake us and our cause when we are associated with such misguided friends.

I regard it as a kind and merciful Providence that has delayed my own actions by causing the check for \$120,000 (?) I sent by the signal corps to fall into the enemy's hands, for otherwise I should have been endangered by these abortive attempts of others. Col. F has acquired much information and adopted excellent plans, but God has been against him. Everything has failed by Divine intervention. If God is against me, I will not succeed. But until you withdraw from me the confidence you have seen fit to repose in me, or I see some other reasons than such as now exist, for discouragement, I must continue to urge upon you the importance of measures which must induce an early peace, and to promise that by God's help I will do the work thoroughly and as speedily as practicable.

It is impossible for Col. F to sit here in Toronto & manage such difficult things in the states. He has truly said to me nothing is going on ___?___. He is a true man, & a shrewd one. But he does not see the cause of these failures. If you can find someone better suited to the work, send him out (?). If not, I will do it by God's help. I enclose my memo, in detail, upon other issues than those agreed on. May God hand down your administration to the future, , with its past and present, lights untarnished, as the glory of a noble but suffering people.

Truly yours & c

A true copy)
B. Wells)
A. P. Tasker)

(Marginal note):

Original filed with Jefferson Davis papers and letters from K. J. Stewart
Nov & Dec /68 (?)
rel to ___?___ from abroad

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John C. Fazio

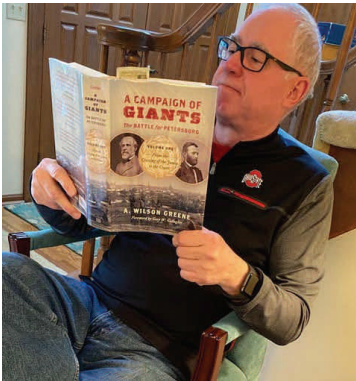


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Our new president Steve Pettyjohn hard at work preparing for the next CCWRT season. Have a safe autumn.

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