PATRIOTIC MR. BOUTELL.

The liberal extracts from the speech of Congressman Boutell, copied in the March VETERAN, have given much pleasure.

That conspicuously enterprising newspaper, the *Atlanta Constitution*, that furnished the report, states editorially:

"The speech of Congressman Boutell before the West End Republican Club, of New York, is a notable utterance from one of the most prominent Republicans in Congress.

"Mr. Boutell, appreciating the deep significance of the lamented McKinley's more than friendly attitude toward the South, devotes, appropriately enough, nearly his entire address to the relation of the South and Southern questions to the nation. It is evident, from the facts and statistics which he utilizes so effectively, that Mr. Boutell has been a close student of his subject. He knows the South and the truth about things Southern. His grasp of the problems involved in the somewhat anomalous position of this section and the broad philosophy of his proposed solution will appeal to fair-minded and patriotic citizens in all sections of our common country as at once statesmanlike and liberal.

"Of course Mr. Boutell, being a strict partisan, is inclined to unduly magnify the alleged beneficence of some of his party's policies in their application to Southern material conditions; but in the main he is correct in his analysis of Southern needs and Southern dues at the hands of Congress and the Federal administration. Particularly are his deductions on the negro question sound. He makes it clear that outside meddling and an officious interference with a problem that is social and not political will only make bad matters worse."

FITZHUGH LEE AT MCKINLEY'S GRAVE.

"McKinley and the South" was Gen. Lee's subject at Canton, Ohio, on McKinley Memorial Day. He said:

"Ohio, it is true, is the State of his nativity. Her citizens knew and loved the living McKinley; her soil is sacred with the grave which marks the resting place of the dead McKinley; her people will cherish his lofty character and his splendid service as long as the mountains kiss the heavens or the rivers roll to the sea. Ohio, however, cannot bound his boundless fame, for on the wings of renown his glory has been wafted to all parts of the world. Sleep on, O just and wise ruler! Your birth was a blessing to your country; your life a blessing to all its inhabitants; your death a calamity which has excited the lamentations of mankind. . . . .

"All sections to-night hear the echo of the voice of the great soldier, U. S. Grant, when on his deathbed he said: 'I feel that we are approaching an era of great good feeling between Federal and Confederate soldiers. I shall not be here to witness it in its perfection, but I feel within me that it is to be so. Let us have peace.'

"The weapons of Grant and Lee have been sheathed forever, the sabers of Sheridan and Stuart have been returned to their scabbards, the tents of Sherman and Joe Johnston have been pitched forever on the eternal camping grounds, and all over this land at this hour is shining the great orb of peace in all the splendor of undimmed majesty."

THE REBEL SCOUT.

Capt. Thomas Nelson Conrad, who recently died at his home in Washington, D. C., was one of the most famous scouts in the Confederate army. He was born at Fairfax C. H., Va., received a collegiate education, and for several years immediately preceding the war he was engaged in teaching a private school in Georgetown, D. C. Having expressed his intention of joining the Confederate army, he was arrested and confined in the "Old Capitol Prison," Washington, but was soon released. He reported to Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, who assigned him to the Third Virginia Cavalry as chaplain, with the rank of captain; but Stuart's intuitive knowledge of men, and his knowing that the chaplain was familiar with Washington and vicinity, induced him to put Conrad on scout duty and in the secret service. Shortly after, when President Davis directed Stuart to send him a reliable man for some important secret service in Washington, this chaplain-scout was sent to Richmond, and his thrilling experience began.

He established regular headquarters in Washington and a line of communication to a point on the south bank of the lower Potomac. He went in and out of Washington at will, frequently reporting direct to President Davis, the Secretary of War, or to Gen. Lee, as the nature of his information indicated. In recognition of his valuable and hazardous service, Mr. Davis wrote him a personal letter of thanks, which Capt.

CAPT. CONRAD.

Conrad published in a little volume a short time before his death. In this book he gives an interesting account of his experiences as a scout. A short time before the surrender of Gen. Lee he was in Washington and was betrayed or discovered, and orders were issued in the secret service department for his arrest; but, having secured early in his service as scout a friend in that department, he was promptly advised of the order for his arrest, and immediately made his escape from Washington. He was in some way suspected of being connected with the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, and for months after the surrender he kept himself concealed in the mountains of Virginia.

