

THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTERS OF ARTS  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
LIFE IN RICHMOND 1861-1865.

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY  
By  
for the degree  
MASTER OF ARTS  
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1989

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1. Jones, N. W. *Under Stars and Stripes*, p. 57

2. DeLoach, T. C. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals*, p. 86

tial section. Houses - Chapter I. Type near the square stood close together. These further The Setting. were spacious, of clap-board or red brick - usually of the Georgian style with gardens, yards, carriage house. In 1861, the appearance of Richmond from the Manchester side of the James was both varied and picturesque. Three of its seven hills stood out prominently. To the south, the red clay sides of Chimborazo Heights shone in the sunlight. To the north, was the new cemetery, Hollywood, its green slopes dotted with monuments. Between these two and further from the river was Council Hill. On it and dominating the view of the city stood the capitol, its classic dignity, gleaming white from a distance, yet grimy and weatherbeaten on close inspection. The "Post Office and many churches, mills and factories, stand out prominently . . . in queenly splendor and beauty."<sup>1</sup> Old St. John's Church and the base of Belle Isle. Before the city was the James River, dotted with many islets and boulders, over which the water rushed noisily. The Petersburg and the Danville Railroad bridges spanned it. The "Petersburg" crossing over Belle Isle was described by DeLeon as a "frail and giddy structure"<sup>2</sup> high above the river, just wide enough for the track and a footway. Lower down was the old Mayo wagon bridge. From the Capitol Square, north and west spread the residential interests. Here was the Tredegar Works which, under the management

1. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 57 This was the only rail-

2. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 86 In 1861, the

tial section. Houses of the urban type near the square stood close together. Those further out were more spacious, of clap-board or red brick - usually of the Georgian style with gardens, yards, carriage houses and cabins. On the eastern side of Council Hill to Shockoe Valley were hotels, Metropolitan Hall, the African Church, the Medical College and residences growing progressively poorer as the hill sloped to the valley.

Shockoe Valley, sometimes spoken of as "the Valley" or "Butcher Town" held many tobacco warehouses, the Central Railroad Yards, the Lancastrian School (free), and many tenements and houses of squalid disorder. Across the Valley was "Church Hill," a residential section, almost the oldest of the city. This section extending to Chimborazo Heights included Old St. John's Church and the home of Miss Elizabeth Van Lew. During the war, many knew her to be a federal spy, but they could not find sufficient proof to bring charges against her.

Before the capitol, lay the business section including factories, banks, stores, etc. The Basin, an enlargement of the canal, extended about eight squares - east and west - between the foot of the hill and the river. It was the center of the city's commercial interests. Here was the Tredegar Works which, under the management of Mr. J. R. Anderson, was becoming famous. This was the only rolling mill of the South capable of casting heavy guns. In 1861, the

mills were making guns under government contract. One of the first acts of the state government after secession was to forbid the company to send the completed guns to Washington.

Other rolling mills, flour mills and warehouses clustered around the Basin. The city's dock was at the lower end, just beyond the first locks in the canal. The large warehouse of Libby & Sons, Ship Chandlers, later to become famous as Libby Prison, was near the dock on Canal Street.

Just below the Basin between 17th and 18th on Cary Street was a section known as "Dublin." At this time the inhabitants were not Irish as the name seems to indicate, but a conglomerate mixture of Negroes, foreigners, and "wharf rats" of every type. It was from this section and lower "Dutcher Town" that most of the crimes and disorders of the city seemed to emanate.

The city had a population of about 40,000 composed of native Virginians, English, Scotch, Irish, Jews, a few southern Europeans, free Negroes, and slaves. The citizens of German descent comprised a large quota of the population. Their presence was important enough for the Enquirer,<sup>3</sup> to publish in January and February 1861 a German-English edition, the outside pages of which were printed in German, with German script.

Richmond was prosperous and fast becoming a leading industrial city of the South. Mrs. Putnam wrote that its "trade (was)

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<sup>3</sup> Richmond Enquirer, Vol. 1, 1861

3. In State Library, Richmond, Virginia.

flourishing; articles of food abundant and cheap; the stores were well stocked with merchandise; pauperism was almost unknown; the people were independent and happy."<sup>4</sup>

In 1859, the tobacco companies, forty-three of them, employed 2,388 workers and produced 20,000 hogsheads of tobacco a month. The James River Manufacturing Company had 4,000 spindles. In 1860, 143,000 bushels of wheat and 42,300 barrels of flour were exported by the Gallego and Columbian Mills alone.<sup>5</sup>

The City Directory of 1860 gives the following inventory of enterprises and businesses of the city:

Carpetweavers and Saddlers - 34  
Carrriage and Coach Makers - 13  
Carvers - 3  
Cheese - 2  
Mercantile Agencies - 1  
Advertising Agencies - 1  
General and Collecting Agents - 15  
Insurance Agents - 8  
Pension and Bounty, Land Agents - 7  
Real Estate Agents - 6  
Shipping Agents - 5  
Agricultural Implements - 6  
Ambrytypist, Photographer - 4  
Apothecaries - 26  
Architects - 5  
Artists - 3  
Attorneys at Law - 66  
Auctioneers - 19  
Bakers - 36  
Bankers - 5  
Banks - 4  
Savings Banks - 16  
Barbers and Hairdressers - 6

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4. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 23

5. Richmond Bicentennial Publications, Vol. 1, 1937



Barrel Factories - 2  
Bell Hangers and Locksmiths - 5  
Belting, Leather, and India Rubber - 1  
Billiard Saloons - 2  
Bird Dealers - 1  
Blacksmiths and Wheelrights - 24  
Boarding Houses - 43  
Book Binders - 6  
Book Sellers and Stationers - 10  
Bane Factories - 1  
Boots and Shoes - 42  
Bottlers - 6  
Brickmakers - 2  
Brokers - 17  
Brushmaker - 1  
Cabinet Makers - 6  
Cap Makers - 2  
Carpenters and Builders - 34  
Carpets and Oil Cloth - 3  
Carriage and Coach Makers - 13  
Carvers - 2  
Chemists - 1  
China, Glass, Crockery - 9  
Cloaks and Mantillas - 3  
Retail Clothing - 60  
Second Hand Clothing - 4  
Wholesale Clothing - 2  
Cloth, Cassimeers, Vestings - 1  
Coal Dealers - 19  
Coal, Oil, and Lamps - 2  
Commission and Forwarding Merchants - 136  
Retail Confectioners - 120  
Coopers - 6  
Cuppers and Leeches - 4  
Cutlers and Instrument Makers - 3  
Dentists - 11  
Dressmakers - 3  
Wholesale Druggist - 7  
Retail Dry Goods - 70  
Wholesale Dry Goods - 3  
Dyers and Scourers - 4  
Earthen Ware - 2  
Engravers - 4  
Express Companies - 1  
Wholesale Fancy Goods - 3  
Fancy Trimmings - 6  
Fancy Variety Goods - 11

File Manufacturers - 1  
Florists - 1  
Flour Dealers - 7  
Flour Mills - 5  
Iron and Brass Foundries - 13  
Furniture Dealers and Cabinet Makers - 10  
Gas Fitters and Plumbers - 9  
Gas Regulators - 1  
Gents' Furnishing Goods - 14  
Gilders - 2  
Grates and Fenders - 2  
Retail Grocers - 360  
Wholesale Grocers - 33  
Gunno Dealers - 5  
Guns and Pistols - 4  
Hardware and Cutlery - 16  
Hats, Caps, Furs, and Straw Goods - 14  
Hospitals - 2  
Hotels - 17  
House Furnishing Goods - 8  
Ice Dealers - 3  
Insurance Co. - 6  
Iron and Steel Dealers - 2  
Instrument Workers - 2  
Iron Railing Manufacturing - 4  
Iron and Steel Works - 2  
Junk Dealers - 2  
Knitting Machines - 2  
Leather, Hides, etc. - 4  
Lime, Cement, etc. - 4  
Liquors, Wines, etc. - 19  
Lithographers - 3  
Livery Stables - 16  
Looking Glasses, Picture Frames - 2  
Lumber Dealers - 14  
Machinists - 7  
Marble and Stone Works - 6  
Medical Colleges - 1  
Merchants and Tailors - 26  
Milliners - 26  
Millinery Goods - 3  
Military Goods - 1  
Music and Musical Instruments - 12  
Music Teachers - 4  
Negro Traders - 15  
News Depots - 4  
Newspapers - 9

