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## Karl S. Betts to Dr. Silver, 13 August 1958

Karl S. Betts

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# CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



The Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Honorary Chairman*  
The Honorable Richard M. Nixon, *Honorary Vice Chairman*  
The Honorable Sam Rayburn, *Honorary Vice Chairman*

Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant 3rd, USA (Ret.), *Chairman*  
The Honorable William M. Tuck, *Vice Chairman*  
Karl S. Betts, *Executive Director*

700 JACKSON PLACE, NW.  
Washington 25, D. C.

EXecutive 3-3300, Extension 641

August 13, 1958

Dr. James W. Silver  
Department of History  
University of Mississippi  
Box 404  
University, Mississippi

My dear Dr. Silver:

I acknowledge with appreciation your letter accepting our invitation to serve on the Advisory Council of the Civil War Centennial Commission. I am also happy to receive copy of your "Prospectus of Volume Two of Mississippi in The Confederacy" part of which I intend to use in one of our future monthly Newsletters. Copies of the first three issues of this Newsletter are herewith enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

  
KARL S. BETTS

Executive Director

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# CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

700 JACKSON PLACE, N. W.

WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

TELEPHONE EXECUTIVE 3-3300

EX. 641 or 642



MAY 1958  
Vol. 1, No. 1.

## INTRODUCING - "100 YEARS AFTER"

A newsletter to be published monthly which will bring you the latest up-to-date news on Civil War Centennial plans. Appointments to State Commissions, special honorary awards to distinguished Americans, educational programs - in fact, everything which we think will interest you will be reported on from time to time. If you have a news note of national interest, send it to us. If we get enough important news from you, we will enlarge the publication.

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After

MR. ROY T. COMBS, Auditor of the State of Indiana, and a leader in the Lincoln Sesquicentennial group called at Centennial Headquarters last week to discuss future cooperation in the promotion of the two national observances. Commander John Allen, Assistant Director of the Lincoln Sesquicentennial was present at the conference.

STATE CENTENNIAL COMMISSIONS - THE KEystone OF THE ARCH upon which the Centennial program rests have already been appointed in several states, notably Maryland, Kansas, New Hampshire and Wisconsin. Virginia has passed the necessary enabling Act and Governor J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., advises he will appoint the personnel of this Commission within a short time. Governor Almond acted as the spokesman for the Centennial Commission at the Governors' Conference in Miami this month and urged his fellow executives to speed up the appointment of these vitally important state groups.

The New Jersey Legislature now has before it for consideration appropriate legislation calling for the establishment of a State Centennial Commission. Governor Stratton of Illinois has announced that he will soon appoint a State Commission to arrange a Centennial program.

WALTER WILLIAMS, THE OLDEST OF THE ONLY TWO LIVING CONFEDERATE VETERANS was presented the first honorary membership on behalf of the Centennial Commission by Congressman Fred Schwengel, Iowa, on Saturday, April 26, 1958, in Houston, Texas. A large group of local residents, including the Mayor, members of the City Council and a personal representative of Governor Price Daniel attended the ceremonies.

A delegation flew down from Washington to present greetings from President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, Speaker Rayburn and others. In the group, which traveled in a specially assigned plane of the Air Corps, were Congressman Fred Schwengel, Iowa; Captain Evan P. Aurand, Presidential Naval Aide; Karl S. Betts, Executive Director of the Centennial Commission and Edmund Gass, Assistant Director.

On a similar excursion staged on Thursday, May 15, Senator A. Willis Robertson of Virginia, Congressman Wint Smith of Kansas, Congressman Fred Schwengel of Iowa, Congressman Pat Jennings of Virginia, Maj. William Farquhar, White House Military Aide; Mr. Fred E. Berquist, representing Senator Edward Martin of Pennsylvania; Honorable John T. Johnson, Virginia State Commander, Sons of Confederate Veterans; Colonel Francis J. Pope, representing the U. S. Air Force; and Centennial Commission staff members traveled to Slant, Virginia, to present the Centennial Commission's second honorary membership to Mr. John Sallings, who served the Confederacy in the 25th Virginia regiment.

ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS WAS GIVEN THE CENTENNIAL MOVEMENT this month with the announcement of the first appointments to the Advisory Council. Among the acceptances received recently were those of Honorable Leo E. Allen, Congressman from Illinois; Richard Bales, Director of Music, National Gallery of Art; Professor Hal Bridges, University of Colorado; Henry D. Brown, Director of the Detroit Museum; Mrs. Mary Givens Bryan, Georgia State Archivist; Miss Charlotte Capers, Mississippi State Archivist; J. Winston Coleman, Lexington, Kentucky; Professor Henry Steel Commanger, Amherst College; Clifford Dowdey, Historian, Richmond, Virginia;

Harry A. deButts, President of the Southern Railway System; and Patrick C. Courtney, Confederate Research Club, Hampshire, England. Further appointments will be announced in future issues.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF AAA SENDS GREETINGS. The following message of greetings has been received from Harry I. Kirk of Chicago, national president of the American Automobile Association:

"Greetings to 'One Hundred Years After' on its inaugural issue.

"The American Automobile Association hails the Civil War Centennial Celebration as a tremendous opportunity for the American people to broaden their knowledge of what has been so fittingly called 'the supreme experience in our history as a nation.'

"We foresee the greatest domestic travel in history. In preparation, the AAA is now making elaborate plans to facilitate this travel. AAA travel counsellors will be coached in Civil War history and the geography. Special maps and tour guides will be prepared. We will take every step to enable our 6,000,000 members to realize the utmost from the epochal observances.

"Congratulations and all best wishes to 'One Hundred Years After' on its patriotic and inspiring mission of telling its story to the American people."

MR. JULIAN METZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, called at Centennial Headquarters last week and discussed plans for a possible regional conference to be held in the South next Spring and offered his cooperation in securing the early appointment of a Centennial Commission in his State. Commission officials in cooperation with the National Park Service are giving consideration to plans for a pageant which will be designed to commemorate the attack on Fort Sumpter. A great deal of interest in such a project has already been indicated by leaders in the TV and movie industry.

DIARIES, PHOTOGRAPHS, NEWSPAPERS AND BOOKS, which have to do with the Civil War, are already being unearthed in cellars and attics in various parts of the country, and Centennial Headquarters has received many communications asking us what to do about them. The Commission recommends that these historical documents be sent to State Archives or local museums and libraries for display. It is a definite part of the program to make these records available for study to students and historians and if you have any treasured papers of this nature, you are urged to bring them to the indicated points of collection.

WILLIAM INGLES, WASHINGTON CAPITALIST, a member of the Advisory Board, has accepted an appointment for additional service on the Industrial Leaders' Committee, which is to be formed to coordinate the publicity and advertising plans of the Commission with those of leading business concerns throughout the United States. The New York Stock Exchange, the Southern Railway Company and representatives of Curtis Publishing Company have been working with us in the preparation of a list of firms which have been continuously in business in the United States for the past 100 years. A number of these firms are already planning a tie-in of their institutional advertising with that of the Civil War Centennial observance.

YOU WILL BE HEARING A LOT ABOUT THE MISSION 66 PLAN of the National Park Service - a proposed 10-year development project designed to serve the needs of the expected 80-million visitors to our park areas by 1966. That year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service. President Eisenhower has summed it up in describing our National Parks, Monuments, and Historical Sites, comprising the National Park System, as "valued and irreplaceable treasures. It is the responsibility of the Federal Government," continued the President "to preserve them and manage them perpetually for the enjoyment of all Americans."

The Civil War Centennial program is closely linked to the objectives of Mission 66. The proposed enlargement of the staff, the improvement of roads and facilities for visitors' use, and the preservation of the nation's most beautiful and most treasured resources will mean much to the enjoyment of visitors from every part of America to these Civil War battle sites and historic memorials.