After the war Capt. Conrad was a prominent educator, being President of Blacksburg College, Virginia, and later President of the M. and A. College, of Virginia, which position he resigned to accept that of Census Statistician.

Southern Intelligence Agents

Spies of the Confederacy

BY DEANNA R. BRYANT, Historian General 2008-2010

The Confederates entered the War Between the States with an espionage system already organized and highly efficient. This system had arms reaching the Federal Government, especially the War Department. As the War was approaching, there was no way to work Federal spies into the Confederate government, because there was no government yet. No one knew exactly what that government would be, where it would place its capital, how strong the army would be, and other information of this kind. Union intelligence services never succeeded in protecting their secrets from the Confederate spies, who continued to penetrate the highest Federal headquarters until the end of the War. One Confederate spy continued to work in the office of the chief of Union counterintelligence throughout the War. Confederate secret agents were so frequently in Washington that one hotel kept a room reserved for their use.

Before the War began, Southern sympathizers in Washington had only to stay in their homes and offices, and spy as much as they pleased. Younger men left to join the Confederate army; the older men and all the women could be useful as secret agents, messengers, and smugglers of medical supplies, recruits, arms, uniforms, and ammunition. Devoted Southern volunteers set to work to establish a Confederate system of secret intelligence and secret communications. They easily learned everything the Federals were doing, since security precautions in Washington were practically non-existent.

Southern ladies who had made their homes in Washington remained there, continuing to charm Northern officers, to the great benefit of the Confederacy. Mrs. Rose O'Neal Greenhow, an astute, wealthy, and highly placed Washington hostess of Southern sympathies, was "reputed to be the most persuasive woman who was ever known in Washington." She was head of an important spy ring that was established by Captain Thomas Jordan, U.S. Army. He retained his Regular Army commission and stayed in Washington until he had fully organized his spies and then turned them over to Mrs. Greenhow sometime in 1860 or early 1861. He became a lieutenant colonel and later a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. By the time he resigned from the U.S. Army, the espionage he had initiated could go on without him. Mrs. Greenhow continued to receive reports from the various spies they had selected together. She sent the information on in cipher, through a secret courier system, directly to Jordan's post at General Beauregard's headquarters, then on to Richmond. The Confederate War Department or General Beauregard would send back queries requesting special information. Under Mrs. Greenhow's management the ring worked undisturbed until he and others were arrested in August, 1861. Even after this, the flow of information to Richmond went on for several months.

Possibly three Confederate spy rings existed in Washington: Mrs. Greenhow's, Capt. Thomas Conrad, a successful intelligence officer operating for J.E.B. Stuart, and another one by Pvt. Frank Stringfellow. Captain Conrad was a regimental chaplain, and this spiritual director spent most of the War in field reconnaissance. He directed his secret agents, one who was working for General L.C. Baker in the Federal counterintelligence service, and managed a courier line that was never broken.

"The Signal Bureau" was located in a suite of rooms where only trusted officers and employees were admitted. The office was located near President Davis's and the Secretary of War's office in Richmond. Although the Signal Corps did operate flag, torch, and telegraphic signals, it was essentially an espionage service. Only a small number of people knew that from these rooms a correspondence was conducted, usually in cipher, with numerous agents beyond the limits of the Confederacy. With some interruptions, mail was received from Washington almost as regularly as from Charleston. Through them, cipher dispatches between generals in the field and the departments were constantly passing.

The Signal Corps was composed of one major, ten captains, twenty each lieutenants and sergeants, and 1,500 men detailed from the ranks of many regiments. Often employed in independent service, they were trusted with important secrets; no case was ever reported of a betrayal of trust. All were experts in signaling and the use of cipher. They were entrusted with the keyword and, when required, became dauntless messengers and agents. They went behind enemy lines and cities, or to lands beyond the sea, communicating with agents and secret friends of the Confederate Government. They or-

dered supplies and conveyed them to their destination, running the blockade by land and sea, making nightly voyages in bays and rivers, threading the enemy's cordon of pickets and gunboats. They were experts with oar and sail, on deck, in the saddle, with rifle and revolver, as with flags, torches, and secret code.