Notaries Public - 10  
Nurserymen - 1  
Opticians - 4  
Ornamental Plasterers - 1  
Oyster Dealers - 8  
House and Sign Painters - 24  
Paints and Oils - 1  
Paper Mills - 1  
Paper Hangers and Upholsterers - 8  
Physicians - 84  
Produce Dealers - 8  
Regalia Manufactory - 1  
Restaurants - 30  
Rolling Mills - 2  
Roofers and Slaters - 4  
Saddle and Harness Makers - 13  
Sofas - 3  
Sailmakers - 1  
Saloons - 88  
Saw Manufactory - 1  
Sash and Blind Manufactures - 4  
Scales - 3  
Private Schools - 25  
Seed Stores - 4  
Sewing Machines - 7  
Ship Chandlers - 5  
Shoe Makers - 49  
Silver Platers - 2  
Soap and Candle Manufacturing - 4  
Shooting Galleries - 2  
Stoves and Tinware - 14  
Stove Manufactory - 1  
Sugar Refinery - 1  
Tailors - 25  
Telegraph Office - 1  
Teamsters - 4  
Tobacco and Cigars - 17  
Tobacconist - 56  
Tobacco Mills and Boxes - 9  
Tobacco Warehouses - 7  
Tobacco Exchange - 1  
Toys - 3  
Trimmings, Lace, etc. - 4  
Turners - 4  
Umbrella Manufactorys - 1  
Undertakers - 4  
Upholsterers - 8

Washing Machine Makers - 1  
Watches and Jewelry - 23  
Wigmakers - 1  
Wood Dealers - 13  
Wooden and Willow Ware - 4

The last few months of 1860 and the fires in the new year made up. All of this formed the setting for the Capital of the Confederate States and made it the coveted goal for each of the five Northern generals who urged his troops, "On to Richmond."

A delegation to Washington and a conference of the Southern states. To know her own position if a choice between the two factions became necessary, a state convention was called on February 13, 1861.

As the legislature was in session, the Convention met in Mechanics Hall on 5th Street. The question was of vital interest. Those who wished to preserve the union at any price were called Union Democrats and those who, in the early days of the Convention, were considered radical were called Secessionists. The debates were long and fiery. Crowds attended. The western gallery was reserved for the ladies who came in great numbers. Many of the delegates - affected by their presence, flamed into long winded oratory to such an extent that a rule was made limiting all speakers to ten minutes. So many people attended each day - standing in the aisles and doorways - that the Convention insisted admission be allowed only by official tickets. Later in March secret sessions were felt necessary. The citizens, getting only brief accounts of the meetings from the

Chapter II.

Secession.

The last few months of 1860 and the first in the new year made apparent to Virginia the necessity for deciding at once how she would proceed in the rift between the Northern and Southern states. Every effort must be made to heal the breach, so Virginia sponsored a delegation to Washington and a conference of the Southern states.

To know her own position if a choice between the two factions became necessary, a state convention was called on February 13, 1861.

As the legislature was in session, the Convention met in Mechanics Hall on 9th Street. The question was of vital interest. Those who wished to preserve the union at any price were called Union Democrats and those who, in the early days of the Convention, were considered radical were called Sessionists. The debates were long and fiery. Crowds attended. The western gallery was reserved for the ladies who came in great numbers. Many of the delegates - affected by their presence, flamed into long winded oratory to such an extent that a rule was made limiting all speakers to ten minutes. So many people attended each day - standing in the aisles and doorways - that the Convention insisted admission be allowed only by official tickets. Later in March secret sessions were felt necessary. The citizens, getting only brief accounts of the meetings from the

papers, felt that little was being accomplished, and complained over the length of the session.

Lincoln's inaugural address gave little hope of peace. The President announced his intention of relieving the garrison at Fort Sumter, peaceably if he could, forceably if he must.

Public meetings were held night after night by Sessionist and Union Democrats, who yet hoped for a settlement. There were very able speakers on both sides. The people listened with rapt attention. Many were convinced that secession was the only stand that Virginia could make. Sessionist flags appeared in the city - particularly in Jackson Ward.

In March the city seemed divided between the two parties. For instance, Mrs. J. A. Belcher, a resident of Sidney, a suburb on the edge of Richmond, raised the emblem of Southern independence. That evening, a group of young boys from Oregon Hill, Richmond, appeared and demanded she take down the flag. She complied with the request only to raise it again. This time about one hundred citizens who had read the story in The Dispatch were on hand to see that the boys did not remove it as had been threatened.

On the 26th of March, Junius L. Archer of the Bellona Foundry announced to the Convention that he had received an order from the federal government to send all guns in his possession to Fortress

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1. Richmond, Daily Dispatch, March 27, 1861

Monroe. The order not only included the guns but some heavy columbiads. Mr. Archer requested the people of Richmond, Chesterfield and Powhatan not to comply with the order since all future action was so uncertain.<sup>2</sup> This order caused so much agitation in the city and state that it was withdrawn April 1.

The popular feeling of the citizens was becoming greater for secession. The Union Democrats held one meeting after another in the African Church using every form of national propoganda to try and hold the citizens to the Union. The State legislature sent a delegation to Lincoln to try and find what his policy was toward the Southern states that had seceded. They returned only to report that Lincoln would hold the Union together. The same day guns were fired on Fort Sumter. Before the report was made to the legislature, Lincoln had sent to Virginia for her quota of the 75,000 troops to march against the seceding states. Governor Letcher refused to obey the order.

Saturday evening (April 13th) the news of the surrender of Fort Sumter reached Richmond. The Dispatch<sup>3</sup> said that the reception of the news was "one of the wildest, most enthusiastic and irrepressible expressions of heart felt exuberant joy on the part of the people shared throughout the city."

2. Daily Dispatch, March 29, 1861

3. The Daily Dispatch was the official title of the newspaper but it was spoken of as "The Dispatch."

generally that we have ever known to be the case in Richmond."<sup>4</sup> Nothing was thought or talked of save the great triumph achieved by the heroic troops of the glorious Southern Confederacy in obliterating "one of the Illinois ape's standing menace against the assertion of Southern rights and equality."<sup>4</sup> Crowds assembled around the bulletin boards of the different newspaper offices watching for the latest dispatches. By sundown the advocates of Southern rights had resolved to celebrate the momentous event.

The iron cannon of the Fayette Artillery Company fired a salute of 100 guns from Shockoe Hill. All the bells rang. The windows rattled in the Capitol, Exchange Hotel, and Ballard House. Thick powder smoke hung around the Washington monument. Gun flashes illuminated the Square and the animated faces of the people with a play of red light.<sup>5</sup>

Stirring addresses were made to the crowd in the Square. Several impulsive men rushed to the roof of the Capitol and hoisted the Confederate flag (taken down later on Governor Letcher's order).

Bonfires were lighted at almost every corner of the principal streets. Beacon fires were started on Union and Church Hills. Almost every house was ablaze with lights. Transparencies were displayed throughout the city.

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4. Daily Dispatch, April 15, 1861

5. Thomason, John W. Jr. Job Stuart, p. 33-34



Many feared fires from the transparencies because the only water available was in the reservoir, and that was quite low. Some of the citizens requested through the newspapers that they would not be considered unpatriotic if they displayed none on Monday night when the torch light parade was planned.

The torchlight procession composed of men and women bearing transparencies, banners, flambeaux, and the new flag, stretched almost a mile down the street. The militia companies in ranks, and under arms but not in uniform, joined the procession. Brass music, the fife and drum, gave a martial touch. The crowd dragged a brass cannon from the State Armory.

The saloons, bars, and corner groceries alike, dealt toddies and straight drams. Pizinni's Palace of Sweets served ice cream and sherberts to the ladies and gentlemen.

