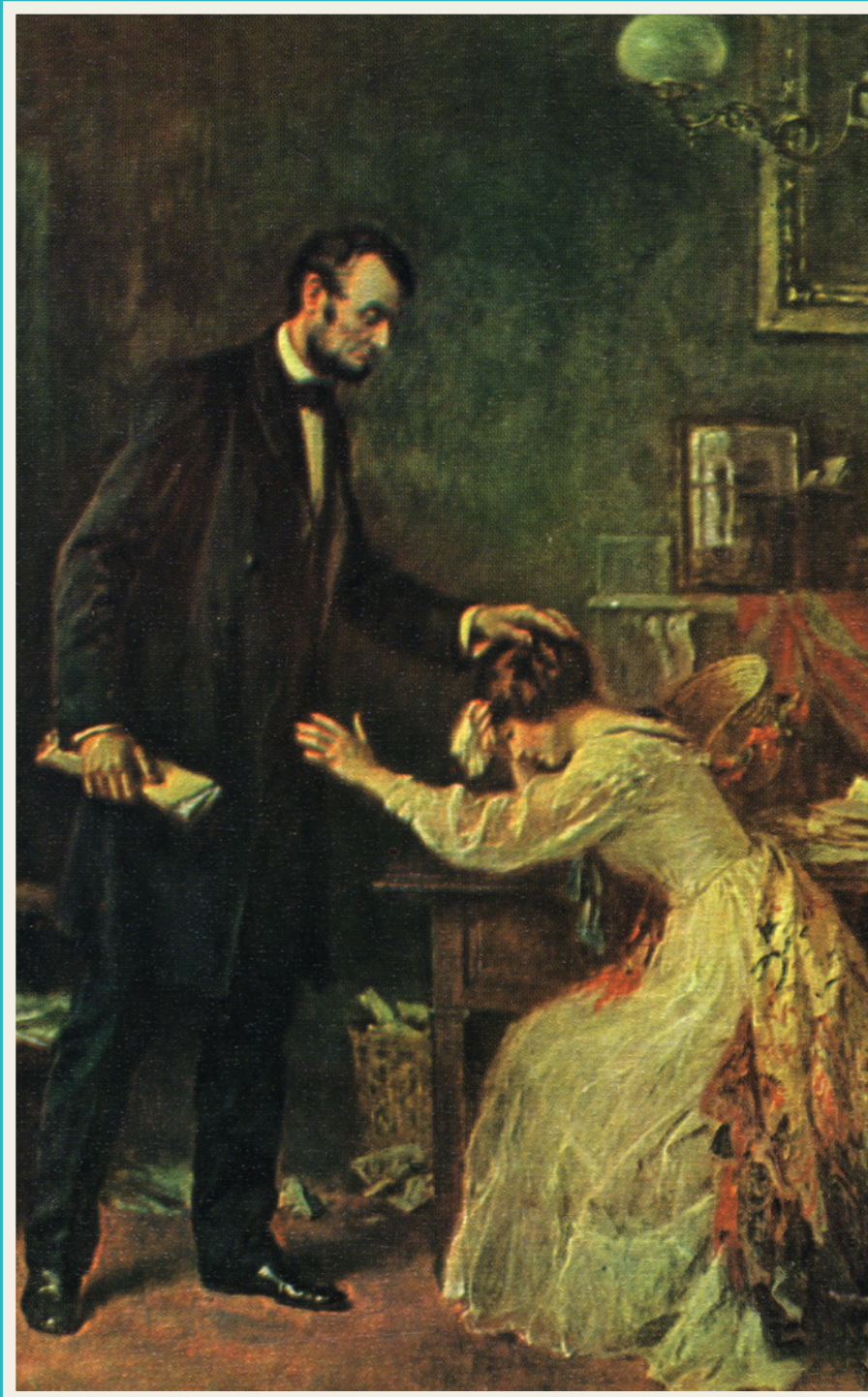

Lincoln

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NUMBER 1942 SUMMER 2024



Lincoln LORE

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Table of Contents

**"To Appreciate the Relation . . . to the Defence of Washington":
Lincoln and the Shenandoah Valley in 1864**
Jonathan A. Noyalas page 3

Abraham Lincoln and "the Most Dangerous Man" in Baltimore
Sean A. Scott page 11

Review Essay: Law and Order in Lincoln's America
Mark S. Schantz page 19

**Book Review: Delivered Under Fire: Absalom Markland and
Freedom's Mail by Candice Shy Hooper**
Frank W. Garmon Jr. page 27

Editor's Note



When I talk to my students about Lincoln's time in the White House, I often tell them about how busy he was. (College students, it should be noted, *think* they are busy.) It is almost unfathomable to consider all of the matters that occupied Lincoln's mind and time: waging a war for the life of the nation; managing the federal bureaucracy, which involved the headache of political patronage; balancing the demands and interests of the various political and regional wings of his party; negotiating foreign policy; corralling obstinate and incorrigible subordinates (both in the military and the civil government); battling partisan opposition; and dealing with the daily cares and concerns of ordinary citizens. In addition, he also had the duties of father and husband.

In this issue of *Lincoln Lore* we get a glimpse of the busyness of Lincoln's days. Jonathan A. Noyalas explores how Lincoln responded to Confederate general Jubal A. Early's attack on Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1864—an assault that placed the president under fire. Sean A. Scott analyzes a different sort of fire—the so-called “fire from the rear”—as Lincoln had to determine what to do about a disloyal minister in the North.

Lincoln dealt with a mountain of petitions for pardon during his presidency. In a fascinating review essay, Mark S. Schantz considers three biographies with a common theme—each focuses on a lesser-known figure who petitioned Lincoln for pardon. However, in reviewing these books, Schantz picks up on a deeper theme drawn from the work of the late Lincoln scholar Phillip Shaw Paludan. Rather than focusing on the pardon stories, Schantz uses these books to offer a meditation on the meaning of “law and order” in Lincoln's America. Finally, Frank W. Garmon Jr. reviews a biography of the man who restored mail service in the South as the Union armies moved forward, reminding us of how many moving parts had to be successfully managed to wage the war effort.

- Jonathan W. White

On The Cover: *Lincoln Issues a Pardon* (71.2009.083.0820)



The grounds of the soldiers' home in Washington, D.C., ca. 1863. (Library of Congress)

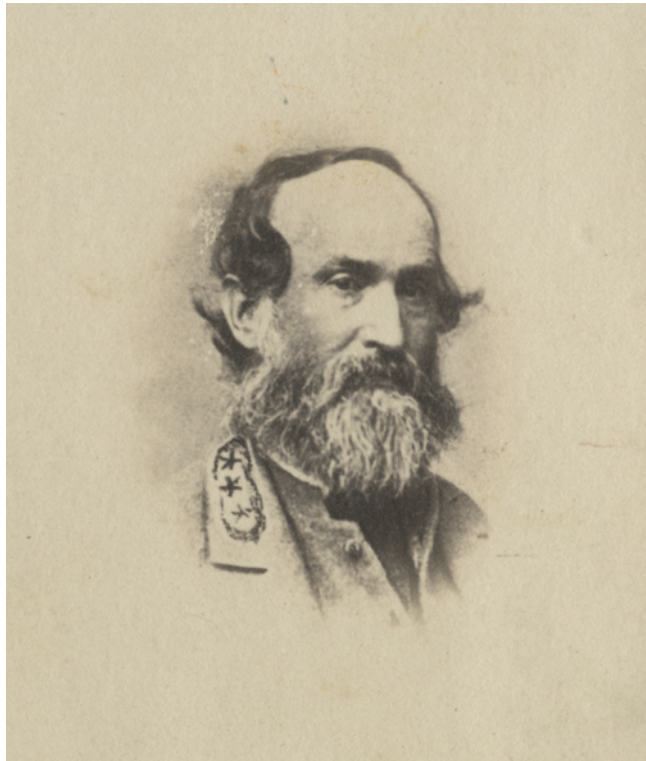
“To Appreciate the Relation . . . to the Defence of Washington” Lincoln and the Shenandoah Valley in 1864

by Jonathan A. Noyalas

As Confederate general Jubal Early's Army of the Valley withdrew from its position in front of Fort Stevens on Washington, D.C.'s northern outskirts during the night of July 12, 1864, Early's veterans attempted to assess the impact of their advance to the gates of the national capital. Confederate general Gabriel Wharton, one of Early's division commanders, boasted to his wife Nannie three days later, as Early's command marched toward Snickers Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains, that "this has been the grandest raid on record." Wharton believed "all Yankeedom very much scared and confused." Rumors circulated throughout Early's command, Wharton explained, that news of Early's approach so disturbed President Abraham Lincoln that

he escaped to Pennsylvania. "It is reported old Abe fled to Philadelphia on our approaching Washington," Wharton wrote from the army's camp near Leesburg, Virginia. Early too, despite his regret that he "did not succeed in capturing Washington," believed the presence of his army greatly unnerved Lincoln. On the night of July 12, in a conversation with one of his staff officers, Maj. Henry Kyd Douglas, Early reportedly boasted "in his falsetto drawl: Major we haven't taken Washington, but we've scared Abe Lincoln like h[ell]!"

Early's operations throughout the previous month achieved much for the Confederate war effort in Virginia. The Army of the Valley drove Union general David Hunter's

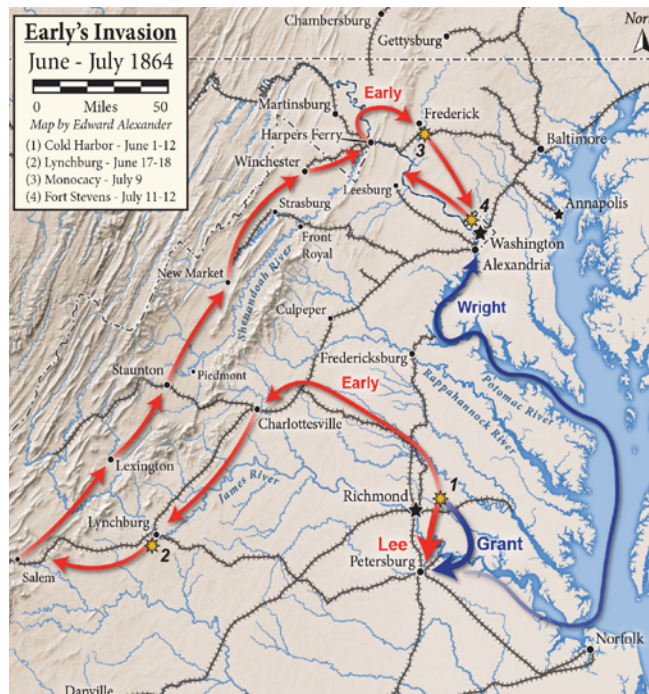


Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early (OC-0560)

command from Lynchburg, a strategically significant transportation and rail hub, cleared Union forces from the Shenandoah Valley, ransomed Hagerstown, Maryland, defeated Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace’s command at the Battle of Monocacy on July 9, and marched to Washington’s northern outskirts. Although evidence indicates Early fell short of frightening “Abe Lincoln like h[ell],” his movements sobered Lincoln to the importance of permanently wresting the Shenandoah Valley, the place from which Early launched his invasion, from the Confederacy’s grasp.

As Early’s army moved through the Shenandoah Valley, drove Brig. Gen. Max Weber’s command from the vitally strategic Harpers Ferry, and marched into Maryland, Lincoln believed the chances of Early capturing Washington unlikely. On July 4, the day Harpers Ferry fell, Lincoln’s secretary John Hay wrote in his diary: “The president thinks with decent management we destroy any enemy who crosses the Potomac.” Those who advised Lincoln seemed less certain. Two days after Early captured Harpers Ferry, Maj. Gen. Ethan Allen Hitchcock shared his concerns with Lincoln, who sat behind a table “surrounded with papers.” The president at first did not seem bothered by Early’s presence. As Hitchcock pleaded with Lincoln to impress upon Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton or chief of staff Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck the necessity for additional troops to protect Washington, Hitchcock recalled that Lincoln did not “see the need of any assistance” to defend a place encircled by sixty forts, ninety-three batteries, and over 800 cannons. Perturbed, Hitchcock, who believed that “an enterprising general could take the city,” placed his hands on the table behind which Lincoln sat, leaned forward, and informed Lincoln, “If Stonewall Jackson were living, and in command of Early’s troops, in my opinion, sir, he would be in Washington in three days.” Lincoln, Hitchcock believed, appeared “very much struck with the expression of such an opinion.”