Prepared and Distributed at Civil War Centennial Commission Headquarters  
Major General U. S. Grant 3d, Chairman; Karl S. Betts, Executive Director.

# CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

700 JACKSON PLACE, N.W.

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MAY 1958  
Vol. 1, No. 2.

## CHRONOLOGY - 1858

June 6 - Schooner "Wanderer" seized in New York harbor on suspicion of being engaged in slave trade.

June 11 - Sen. Wilson (Mass.) declined to duel with Sen. Gwin (Cal.) after bitter slavery debate in Congress.

June 14 - Gen. Jim Lane acquitted in killing of Col. Gaius Jenkins at Lawrence, Kan. over free state issue.

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## EVENTS ON EVE OF WAR

June 23 - Richmond Commandery, Knights Templars, visited Boston.

July 3 - Body of President Monroe escorted from New York to Richmond by 7th Regiment, National Guard, and received with impressive ceremonies.

VIRGINIA'S GOVERNOR J. LINDSAY ALMOND, JR. won unanimous support at the Miami Governors' Conference last month for his resolution urging the appointment of State Civil War Centennial Commissions throughout the country. He said these groups would commemorate "not the conflict itself, but rather the high principles in which valiant men of 100 years ago firmly believed and for which they readily offered themselves and all that they possessed. Through his resolution, the Conference commended the project and requested its members to encourage the establishment of centennial commissions within their respective states to plan and conduct appropriate observances "of this significant event in the building of an enduring nation."

THIRTY STATES TO DATE HAVE APPOINTED COMMISSIONS or are in the process of pass-enabling legislation.

One of the most recent to join this growing list was Kentucky. In appointing its commission, Governor Chandler said: "Kentucky was the foremost representative of the spirit of compromise during the War Between the States. It was the only Commonwealth officially a part of both the Union and the Confederacy, and our state should give particular attention to those events and ceremonies commemorating that great conflict and renewing those tragic but necessary lessons it taught us." The state already is planning programs at all Kentucky battlefields and expects to make appropriations for the improvement of Civil War sites in that area. Hambleton Tapp of Lexington is acting chairman of its commission.

Donald Crislip, secretary of the West Virginia Centennial Commission, is organizing a staff and establishing headquarters in Charleston to arrange for Centennial observances during the anniversary years. The Commission itself was one of the first to be organized since it was authorized by the State Legislature in 1955.

Maj. Gen. A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr., chairman of the Pennsylvania State Centennial Commission, is developing extensive plans for appropriate ceremonies at Gettysburg. Details of the program will be announced in a later issue.

Word has been received from Governor J. Caleb Boggs that the Delaware State Senate has adopted a resolution authorizing the appointment of a State Commission. It now awaits action in the lower house.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA claims the first Centennial showing of any group in the country. It presented an exhibit of weapons, accoutrements, model soldiers, documents and newspapers, labeled "Pre-Civil War Centennial Exhibit," at the U. C. L. A. Library in Los Angeles April 28-May 18. Local Civil War buffs appeared on television programs during the exhibition.

DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS WHO RECENTLY ACCEPTED APPOINTMENT to the Centennial Advisory Council include Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association of America; Col. Robert S. Henry, Vice-President of the Association of American Railroads; Stanley F. Horn, historian and editor of America Lumbermen; Rufus Clement, President of Atlanta University; Leonard Carmichael, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Carl Sandburg, Historian; Congressman Frank E. Smith, (Miss.); Mrs. Murray Forbes Wittichen, President General of the United Daughters of the Confederacy; Clyde C. Walton, Jr., Illinois State Historian; Prof. William Prescott Webb, President, American Historical Association.