The procession halted before the Governor's Mansion and clamored for a speech. Governor Letcher was annoyed by the demonstration because Virginia had not seceded and was still a part of the Union. He spoke very briefly saying that he did not know what they were celebrating, and advised them to return the cannon to the armory and disperse. He thanked them for the courtesy of calling and bade them "goodnight." The crowd cheered him and passed from the Square still celebrating the fall of Fort Sumter.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Thomason, John W. Jr. Jeb Stuart, p. 33-34. Present, p. 218

The city was anxious and restless. The proceedings of the Virginia Convention, (its members torn by conflicting ideals and ideas had been meeting for fifty-two days) seemed slow and undecided. The Legislature was holding back to try and save Virginia from both the North and the South. Confederate and State flags were hoisted on public buildings. Both men and women became politicians and lobbyists trying to influence the delegates. Becoming impatient, the people called an unofficial convention to meet the 16th. If the regular Convention did not act by that time, the people were going to take over the affairs of Virginia. Ex-Governor Wise was one of their most popular speakers. That night, the greatest torchlight parade of the city's experience. They met at Metropolitan Hall on the 16th and called themselves the "Spontaneous Peoples' Convention." (Grandsons of both Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson were members.) After organization they agreed to give the Virginia Convention one more day to take action. The window proved that at least the inclination to rejoice was not. On the night of the 17th, the Virginia Convention, meeting in secret session, by a large majority vote passed the Ordinance of Secession, "to repeal the ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the State of Virginia and to resume all the rights and powers granted under the said Constitution."<sup>7</sup> The news was made public the next morning. Cannons were

7. Christian, W. Asbury. Richmond, Her Past and Present, p. 216

8. Pitman, Nellie A. Richmond During the War, p. 20-21

fired from Capitol Hill. Business was suspended. People embraced on the streets. The United States Customs House of the city was seized by Col. J. L. Davis on orders from the governor. The sign over the Bank Street entrance proclaiming "United States Court" was torn down by a mob. Confederate and State flags were hoisted on public buildings, Union flags disappeared in haste, and orators declaimed from every vantage point.

A proclamation was issued calling for armed volunteer regiments for immediate action. All over the city companies were being organized. The City Council voted \$50,000 for equipping them.

That night, the greatest torchlight parade of the city's experience took place. Mrs. Putnam, who witnessed it, says that in practically every house some form of illumination was displayed. The favorite form was the Cross of the South "and if any among the poor and humble, were wanting means to illuminate grandly, a single light in the window proved that at least the inclination to rejoice was not wanting. . . . As far as the eye could reach down the line of Franklin Street, and over the hill, more than a mile distant, gleamed the torches, and the dim transparencies shone like illuminated squares of vapor, or gigantic fireflies; the sounds of musical instruments growing fainter and fainter, until they were lost upon the ear, or drowned in the hum of the multitude, which now and then burst forth in the wildest hurrahs."<sup>8</sup>

7. Jones, J. B. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, p. 27-28

8. Putnam, Sallie A. *Richmond During the War*, p. 20-21

Richmond prepared for war. Martial music was heard throughout the city for days after the news. Police were doing their best to preserve order. A crowd, hearing that one of Lincoln's emissaries was passing, blocked the thoroughfare, stopped the emissary and turned him over to the police. All trappings and war's decorations were in great demand. Women were sewing everywhere, even in churches. On the 26th, Northern merchants and Jews were in the streets busily collecting the debts owed them. The Convention had thrown some impediments in the way, but many Southern merchants recognized a debt of honor and were sending money North.<sup>9</sup>

The week following the excitement and bustle of Secession, Richmond received her first war scare. Just at the close of the Sunday services, the bell from the tower in the Capitol Square, clanged out an alarm. Other bells in the city rang madly. The citizens did not know what it meant except that the city was in danger. Soon word came that the federal man of war, Fawcett, and several gunboats were on their way up the river to shell Richmond.

Noise and confusion reigned in the city. One thousand soldiers were sent to the dock. Some citizens got in their carriages and fled; some rushed to Chimborazo Heights to watch for the enemy; the majority seized every possible weapon and rushed to Rocketts<sup>10</sup>

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9. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, p. 27-28

10. The city dock

to meet the enemy. The two bronze French cannons which Lafayette had presented to the city, were dragged from their places at the State Armory, without powder or shell, toward Rocketts for the defense of the city. Dr. J. J. Jeter, pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, secured an old shotgun, that some said had no lock or load and set out for war. He double-quickened down Broad Street with the empty shotgun, going alone to engage the United State's man of war. (Years later he was teased about this, but he declared he was at least an example.)

After much deliberation, a detachment of the local artillery was sent down to Drewry's Bluff to greet the Pawnee. Hours later the crowd slowly dispersed. The report proved a false alarm. The Pawnee and escort had merely pointed their noses up the river and withdrawn. In A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, Mr. Jones states that he believed it was an invention of the enemy to divert the South from attacking Washington.

War was formally declared by Act of the Congress of the Confederate States on the 10th of May. On the 23rd, Virginia formally ratified the Ordinance of Secession and by December had adopted a new State Constitution. At that time three important legislative bodies were meeting in Richmond, the state legislature, the Constitutional Convention and the provisional Congress of the Confederate States.

seen on the streets worn by people from inland Georgia and Tennessee.

Chapter III. Boarding houses were difficult to find. Problems of the Confederate Capital. House, and the American held beds at the highest premiums in the halls, parlors and on all Virginia invited the confederate states to make Richmond the capital of the Confederate States of America. The city awaited the reply to the invitation with poorly concealed excitement and impatience. The 23rd of May, it was formally announced that the Confederate Congress had adjourned to meet in Richmond, the new capital of the Confederacy. Increased in number. Many houses took boarders, partly so. The city probably was chosen for several reasons. It was the terminus of railroads from every direction. Few southern cities had this advantage because many of the southern railroads were short lines, often of different gauge. The Tredegar Works was a factor considered because of its facility to turn out heavy armament. The city was also a more central location in event that Maryland and Kentucky joined the Confederacy. and they had the appearance of guests Before the arrival of Congress, the whole complexion of Richmond had changed. It was the center of a whirlpool. Strange faces greeted citizens at every turn. The population of 40,000 had tripled in one month through the presence of government officials and clerks, office seekers, merchants and "hangers on" of every description, from all sections of the South. Queer costumes were seen on the streets worn by people from inland Georgia and Tennessee. Richmond During the War, p. 20-22

Hotel accommodations and boarding houses were difficult to find. The Spotswood, Exchange Hotel, Ballard House, and the American held beds at the highest premiums in the halls, parlors and on billiard tables. Lesser houses were equally packed. Guests stood at the dining room doors waiting to grab the first vacant seat. DeLeon said that Richmond hotels were always mediocre but in the spring of '61 they were wretched. A clean room, a hot steak, or an answered bell could not be bought by flagrant bribery.<sup>1</sup> Private boarding houses increased in number. Many homes took boarders, partly because the great number in the city had to be accommodated, and because the confederate currency had depreciated - even in the early months of the war. Many citizens already felt the results of this.

Every train brought its freight of soldiers. Fifteen thousand were encamped on the outskirts of the city. In the early days, they were given a most cordial welcome "and they bore the appearance of guests at a holiday festival."<sup>2</sup> The promenades on Franklin Street, Gambles' Hill and Church Hill were crowded by officers and young ladies to whom the uniform was the symbol of the glory of war. The Dispatch makes the following comment in an article entitled Changes in the Landmarks of Etiquette and Social Life Made by War: "The time

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1. DeLeon, T. C. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals*, p. 86-87

2. Putnam, Sallie A. *Richmond During the War*, p. 85-86

was when it was dangerous to a man's reputation to enter the presence of ladies with anything short of a clean dickey, a shaven face, an unincreased suit and patent leather brogans. . . . Now if a man only wears brass buttons and a stripe down his leg, a rumpled shirt or a dirty pair of pantaloons it is all right. To be a soldier is to be a man, and its a passport to anywhere in his patriotism."<sup>3</sup>

Richmond had reason to regret the presence of many of its new citizens. Drunkenness was common. Prior to this period, the city had very little drunken disorder in places where society attended. The Varieties, one of the theatres, had to be closed by the police. Not only was the theatre losing its better type audience, but plays were being interrupted by the drunkards who argued, started fights, and even used fire arms.

Crime such as garrotting and assaults mounted. Many soldiers were arrested. Mrs. Putnam says that there were many "villians who donned military dress, and for a while this was a passport to notice and respect; but growing wary of the imposition, society required some other voucher to pass an unknown and suspicious individual. Guards halted every man at every corner, and unless supported by proper credentials, a safe place was found for delinquents in durance vile:"<sup>4</sup>

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3. Daily Dispatch, January 8, 1861

4. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 86



In spite of this never before had business had more life. New stores opened in Richmond. Garment makers, cobblers, machinists and bakers had so much trade that they saw great opportunity of becoming wealthy. Prices soared. The people were at the mercy of a band of profiteers.

Preparations were made for arrival of the President. The city bought the old Brockenborough home on 16th and Leigh Streets for the White House. The provisional Confederate government said that they could not accept the gift as all states should have a share in providing a home for the President. Therefore the mansion was rented from the city.