A squad of three to five men was assigned to every division of infantry and brigade of cavalry. Each man was provided with signal flags for sending messages by day, and spirits of turpentine-filled torches by night. The flags were four feet by two and a half feet, and in their centers squares of another color different from the flag. The system of flag communication was an alphabet being formed by combinations of right and left waves of the flag. A practiced operator could spell out a message as fast as a telegrapher could. Part of the work of the Signal Corps was on blockade-running steamers. In the later days of blockade-running, no steamer would come into port without at least one signal officer on board to communicate with the forts and batteries. They used lanterns of different colors with sliding screens in front, rather than flags or torches. Stations were located thirty or forty miles along the coast on both sides of the blockade port.

The Signal Corps and Secret Service were in control of the cipher used by the State and War Department of the Confederate Government. The "Court Cipher" was used and depended on the use of a keyword or sentence known by the sender and receiver. Often a special messenger was sent to headquarters of the several departments to communicate orally a new keyword. The Confederate system was very simple. The entire alphabet was written twenty-six times on a page so as to appear alike when read horizontally and perpendicularly. The first letter of the keyword was found in the first horizontal column, and the first letter of the message in the first vertical column. At the intersection of the two columns, the letter used in the message is found. Translation of the cipher into the original was the reverse of this process. The keyword always consisted of fifteen letters, the same number being always retained for convenience in the use of several mechanical contrivances which made translation to and from cipher simple and easy.

One of the most romantic of the many young ladies who spied for the Confederacy was the fascinating Belle Boyd, who was only seventeen when she began her career as a secret agent. She was arrested three times and finally packed off to Canada to make sure she would stay away from the Federal Army. Ladies made their debut in this war in espionage. Many ladies' names became famous, others were never known. In April 1862, General John Hunt Morgan sent a young female spy into Nashville to "see what the enemy was about." Within twelve hours, she

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returned with complete plans of the field fortifications around Nashville, an exact strength report, and the precise location of every Union regiment or battery. Since the information was gathered in such a short time, it was obvious that a spy network had been at work for some time.

General Braxton Bragg's intelligence service when he took command of the Army of Tennessee was under Colonel J.S. Johnson, who organized espionage networks in various parts of the theater of operations. Shortly, he turned this over to General B.F. Cheatham, who ordered Captain H.B. Shaw "to organize a company of scouts composed of men from various commands who were familiar with the country and well acquainted with the people." These became known as Coleman's Scouts. Shaw had from forty-five to fifty scouts and agents in his band, all specially chosen and devoted to the cause. The best known of the group was Sam Davis, barely twenty-one years old, from Smyrna, Tennessee, who died on the gallows, refusing to save his life by betraying his fellow soldiers. Captain Shaw was captured and in jail, unbeknownst to Davis. One of Shaw's best agents, Alexander Greig took over and was careful to sign all reports with Shaw's usual pseudonym, "E Coleman," so if documents were captured they would not guess there had been a change.

Scouts operated all though the South, keeping the Union Army under careful observation. Many times false orders were given to Union troops by Confederate officers actually wearing Confederate uniforms. Few commanders in the urgency of combat thought to question an unknown "staff officer" or "courier," who with an air of confidence delivered an order from "the general." These messages were always in the dark of night so these spies had to make sure they had the name of the right general. Even if detected, these men could not be accused of espionage since they were not disguised.

Henderson's Scouts operated along the Mississippi. They began to appear in reports in 1863 and continued until the end of the War. The Iron Scouts operated in the Blackwater Swamp, home of George Shadburne, who spent a large part of the War within Union lines. He was usually wearing a neat blue uniform, but occasionally he wore skirts. Carter's Scouts was another spy ring operating in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia. Almost every regiment had from five to fifty scouts from time to time.

These agents saved countless lives and prevented unnecessary bloodshed. Many were never known, and their adventures never recorded. Many were shot down, died obscure deaths, or succumbed to exposure. Reportedly, one of the last acts of Judah P. Benjamin when Richmond fell was the burning of most of the South's secret service papers. Jefferson Davis years later discouraged attempts to give out details of Confederate spying.

No Confederate spies seem to have been under death sentence in Federal prisons at the time of the Appomattox surrender. Two Union spies, captured and court-martialed a few days before Appomattox, were under death sentence. The surrender saved their lives. ○

Bibliography furnished upon request.

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