In the ensuing days anxieties neared a fevered pitch in the nation’s capital. Following Early’s victory at Monocacy on July 9 streams of refugees poured into Washington, spreading rumors about the strength of Early’s army, depredations committed by it, and where Early’s command might head next. Albert Gallatin Riddle, a former congressman from Ohio who worked as an attorney in Washington, heard rumors that Early’s “force was estimated at not less than 40,000 men.” Some estimates placed Early’s strength at 45,000 troops. Horatio Nelson Taft, an examiner at the patent office, did not believe Early’s army quite that large. Taft recorded in his diary on July 9: “The rebel force is estimated at all numbers from five thousand to twenty thousand. . . . It is supposed that they will make an attempt upon this city or Baltimore next.” In reality, Early’s force consisted of approximately 10,000 troops. Regardless of Early’s numerical strength, Attorney General Edward Bates believed the situation quite serious. “For several days past



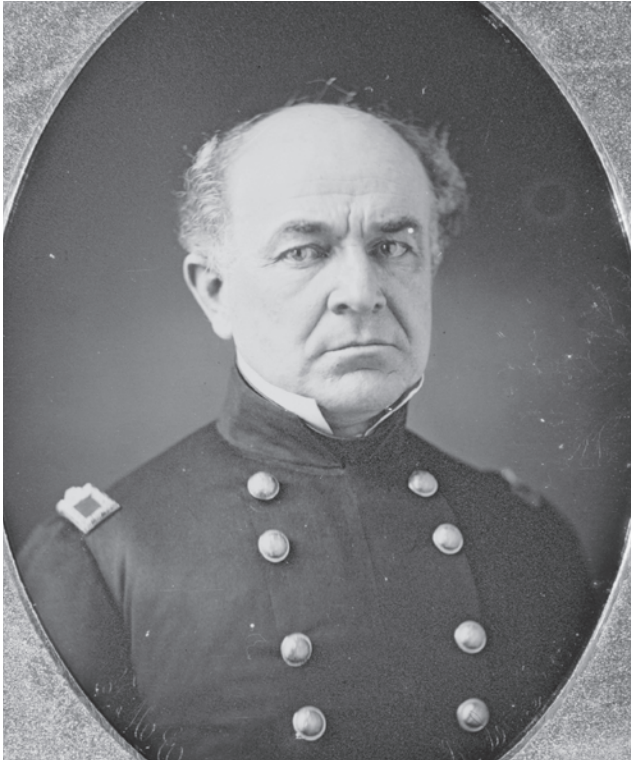
Map illustrating Early’s movements from Petersburg, through the Shenandoah Valley, and to the gates of Washington, D.C. (Map prepared by Edward Alexander and courtesy of Shenandoah University’s McCormick Civil War Institute)

there has been great excitement here . . . in consequence of a renewed invasion of the rebels,” he wrote in his diary on July 10. “At first it was made light of, as a mere raid, by a light party; but now, it is ascertained to be a formidable army, of some 20,000, or more.”

As Washingtonians and those seeking refuge in the city speculated about the size of the Confederate force and its next target, little doubt existed as to the ultimate purpose of Early’s mission—to distract Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant’s campaign to take Richmond. One federal employee correctly surmised on July 9 that “this rebel ‘raid’ is supposed to be intended to draw Grant away from Richmond to defend Washington.”

While many in Washington fretted for the capital’s safety as Early’s army moved closer, Lincoln’s perspective of the threat posed by Early remained unchanged. On the morning of July 10, he sent a telegram to Thomas Swann, a member of a committee appointed by the mayor of Baltimore to tend to the city’s safety in the event of a Confederate advance, urging people to “be vigilant, but keep cool.” Throughout the day, as it became clearer to Lincoln that “the enemy is moving on Washington,” Secretary of War Stanton took measures to ensure the president’s safety. Since 1862 Lincoln and his family had spent the summer months at a cottage on the grounds of the Soldiers’ Home, located three miles north of the White House. Situated on one of the highest elevations in the city, the Soldiers’ Home offered the Lincolns refuge from Washington’s oppressive heat and humidity during the summer months and provided Lincoln a quiet place to gather his thoughts. Although only a thirty-minute carriage ride from the White House, its location north of Washington—the direction from which Early’s command approached the capital city—unnerved Stanton. Noah Brooks, a longtime friend of Lincoln’s who worked as a newspaper correspondent in Washington, thought “the lonely situation of the President’s Summer residence would have afforded a tempting chance for a daring squad of rebel cavalry to run some risks for the chance of carrying off the President.” Recognizing that the nation could “ill afford to spare” Lincoln “just now,” Stanton thought it best for Lincoln to return to the White House. At 10:00 p.m. Stanton sent a message to Lincoln, whose family had already gone to bed, recommending that he “had better come in to town tonight.” Approximately one hour later, Stanton arrived to make certain that the president complied. While Lincoln, according to Private Willard Cutter, a soldier in the 150th Pennsylvania who served on guard duty that night, “didn’t think there was any danger,” he assented to Stanton’s request and “went along.”

The following day, as Early’s troops moved into position north of Fort Stevens, the defensive work which safeguarded the Seventh Street Road, Lincoln left the White House and ventured to Fort Stevens to see for himself



Maj. Gen. Ethan Allen Hitchcock (Library of Congress)



President Lincoln with his secretaries John Nicolay (seated) and John Hay. (OC-1536)



Fort Stevens as it appeared in 1864. (Library of Congress)

what sort of threat Early posed. “The President concluded to desert his tormentors today,” John Hay wrote in his diary on July 11, and “travel around the defenses.” When Lincoln returned to the White House around 3:00 p.m. Hay thought the “President is in very good feather. . . . He seems not in the least concerned about the safety of Washington.” Lincoln’s calm demeanor, undoubtedly fortified by the arrival of reinforcements from Maj. Gen. Horatio Wright’s Sixth Corps, continued throughout the following day. “The President seemed in a pleasant and confident humor today,” Hay reported in his diary on July 12.

While Early and his Confederates undoubtedly raised anxieties among many in Washington, including some of Lincoln’s cabinet members, extant evidence from those closest to Lincoln reveals that Early did not, as the Confederate general boasted, scare “Abe Lincoln like h[ell]!” In fact, if Early’s advance stirred any feeling in Lincoln, it was frustration due to the inability of Union troops to prevent Early’s escape. From the moment Early appeared in front of Fort Stevens, Lincoln’s primary concern, according to John Hay, “seems to be whether we can bag or destroy this force in our front.” After Lincoln received reports on the morning of July 13 “that the enemy is retiring from every point” Lincoln, and for that matter many in Washington, appeared “eager for the pursuit to

begin.” Lincoln, as Hay recalled, thought “we should push our whole column up the river road & cut off as many as possible of the retreating soldiers.”

However, as much as the commander in chief might have wanted an immediate pursuit, Lincoln refused to order it out of respect for his general in chief. When Lincoln entrusted Grant with command of all United States forces in March 1864, he vowed that he would not confuse his role as commander in chief with that of the general in chief so long as Grant did not procrastinate. The president’s secretaries, John Nicolay and John Hay, explained that “the President, true to the position he had taken when Grant was made general-in-chief, would not interfere.” The next day proved excruciating for Lincoln. Nicolay and Hay later noted that the president felt much “anguish” as he “observed . . . the undisturbed retreat of Early.”

Lincoln understood that before any pursuit of Early could begin the various forces in Washington needed to be placed under a single commander. Charles A. Dana, Lincoln’s assistant secretary of war, wrote pointedly to Grant on July 12 that “nothing can be done here toward pursuing or cutting off the enemy for want of a commander . . . there is no head to the whole.” Grant addressed the problem later that day when he ordered General Wright “to supreme command of all troops moving out against the enemy.” Wright’s command, which initially consisted of 10,000 troops—the approximate size of Early’s command—departed Washington around 3:00 p.m. on July 13. (Within days it would grow to 30,000 men.)

Five days later, along the banks of the Shenandoah River near Snickers Gap in eastern Clarke County, Virginia, a portion of Early’s command and a contingent of Wright’s force clashed at the Battle of Cool Spring. The battle, which resulted in yet another tactical victory



The Union pursuit of Early ended here along the banks of the Shenandoah River with Confederate victory at the Battle of Cool Spring. Today Shenandoah University owns 195 acres of the battlefield and interprets it for visitors. (Photograph by Jonathan A. Noyalas)

for Confederate troops in the Shenandoah Valley, proved problematic for Lincoln, who possessed increasing uncertainty about his chances to win reelection in November.

Three days after Cool Spring the Washington *National Intelligencer* berated the Lincoln administration for failing to recognize the important role the Shenandoah Valley played as a diversionary theater of war for Confederate forces. In addition to its value as a source of provender for Confederate soldiers in the Old Dominion and a point from which Rebel armies could invade the North, the Valley proved a point from which Confederates could threaten Washington, as Early had done, and therefore create a strategic diversion to alleviate pressure on the Confederate capital. “The Valley of the Shenandoah has more than once been the valley of our national humiliation,” the *Intelligencer* rightfully groaned. The paper charged that Lincoln and his “military administration” had “not learned to appreciate the relation of this valley to the defence of Washington, and the enemy . . . has learned to practice in this quarter a wearisome monotony of movement which only serves to show that he deems it safe at any time to hope for success by counting on our official stolidity as a standing substitute for his poverty of invention.” In addition to pointing out the administration’s ostensible lack of awareness of the Shenandoah Valley’s strategic significance, the *Intelligencer* posed a question to its readers: “And now we ask, the whole nation will ask, *who is responsible for such humiliations?* Is it the President, the Secretary of War, the Chief of Staff, or can it be that our military affairs are still left at such loose ends. . . ?” While the *Intelligencer* did not directly assign the blame to Lincoln it warned “that if the President cannot discover and correct the source of these blunders, the people in the approaching election will not be slow to discover one method by which they can put an end to this reign of military incompetence.”

Criticism of Lincoln, exacerbated by clashes with members of his own party about plans for reconstruction, increased over the next week-and-a-half as newspapers throughout the nation berated Lincoln and asserted, as did an Ohio newspaper on July 28, that “Mr. Lincoln’s Re-election is now considered an impossibility.” This reproach, coupled with General Wright’s inability to destroy Early, fueled the Democratic Party’s accusation that the war effort under Lincoln’s leadership proved an epic failure. Grant, aware that the Shenandoah Valley “had been a source of a great deal of [political and military] trouble,” determined to consolidate the four departments that shared some responsibility for Washington’s protection—Susquehanna, Middle, West Virginia, and Washington. On July 25, Grant “recommended” to Lincoln that “the four departments” should be “merged into one”—the Middle Military Division (popularly referred to as the Army of the Shenandoah)—and placed under the command of “one general officer, in whom I and yourself have confidence.” Lincoln approved of Grant’s plan, but possessed some misgivings as to who should lead it. Initially, Grant believed Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin “a suitable person to command the whole.” Despite Grant’s belief that Franklin was “capable and . . . trustworthy” Lincoln balked at the suggestion since Franklin was a Democrat who had criticized the president. Next, Grant recommended Maj. Gen. George G. Meade,

commander of the Army of the Potomac, an excellent choice. Meade, Grant explained to Lincoln, would use “the troops within the [new] military division . . . to the very best advantage.” However, Lincoln disapproved of Meade. While Lincoln might have believed Meade equal to the task, the president thought moving Meade from Petersburg to the Shenandoah Valley might make him appear weak politically. The president reminded Grant that various individuals pressured Lincoln to remove Meade from command of the Army of the Potomac. With the presidential election slightly more than three months away Lincoln worried that his detractors might interpret any change in Meade’s status as a sign that Lincoln caved to pressure and was growing feebler politically. Finally, when the two met at Fort Monroe on July 31—the day after cavalry from Early’s army rode into Pennsylvania and burned Chambersburg—Lincoln and his general in chief decided that Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan was best suited to command the Army of the Shenandoah.

Sheridan, a West Point graduate whose star was born earlier in the conflict as a division commander in the Army of the Cumberland and who continued to gain recognition as the chief of the Army of the Potomac’s cavalry corps during the spring and summer of 1864, arrived in Washington on August 4. Sheridan thought he possessed a clear understanding of what Grant expected him to do. Grant, Sheridan wrote, “wanted” the Army of the Shenandoah “to push the enemy . . . and if Early retired up [i.e., moved south] the Shenandoah Valley I was to pursue, but if he crossed the Potomac I was to put myself south of him and try to compass his destruction.” Conversations Sheridan had



Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan (OC-0943)

with Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton on August 5 complicated things a bit for Sheridan. After Lincoln “candidly” informed Sheridan that he and Stanton possessed doubt about entrusting such an important command to someone they “thought . . . too young,” Stanton explained the impact another Union defeat in the Valley could have on Lincoln’s bid for reelection. As Stanton and Sheridan departed the White House, Stanton conversed with Sheridan “freely in regard to the campaign I was expected to make, seeking to impress on me the necessity for success from the political as well as from the military point of view.”