Houses were decorated for the arrival of the President. He was met by Governor Letcher, his advisory council, Mayor Mayo, a delegation from the city council, and crowds of citizens. A fifteen gun salute was fired when he entered the carriage. People cheered as he passed. Many times the carriage was halted for someone to shake Davis' hand. At the Spotswood, he addressed the crowd. His remarks were few, to the point, and convincing. The citizens were confident that he was the "man for the occasion."<sup>5</sup> At the Fair Grounds that afternoon, men and women greeted him with the heartiest demonstrations of pleasure.<sup>6</sup>

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5. Daily Dispatch, May 30, 1861

6. Tate, Allen. Jefferson Davis, p. 105

Jefferson Davis' previous career was well known in Richmond. He was a graduate of West Point and had served in the Mexican War. He had been Secretary of War under President Pierce, and senator from Mississippi before the Confederate States seceded. Davis was an excellent speaker, he had the ability to make crowds believe what he told them. His very appearance helped him as everyone received the impression that he was a mystic. He was "austere and thoughtful at all times, rarely unbending to show the vein of humor hidden under his stern exterior."<sup>7</sup> He was called the "Just" as he seemed to have a divinity about him.

Mrs. Davis had all the qualities to make an excellent "first lady." She was warm hearted, a devoted wife and mother, and a most gracious hostess. She had an impetuous tongue, witty and caustic, with a sensitive nature underlying it. She could discuss the latest book, or talk knowingly of the latest picture, or opera. She could comfort the unhappy and sick, or entertain the most distinguished guests.

Mrs. Davis was "at home" every afternoon. A group of brilliant women, both strangers to the city and residents dropped in for a "cup of tea." Many gentlemen from the army and the government departments came. Mr. Davis always came for an hour's relaxation. All were assured of a hearty welcome.

<sup>6</sup> Steward, Mary Norton, Richmond, Its People and Its Story, p. 176

<sup>7</sup> DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 153

Therefore, Later, when the first enthusiasm for the new government and all for which it stood had worn off, these "at homes" came in for a great share of criticism. The tea was called the "court," and the people said "our court ladies assume too much state."<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Davis was called a martinet in social matters. The critics announced " . . . a sort of court is being kept up there but the wives of the generals are conspicuous by their absence."<sup>9</sup>

President and Mrs. Davis held bi-monthly levees that were both aristocratic and democratic. "To them . . . flocked the world and his wife in what holiday attire they possessed, in the earlier days; marked by the dainty toilettes of really elegant women, the 'butter-nut' of the private soldier and the stars and yellow sashes of many a general . . ." <sup>10</sup> The levees were useful in letting all classes of people have a glimpse of the inner workings of the great machine of government.

President and Mrs. Davis shone brilliantly, but this was not all that the society of Richmond demanded. Who were their ancestors? Whence did they come? Virginians had little sympathy with the dream of the lower South of becoming a great empire. "There is no doubt that (Virginia) considered the lower South as 'upstarts.'"

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8. Tate, Allen. Jefferson Davis, p. 226

9. Starnard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 176

10. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 155

11. Chesnut, Mary E. A Diary from Dixie, p. 112

Therefore, Mrs. Davis was received none too warmly. The local ladies called her "that western woman" and later "that coarse western woman," even saying that she was rude to a plainly dressed lady whom she had not recognized as Mrs. R. E. Lee.<sup>11</sup> Petty feuds arose among the wives of the generals and cabinet ministers and Mrs. Davis. Many said that the feud between Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Johnson was the cause of the animosity between the President and the General who were earlier firm friends. Mrs. Tocombs was so anti-Davis that when it was announced that the President was ill, declared it was all "humbug" and he was not sick at all.<sup>12</sup> The squabbles and jealousies kept the gossips' tongues busy, and ladies' sewing circles from being dull.

When the Confederate Congress first met in the Virginia Capitol, crowds of spectators filled its galleries, and lobbies. They listened attentively to the speeches and debates, interested in the affairs of state. After the meeting of the first permanent congress and Jefferson Davis' inauguration, the galleries became practically empty of citizens. The pride in the government turned to shame and disgust. Gradually the masses began to realize that the government was inefficient. Mr. Davis's position changed from that of the idol of the people to that of a dictator.

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11. Tate, Allen. Jefferson Davis, p. 105 - Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 101

12. Chesnut, Mary B. A Diary from Dixie, p. 112

expense of Just after the first Battle of Manassas, the first definite breath of criticism was directed against Davis. The citizens held him responsible for the failure of the Confederates to pursue the fleeing enemy into Washington. On Davis' inauguration, the Richmond Examiner openly criticised him for his failure to state his future policy in the inaugural address.<sup>13</sup> of Confederate policies

and credit. The Examiner was the critic of the administration. John M. Daniel, the editor, criticised Davis' appointments, his leniency to the troops of Dahlgreen, his "rubber stamp" cabinet, his policy of setting aside days for fasting and prayer, etc. Washington.<sup>13</sup>

It was not Before the fall of Nashville, Davis had become very unpopular. Almost half the country was against him. "No one act could have encouraged this feeling more than his relieving Floyd and Pillow from command, for abandoning their post and leaving a junior officer to capitulate in their stead. . . . Mr. Davis stood firm and - as was his invariable custom in such cases - took not the least note of popular discontent. And still the people murmured more loudly, and declared him an autocrat, and his cabinet a bunch of imbeciles."<sup>14</sup>

the laugh Davis' policy of keeping all the reins of government and conduct of war in his own hands irritated the people. Many were certain of his favoritism for any man who had been to West Point, at the

13. Richmond Examiner, February 22, 1862

14. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 163 114, 172, 191

15. Jones, J. E. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, Vol 1, p. 114, 129; Vol. 2, p. 127, 127, 209

expense of those who had proved themselves worthy of trust, and that Davis would relieve any minister or official, who disagreed with him and replace him by some favorite. They criticised his appointments of Northerners and men with Union sentiments to high offices in his government. General Winder of Maryland was in charge of martial law in Richmond. More "leakage" of Confederate policies and conditions went to the North by way of his imported Maryland police than in any other way. Major General Gustavus Smith of New York City was appointed Secretary of War when Mr. Randolph resigned in November 1862. Too many clerks were imported from Washington.<sup>15</sup> It was not to be wondered that the North had news of facts within the capital almost, and sometimes before, they were made known to the citizens. Davis issued the proclamations of a dictator. He constantly ignored both congress and the courts. He proclaimed martial law and suspended the writ of habeas corpus.<sup>16</sup>

The Examiner made this comment in 1863 on his policy: "Mr. President Davis' proclamations and pronunciamientos, his horrible threatenings and gloomy appeals have so often been repeated they are the laughing stock of the world. But never have they resulted in one solitary performance. He is obstinate, very bitter when he gets in a quarrel with some official over whom the law gives him temporary control. He is very firm indeed in maintaining a minion or a measure

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15. Jones, J. B. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, vol. 1, p. 114, 123, 191

16. Jones, J. B. *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, Vol 1, p. 113, 159; Vol. 2, p. 137, 187, 359

- against the smothered indignation of a people who are compelled by their present unfortunate situation, to support silently, a great deal from their officials. But when his duty brings him in contact with the enemy, he is as gentle as a lamb."<sup>17</sup>

Congress did little to inspire the confidence of the people. After the fall of Vicksburg, its debates and speeches were concerned with the cause of the defeat, the number of pounds of pork and guns in that city, etc.,<sup>18</sup> instead of making plans to prevent such a disaster ever happening again! While Richmond was in a state of siege its weighty discussions concerned the questions of limiting the number of heads of departments, and the number of newspapers each senator should have on his desk each morning.<sup>19</sup>

Not only the people of the South, but the army realized that there had been gross mismanagement in all departments of the government.

The Treasury Department was a failure. It failed to get the currency of the Confederacy recognized in Europe. It was so sure of foreign recognition and "King Cotton," that it printed worthless paper money on future sales of cotton and tobacco which never materialized. In 1861, one gold dollar was equivalent to \$4.50 in Confederate notes.

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17. Richmond Examiner, July 13, 1863

18. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 317

19. Morgan, James M. Recollections of a Rebel Reefer, p. 226

20. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, chap. XXVI

In 1865, a man was fortunate if he could exchange \$3,000 in notes for \$30 in silver.<sup>20</sup> Every time there was great scarcity of food-stuffs and exorbitant prices, Congress would authorize the Treasury Department to heavily increase the money in circulation. This attempt to improve conditions was going from bad to worse. Wild speculation and most ruthless extortion resulted.<sup>21</sup> A system of barter was instituted with little success. Finally the Treasury Department issued a replacement of the old currency. The new notes were less valuable than the old by 33-1/3%. By the end of the war the "gray-back" of the Confederacy had depreciated \$1,000 for one in gold.<sup>22</sup>

By aiding the Treasury Department, the citizens of Richmond were practically reduced to panic. Early in 1861, the City Council loaned the Confederacy \$50,000. In order to do this and appropriate money for city defense, the city printed notes, all smaller than \$5.00. These notes were called "shin plasters." The courts declared the issue illegal. Since the citizens, banks and business houses had used the notes freely, a condition of near-panic prevailed. Case after case was brought before the courts, banks refused to accept the "shin plasters." Finally the matter was brought before the legislature which passed a bill making "shin plasters" legal tender.