KANSAS CELEBRATED the first notable centennial event of the Civil War on May 19 when ceremonies were staged commemorating the Marais des Cygnes massacre near the town of Trading Post in 1958, where Charles Hamelton, leading a band of bushwhackers from Missouri, captured 11 Free State men and, lining them up in a ravine, killed five and wounded five. The last man escaped.

"The war really started in Kansas in 1858," says Wint Smith, Congressman from the state's 6th District and chairman of our Executive Committee.

VIRGINIA'S SHENANDOAH VALLEY, that corridor down which Stonewall Jackson made history against the armies of Banks, Shields and Fremont, is laying its plans to be well represented in the Centennial observances. Three Civil War Round Tables already have been organized in the area - at Winchester, Harrisonburg and New Market - and the membership of each is rising.

The organization at Harrisonburg, known as the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Round Table, held its first public meeting recently, with Virgil Carrington Jones, author of "Ranger Mosby" and "Gray Ghosts and Rebel Raiders", as speaker. A standing-room-only crowd jammed an auditorium to hear his discussion of the war role of the guerrillas. On hand were a number of visitors from surrounding communities, including Jay W. Johns of Charlottesville, Director of the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Foundation at Lexington.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRAVEL ORGANIZATIONS, comprising a cross-section of the U. S. travel industry, will publicize localities of Civil War interest as a help to great travelling public during 1961-65, according to James L. Bossemeyer, Executive Vice President. The organization's members, he revealed, control three-fourths of the estimated \$100,000,000 annual travel advertising budget.

RELOCATION OF STATE ROADS CROSSING SHILOH NATIONAL MILITARY PARK is under consideration by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Under provisions of H. R. 4115, sufficient National Park Service land would be conveyed to the State of Tennessee to make possible a parallel highway and eliminate through traffic in the park area.

Another bill of interest is H. R. 9581, to acquire lands still in private ownership for the preservation of the Antietam battlefield area.

MISS JOSEPHINE COBB, Still Picture Branch director, advises that National Archives now has ready for sale on positive microfilm a copy of the Brady photographs of the Civil War purchased by the Secretary of War from the photographer in 1874-75. Included are about 6,000 photographs of scenes and military leaders and notables of the war period.

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JULY 1958  
Vol. 1, No. 3

## CHRONOLOGY - 1858

July 9 -- In Chicago, Abraham Lincoln listens to the oratory of Sen. Stephen A. Douglas, just back from Washington and speaking from the balcony of the Tremont House.

July 10 -- Speaking from the same balcony, Lincoln answers Douglas.

July 17 -- At Springfield, Douglas speaks in the afternoon and Lincoln in the evening.

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## EVENTS ON EVE OF WAR

July 24 - From Chicago, Lincoln challenges Douglas, in Springfield, to a series of debates. Douglas accepts under protest, with stipulation debates shall be held in seven cities where neither had yet spoken.

July 29 - Atlantic telegraph cable is spliced in mid-ocean.

July 31 - Lincoln writes Douglas confirming arrangements for debates.

AS EVIDENCE OF MOUNTING INTEREST IN THE CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL, the American Automobile Association has circularized its membership all over America with a message from Major General U. S. Grant, 3rd, chairman of the National Commission, urging vacations be planned now to take in sites of Civil War significance.

"Then, by the time the Centennial begins in 1961," the general explains, "they will be better prepared to participate in and to appreciate the full significance of the various events to be scheduled."

This message is the first of several on the Centennial which will be sent out from national headquarters in Washington from time to time. It was accompanied by a list of 28 major battle areas in 10 different states and by a map showing their general location.

TEN ADDITIONAL DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS have been added to the Centennial Commission's Advisory Council during the last month. They are Dean A. B. Moore of the University of Alabama; Dore Schary, Schary Productions, Inc., Beverly Hills, Calif.; William J. Lowry, assistant vice-president of the Hartford National Bank and Trust Co., Hartford, Conn.; Ralph Newman, president, Civil War Book Club, Chicago, Ill.; Dr. Kenneth P. Williams, professor at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.; T. Harry Williams, Baton Rouge, La., named to represent the Mississippi Valley Historical Association; Frederick Hill Meserve, New York City; Dr. Allan Nevins, vice-president of the American Historical Association and professor of history at Columbia University; Erwin C. Zepp, director of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio, and Herman Blum, director of the Blumhaven Library and Gallery, Philadelphia, Pa.