This conversation crystallized Sheridan’s objective in the Shenandoah. While clear that Sheridan needed to defeat Early’s Army of the Valley and “destroy” what “cannot be consumed” by Union troops so as to leave “nothing . . . to invite the enemy to return,” Sheridan also realized that he ought not to strike Early unless he could be assured of success. Cognizant of the consequences Union defeat in the Shenandoah Valley would have on Lincoln’s reelection campaign, Sheridan thought a pragmatic approach best. Aware that the defeat of the Army of the Shenandoah “might be followed by the overthrow of the party in power” Sheridan “deemed it necessary to be very cautious” and “not . . . risk a disaster.”

During Sheridan’s first month in command he and Early maneuvered in a forty-five-mile swath of territory between Harpers Ferry and Fisher’s Hill, located south of Strasburg, Virginia. While encounters with portions of Early’s command occurred, perhaps most notably at Berryville, Virginia, on September 3–4, the incessant marching and countermarching—what one of Sheridan’s infantrymen branded a “mimic war”—confounded some of Sheridan’s troops. Lieut. John Sturtevant of the 14th New Hampshire Infantry found the movements “curious and inexplicable . . . mysterious and unaccountable.” So too did Lincoln. While Lincoln might have appreciated Sheridan’s desire not to invite another disaster in the Shenandoah, Lincoln also understood that continued inactivity in the Valley might likewise prove politically injurious. Northern newspapers began to question why the person Lincoln approved to command the Army of the Shenandoah had taken no significant steps to crush Early. “Mutterings of discontent broke out . . . in the



"Final Charge at Winchester," chromolithograph by Louis Prang, ca. 1886 (71.2009.081.1344)

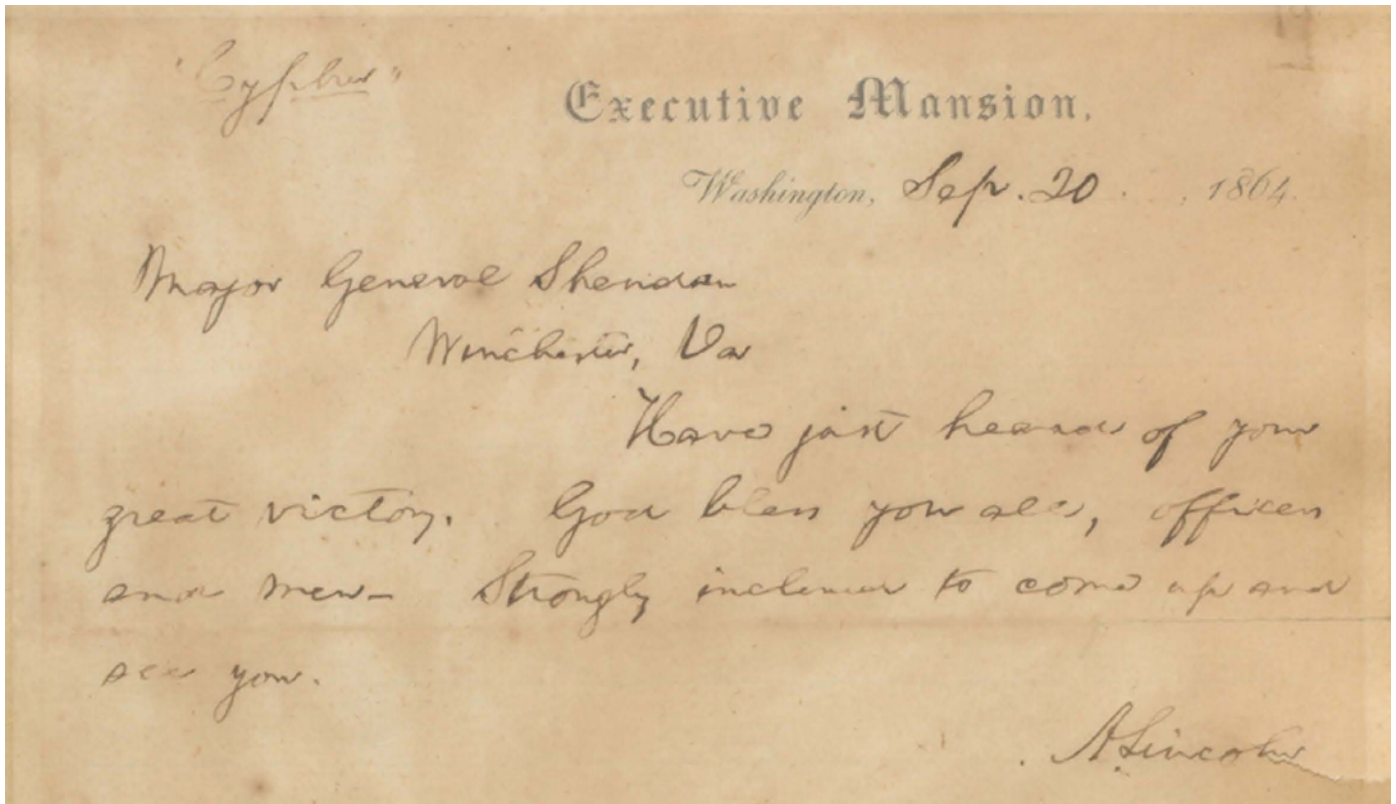
Northern papers," recalled Henry Greiner, one of Sheridan's longtime friends. By the second week of September Lincoln's impatience with Sheridan's pragmatism, fueled further by Union general William T. Sherman's capture of Atlanta on September 2, crescendoed into a "suggestion" to Grant on September 12. Cognizant that Sherman's success silenced that plank of the Democratic Party's platform that asserted that Lincoln's handling of the war had been a "failure," Lincoln understood the political benefits victory in the Shenandoah offered. "Sheridan and Early are facing each other at a dead lock. Could we not pick up a regiment here and there, to the number of say ten thousand men, and quietly, but suddenly concentrate them at Sheridan's camp and enable him to make a strike?" Grant agreed.

Five days later Grant met with Sheridan in Charles Town, West Virginia, to "arrange what was necessary to enable him to start Early out of the Valley." By the time the two met in the home of Thomas and Mary Rutherford, Sheridan had developed a plan to strike Early. Based on information Sheridan received from Rebecca Wright, a Quaker Unionist in Winchester, coupled with reports from cavalry scouts, Sheridan possessed a clear understanding of the strength and whereabouts of the elements of Early's army. After Sheridan laid out his plan Grant directed Sheridan simply to "Go in!"

On September 19 Sheridan launched his campaign against Early with victory at the Third Battle of Winchester, a triumph Secretary Stanton regarded as "the turning point!" Three days later Sheridan bested Early at Fisher's Hill. Secretary of the Navy Gideon

Welles recognized that Sheridan's victories had "a party-political influence" and "strengthens the Administration." A correspondent for the *Philadelphia Press* labeled Sheridan's victories "a new endorsement of Abraham Lincoln." Grant thought Sheridan's victory at Fisher's Hill "the most effective campaign argument in the canvass." While Sheridan's initial successes pleased many, they arguably brought the greatest joy to Lincoln. The day after Sheridan bested Early at Winchester, Lincoln wrote Sheridan: "Have just heard of your great victory. God bless you all, officers and men. Strongly inclined to come up and see you."

One month after Sheridan began his campaign against Early, the Army of the Shenandoah gained another victory at the Battle of Cedar Creek. Although Sheridan and his command did not fully comprehend it at the time, the success achieved at Cedar Creek on October 19 effectively stripped the Confederates of their hold on the Shenandoah Valley. Three days later Lincoln expressed his gratitude: "With great pleasure I tender to you and your brave army, the thanks of the Nation, and my own personal admiration and gratitude, for the



President Lincoln sent this message to Sheridan the day after his victory at the Third Battle of Winchester. (Library of Congress)

month's operations in the Shenandoah Valley; and especially for the splendid work of October 19, 1864." Lincoln wrote.

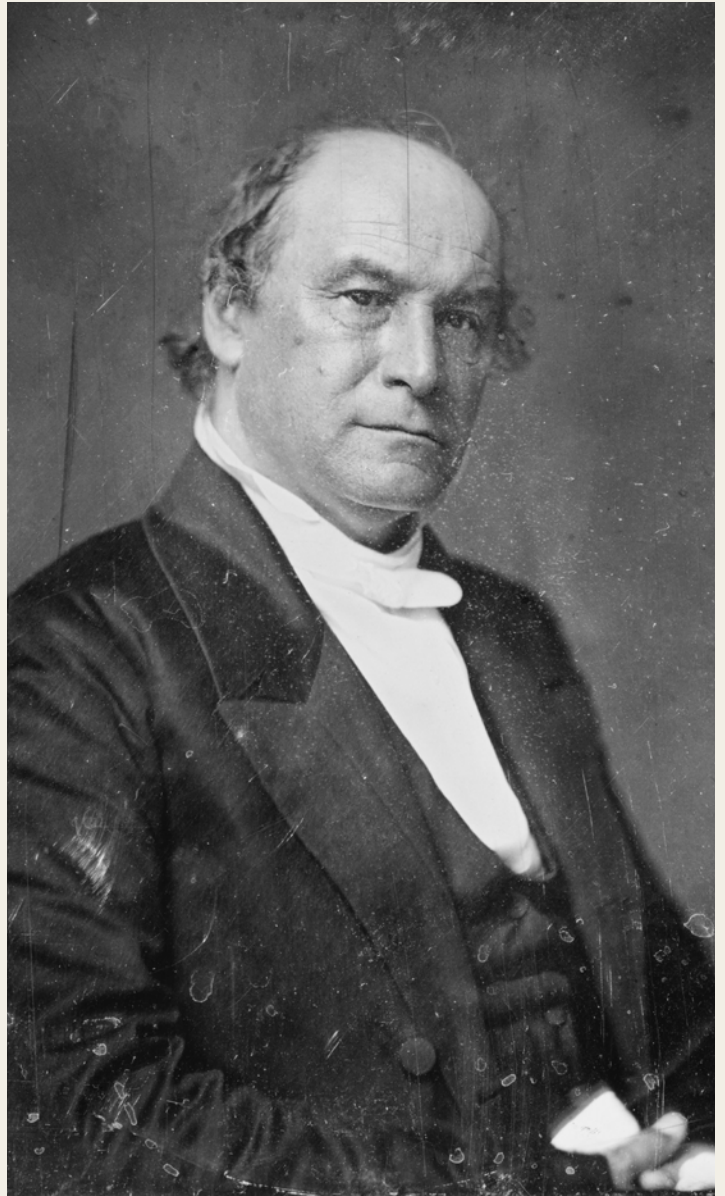
Lincoln's supporters, recognizing the political benefits of Sheridan's victories in the Shenandoah Valley, held a torch-light parade in Washington. Those who participated cheered for Lincoln and Sheridan. A group from New Jersey toted an image of Democratic candidate George B. McClellan with the phrase "Great Failure of the War" emblazoned across it. When the parade ended at the White House Lincoln's devotees pleaded with the president to make a few remarks. Lincoln, aware that the parade would happen, but not inclined to make a speech, stood under the White House portico with his son Tad by his side and utilized the moment to praise Sheridan. After urging those in attendance to "give three hearty cheers for Sheridan" Lincoln joked with "the large crowd" how Early should count his blessings that Sheridan "was a very little man." "While we are at it we may as well consider how fortunate it was for the Secesh that Sheridan was a very little man. If he had been a large man, there is no knowing what he would have done with them," Lincoln quipped.

Following Sheridan's successes in the Shenandoah Lincoln's supporters attempted to discern what control of the Valley might mean for Lincoln's political future. Benjamin Brown French, commissioner of public buildings in Washington, thought "the reelection of Lincoln . . . seems, now, to be a foregone conclusion." Newspapers across the globe attempted to assess the impact, too. A correspondent for the *London Times* thought the "victory gained by Gen. Sheridan . . . rendered" Lincoln's reelection "almost certain." Although Lincoln could not know with any certainty how he would fare at the polls until the states tabulated the ballots cast on November 8, Union victory in the Shenandoah Valley, something that eluded United States forces until the autumn of 1864, removed Lincoln's "anxiety" about Confederates utilizing the Valley to threaten Washington. Victory in the Valley redeemed the president's reputation for the "national humiliations" suffered as a result of the Confederate control of the Shenandoah, a place the *National Intelligencer* rightfully concluded produced incessant "panic cries of alarm . . . terrors . . . [and] blunders." Additionally, Union control of the Shenandoah showed that Lincoln indeed deserved, as a newspaper correspondent wrote, to "receive" the votes "of fellow citizens . . . at the next election."

Jonathan A. Noyalas is director of Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute. He is the author or editor of sixteen books including a new study of the Battle of Cool Spring, *The Blood-tinted Waters of the Shenandoah*.