Richmond, Virginia, January 2, 1863

20. Last Days of the Southern Confederacy, New York Herald, March 13, 1891

21. Putnam, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 203

22. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, chapt. XXVI



Another reason for the deflation of the currency was that the blockade runners demanded gold in payment.<sup>23</sup> This caused a constant flow of gold from the South. The government's failure to control blockade running was another source of grievance. By the time it realized that it must make an attempt to take control, it was too late. Two large blockading companies had formed,<sup>24</sup> and though they agreed to go in partnership with the government, they always continued their own policies, regardless of restrictions placed upon them.

The Commissary and Transportation Departments were the worst managed of all. Commissary General Northrop was the most vilified man in the Confederacy. He was "celebrated as much for his want of judgement as for his contempt for advice . . ." <sup>25</sup> Meat spoiled<sup>26</sup> in the Commissary depots in the city for want of proper packing. Grain and beef rotted in the summer sun on various station platforms throughout the South. The citizens and armies in Virginia starved. The Commissary Department reported that it had supplies but could not get transportation, yet every citizen knew that whenever a blockade runner slipped into the ports of Charleston or Wil-

The Treacher Works continued throughout the war to supply the army

23. Daily Dispatch, August 3, 1863

24. DeLeon, T. C. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals*, p. 280

25. Putnam, Sallie A. *Richmond During the War*, p. 352

26. Daily Dispatch, August 27, 1862 *Rebel Capitals*, p. 92

ington, part of their cargo was on sale in Richmond auction houses within record time.<sup>27</sup>

The Ordnance Department received less criticism than any governmental department. It had been well organized by Major Gorgas. His efforts were seconded by the whole-hearted support of the Tredegar Works which were considered so important that its employees, white and black, received some of the privileges of government officials. One negro worker was riding on the train. The conductor demanded his fare. The Negro replied that he did not have to pay as he rode on a pass. When asked if he worked for the government, he rolled his eyes, with an expression of disgust and replied with disgust, "No - sah; Fur t'uther consarn!"<sup>28</sup>

As long as the war lasted the Tredegar Works supplied heavy guns, and brought old style muskets up to date. The "Brook gun" - a seven inch rifle - was cast, tested and perfected. Plates for iron-clads and heavy ordnance for forts, shell, shot, and torpedoes were made. Men worked night and day to complete as much work as their capacities would allow. In spite of the fact that conscription took most of the skilled mechanics, compelling the use of slave labor, the Tredegar Works continued throughout the war to supply the army with most necessary ordnance.

27. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 281

28. DeLeon, T. C. Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 92

The declaration of martial law in Richmond caused much dissatisfaction. General Winder of Maryland was put in command in the city and he was responsible for his acts only to President Davis. There was no doubt that martial law or some other type of law enforcement was needed. The soldiers from the camps were being demoralized by the long spell of inactivity following the first Battle at Manassas. Stragglers were pouring into the city, going and coming as they wished. Among them, Northern spies had been apprehended. The city officials could not control these conditions.

Martial law, for the city and a ten mile radius, suspended all civil jurisdiction except that of the mayor of the city; forbade all distillation of spiritous liquors (all sales and gifts of it) and closed all saloons and distilleries.<sup>29</sup> All who broke the law, were subjected to court martial and the punishment of one month of hard labor.

One of the first reactions to the prohibition law was the formation, by a few citizens, of the "Free and Easy Society." At their first meeting, they denounced the law. They appointed a committee to wait on the President for a modification of the law that was a definite deprivation of a man's rights. A committee was appointed to visit the hospitals to see if fewer were there as "sots" than before, to prove whether or not whiskey was harmful. Another

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29. Daily Dispatch, March 4, 1862 (This was probably a satirical comment by the editor on the general feeling of the citizens.)

delegation was to visit General Winder and ask if the law was made for gentlemen, or only vagabonds.<sup>30</sup> The Secretary of War and the President. Everyone had to get General Winder's permission, in the form of a passport, in order to leave the city, or to enter it, - in the case of market men. For about ten days the markets were empty, as passes had not been supplied, and men did not bring their wares into the city for fear of being imprisoned by the squads of patrolling foreigners (as Winder's police from Baltimore and points north were designated).

General Winder brought his own detectives with him to the city. They were so much hated that the citizens dubbed them the "Plug Uglies." The citizens believed that these men were in the pay of the federal government, as in many cases it was proved. They controlled the passport office. Any one of their "friends" could get passes to Maryland and the North, but it was very difficult for a citizen to get one to go out of the city for a few days to visit and nurse the wounded or for relaxation. Accusations against the "Plug Uglies" finally became so general, and so many detectives had been proved guilty of fraud, bribery and illegal passports that they were dismissed in October 1862. J. B. Jones commented in his diary: "General Winder's late policemen have fled the city. Their monstrous crimes are a theme of universal execration. But I reported them many

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30. Daily Dispatch, March 21, 1862 (This was probably a satirical comment by the editor on the general feeling of the citizens.)

months ago, and General Winder was cognizant of their forgeries, correspondence with the enemy, etc. The Secretary of War and the President, himself, were informed of them, but it was thought to be a 'small matter.'<sup>31</sup> General Winder allowed them to return later.

The questionnaire on the new passport was very embarrassing to the ladies as it asked for personal appearance and age. But the Dispatch reported that "Major Griswold with his usual gallantry, has discontinued such questions of the ladies."<sup>32</sup>

The conscription law brought violent opposition from the citizens who were staunch defenders of personal and state's rights. The Whig drew attention to the number of able-bodied men of wealth in the city who had been declared "indispensable at home."<sup>33</sup> The citizens objected to the methods that were used. J. B. Jones noted in his diary, "The 'dog catchers,' as the guards are called, are out again, arresting able-bodied men (and sometimes others) in the streets, and locking them up until they can be sent to the front. There must be extraordinary danger anticipated by the authorities to induce a resort to so extreme a measure."<sup>34</sup> These officers

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31. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, V.1, p. 179

32. Daily Dispatch, August 29, 1863

33. Richmond Whig, April 5, 1864

34. Jones, J. B. A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, V. 2, p. 317

entered the theatre and carried a number of actors to Camp Lee.

However, they soon returned - whether paroled or exempted was unknown. From street gossip it was said that Davis had declared actors exempt as they provided a beneficial recreation to thousands of soldiers who yearly passed through the city.<sup>35</sup>

The impressment of horses and flour; the law against substitutes; the sale of tobacco to the North; and the leniency to spies, added to the dissatisfaction with the government and a great distrust of it. Mrs. Putnam copied an article from the city newspaper that told very clearly how the citizens felt about the situation. The article was entitled "Strangers' Guide."

"1. The large number of houses on Main and other streets which have numbers painted in large gilt figures over the doors and illuminated at night, are Faro Banks. The fact is not known to the public.

2. The very large number of flashily-dressed young men, with villianous faces, who hang around the street corners in the day time, are not gamblers, garrotters and plugs, but young men studying for the ministry, and therefore exempt from military duty. The fact is not known to General Winder.

3. The very large number of able-bodied, red-faced, beefy, brawny individuals, who are engaged in mixing very bad liquors in the very large number of bar-rooms in the city, are not, as they appear to be, able to do military duty. They are consumptive individuals from the other side of the Potomac, who are recommended by the Surgeon-General to keep in cheerful company, and take gentle exercise. For this reason only, they have gone into the liquor business.

34. Putnam, *William A. Richmond During the War*, p. 220

35. *Richmond Whig*, April 5, 1864

4. The very large number of men who frequent the very large number of bar-rooms in the city, and pay from one to two dollars for drinks of very bad liquor, are not men of very large fortunes, but out-of-door patients of the hospitals who are allowed so much a day for stimulants, or else they belong to that very common class who live nobody knows how. None of them are government clerks on small salaries with large boards to pay. This fact is not known to the heads of departments.