MINNESOTA, though in the fringe of the Civil War area, is planning full cooperation with the Centennial. The Minnesota Historical Society has announced that a full program of observances will be planned and that the Governor likely will appoint a state Centennial commission within the next few weeks.

Among incidents to be memorialized in the state are the Sioux uprising of 1862, some of the battle sites of which formed the nucleus of its fine state park system; the famous charge of the First Minnesota Regiment at Gettysburg, which resulted in the highest casualty rate -- 82 per cent -- of any regiment in the war; the activities of General William Gates Le Duc, distinguished member of Sherman's staff and later U. S. Commissioner of Agriculture, whose home will be acquired by the Minnesota Historical Society this year, and the death in 1956 of Albert Woolson of Minnesota, last of the Union veterans to die.

MAINE has opened its first Civil War museum. It is situated at Portland and is under the direction of Philip E. Hamlin, president of the Bosworth Post Trustees and a descendant of a Union veteran. Relics ranging from bullets to a razor used by Lincoln will be on display there.

CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL OBSERVERS, looking about for lessons of true Americanism, will find a classic example in the South Georgia town of Fitzgerald. Just 60-odd years old, it had a beginning patterned in the spirit with which Grant shook hands with Lee at Appomattox.

Old-timers still remember the story. It centered around the economic depression of 1893-1894, a time when families faced starvation and, in the Middle West, suffering was aggravated by a drought that snuffed out the food-producing crops. Out went a call for help, and from the section of America that had borne the brunt of the war, the South, came an answer -- trainloads of food and feed to aid the stricken sections.

A business man of Indianapolis, Ind., P. T. Fitzgerald, took note. Union veterans were among those caught in this unusual plight. Why not set them up in a section of the South where droughts were not so likely to strike? With Georgia's Governor William J. Northern, he traveled over the land of that state until he found a site. There, in 1896, the town of Fitzgerald was incorporated and into its borders and surrounding areas moved men who had worn the Blue of the North, come now to enjoy peace and plenty in the homeland of neighbors who once had once been their enemies.

Soon afterward, residents of Fitzgerald took a leading role in forming an organization known as the Blue and the Gray. Its aim was to promote fraternity, charity and loyalty. And its principles were ideally exemplified in 1898 when the men who had worn Blue and men who had worn Gray shouldered weapons and marched off side by side in a common uniform to fight under a single flag in the Spanish-American War.

"TAPS," the bugle call that brings lumps to throats at graveside and tears to eyes unused to lachrymal reaction, may become a highly dignified part of the Civil War Centennial observance. Virginia, where the solemn notes first were heard, is leading the way.

On July 4 at Berkeley Plantation on the James River, in the first sanctioned event of the program leading up to the Centennial, Clifford Dowdey, well-known Civil War authority and writer, reviewed the circumstances under which "Taps" was first played during the occupation of Harrison's Landing by McClellan's troops following the Peninsula campaign. This came as a highlight of the reenactment of the event staged by U. S. Marines and arranged by the present owner of the plantation, Malcolm Jamieson.

The reenactment may become an annual event.

KANSAS WILL HAVE TWO OBSERVANCES to commemorate during the Centennial period -- its part in the Civil War and its admission to the Union in 1861.

Already a Kansas Centennial Commission has been created and has arranged annual observances to precede the Centennial, the first of which was held on May 19 and involved ceremonies at Trading Post recalling the Marais des Cygnes massacre.