Abraham Lincoln and “the Most Dangerous Man” in Baltimore

by Sean A. Scott



Francis Lister Hawks (Library of Congress)

Francis Lister Hawks was a distinguished clergyman and man of letters whose southern sympathies during the Civil War brought him to the attention of Abraham Lincoln. Born in 1798 in Newbern, North Carolina, Hawks graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1815, pursued a career in law, and served a term in the state legislature. In his late twenties he began studying for the ministry, received ordination, and eventually settled into a twelve-year-long pastorate at St. Thomas Church in Queens County, New York. Regularly drawing large crowds to hear him preach, the hard-working clergyman also taught seminary classes, compiled records of Episcopal church history, and wrote children's books and poetry, including one entitled “To an Old and Very

Cheerful Christian Lady.” When this much-admired woman asked him to “make sense of” her husband’s “thousands of pages of writings,” he edited *The Official and Other Papers of the Late Major-General Alexander Hamilton*. However, in 1843 financial troubles stemming from a short-lived boys’ school prompted his resignation and relocation to the South, where he served churches in Mississippi and New Orleans, turned down an appointment as Bishop of Mississippi, and became the first president of Louisiana College (now Tulane University). His reputation repaired, in 1849 he returned to New York City and the following year accepted the rectorship of Calvary Church in Manhattan with an annual salary of \$5,000 and a promise by the vestry to pay off his remaining debt. During the 1850s the



Elizabeth "Eliza" Schuyler Hamilton, widow of Alexander Hamilton (Library of Congress)



Horatio Potter, Bishop of New York (Library of Congress)

church thrived under his oversight, and he earned the sincere respect of his Episcopal colleagues and heartfelt gratitude of his congregation.

When the nation fractured and civil war ensued, Hawks staked out a conservative position and never wavered in his convictions. During the secession winter he faulted both North and South for the nation's turmoil and avoided mentioning slavery as a cause of strife. "Our duty as Christians is to speak peace," he proclaimed in a fast day sermon on January 4, 1861, as he urged his listeners to bombard their representatives and senators with petitions and letters demanding that Congress avoid war. Once fighting began, the rumors swirled—that he refused to follow the prayer book and pray for President Lincoln; that he fled to the South; and that he "committed numerous other improper and unpatriotic acts." Although the Democratic *New York Express* scoffed at such allegations, it admitted that Hawks favored "concession and conciliation," a position derived from his North Carolina roots.

By March 1862 an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with Hawks was stirring among congregants who objected to his public indifference, if not personal hostility, to the Union. One disgruntled vestryman complained to William R. Whittingham, bishop of Maryland, that Hawks was "among the suspected, if not acknowledged enemies of the Government of the United States." He made his case based on Hawks's "sympathies" for "his relatives and 'countrymen' in North Carolina." In fact, earlier that year the rector's son Francis T. Hawks, who had worked as an assistant superintending engineer on the construction of Manhattan's Central Park, joined the Confederate army as an aide-de-camp and participated in the Battle of New Bern on March 14. One week after the capture of his hometown, Hawks submitted his resignation to the wardens and vestry of Calvary Church, citing "[God's] will" and declining health as his reasons. The New York papers hit closer to the mark when they discerned political differences as the cause, but the *Times* nevertheless defended Hawks's conduct as rector. "He has not so obtruded his private political opinions upon his people as to give offence," a statement backed in the main by the vestry's refusal to accept his resignation because a majority of pewholders and New York bishop Horatio Potter desired him to continue as rector. The astute Hawks would never demean his office by expressing from the pulpit personal opinions about the war, yet omitting "the prayer prescribed by the Bishop for the success of our arms and the protection of our troops" constituted a political act as much as the former. The unsought groundswell of support blocking his planned exit compelled him to come clean, albeit obliquely. "I conscientiously believe," he maintained, that the resignation "embraces in it certain great and vital principles which I have no right to surrender." In other words, he refused to bow to "the dictation of men" regarding what he should preach or pray. Furthermore, he valued his "rights as a man and an American" to hold private opinions, for certainly he did not forfeit them simply by being



Calvary Church, located at Fourth Avenue and 22nd Street in Manhattan (New York Public Library)

a clergyman. Perhaps feeling a tad sanctimonious, he appealed to Scripture to justify his course. “If they persecute you in one City, flee ye to another,” he paraphrased Jesus’ words in Matthew 10:23, and he followed that admonition, taking refuge in the seemingly safer confines of southern sympathizing Baltimore.

By autumn 1862 Hawks had settled in nicely at Christ Church, reportedly drawing “overflowing” audiences. Although he did not preach politics, everyone knew that he favored the South, which he clearly demonstrated by refusing to read the recently adopted pastoral letter that condemned the southern rebellion in no uncertain terms. By 1863 his reputation was cinched. Republican newspapers described him as “a rebel sympathizer of the extreme kind.” Southerners, in contrast, could be confident that “the South has no truer friend than Dr. Hawks.” Indeed, a Southern Baptist pastor who was permitted to leave Baltimore shared a conversation in which the Episcopalian had fervently proclaimed, “All North Carolinians, male or female, who are true to Southern independence[,] are *kin* to me.”

On Tuesday, May 10, 1864, several vestrymen from Christ Church gained an audience with Abraham Lincoln. They informed the



Christ Church, Baltimore (Collection of Carol Anne Wald)



William R. Whittingham, Bishop of Maryland
(Google Books)

president that their beloved rector, who had traveled to New York City in April, was not permitted to return to Baltimore, and they sought an explanation for his banishment. Lincoln, of course, knew nothing about their dilemma and likely had never even heard of Francis Hawks. Nevertheless, he good-naturedly complied with their request to sort out the matter and telegraphed Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace, who two months previously had been placed in Baltimore as commander of the Middle Department and the Eighth Army Corps. “Please tell me what is the trouble with Dr. Hawks,” Lincoln queried, then added, “Also, please ask Bishop Whittington to give me his views of the case.” The delegation may have name-dropped the bishop of Maryland, but the president already knew that Whittingham would offer an unvarnished opinion on the matter, even if he often misspelled the bishop’s surname. He certainly valued the patriotic support that Whittingham had consistently given his policies and once had written, “I need not tell the Sec. of the Treasury or any of the Heads of Departments, who Bishop Whittington is.”

Likely expecting a protest from Hawks’s defenders, Wallace dutifully complied with his commander in chief’s request the following day and personally conveyed the message to Whittingham, who to that point “knew nothing about the

affair” either. However, rather than giving a straightforward response to Lincoln’s question, Wallace instead provided a highly speculative preface on “the peculiarities of secessionism in Baltimore.” “Out of the multitude of letters captured on the way to ‘Dixie,’” Wallace began, seemingly off topic, “not one is from a man—*they are all from women.*” At first glance, he reasoned, it seemed normal for ladies to communicate with loved ones in the South, but the “intense and malignant hate of the Govt.” contained therein proved that these missives were more than familial chitchat. Unable to acknowledge that women might form their own political opinions based on their circumstances, backgrounds, or ideology, the general instead concluded that they developed their treasonable ideas by listening “to the teachings of certain Ministers of the Gospel, whom I have watched and reported, Dr. Hawks being one of the number.” The conspiracy only deepened when he erroneously claimed that Hawks had purposefully been “imported by the disloyalists to make fight, in a spiritual way,” against A. Cleveland Coxe, the “devoted Unionist” rector of Grace Church, and had in fact replaced him. Finally giving accurate information about Hawks, Wallace admitted that the rector “never says anything exceptionable,” which allowed



“A Female Rebel in Baltimore—An Everyday Scene,”
Harper’s Weekly, September 7, 1861 (71200908408087)

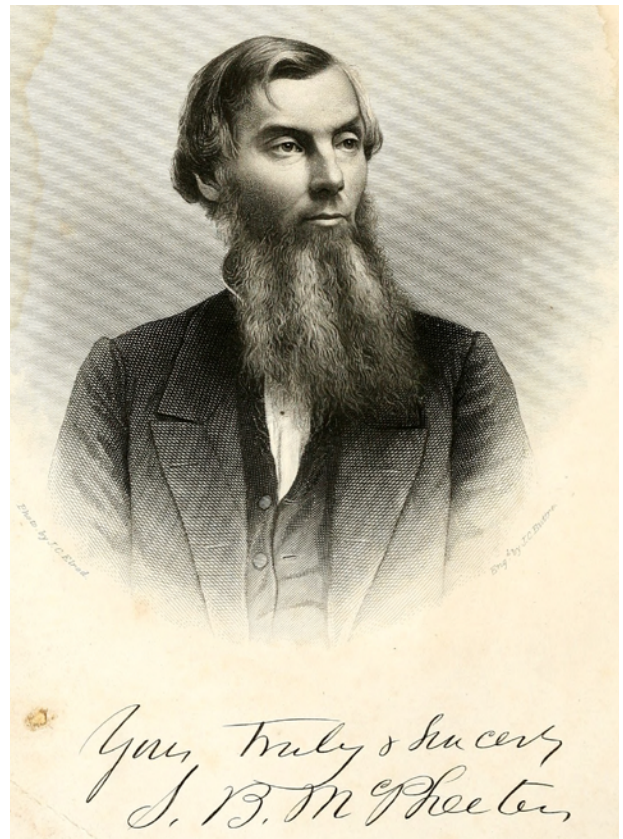
his supporters to “carry their entreaties to yr. Excellency. They honestly believe him all right, while I feel a positive assurance that he is all wrong.”

To prove to Lincoln that Hawks was a dangerous individual, Wallace enumerated four reasons why the Episcopalian rector could no longer be ignored. Hawks “insidiously” stoked his congregation’s opposition to the government through his “talents” and “influence”; his disloyal members wanted him to replace Whittingham as the next bishop of Maryland; he never publicly supported the government; and he had written and circulated a pamphlet to encourage Baltimore’s “reliable disloyalists”—an elusive document “Union people never get to see.” The general gathered this information from sources who were “numerous,” personally devout, politically sound, and Episcopalian—credentials that in his mind rendered them more reliable than Hawks’s supporters who had visited the president. However, he had promised to keep their identities secret, so Lincoln had to trust his judgment. Finally leaving the realm of speculation and insinuation, Wallace informed Lincoln that he had merely ordered his provost marshal to require that Hawks swear an oath of allegiance or vacate Baltimore within twenty-four hours, a seemingly easy task for any loyal citizen. The minister’s continued absence confirmed to Wallace that he had acted prudently and unmasked a traitor who could never swear the oath in good conscience. Instead, the threatened oath had eliminated Hawks’s pernicious influence from Baltimore and would serve as a warning to other “disaffected” clergymen. Having made his case, the general implored Lincoln to sustain his action, effectively removing Hawks and rendering “a happy end” to a “disagreeable” situation.

Considering the flimsy evidence offered by Wallace, Bishop Whittingham’s assessment may have carried significant weight in shaping Lincoln’s thinking about the religious and political ramifications of the case. Although the bishop personally preferred to avoid any involvement, he could not ignore the president’s desire for his input. In his mind, Wallace had not violated Hawks’s “religious freedom” because he had not obtruded military authority into church affairs by specifically stipulating what a clergyman could or could not say in public worship. In effect, Whittingham accepted the general’s prerogative to act as “the responsible guardian” of the public interest and feared that countermanding the order would undermine respect for Wallace’s policies and authority. However, if Wallace had conferred with him first, he would have advised, based on both “personal and official interests,” to leave Hawks alone, despite the “sufficient grounds” that Wallace claimed existed. Far from a ringing endorsement, Whittingham ultimately deferred to military authority while suggesting that the imbroglio was both unnecessary and avoidable. With both letters in hand, Lincoln took a couple days to mull over how to respond and simply wrote on the envelope, “Gen. Wallace—Bishop Whittingham.”