5. The people of Richmond have little or nothing to do with the government of the city. Early in the war it was, for some reason, handed over to Maryland refugees, who were not thought fit for the army. Strangers, stabbed, robbed, garrotted or drugged in Richmond, will not charge these little accidents to the people, but to the city of Baltimore."<sup>36</sup>

Just after the city became the capital, the newspapers began a campaign to awaken the citizens to the need of breastworks and batteries. They met with little success at first. The news of fighting at Bethel and Bull Run awakened the city to a certain extent. The Council then made an appropriation and hired Negro slaves to start work on a line of batteries and breastworks around the city. News of Federal invasions in the northern part of the state finally made the city "defence conscious." Prisoners in the penitentiary were put to work, and free Negroes were impressed into service.

In spite of the law requiring that the Negroes have a pass to move from one locality to another, Richmond had become crowded with them. They congregated on the corners, jostled the whites or caused

36. Putnan, Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 255

increased, and punishment by the Mayor's Court (lashes - usually 25) seemingly had

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had not paid his taxes. Siege. impressed for work on the preparations for defense. The law was very effective. The Negro "army" was raised. Richmond was not easy to defend. The river was navigable to the Falls leaving the lower half of the river front open to attack. The other three sides were not easily defended. The Westham Plank Road and Three Notch (Choct) led into the city from the west. On the north were the old Mountain Road, Brook Road and the Mechanicsville Turnpike. The Williamsburg and Darby Town roads gave access from the east. Factories, banks, and stores organized battalions.

The Breeds. Just after the city became the capital, the newspapers began a campaign to awaken the citizens to the need of breastworks and batteries. They met with little success at first. The news of fighting at Bethel and Bull Run awakened the city to a certain extent. The Council then made an appropriation and hired Negro slaves to start work on a line of batteries and breastworks around the city. News of federal invasions in the northern part of the state finally made the city "defense conscious." Prisoners in the penitentiary were put to work, and free Negroes were impressed into service. people of Rich-

In spite of the law requiring that the Negroes have a pass to move from one locality to another, Richmond had become crowded with them. They congregated on the corners, jostled the whites or caused them to walk in the streets. The amount of thefts had increased, and punishment by the Mayor's Court (lashes - usually 39) seemingly had



no effect. Finally the Council proclaimed that any free Negro who had not paid his taxes would be impressed for work on the preparations for defense. The law was very effective. The Negro "menace" was removed from the streets, and the work on batteries and earthworks was speeded up. The Congress did little to inspire confidence. Reports The bell in the Capitol Square tower was designated as an alarm, to be rung at the slightest sign of danger, a signal for the local defense companies to report to stations immediately.<sup>1</sup> Guards were placed on duty at the tower, day and night. The fact of the presence of the factories, banks, and stores organized battalions. The Tredegar Works had three, the "Home Guards," "Home Artillery," and "Mounted Rangers." The Council of Richmond waited on the President. In May all the security that had been felt by the city, after the federal route at Bull Run, was lost. Rumor, soon verified, reached the city of the approach of the enemy by both the peninsula, and by gunboats on the river. News of the silencing of the batteries at Day's Neck and Hardy's Bluff (the outer river fortifications) filled the city with panic. The destruction of the Merrimac<sup>2</sup> deepened the feeling of hopelessness and despair. The people of Rich-

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1. This bell had always been a factor in Richmond life. It struck the hour; called the Legislature; and summoned the fire department. It feared that silence might mean a federal victory. The batteries were
  2. When the Merrimac had been made an ironclad, it had been rechristened Virginia. The city had rejoiced over its success in Hampton Roads. Church societies had collected \$1,500 to build more ironclads for city defense.

mond had a phobia of gunboats, believing that nothing could stop them but the Herrington and now that had been destroyed by the Confederates to prevent its capture. Only the batteries on Drewry's Bluff were between the city and disaster. The Confederate Congress did little to inspire confidence. Reports of the debates were long and unimportant in the face of an emergency. When it adjourned all the records and papers of the various departments had been packed in boxes ready to be shipped from the city. Rumor that the city was to be evacuated spread. The fact of the packed records gave it credence. Many citizens left to refuge in quiet sections of the state, North Carolina and Georgia. The legislature and the Council of Richmond waited on the President and told him that they would stand any loss of life and property before giving in to the enemy. President Davis and Governor Letcher addressed the people. They declared that the city was not to be evacuated, and both Confederate and state troops would defend the city as long as there was a man left. Richmond seemed to gather new courage and pinned its faith on the batteries at Drewry's Bluff.

Reverberation of cannon from down the river announced that the enemy had arrived. The city hoped the firing would cease but feared that silence might mean a federal victory. The batteries were successful. The Yankees could not pass. Losing four gunboats and a monitor they crept down the river to greater safety near Westover.

The siege by river was over, but danger by land threatened. McClellan's troops were within twelve miles of the city and "digging in." Only the troops of Johnson and Lee separated them from the city. News that General Meade was planning to join McClellan did not make the city feel easier. Battle was imminent. Troop baggage was sent to the rear. Hospitals were made ready to receive patients. The government lent its wagons to scour the city for the ice<sup>3</sup> that would alleviate so much suffering and deaden the pain of amputations. All tobacco was stored in one locality in order that it might be easily destroyed if the city fell. The hospitals were filled. The morning Mayor Mayo called a mass meeting at the request of the citizens who felt that greater defense was necessary. Several resolutions were passed, such as: to declare the city in danger; to form a Home Guard of all men in the city over eighteen; and to suspend business at twelve noon for thirty days so the militia might drill in the afternoons. It was unnecessary for the city to follow this plan as the governor in a proclamation called for the Second Class Militia of all over forty-five and between sixteen and eighteen years old. Business was to be closed at two P. M. Drill was called at three P. M. daily.

The citizens saw the use of balloons in war. The federals had several and sent them up for observation purposes. The Confederates wasted much ammunition trying to destroy them. The federals would

3. Ice was very scarce. The winter had been unusually warm and wet. Very few private ice houses had been filled.

7. Johnson was wounded in the Battle of Seven Pines. Lee replaced him.

leave them up until the range of the Southerner's guns was close, then they would haul them down, only to send up others in different localities.<sup>4</sup>

For three days there was an ominous quiet without the city. Richmonders waited with determination and the "calmness of despair." Business, visiting, rolling bandages, drilling, and theatre going went on as usual. On the 31st, the thunder of cannon notified the people that the awaited battle had come.

"All night groaning columns of transports rolled through the streets with the wounded."<sup>5</sup> The hospitals<sup>6</sup> were filled. The morning papers carried requests for cooked provisions, bandages, lint, coffee, and tea. As the number of wounded swelled, private homes were pressed into service.

The citizens were so busy that there was little time for rejoicing over the success of the Confederates and McClellan's withdrawal to the Chickahominy River. Gratification was expressed when the president put R. E. Lee at the head of the armies of Eastern Virginia and North Carolina.<sup>7</sup>

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4. At the beginning of the war, Professor James C. Patterson had offered to construct balloons for the use of the Confederate States of America but was refused. After seeing the federal success, the Confederate States of America gave an order to Professor Patterson.

5. Thomson, John W., Jr. Jeb Stuart, p. 185

6. The city had thirty-two at this time. The largest on Chimborazo Heights would accommodate several thousand.

7. Johnson was wounded in the Battle of Seven Pines. Lee replaced him.

Only a few skirmishes broke the quiet that surrounded the city. Lee was very anxious to know the strength of the enemy and the topography of the vicinity in order to make plans for battle.<sup>8</sup> General J. E. B. Stuart, in attempting to discover this, made his famous circuit of the enemy lines around Richmond. Stuart was already one of the most popular officers of those who had encamped around the city. The success of his ride enhanced his popularity a hundred fold. He not only brought Lee the necessary information, but also 107 prisoners, 300 horses and mules, and a million dollars worth of the sorely needed rations.<sup>9</sup> Only one soldier was lost.<sup>10</sup> More preparations were made for defense. The state called for 8000 for the militia. (This was a call for volunteer service rather than a draft. In the early days of the war, conscription was deemed unnecessary as any Southerner would do "the right thing.") The citizens were very slow in enlisting, but the men from the counties made up a large proportion of the quota. The Confederate States of America Navy Yard formed a battalion. All bridges across the James were closely guarded. No one was allowed to cross after ten P. M.

many wounded. The number of horses was inadequate. The women were

8. The citizens found ample grounds to criticize the inadequacy of the Confederate government as no maps had been made of the vicinity of the city and the army leaders were often at a loss as to procedure.
9. State of siege had cut the city's market supplies.
10. Latane was killed just north west of the city. The circumstances of his burial were such as to make him forever famous. The lithograph of the Burial of Latane graces many homes.
- 11.