Next year the centennial of the Wyandotte constitution, under which the state still operates, will be observed in a three or four day program at Kansas City. The constitution, now under glass in Memorial Hall at Topeka, will be moved there by special car for display. These ceremonies will be held in July and will be followed in December by the centennial of Lincoln's visit to Kansas, to be featured by a caravan along the exact route followed by the visitor.

The 1960 reenactment probably will take place at Lawrence or Lecompton.

JOHN PELHAM, the youthful Alabama artilleryman who blazed his way along the battlefronts during the early years of the war, will come in for his share of recognition during the Centennial.

The Gallant Pelham Club of Cambridge, Mass., a club that holds weekly meetings to study Southern arms and other subjects pertaining to the war, has announced that it plans to erect a suitably engraved bronze plaque at Kelly's Ford on March 17, 1963, the place and the anniversary of Major Pelham's death.

GEORGIA IS WELL ADVANCED WITH ITS PLANS looking toward a suitable commemoration of the Civil War. Among major steps, the Georgia Historical Association has erected more than 600 roadside markers detailing every step of Sherman's march from Chickamauga to Atlanta and to Savannah.

"We believe the estimated 20 million descendants of soldiers on both sides in the Georgia campaign would be more interested in tracing the footsteps of their heroic ancestors than listening to college lectures or reading musty archives," said C. E. Gregory, executive secretary and director.

The Commission also is in the process of restoring Fort McAllister, the bastion which held out for four years against Union naval vessels and which was twice praised by the Confederate Congress before it fell. Henry Ford has contributed \$200,000 toward its restoration.



August 15, 1958

Mr. William E. Rooney, President  
New Orleans Civil War Roundtable  
110 St. Anthony Drive  
New Orleans 22, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Rooney:

I would be delighted to come to New Orleans on September 24 to talk before your Round Table on some phase of the Confederacy. Your arrangements as suggested in your letter of August 13 are perfectly acceptable.

I think that I would like to talk about a general thesis of mine (about which I'm going to concoct a book one of these days) which has to do with the control of public opinion in the days leading up to Secession and something of the same during the war. I think that this is a bit more than reasonably entertaining and yet of rather great importance today because of the comparisons an intelligent audience can make. The only trouble is that it sometimes leads to mis-quotation and gets me into trouble with extremists in Mississippi. But I expect to continue to talk about this and if your group can take the consequences I suppose I can, too.

The idea of a question and answer period suits me fine. Without that I'm inclined to believe that most talks are lost before they are made. If a person can't defend what he says he ought to keep quiet in the first place.

If you need a title, it might be called, "The Control of Public Opinion in the Confederacy," although the talk will probably be more on the period leading up to the formation of the Confederacy.

I need to know one or two things. Within a matter of ten minutes or so I would like to know how much time you want me to take. The time for the free-for-all afterwards is of no concern to me. Just let me know the time and place of the meeting and I'll be there. Will probably come down on the train inasmuch as I'm through with these long drives on the highway.

Enclosed is a statement of a little project we now have on hand here, having to do with the Confederacy. (One other thing: I've read considerable military history but don't really know a damned thing about it.)

Sincerely,

James W. Silver

August 13, 1958

Dr. James W. Silver  
Dept. of History  
University of Mississippi  
Oxford, Miss.

Dear Dr. Silver,

The New Orleans Chapter of The Civil War Round Tables is preparing its program for 1958-59 and would like to present you as a speaker on a topic similar to your recently published "Confederate Morale and Church Propaganda." Our first meeting this season will be September 24 and we would like very much to schedule you for that date if you are available. Meetings consist of dinner, the talk, and a question and answer period. The meetings are stag.

We are a small group and usually rely on our membership for speakers, but we are able to pay the transportation and one night hotel expenses plus a small fee if the out of town guest can visit us. If you can appear September 24, or at some future date we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,

*William E. Rooney*  
William E. Rooney  
President

110 St. Anthony Dr.  
New Orleans 22, La.