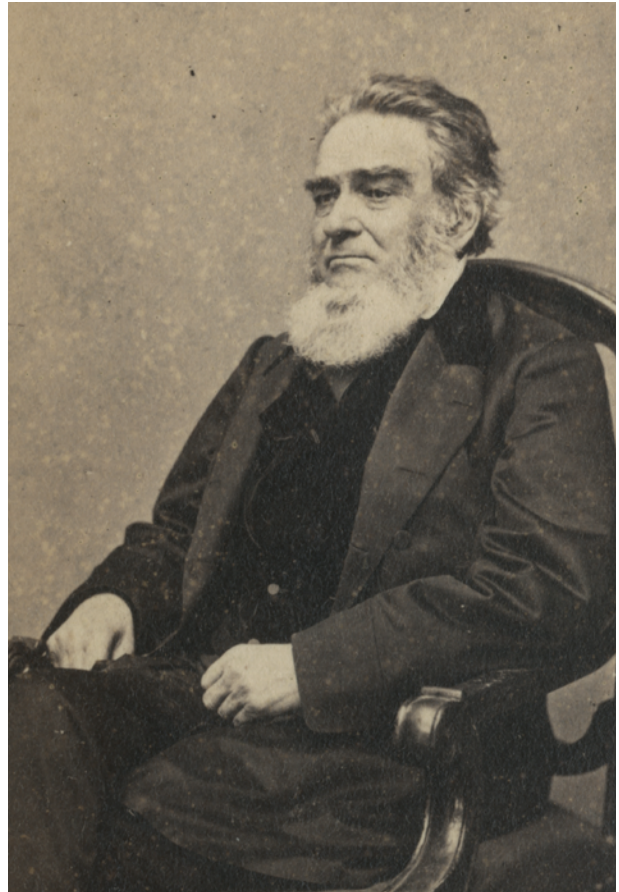
General Lew Wallace (OC-1037)



Reverend Samuel McPheeters (71200908406363)

In the past Lincoln had dealt with Border State ministers in similar situations. The most well-known case involved Samuel McPheeters, a Presbyterian pastor in St. Louis who was banished from Missouri despite having taken an oath of allegiance. After McPheeters and Attorney General Edward Bates personally met with Lincoln in late 1862, the president concluded that the clergyman indeed “sympathizes with rebels” and “exercises rebel influence.” However, McPheeters had not committed any illegal acts against the government, and Lincoln questioned whether or not it was appropriate for a general to exile an oath-taking citizen “of unquestioned good moral character” merely “upon suspicion of his secret sympathies.” He ultimately concluded that the field commander knew the situation best and should have authority to act in whatever way necessary to secure “the public good.” Nevertheless, in allowing this latitude Lincoln stipulated that “the U.S. government must not . . . undertake to run the churches,” essentially telling the military to interfere as little as possible with church matters. On April 4, 1864—only five weeks before the issue with Hawks arose—in response to an order by Gen. William S. Rosecrans that required an oath of allegiance from anyone attending a denominational convention or similar assembly of clergymen in Missouri, Lincoln perceptively observed, “I have found that men who have not even been suspected of disloyalty, are very averse to taking an oath of any sort as a condition, to exercising an ordinary right of citizenship.” Even though he “somewhat dread[ed] the effect” Rosecrans’s order would have, he allowed it to stand. With this precedent already established, consistency required him to back Wallace, even if he found the order unwarranted. “I was very anxious to avoid new excitements at places where quiet seemed to be restored,” wrote Lincoln; “but after reading, and considering, your letter and inclosure, I have to say I leave you to act your careful discretion in the matter.”

Wallace certainly had reason to be pleased with his commander in chief’s response, but in certain respects it proved to be a pyrrhic victory after all. Targeting Hawks was not an isolated decision but part of a larger agenda to uproot secessionist sentiment and punish disloyal civilians throughout the Middle Department. On the same day that he ordered Hawks to take the oath, he issued General Orders No. 30, which prevented individuals who had vacated the area to help the South from collecting any rents, interest, or other financial profits from the use of their property



Attorney General Edward Bates (LFA-0182)

or assets left behind. A few days later he asked the War Department for permission to declare martial law in several counties in Delaware and along the Eastern Shore of Maryland because of “the prevalence of disloyal and traitorous sentiments” there that facilitated the activities of Confederate spies, recruitment for the Rebel army, and contraband trade. However, on May 9 Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton emphatically quashed the proposed martial law enactment and scribbled “Not Approved” in his characteristically dark script. Complaints about General Orders No. 30 eventually reached Edward Bates, who scolded Wallace on May 25 because his first knowledge of the order came from a clipped copy from a Baltimore newspaper. “After conversation with the President and with his knowledge and permission,” the attorney general explained to Wallace that his order was not only bad policy but “assumes a very large power over persons, contracts, and property purely civil . . . over which the military has no lawful authority.” To redirect the general to the legal path, Bates enclosed copies of Lincoln’s orders giving him, as attorney general, the authority to superintend enforcement of the Confiscation Acts passed by Congress—a not-so-subtle hint that Wallace should revoke his poorly conceived directive. The general instead doubled down and on May 30 claimed that General Orders No. 30 and a related, explanatory order constituted “necessary powers” fully in keeping with the Confiscation Acts and “certain laws of war.” Insistent that he had acted “from a sense of duty,” Wallace politely refused to annul the orders and requested Bates to share his response with Lincoln.



Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton (LN-1290)

On June 11 Bates met with the president to discuss Wallace's orders. After showing Lincoln their correspondence, he unequivocally asserted that the orders were unlawful and violated Lincoln's previous instructions. Moreover, he considered Wallace's "letter of justification" from May 30 to be "wor[s]e than the orders, in that it avowed the illegal act, knowingly done, and defended it, upon grounds the most absurd." After studying the papers, on June 13 Lincoln directed Bates to give them to Stanton, who would order Wallace to revoke the offensive edicts. Later that day Bates found Stanton in a bad mood and, after discussing the situation with him, concluded that his colleague "evidently hates to give the order." Bates seemingly misread the temperamental Stanton, or perhaps the latter needed further convincing from Lincoln. Whatever the case, that same day he sent Wallace a pointed rebuke from the commander in chief. "The President directs me to inform you . . . that in issuing these orders without his instructions, you have transcended the power vested in you." Emphatically underscoring that Wallace had not only acted dictatorially but had foolishly defended such abuse, Stanton continued, "He instructs me also to say to you, that the authority claimed to be exercised by you in these orders is a power vested in him alone, and only to be exercised by a subordinate officer when directed to do so by the President." Lincoln demanded that the offensive orders be "absolutely annulled" and warned Wallace that henceforth he needed to gain approval prior to issuing similar orders. Duly reprimanded, on June 14 a submissive Wallace telegraphed his dutiful compliance.

In the meantime, Hawks decided to remain in New York City until a favorable breakthrough. The newspapers reported his prolonged absence because of a summons from the provost marshal, but the public lacked further details beyond a vestryman's statement that Hawks feared banishment to the South if he returned to Baltimore. After it became clear that the delegation to Lincoln had failed in its mission, the vestrymen, worried about the church's finances without their popular rector, wondered how to proceed. Hawks was not much help and readily admitted, "Recent events have been so like a *dream*, that I have hardly found myself able to compose my thoughts, and form a sober judgment on what it is best to do." Rather than explaining to the church clerk that all could be well if he simply took the oath, he interpreted the "storm" from a providential perspective and concluded that "God has been pleased for the present to separate us. . . . It is not the fault of either of us that we are for a time forcibly parted." With a prompt reunion unlikely, Hawks reckoned that his parishioners had only two legitimate options—they could retain him as rector or sever ties altogether. He considered the former option to be risky because General Wallace would consider it "a *defiant* course," liable to cause trouble in the community for members who supported him and potentially giving Wallace a pretext to commandeer the church building for a hospital or barracks. Since this worst case scenario was unlikely and would have violated Lincoln's clear directive that authorities not interfere with churches unless military necessity demanded it, Hawks seems to have been resigned to the latter as the more prudent choice. He consequently offered his resignation if it would save the church from further "embarrassment" but left the final decision with the vestry.

Always concerned about his reputation and fully cognizant that both Stanton and army chief of staff Henry W. Halleck already thought him unfit for command, Wallace feared the worst on June 21 when he heard that "a delegation of Union men" from a few Baltimore churches had traveled to Washington to persuade Lincoln to cashier him "on account of my action in the case of Dr. Hawks." Having already been removed from field command, Wallace imagined either losing his current desk appointment or retaining his position but being humiliated and hung out to dry if Lincoln listened to Hawks's friends. Taking no chances, Wallace enlisted his brother-in-law, Sen. Henry S. Lane of Indiana, to deliver a letter directly to Lincoln. He reminded the president of his earlier support in dealing with the rector and assured him that most

loyal Baltimoreans took “hearty satisfaction” from his absence. The general pleaded, “If you decide to keep me here, I beg you to consider that it is a point of importance not to deprive me entirely of the influence which belongs to me as an officer whom the Government will support, and which can suffer from nothing so much as the triumphant return of Dr. Hawks, whom I still regard the most dangerous man of my knowledge for this locality.”

The delegation to Lincoln may have been nothing more than rumor, but if it indeed set out, it never accomplished its purpose in seeing Lincoln. The previous evening he and Tad had left Washington to visit Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at City Point, Virginia, and did not return until the evening of June 23. Since Lane also found the president absent, he left Wallace’s letter at the White House and added that Maryland congressman John A. J. Creswell would drop by later to discuss the situation. By the time Lincoln read Wallace’s letter, there were no accusers and no reason to revisit Hawks’s case, so he endorsed the envelope “Gen. Lew. Wallace” and moved on to more important business.

The vestry of Christ Church doggedly stuck with Hawks despite increased pecuniary difficulties caused by his prolonged absence. After Lincoln’s reelection, they again entreated the president to intervene and grant their rector’s return. He jotted “Dr. Hawks” on the back of their petition and again refrained from further action. Undeterred by this lack of response, in early December they secured Bishop Whittingham’s written opinion that Hawks’s restoration would benefit the congregation and save the church from “impending” financial disaster. They forwarded this supportive letter to former Postmaster General Montgomery Blair and requested him to take the matter directly to Lincoln, who could demonstrate his “justice and clemency” by permitting their law-abiding rector to rejoin his suffering congregation. Blair obliged and met with the president on the evening of December 22. After reading Whittingham’s letter, Lincoln deemed the church’s fiscal troubles insufficient grounds to justify countermanning Wallace’s orders. However, he told Blair that if the bishop communicated his belief that Hawks could return to Baltimore without disrupting “the public tranquility,” he would order it to be done. After conveying the president’s sentiments to Whittingham, Blair related that in September he had spoken to Wallace about Hawks, and the general had declared his intention to restore the

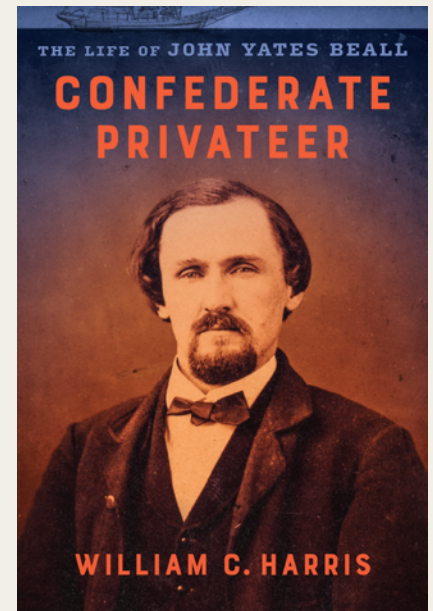
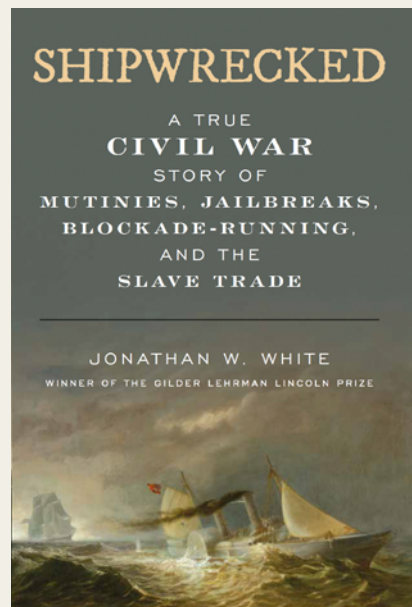
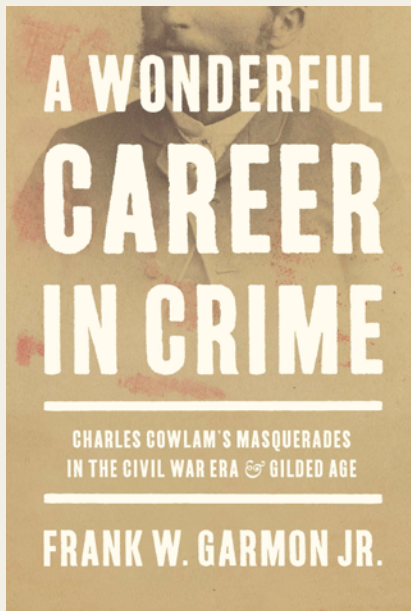
rector after the fall of Richmond. For his part, Blair could not detect “the least clue to any danger to the public” from Hawks’s residence in Baltimore and concluded, “Indeed[,] the Genl’s great solicitude seemed to be for his own authority.”

Once more Lincoln permitted Whittingham to determine Hawks’s fate, and the bishop again declined to wield his influence. Still convinced that Lincoln lacked jurisdiction to act in church affairs and that he similarly possessed no authority to manipulate political matters, Whittingham unequivocally asserted, “I cannot advise the President to interfere with the action of General Wallace.” In fact, he even apologized to Blair that “a considerable and influential portion” of clergymen in his diocese “are avowedly hostile to the interests and plans of the Government.” Furthermore, he admitted that Baltimore’s disloyal Episcopalians considered Hawks “an able and efficient leader,” and he regarded their criticism of his own policies and official actions as bishop as an outlet for venting their displeasure with the U.S. government.