Richmond was calmer when the fighting started near Mechanicsville than during the Battle of Seven Pines. It had had its first baptism of war. Ambulance after ambulance passed through the city. The President and many citizens had watched the battle from the surrounding hills - interested spectators. "The balloons of the enemy hovering over the battlefield could be distinctly seen from the outskirts of the city, the musketry as distinctly heard. All were anxious, but none alarmed for the safety of the city. From the firing of the first gun until the close of the battle, every spot favorable for observation was crowded. The tops of the Exchange, the Ballard House, the Capitol and almost every tall house were covered with human beings."<sup>11</sup> That night the commanding hills from the new Alma House to the President's were covered with "men, women, and children witnessing the grand display of fireworks - beautiful yet awful."<sup>11</sup> Even when the crowd dispersed, it seemed tranquil, as if they had watched something impersonal.<sup>11</sup>

During the next morning and days to follow, war was anything but "impersonal." The hospitals were full. Private homes had many wounded. The number of nurses was inadequate. The women were called to assist, in giving water, keeping off flies, etc., only to find that many were soon pressed into the service of bandaging, cleansing wounds, and even assisting the surgeons with amputations. The

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<sup>11</sup> McGuire, Mrs. Judith W. Diary of a Southern Refugee, p. 123-124

newspapers plead that every private wagon, carriage and buggy be sent to help bring the wounded from the field. The government issued a proclamation ordering that all mattresses, except those used by the ladies, be brought to the Provost Marshal's office, and stating that if this were complied with impressment would be unnecessary.<sup>12</sup>

The city facilities were absolutely unequal to the strain and necessities of Seven Days Battles. Even with the use of private means of transportation, many of the wounded remained on the fields in the blazing June sun for days. The blockade and the speculators, who directed and financed blockade-running, had cut off the supplies of needed medicines and disinfectants.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the hot weather and the lack of disinfectants, gangrene set in very rapidly and amputations were necessary. The surgeons worked as quickly as possible. There was no time to clean up between operations. The amputated arms and legs were just thrown out of the windows. The stench of rotting flesh was obnoxious among the other odors of the hospitals. Through experimentation by trial and error, it was found that burning tar in the basements of the hospitals made an excellent fumigant.

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12. The speculators made an excellent profit on clothes and luxuries, whereas the profits on medical supplies was small.

13. Stewart, *Army Medical Service*, Washington, D. C., 1911, p. 111.

enjoying Burials of those who died in hospitals was performed quickly - in such haste that many citizens feared some of the soldiers were buried alive. There was no time at first to bury those who had died on the field or on the way to the hospital. The Dispatch carried an item for four days requesting that someone inter the body of a federal soldier that was lying on the station platform of the Virginia Central Railroad.

So many prisoners were taken that there was no place to hold them. The solution was found in sending them to Belle Isle which was equipped with one large shed and a few tents into which they could crowd when it rained. Needless to say, there were not enough blankets in the city to supply the prisoners.

The battles of Meadows' Bridge, Gaines' Mill, Frazier's Farm and at last Malvern Hill followed in quick succession. After Malvern Hill the federal troops withdrew toward Westover. General Lee's report said that: "The siege of Richmond was raised. The object of the campaign which had been prosecuted after months of preparation, at enormous expenditure of men and money, completely frustrated."<sup>13</sup> Mrs. Judith McGuire's diary records: "Richmond is disenthralled and the only Yankees there are in Libby and other prisons. McClellan and his 'Grand Army' are on the James River near 'Westover'

14. McGuire, Mrs. Judith. Diary of a Southern Lady, During the

13. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 191

14. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 192



enjoying mosquitoes and bilious fever."<sup>14</sup>

Richmond took time from administration to the wounded to rejoice over the Confederate victories. Colors were presented to distinguished regiments. Military bands blared "Dixie" and the "Bonnie Blue Flag." The soldiers of Jackson, Longstreet, Hill, Magruder, and the troopers of Stuart swaggered through the streets, proud of their weathered uniforms.

Newspaper and magazine jokes reflected the spirit of the time. The Richmond Examiner described Stuart and his ride as "a circuit rider conducting a series of missionary meetings" and reporting his success to 'Bishop' Robert E. Lee. 'Even their wagons were converted and purified by fire. Some of them constrained to come and abide with us, bringing with them their cattle.'

A writer of the Richmond Whig jocularly describes Jackson as a man dangerous to the peace of society, and issues a mock proclamation signed 'Jefferson Davis' offering \$1,000 reward 'if the aforesaid Jackson is taken in Washington, \$5,000 if taken in Philadelphia, and \$20,000 if taken in Portland, Maine.'<sup>15</sup>

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14. McGuire, Mrs. Judith. Diary of a Southern Refugee, During the War, p. 127

15. Stanard, Mary Newton. Richmond, its People and its Story, p. 195 (Daily Dispatch, April 29, 1861.)

Chapter V. Picturesque with their red  
Camps, Military Prisons, and Hospitals. They were the most  
usually and well-regimented of all the soldiers. It was said that they  
had been Since Richmond was the railroad terminal for the south and  
west, it was naturally the rendezvous for all troops from every sec-  
tion of the Confederacy. Troops were stationed in camps around the  
city and sometimes factories were used as camps in emergencies.  
The four largest camps were Chimborazo; Camp Lee, the old  
fairgrounds;<sup>1</sup> the new fairgrounds;<sup>2</sup> and Howard's Grove on the Mechan-  
icville Pike. Others were the Baptist College,<sup>3</sup> Camp Letcher, and  
Camp Schermerhorne.<sup>4</sup> the Virginia Military Institute cadets were  
assigned Camp Lee was the most important. Here the men were prepared  
to go to the battle field after extensive drills under Virginia Mili-  
tary Institute officers. Executions, ordered by the Court Martial,  
were carried out on the camp grounds.  
The army was composed of all classes, from the highest born  
and richest, to the humblest and poorest, from grandsires to teens.  
Of all the soldiers, the New Orleans Zouaves and the Virginia Mili-  
tary Institute cadets made the greatest impression on the citizens.  
Green parade was held in the late afternoon. Before the novelty of  
1. The old fairground is today Monroe Park.  
2. Often called the Hermitage Fairgrounds.  
3. Most of the students had formed a company in the Home Guards.  
They called themselves "The Richmond College Minute Men."  
(Daily Dispatch, April 29, 1861.)  
4. Jones, S. W. Under Stars and Bars (a letter from Camp Letcher,  
May 27, 1862, p. 115)

The Zouaves were the most picturesque with their red trousers and blue embroidered coats and fezzes. They were the most unruly and undisciplined of all the soldiers. It was said that they had been recruited from jails and had been given the choice of fighting or confinement. "Where ever a Zouave was seen something was sure to be missed."<sup>4</sup> Among other misdemeanors, they entered restaurants, ate and drank, and then ordered the proprietor to charge it to the government. The doors of private homes were kept locked, and the "strictest watch was directed upon the Zouaves as long as they tormented Richmond with their presence."<sup>4</sup>

In May 1864, the Virginia Military Institute cadets were assigned duty under Brig. Gen. Custis Lee. The city gave them quite an ovation on their arrival. They paraded in the Capitol Square, "their proud banner rent by the bullets of Bloody New Market."<sup>5</sup> They were received by the President. Governor Smith welcomed them in an address from the Governor's Mansion. The Secretary of War gave them new clothing.

The troops drilled twice a day, and did guard duty. B. W. Jones found "broom day"<sup>6</sup> the most arduous of all camp duties. Full-dress parade was held in the late afternoon. Before the novelty of military camps near the city had waned, many citizens visited the

4. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 129-130

4. Putman, Mrs. Sallie A. Richmond During the War, p. 36

5. In June 1864, the Baptists of the city started publishing the Whig, May 25, 1864

6. The weekly press near the camp, the Richmond Dispatch, May 27, 1863, p. 115

parade grounds daily. Camp Lee had the appearance of a picnic rather than a bivouac.<sup>7</sup>

Theatricals and balls were given by the soldiers. Singing was one of their most enjoyed recreations. "Annie Laurie," the "Bonnie Blue Flag," "Dixie," "My Maryland," "Stonewall Jackson's Way," and "Sweet Evelina" were among the favorites. As permits to go into the city were easily obtained, the soldiers participated in the city's life, visiting, going to the theatre, and attending church services.