After it became known that Lincoln had given Whittingham the opportunity to have Hawks restored to his congregation, the principled bishop received some vicious hate mail. One disgruntled Episcopalian asserted, “You are at the head of a church without its confidence or affection and scar[c]ely have its respect.” After Lew Wallace was ordered to Texas in late January 1865 to investigate whether or not the government should aid Mexican rebels fighting the French, the vestry of Christ Church appealed Hawks’s case to Wallace’s replacement, Gen. William W. Morris. He located the paper trail indicating that Lincoln had allowed Hawks’s banishment but nevertheless referred the case to the War Department, which made no further inquiries. Having done all they could to bring back their rector and cognizant that a majority of pewholders would not renew their rents, on March 23 the vestry accepted Hawks’s resignation. The banished clergyman, described as “Metropolitan by habit,” seemed perfectly content in New York City during his exile from Baltimore. Despite declining health, he gathered a following but died in September 1866, shortly after laying the cornerstone for the Chapel of the Holy Saviour.

Abraham Lincoln wrote two two-sentence telegrams and added three endorsements to documents about Francis Hawks’s banishment from Baltimore. These eighty-six words and the back story around them reveal a president who carefully considered the context of the rector’s situation before rendering judgment. He recognized his limited knowledge of the case and prudently sought the opinions of interested stakeholders. Although he gave General Wallace latitude in dealing with Hawks, Lincoln brooked no usurpation of his presidential authority. Since Wallace’s conduct toward Hawks accorded with actions against ministers taken by other generals, and since Hawks had the option to swear an oath of allegiance to resume preaching and living in Baltimore, the president had no reason to upset Wallace by returning a clergyman with disloyal sentiments to a city inhabited with active traitors. Lincoln, it seems, understood that “the most dangerous man” in Baltimore was only a hawk without talons.

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Review Essay: Law and Order in Lincoln's America

by Mark S. Schantz

Writing in *The American Historical Review* in October 1972, historian Philip Shaw Paludan reflected on the forces that propelled the United States into civil war. It was easy enough, he thought, to understand why the South seceded in the days after Abraham Lincoln's election: without the electoral votes of a single southern state, a new Republican president had been swept into office. Despite Lincoln's promises to leave the institution of slavery intact where it already existed, limiting only its extension into the West, southern planters saw the writing on the wall. They knew slavery to be an organic institution, always in need of new territory to endure. Talk of limiting slavery's expansion pushed the white South toward what historian James M. McPherson calls a "counter revolution"—a move to leave the Union before their human property was threatened by "Black Republicans."

What engaged Paludan, however, was a deeper concern: Why didn't the North simply let the South leave the Union? What would have been the cost of leaving the economic and cultural relations of the North and the South intact, albeit living as two separate nations, cheek by jowl? After all, some radical abolitionists—William Lloyd Garrison comes to mind—might have been happy to have seen the sinful part of the Union excised like a tumor in order to keep the saving remnant of the North free from the spread of corruption.

As Paludan rolled this question over in his mind, he discovered the motives for the Republican Party's willingness to wage war, not in the North's inherent love of racial egalitarianism or even the free labor ideology espoused most clearly by Abraham Lincoln. Rather, he argued, the reality

of secession jeopardized the social relations that bound society together—particularly at the level of local and state governments. Northerners and Midwesterners, for Paludan, carried with them a profound respect for law and order, demonstrated especially in their reverence for and dedication to the lawful functioning of local authority. The political act of secession, then, threatened all of this. If secession were allowed to stand, then any law could be set aside, and any authority challenged. What would happen to the smooth functioning of local and state government, to binding economic contracts and arrangements, to the institution of marriage—to the entire web of covenants and agreements that held together the people of the United States? The answer that secession offered was that none of this would matter going forward. If the South could leave the Union unchecked, then all bets were off. Or, as Abraham Lincoln put the matter in his first inaugural address: “Plainly, the central idea of secession, is the essence of anarchy.” Respect for the law in all its dimensions demanded that the errant southern states (or, rather, the deviant individuals who had prompted secession) must

be brought back into their proper alignment with the Union. Failure to do so would plunge the United States into the abyss of chaos.

The three books before us offer a fascinating counterpoint to Paludan’s notion that legal order occupied center stage in America’s unfolding drama. The volumes by Frank W. Garmon Jr., *A Wonderful Career in Crime: Charles Cowlam’s Masquerades in the Civil War Era and Gilded Age*, Jonathan W. White’s treatment of Appleton Oaksmith in *Shipwrecked: A True Civil War Story of Mutinies, Jailbreaks, Blockade-Running, and the Slave Trade*, and, finally, William C. Harris’s consideration in *Confederate Privateer: The Life of John Yates Beall*, present us with historical figures who were nothing if not counter-cultural forces in derailing respect for law and order. In different dimensions, Charles Cowlam (a born Michigander), Appleton Oaksmith (originally from Maine) and John Beall (whose father owned twenty-nine slaves in Virginia), complicate in fascinating ways the image of the United States as a law-abiding nation.

All three books showcase the talent of their authors as master sleuths and detectives *par excellence*. Frank Garmon’s book somehow traces the fabulist and “chameleon” Charles Cowlam throughout his life of crime, from his pilfering of mails in Virginia, to his stint as a convict in the Virginia State Penitentiary (he received a pardon from Lincoln in May 1861 but the governor of Virginia refused to recognize it), to his rehabilitation as a spy claiming information about the Lincoln

pardon if the facts admitted of my doing so,
but I am compelled to say that I regard his
application as one of the least meritorious
on file in the office.
Respectfully yours &c.
J. M. Cooper,
Pardon Clerk.
Hon. Edward Bates,
Attorney General.

In this letter to Attorney General Edward Bates, Lincoln’s pardon clerk called Cowlam’s petition for clemency “one of the least meritorious on file in the office.” Lincoln nevertheless pardoned Cowlam on May 28, 1861. (National Archives; scan provided by the Papers of Abraham Lincoln)



Appleton Oaksmith (David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University)

assassination, to his work as a detective—where, amazingly enough, he attempted to ingratiate himself with the Canadian prime minister in an effort to round up Fenian rebels in Michigan and Ohio—to his stint as an Internal Revenue agent (you can guess how this ended), and then, his self-promoted run for Congress in Florida in 1872. Cowlam’s scheme to serve as U.S. marshal for the Northern District of Florida is exactly the kind of disrespect for governance that concerned Paludan in his essay. Eventually Cowlam reinvented himself as a Union colonel and wound up for a time at the soldiers’ home in Dayton, Ohio. Along the way, he swindled everyone in his path, committed bigamy, and concocted, in the words of one contemporary, “as many *aliases* as there are letters in the alphabet.” Tracking down Cowlam’s movements, and his numerous name changes, addresses, occupations, spouses, relationships, is a heroic feat and reveals Garmon’s indefatigable research.

Garmon’s treatment of Cowlam also expertly invokes excerpts from Herman Melville’s 1857 novel, *The Confidence Man: His Masquerade*. Garmon situates Cowlam’s various schemes at a moment in American culture in which individual identities were porous and negotiated, where social mobility precluded authentic knowledge of someone’s past life, and where the dislocations of war made it even more possible for grifters and con artists to ply their trade. Cowlam may have been an exceptional rogue, but he was a rogue born of the particular historical circumstances of his time.

Jonathan White’s efforts in tracking down Appleton Oaksmith’s adventures are perhaps even more extensive, as they follow his protagonist around the globe. He was born into a prominent literary family—Appleton’s mother Elizabeth Oakes Smith was a widely-read poet (and a major character in White’s telling) featured in national publications, and his father, Seba Smith, invented the character of Jack Downing, a literary figure whom Abraham Lincoln enjoyed immensely. Throughout his life, Appleton punctuated his exploits and scrapes with the law in poetic verse, and White does an amazing job of joining together his literary productions with specific events in his life. His lively and compelling narrative casts Oaksmith as a swashbuckling troubadour. Appleton Oaksmith was, by turns, an adventurer to California, a brave captain fending off a mutinous crew, an agent for freebooter William Walker’s invasion of Nicaragua, and a possible slave trader on the African coast where his crew engaged in a pitched battle with indigenous African peoples at the mouth of the Congo River. It was his alleged relationship with the international slave trade that could have sent Oaksmith to the gallows. Accused of outfitting ships for the slave trade, Oaksmith endured arrest, a trial (in which no fewer than fourteen women sat around him at the defense table), conviction, and imprisonment, before engineering a miracle escape from Boston’s Charles Street Jail (now the luxury Liberty Hotel). In so escaping, Oaksmith elided the fate of the era’s most well-known slaver, Nathaniel Gordon.

White’s chapter on the Gordon trial and execution is a wonderful counterpoint to Oaksmith’s tale—the implication, perhaps, is that Oaksmith could have been another Gordon, the only American hanged for engaging in the international slave trade. The Gordon case grabbed national headlines and brought enormous pressure on Abraham Lincoln to save the slaver from his death. In the historical record, Lincoln’s refusal to grant Gordon a reprieve from his death sentence is often taken as an emblem of the president’s hard stand against slavers more generally. In the critical month of February 1862, it served as a warning that Lincoln would mete out harsh punishment to those who broke the laws, especially when it came to the international slave



Nathaniel Gordon was captured on the Erie near the west coast of Africa in August 1860 with 897 African men, women and children held belowdecks. Painting by Michele Renault, ca. 1855. (Courtesy of James Shuttleworth, author of Collecting and Studying Ship Portraits)

trade. But there is more to the story. White is a clear-eyed and nuanced guide in exploring some of the other lesser-known cases of slavers in which Lincoln did indeed pardon the culprits. Lincoln's handling of the Gordon case, while decisive, does not sum up all his dealings with those convicted of violating U.S. law. Thus, even the "law and order" president seemed reluctant to hold some slave-traders accountable for their actions.

After escaping from jail, Oaksmith fled for a time to Cuba, where he served as a Confederate blockade-runner. The Lincoln administration unsuccessfully sought his extradition, even to the point of attempting an illegal kidnapping scheme shortly before the presidential election of 1864. By 1865, he had landed in England, where he became a naturalized British subject and wrote commentary on the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. Oaksmith eventually returned to the United States, received a pardon from President Ulysses S. Grant—after more than a decade in exile—and then moved to North Carolina. There, he became a railroad promoter and then won election to the state house of representatives, where he served alongside seventeen African American men. The former convicted slaver who had spent a career skirting the laws now joined with Black men in the pursuit of local and lawful governance—exactly the sort of outcome that Paludan's Unionists would have cheered.

John Yates Beall, the subject of William C. Harris's volume, was a lawbreaker twice over. He was a pirate in a rebel navy. Ironically, as a young man he had pursued the study of law at the University of Virginia but lost interest in things academic. Already a Confederate soldier before being discharged due to wounds incurred early in the conflict, he also became a notorious privateer, commando, and guerrilla warrior engaged in the Confederacy's cause. Like Oaksmith, Beall had an appetite for adventure and did not let his early wounds sideline him. By 1863, the erudite young man parlayed his connections with Robert E. Lee's second cousin into a plan to serve as a privateer on the Chesapeake Bay. Beall's official connection to missions approved by the Confederate government would become an integral part of his legal defense when he was eventually captured by Union forces. For a short time, "Master" Beall and his commando comrades terrorized a handful of Union vessels on the Chesapeake before being captured. While he did no real damage to the Union cause, his



Despite immense pressure to show mercy, Lincoln refused to grant Gordon a pardon. The slave trader was executed in New York City on February 21, 1862. (Library of Congress)

activities were troublesome enough to engage the attention of Union forces. And then, as fate would have it, Beall was lucky enough to have the piracy charges pending against him dropped and was then exchanged for a Union officer.

Beall took his exchange as license to continue his marauding activities. This time, he appealed to Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory to approve an audacious plan to rescue a large contingent of Confederate officers being held as prisoners of war on Johnson's Island, in Lake Erie. As it developed, this rather fantastical plan revolved around Beall and his commandos getting hold of the Union gunship *Michigan*—the most imposing warship on Lake Erie—and using it to sail to Johnson's Island, rescuing Confederate prisoners of war, getting them to Canada, and then secreting them by boat to Wilmington, North Carolina, where they would replenish Gen. Robert E. Lee's officer corps. It was a plan born of both despair and delusion, reflecting the desperation of the Confederacy as the war ground into yet another year.

Harris is deft in revealing that by 1864, "guerrilla or clandestine activities on the Great Lakes and in the West thus became a part of the Confederate strategy." Historians have largely overlooked this northern theatre of the Civil War, and Harris contributes to our

understanding of the conflict by bringing it into focus. And indeed, Harris shows how the raid on St. Alban's, Vermont, and the attempted arson of New York City in 1864 figured into a larger Confederate strategy of embarrassing the Lincoln administration in an election year, and possibly fomenting a military conflict between the United States and Great Britain that could work to the favor of the Confederacy. Despite these lofty aims, the plan to capture the *Michigan* and to free the captive rebel prisoners on Johnson's Island failed and sent Beall back to Canada. It is a matter of some irony that Canada—the refuge for antebellum enslaved people running from their masters—simultaneously became a base of operations for Confederate operatives seeking to attack the Union.

Beall's next big operation kept him on solid ground. This would be an attempt to capture a Lake Shore train about fifteen miles from Buffalo, New York, overpower the guards, and then free seven Confederate generals who

were presumed to be among the prisoners of war on the train. It was a fiasco. Beall and his group of ten commandos bought tickets on the Lake Shore Railroad, then planned to exit the train and deploy themselves to capture their target. They rode out to the point of attack on sleighs—which Harris notes wryly, “might have been the only time sleighs were used in a train robbery.” But it was cold in Buffalo in the winter (a surprise?), and, indeed, the track was frozen so hard that one of the raiders could barely budge it. The train stopped anyway, but it contained no Confederate generals. The mission disintegrated. While he fell asleep in a railroad station trying to get to Canada, Union men captured and arrested Beall. Throughout Beall’s exploits there is an element of tragicomedy, such earnest intention combined with an almost cartoonish lack of planning and execution.

John Yates Beall was convicted by a military commission of spying and pursuing irregular warfare, which Judge Advocate John A. Bolles contended “are offenses against the laws of God and the laws of man.” Captain Beall was now a rebel three times over. He was sentenced to death. And, as in the case of Nathaniel Gordon, Abraham Lincoln withstood significant appeals to save Beall’s life from many quarters, including entreaties from Rep. Thaddeus Stevens—a Radical Republican and a most unusual ally for Beall. Indeed, Harris indicates that the Gordon case was much on Lincoln’s mind when he supported Union general John A. Dix in carrying out the death penalty. By all accounts, Beall met his fate with composure and calm, without regret, and lambasting the legal proceedings against him by saying, “I protest against the execution of this sentence. It is absolute murder; brutal murder. I die in the defense and service of my country. I have nothing more to say.” Thus did the commando and guerrilla meet his end, protesting the legal process and the outcome of the military commission that sent him to his death.

Rebels and rogues though they were, Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall all nevertheless yearned for some measure of political respectability. As they skirted the edges of legality, all three men, in different ways, wanted recognition, acknowledgement from the public, and even government office. Charles Cowlam, in Garmon’s estimation, claimed a Union colonel’s office toward the end of his life to present himself as a true patriot and stalwart supporter of his country. Cowlam’s interest in serving as a spy to uncover the assassination of Lincoln, his stint as an Internal Revenue officer, even his trumped-up campaign for Congress in 1872, might all be taken as backdoor efforts to claim a place of political legitimacy. The offices he sought would have marked him as a success had he not tried to swindle his way to them. Garmon’s interpretation of Charles Cowlam’s life is that he invested much effort in trying to be someone else—more specifically his brother, George. As Garmon writes,

“Charles’ brother, George, offers a counterpoint to his life and allows us to speculate on what type of life he might have led had he not gone to prison.” Respectability by proxy, then, might be one avenue to understanding Charles Cowlam’s life.

Appleton Oaksmith, to a lesser degree than Cowlam, ventured into the realm of the political. White’s treatment of Oaksmith during the secession crisis of 1860–1861, places him in New York as an “active member” of the Democratic Tammany Hall machine. In this role, he took it upon himself to lecture Sen. William H. Seward on the virtues of maintaining the Union and what it would take to avoid all-out war. Seward never replied. Oaksmith continued to hound President Buchanan on the need to enforce the laws of the land, declaring secession to be unlawful and calling on Congress to come up with a compromise to avoid war. He wrote resolutions. He made speeches. He proposed that three commissioners from the city of New York be appointed to meet with representatives of the seceding states, hoping to avert war. And of course, he wrote a poem titled the “The Union Marseillaise” calling for the nation to endure. A man who would soon spend time in jail for violating the congressional prohibition against slave trading nevertheless lectured a New York senator and future secretary of state and the sitting president of the United States on the illegality of secession and the coming of the Civil War. And on the other side of the conflict, Oaksmith served in the North Carolina state legislature, where he “was ardently anti-Klan and in favor of protecting the rights of ex-slaves.” A strange outcome indeed for a man convicted of having outfitted ships for the international slave trade and who then broke out of jail and fled the country.

The case of John Yates Beall presents us with a different path toward asserting legitimate political authority. To the date of his execution, Beall and his legal defenders maintained that

he was not a pirate or a brigand or a spy, but a duly constituted legal actor, operating under direct orders from the Confederate government. During his military commission trial, Beall's attorney, James T. Brady, drove home this point again and again. "Captain Beall was acting as an officer of the Confederate Government, either in command himself of Confederate soldiers, or under the command of some Confederate officer," Brady claimed. And what difference was there, Brady asked, between William T. Sherman, who despoiled a peaceful people in their homes and property with perfect legality, and a commander such as Beall who, arguably, did very little damage to the Union cause. Ironically, Beall rested the defense of his case on the very principles of orderly government that secession called into question.

Thus did Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall occupy a kind of liminal terrain between legality and illegality—at once challenging the structures of legitimate social authority and then by turns relying on them. The arc of their lives suggests

that the boundary between law and chaos was everywhere up for grabs in the Civil War era. Paludan's "law and order" argument may indeed still hold water, particularly as a broad framing of the secession crisis itself. But the three characters we are considering here present some important caveats, at least, in accepting his contention across the board. Law and disorder may have walked hand in hand at this moment in American history.

Reading about the lives of Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall recalled to mind a 1988 volume by David S. Reynolds (a recent Lincoln Prize winner), *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*. Reynolds probed antebellum literature that he termed *subversive*, "which was bizarre, nightmarish, and often politically radical." These extra-canonical writers testified to a robust and pervasive American literary culture outside of Melville, Hawthorne, Dickinson, and Poe, but simultaneously showed how popular and subversive writers deeply influenced more conventional literary figures. Reynolds' argument may also suggest to us that Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall, may not have been as singular as we might at first suspect. Perhaps we have read our own histories in ways that hew toward conventional narratives at the expense of more disreputable and unsavory characters. Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall may have embodied their own version of "the subversive imagination" in an age of law and order—but one in which many Americans participated.



Casemate No. 2 at Fort Lafayette in New York Harbor confined Appleton Oaksmith in November 1861 and John Yates Beall in the months leading up to his execution on February 24, 1865. This image appeared in Harper's Weekly on April 15, 1865. (71200908408087)

Our characters also call on us to reflect on questions of personal identity in the Civil War era. For example, the use of aliases, alternative spellings of names, and outright name changing was not uncommon in nineteenth-century America. Historians who have mined the archives in search of particular individuals and genealogists tracking down their ancestors know this to be true. In addition to making research vexing, however, name changes can serve to mask crime. Charles Cowlam was the master of aliases, but Oaksmith and Beall also switched their identities over time. In 1849, Appleton Oaksmith self-consciously changed his name from Appleton Smith to Appleton Oaksmith. He served as a Confederate blockade-runner under the name Captain John McDonald. In 1862, when John Yates Beall was hiding out from Union forces in Iowa, he concealed his identity as a Confederate soldier and called himself simply John Yates. At the time of his capture by Union authorities, Beall claimed to be a man named W. W. Baker. One of the most striking quotes in *Shipwrecked* comes from 1871, in which Oaksmith ruminates, “I look upon myself sometimes with a sort of doubt *as to my own identity*—when I reflect upon this case and all I have seen in the papers. Am I *myself*?” While Oaksmith was likely referring to the gap between the perception of his actions in the press and his own view of himself, the query invites us to consider the nature of personhood in the Civil War era.

It is an article of faith among historians of the Civil War era that the Republican Party birthed the image of the “self-made man” in American political culture. The archetype for this vision of a society based on “free soil, free labor, free men” was Abraham Lincoln himself. He began his life in grinding poverty and obscurity, and then lifted himself to the presidency of the United States. It was Lincoln’s trajectory of upward mobility, a story rich with individual achievement and determined striving, that captivated the North and especially the Republican Party. Yet, how different was Abraham Lincoln’s narrative of “self-making” from the self-making in which Charles Cowlam, Appleton Oaksmith, and John Yates Beall engaged? To be sure, Abraham Lincoln, former Whig politician and soon-to-be law and order Republican president, was made of different stuff than Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall. Still, all of them engaged in the process of making and re-making themselves, taking on and casting off different personas over time, recasting their identities in intentional ways.



Photograph of John Yates Beall taken the morning of his execution. (Library of Congress)

Perhaps it was in sharing this dedication to identities in flux that Cowlam, Oaksmith, and Beall—outsiders in many registers—embodied the spirit of their age more fully than we realize.

A telling detail from the last moments of John Yates Beall’s life offers a coda to the project of self-making and to the thin line between the legal and the extralegal. On the day of his execution at Fort Columbus in New York harbor, Beall requested to have his photograph made. He wanted control of his last moments, his last image, and of the memory that future generations would possess. The resulting portrait perpetrated a masquerade every bit as deceptive as the character in Melville’s *The Confidence Man* and perhaps worthy of a Charles Cowlam misdirection. Dressed in gentlemanly civilian garb, with a bow tie neatly finished, Beall looks out at us as an entirely bourgeois man. Not a rogue, not a pirate, not a spy, Beall made his oeuvre the very image of respectability, embodying in one simple shot the shadowy boundary between legality and illegality in the era of the Civil War.

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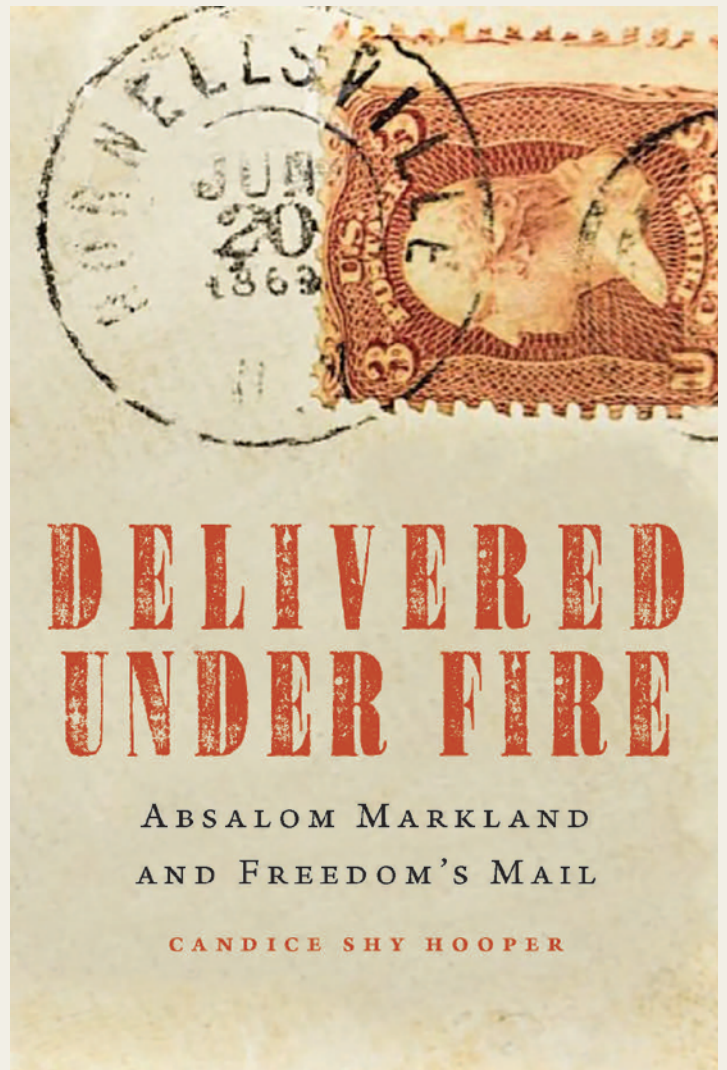
BOOK REVIEW

Delivered Under Fire: Absalom Markland and Freedom's Mail by Candice Shy Hooper

Review by Frank W. Garmon Jr.

Although Absalom H. Markland is an unknown figure in the twenty-first century, his life intersected with many of the leading characters of the Civil War era. As a special agent for the Post Office Department, Markland came to oversee the delivery of military mail for the Union army, and he had the opportunity to reopen post offices in the South in areas that came under Union control. In this first full-length biography of Markland, Candice Shy Hooper offers a riveting story of the war's western theater that finally gives the special agent the attention he deserves.

Markland's home state of Kentucky looms large throughout the book. In his youth he enrolled in the Maysville Academy where he was a classmate of Ulysses



S. Grant. Although Grant attended the school for less than a year, in 1838, their early familiarity formed the basis of a lifelong friendship after they reconnected years later in adulthood. Before the war Markland worked as a schoolteacher, lawyer, and clerk for the Office of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Pensions. For five years he worked as a freight clerk on steamboats traveling between Cincinnati and New Orleans. There he cultivated the nickname “Oily Buckshot” that he would later employ as his *nom de plume* when writing as a correspondent for the *Louisville Courier*.