Religion played a large part in the life of the soldiers. In the fall of 1863, a great revival took place in the city and throughout the army.<sup>8</sup> B. W. Jones described it as a great "outpouring of the Spirit upon our people everywhere, . . . among women and children and aged men and in all divisions of the army."<sup>9</sup>

The city churches welcomed the soldiers, and sent workers to the camps. Their publishing houses were kept busy printing tracts and sermons for distribution. Reverend Moses D. Hoge was sent to London to solicit a donation of Bibles<sup>10</sup> for the soldiers. He re-

7. DeLeon, T. C. *Four Years in Rebel Capitals*, p. 95

8. Revival swept through the South. *War Past and Present*, p. 122

9. Jones, B. W. *Under Stars and Bars*, p. 129-130

10. Publication of Bibles, tracts, etc. had been done in the North. In June 1861, the Baptists of the city started publishing them as did other denominations. The exigencies of war prevented the supply from ever equalling the demand.

ceived from the British 10,000 Bibles, 50,000 Testaments, and 250,000 Gospels and Psalms.<sup>11</sup>

The city Y. M. C. A. did much for the comfort of the soldiers. He was given the use of its library of 2,500 volumes<sup>12</sup> and newspapers from every section of the Confederacy (as long as they could be obtained). Its Army Committee Association contributed for the relief of the soldiers in the hospitals and camps by sending tracts, newspapers, and doing systematized visiting.

The Sons of Temperance conducted meetings in the churches near the camps, and tried "to enlist the aid of soldiers in their own behalf."<sup>13</sup> Their success was meager as war made the odds against temperance too great. A few months, the camps were filled to capacity.

Many of the soldiers were of the same type as the New Orleans Zouaves. They caused much disorder in the city. Many drunken soldiers were on the streets and in the bar rooms. Their quarrels and arguments often led to the use of weapons. Some regarded their uniforms as protection from the civil authority they continually abused. Others accepted bribes. (The pay for the private was never more than \$11 to \$12 a month, regardless of the fluctuation of the

11. The Daily Dispatch, February 29, 1863 carries an article on the unfairness of the salaries of privates and officers. In 1862 the Christian, W. Asbury. Richmond, Her Past and Present, p. 239.

12. The Daily Dispatch, February 8, 1862 The value was still thirty-five cents.

13. The Daily Dispatch, November 4, 1861

14. The Daily Dispatch, April 26, 1863. Two soldiers of 1st City Battalion were found guilty of taking a \$10 bribe. Their hearts were shaken and they were drummed out of service.

currency. The officers received from \$80 to \$100 with the privilege to buy at cost from the government.<sup>14)</sup> Desertions from the line and camps were numerous. Every day the newspapers carried advertisements for the return of deserters. Rewards from \$30 and up for their return were offered by the captains of the regiments. Castle Thunder was overrun with deserters. In the last raids against the city they were taken to the battlefields and compelled to fight.

Punishments for misdemeanors, imposed by the court martial, varied from having their beards shaved<sup>15)</sup> and drummed out of camp, to stripes, and to hanging. Stripes, which was usually a punishment for slaves, was later forbidden by a law signed by President Davis.

Except for a few months, the camps were filled to capacity, as was the city. This created a problem, as troops often were in Richmond over a short period when they were being moved from one locality to another, or on their ways to and from leaves of absence. There was no place in the city where they could stay over-night unless they roamed the streets or slept on the station platforms or sidewalks. Finally a "Soldiers' Home" was established. It was more

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\_\_\_\_\_ Jail. The State Penitentiary was near the

14. The Daily Dispatch, February 27, 1863 carries an article on the unfairness of the salaries of privates and officers. In 1863, the privates monthly pay was equivalent to fifty-five cents in coin, also T. C. DeLeon, Four Years in Rebel Capitals, p. 233 says that pay rose to twenty three dollars, but its value was still fifty-five cents.

15. James, E. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 107-108  
15. The Daily Dispatch, April 28, 1863. Two soldiers of the city battalion were found guilty of taking a \$10 bribe. Their beards were shaven and they were drummed out of service.

like a prison than a home but it at least furnished shelter and food of one type or another.

B. W. Jones describes the "Home" in a letter to his family in Surry. He had come into the city from Camp Sehermerhorne without a pass (as many soldiers did). He was stopped by the city's patrol and having no permit was taken to the "Soldiers' Home" to give satisfactory reason for his being in the city and to remain there over night (which he did not as escape was easy and he had to be back in camp in time for roll call). A drum sounded the call for dinner. The "guests" formed a line and roll was called "and then a tray of light bread, cut into half-leaves, each leaf already small enough, was passed down the line."<sup>16</sup> Each man took a piece. That was the only course; "a very light dinner, even for the times."<sup>16</sup>

Military prisons<sup>17</sup> in the city were haphazard at best. They came into existence without any definite plan to meet the emergencies of war. There was no Commissary General of Prisoners until the last months of the war. The only prisons in the city were the City Jail, inadequate for the care of those imprisoned by the civil authorities, and the Henrico Court House Jail. The State Penitentiary was near the northern boundary of the city.

After the battles of Bethel and Bull Run, thousands of never equalled the number of prisoners. The suffering was great and

16. Jones, B. W. Under Stars and Bars, p. 157,158

17. Hesselstine, William Beck, Civil War Prisons

January 17, 1862.

WALLACE OF WALLACE & WELBY

prisoners were sent into Richmond. Warehouses on Cary, 17th and 18th Streets, were pressed into service. Libby Prison and Belle Isle were the most famous and important. The other large prisons were Castles Thunder, Lightning, and Godwin. ~~by were Northerners in Southern~~ Libby Prison, occupying an entire city block, was a four story warehouse with four rooms and a privy on each floor. Small stoves, inadequate to heat the barnlike rooms, were installed for the prisoners to use for heat and cooking. The Northern officers were always confined in Libby with other prisoners. The prisoners taken after the Battle of Seven Pines and Seven Days Battles made it necessary to use a mill close to Libby which would hold 4,000 soldiers. ~~As time the prisoners were taken down the river to City Point,~~ Though several thousand prisoners were sent south, more prison space was needed. The citizens were alarmed at the number in the city and feared they would mutiny, aided by the paroled Northern troops in the city. Finally, they decided to use Belle Isle as a prison. Not only would it take the Yankees out of the city, but its island fastness would keep the number of guards down to a minimum. The islet was equipped with a few large tents<sup>18</sup> into which the prisoners could find crowded shelter from the elements. On clear nights they slept outside on the ground. The number of blankets never equalled the number of prisoners. The suffering was great and

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18. The Confederate government planned to replace the tents by sheds when sufficient lumber could be procured. The Daily Dispatch, January 17, 1863.



the mortality rate, according to the Northerners, very high. Prisoners awaiting the irregular exchange were held on the island. At times there were as many as 5,000.

The first year of the war found many more Northerners in Southern prisons than there were Southerners confined in the North. The Washington government was very anxious to set up some system of exchange in spite of the fact that by doing this, they would be in a technical sense recognizing the Confederate States as a separate country. Finally a system of exchange was instituted.

Richmond was a depot for holding prisoners for exchange during the ten day period according to agreement.<sup>19</sup> At the expiration of this time the prisoners were taken down the river to City Point, and the released Confederates were brought back. Exchange was never regular because the two governments were continually at odds, each side accusing the other of not living up to the agreement; and because of the fact that the South considered the Negro as "property," and not subject to exchange. Also, the South was holding two officers and threatened to hang them in retaliation for the execution of two southern officers in Kentucky. Often the steamer Schultz would take its quota to City Point, only to return with the same cargo.

This meant that many federal officers and privates were de-

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19. During the ten day period, the commissioners met at City Point to arrange the terms of exchange.

tained in the city. The arrival of prisoners in large numbers always caused the market prices to soar. In January 1863, their arrival caused the price of butter to rise from forty to sixty cents a pound to \$2.50 in a twenty-four hour period!

The fact that the prisoners were allowed to buy foodstuffs caused much disorder around the prisons. Women and children living in this vicinity, would crowd around the windows with any provisions they could secure and bargain with the Northern prisoners. Not only did the government feel that this was one means by which the Northerners knew of conditions in the Confederacy, but the prisoners brought with them a quantity of bogus Confederate bills<sup>20</sup> which they dumped on the city when buying supplies, or when asking Negroes and children to get the bills changed for them. As a result of this the prisoners were searched. All but a portion of their money was confiscated. The rest was to be returned when they were exchanged. General Winder made the circulation of bogus money by prisoners a criminal offense.

According to an agreement between the North and the South, the prisoners were to receive the same rations in quality and quantity as the soldiers. The failure of the government to get foodstuffs brought in caused food shortage for all inhabitants of the beleaguered city.

<sup>20</sup> Daily Dispatch, June 30, 1862: was asked by the United States officials to support life and that many soldiers were dying of starvation, and