Markland's local connections proved important when the South seceded from the Union and the Kentucky legislature navigated a policy of neutrality. Abraham

Lincoln recognized Kentucky's importance, and the president gave special consideration to sources of local information emanating out of that state. At the onset of the secession crisis Markland participated in an informal network of Kentuckians who collected information on southern affairs and transmitted this intelligence to officials in Washington. It was through this association that he first met Lincoln shortly after his inauguration. (Unfortunately, no detailed account of the meeting appears to survive.) By that time Markland's political affiliation had already evolved from Kentucky Democrat to Lincoln Republican, a commitment that he maintained for the rest of his life.

Markland struggled at first to obtain an appointment in the War Department as a paymaster for the army. He wrote to the president on September 1, 1861, emphasizing his loyalty to the Union, integrity, and moral character. Lincoln endorsed Markland's application on September 6, writing that "Absalom H. Markland is a worthy man. I believe I have before endorsed a letter sent to the Department for him as Paymaster. As a Kentucky appointment, I think it would be a good one." Despite the president's recommendation, however, no action was taken on the application. Five days later Lincoln sent a follow up to Simon Cameron, noting, "I have before said, and now repeat, that by the within, and other sources of information, I have no doubt of the fitness and worthiness of Mr. Markland to be a Paymaster, and I desire his appointment if it can consist[ent]ly be made." After several more days of inactivity Markland wrote to his friend John D. Defrees to withdraw his application. In a letter uncited in the book, Markland indicated, "When the Presidents endorsement fails, the pursuit of office should end."

Defrees forwarded Markland's letter to Lincoln and requested that Markland not be overlooked as the president made additional appointments. Within two weeks Lincoln's postmaster general, Montgomery Blair,



Absalom H. Markland (The Massachusetts Commandery MOLLUS Photograph Collection, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pa.)

appointed Markland to serve as special agent for western Kentucky. As special agent for the Post Office Department, Markland was tasked with investigating postal fraud and misconduct, but his assignment in western Kentucky placed him in a unique position to assist the Union army as it moved into Tennessee.

A fortuitous assignment in the fall of 1861 carried Markland across the Ohio River to Cairo, Illinois, and tasked him with alleviating the backlog of soldiers' letters fast accumulating from the army headquartered there. It was in Cairo that he reconnected with his former classmate, Ulysses S. Grant, in a chance encounter that would change the trajectory of Markland's career. Grant was so impressed with the special agent's talent for logistics that Markland soon became his righthand man when it came to postal matters. As the pair traveled through western Kentucky in February 1862, on the way to Forts Henry and Donelson, Grant issued special orders that placed Markland in charge of all mail sent to or originating from the soldiers under his command. The army's successes on the battlefield created new opportunities that further enlarged Markland's responsibilities. Officials in the Post Office

Department instructed Markland to reestablish post offices in the former Confederacy as the army made inroads, and even granted him the power to appoint postmasters provided that the offices were staffed with loyal Union men and the locations were not in danger of falling under enemy control. Markland reopened post offices in numerous southern cities, including Nashville, Memphis, Corinth, and Vicksburg. With Grant's promotion to lieutenant general in 1864, Markland's authority expanded once again as he came to oversee the entirety of the military mail service.

The illustration of Grant that appeared in *Harper's Weekly* shortly after the capture of Fort Donelson has long perplexed historians and biographers. While the engraving purported to be taken "from a photograph," the likeness bears little resemblance to the future commanding general and president. The image is a composite, featuring the face of a man with a receding hairline and a long, flowing beard superimposed on a figure sporting an officer's uniform with large epaulets. While there has been some debate about exactly whose photograph inspired the sketch, Hooper

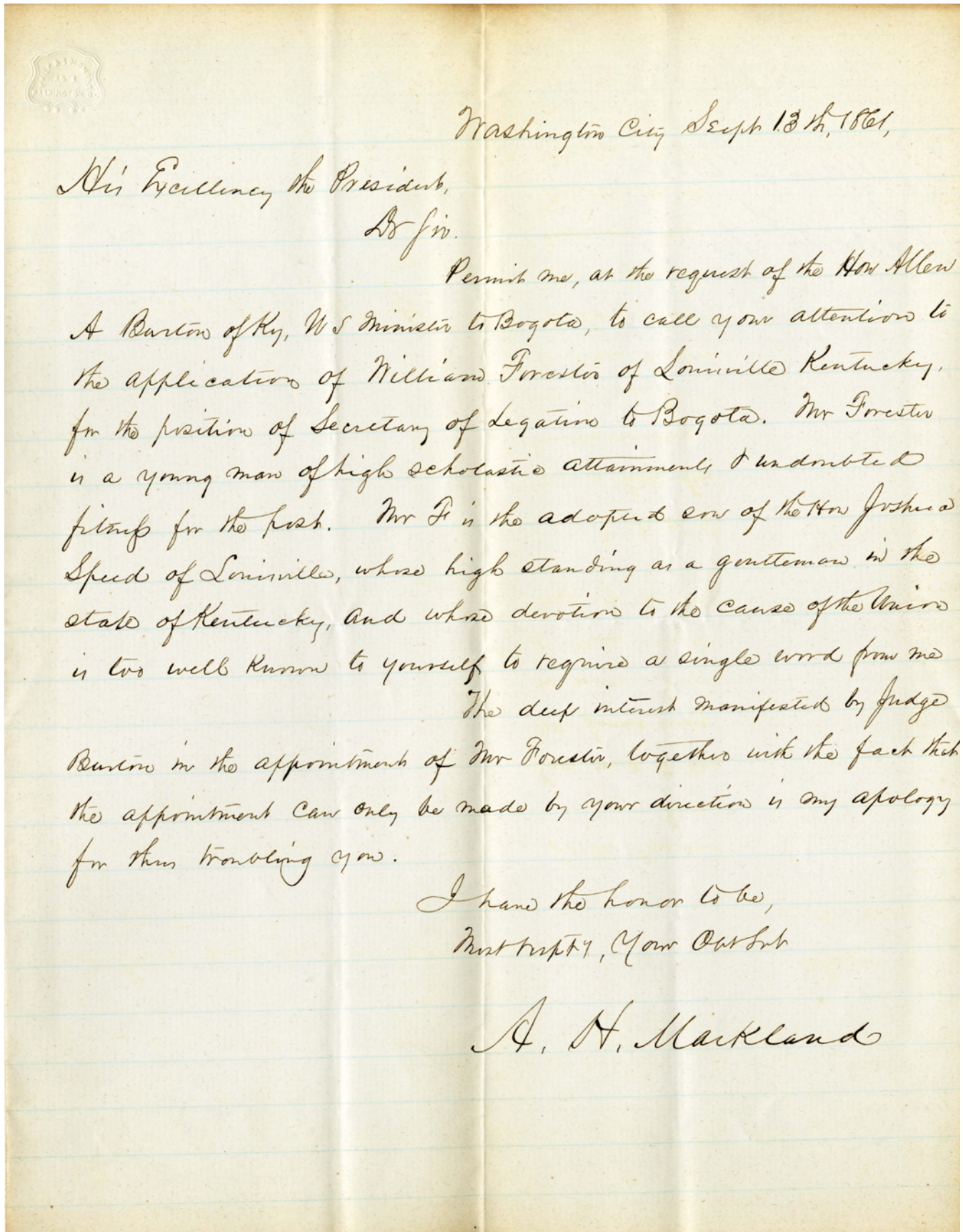
provides evidence that the illustration actually depicts Absalom Markland while he accompanied Grant with the Army of the Tennessee. Although only three photographs of Markland survive, the engraving published after Fort Donelson does resemble him and Hooper makes a convincing case for their similarity.

Throughout the book Hooper emphasizes the importance of mail delivery for maintaining Union morale. Letters allowed soldiers to remain connected to the home front and permitted those at home to stay in touch with friends and family fighting on the battlefield. Soldiers sent and received letters frequently. At one point in the war the military mail service processed 180,000 letters per day, roughly one letter for every three men in the service. Markland's efforts to remove bottlenecks in the postal system ensured that those letters arrived faster. Reopening post offices in the South helped begin the process of reunion and made it possible for soldiers stationed there to send and receive mail on a regular basis. Hooper emphasizes that "it is no understatement to say that from the very beginning of the war, letters were nearly as important as ammunition to men fighting in the field."

Routing the mail could also create a diversion for the advancing Union army. As Gen. William T. Sherman's army prepared to march from Atlanta to Savannah in 1864, Markland realized that the path taken by the train cars carrying the soldiers' letters might signal the army's advance. While the army remained in Atlanta the mails had been carried along the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. If the present method of delivery remained in place, Markland reasoned, Confederates might be misled into thinking that Sherman's movements were an exercise in misdirection when he really intended to remain in Atlanta. Markland continued to send the mails along the Louisville & Nashville for fifteen days, providing enough cover for Sherman to make his advance, before ordering that all of the army's mail be directed to Baltimore. Sending the mails to Baltimore gave the impression that Sherman did not actually mean to go to the coast, but instead planned to march north to engage Robert E. Lee's army. These circuitous acts of subterfuge were effective in concealing the position of Sherman's army, and Hooper notes that "even Lincoln admitted that he did not know where Sherman and his army were."



Ulysses S. Grant, Harper's Weekly, March 8, 1862
(71200908408087)



Letter from Markland to Abraham Lincoln, September 13, 1861 (National Archives; scan provided by the Papers of Abraham Lincoln)

Markland's puckish sense of humor helps to bring the book to life. In one comical exchange Markland pretended to be a Union major general in an effort to secure dinner and drinks for himself and his staff while the group was stranded in Alabama waiting for a northbound train. In another instance Markland smoked a box of premium cigars that an associate of his planned to give as a gift to General Sherman. When the owner of the cigars discovered Markland's mischief, the special agent retorted that Sherman did not know the difference between a good cigar and a bad one. He instructed his associate to purchase a new box and "tell him they are extraordinary cigars, and he will make a great deal of them and think them just what you call them." Similar incidents dot the pages and help to illustrate how embedded Markland was with the Union army's leading generals.

Markland's career with the Post Office Department did not end with the conclusion of the war. During Reconstruction he served as a special agent in a new district encompassing Kentucky and Tennessee. In 1870 he courted controversy when he hired William H. Gibson as the first African American railway mail route agent in Kentucky. Gibson excelled in the position, and six months later Markland promoted him to serve on a more prestigious route between Louisville and Lexington. On his second day of work on the new line Gibson was violently attacked by members of the Ku Klux Klan, who dragged him from his railcar, beat him, and shot at him repeatedly. When Gibson returned to work Markland ensured that he received a military escort of ten soldiers to guard him for the next three months. As Congress debated the Second Enforcement Act the following month President Grant ordered the mail route suspended, invoking an obscure act from 1861 that allowed the postmaster general to discontinue mail service where it "cannot be safely maintained." Gibson's attack resulted in a congressional investigation, and played a pivotal role in the enactment of the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871, which reinforced the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause and made it a federal crime to obstruct government officials as they performed their duties. Unfortunately, the act did not arrive in time to protect Gibson. He resigned from his post weeks before its passage once his three months of military escort ended.

Throughout the book Hooper provides detailed descriptions of events taking place on the national stage, which help to provide context for the affairs unfolding in Markland's life. Markland related many of his exploits in the form of touching letters to his wife, Martha, who occasionally followed Absalom in his travels. In these sections Hooper draws on her prize-winning book, *Lincoln's Generals' Wives: Four Women Who Influenced the Civil War—for Better and for Worse* (2016). The Marklands' friendship with the war's leading generals and their families is one of the book's strengths.

In the course of reading Hooper's biography of Markland there are a few details that remain elusive. Although Absalom Markland had a working relationship with Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman, his connection to Abraham Lincoln was more peripheral. In his later life Markland recalled meeting with Lincoln monthly, and sometimes weekly during the war, to brief the president on his activities, but the details of their conversations are not always known. Markland may have even been related to Lincoln through his mother's side (his middle name was Hanks). After an extended discussion on the subject, Hooper found the familial connection between Markland and Lincoln to be inconclusive. However, Markland's 1861 letter to John D. Defrees withdrawing his application as a paymaster for the army (mentioned above) reveals that he was aware of the possible connection. Markland wrote, "Abraham Lincoln is one of the Hanks stock . . . and from that fact his love of country is manifest and his integrity unquestioned."

Delivered Under Fire offers a fascinating examination of an unfamiliar but influential figure. In bringing Markland's career to light Hooper has written an engaging biography of a charming character. One wonders what other episodes of Markland's life might lie waiting to be discovered.

Frank W. Garmon Jr. is assistant professor of American Studies at Christopher Newport University and the author of *A Wonderful Career in Crime: Charles Cowlam's Masquerades in the Civil War Era and Gilded Age* (2024).

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