

### · **During The War** **April 12 1861 - June 23 1865**

1861 April 12 Civil War began at Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. The Yankees retreated defeated. While a parade and celebrations marked the event in Richmond, a more perceptive Mary Boykin Chestnut wrote "April 12...At half-past four the heavy booming of a cannon. I sprang out of bed, and on my knees prostrate I prayed as I have never prayed before." From A Diary from Dixie as written by Mary Boykin Chestnut - Electronic Edition. This whole diary is fascinating to read!

1861 April 23 Jacob Sharpe, age 29 enlisted on the side of the Union. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in Company B 20th NY Infantry and mustered out on August 2nd from Kingston New York.

1861 May The government of the Confederacy moved from Montgomery Alabama to Richmond Virginia.

1861 May 3 Jeb Stuart, after eleven years of service in the U.S. Army, resigned and joined The Confederate States of America, saying "From a sense of duty to my native state, I hereby resign my position as an officer in the Army of the United States. Most respectfully, Sir, Your obt. svt. J.E.B. Stuart". In a letter to Samuel Cooper he expressed hopes of a comparable position in the Confederate forces listing cavalry, light artillery, or light infantry as his top choices. His resignation was accepted on May 6th and on the 7th he enlisted in the Confederate Service where his rise to fame became legendary.

1861 May 7 While on a visit to Virginia, the home of his wife's relatives, Dr. Charles Brewer resigned his commission with the U.S. Army and declared for the South. He entered the Medical Corps of the Confederate Army and was attached to the headquarters of the general staff of the army, under Surgeons-general DeLeon and Moore. By July, Maria and Charles Brewer were in Richmond where they appear to have remained for the duration. During the latter part of the war Dr. Brewer served as surgeon general on Gen. Robert E. Lee's staff in Richmond.

1861 May 28th Dr. Charles Brewer wrote to a brother from Wytheville Wythe Leo, Va

My dear Brother,

I received your very acceptable letter today. A?? and thanks for your kindness. I shall ever gratefully remember your generosity as a brother should ere long I may be in better circumstances. My wife's parents would no doubt have assisted us in these trying times, but her father is in Utah, her mother alone in Missouri and their property in land there & in Illinois could not be disposed of. My wife has generously offered to dispose of her jewelry to take care of us for a little while, but my pride struggles against this, but as a last extremity. I am young, educated and can work, and I will put my trust in God, and wait even a little yet patiently. I shall tomorrow or the next day try to get some local employment in Richmond until I can hear from the South. My application is, I am informed before the war dept. but has not yet been acted upon. On my return from the country I brought my wife here which is the cheapest place I can leave her while I am ordered away. I feel very low spirited and badly, but in the presence of that "All seeing eye" my conscience is right and I shall still persevere in what I think right.

I cannot bear to write to Annapolis - bitter tears blot my paper when I try. Do write to brother Nicholas and say that my most earnest wishes are for the welfare of himself and wife and tell mother that I still love her as her child. Father I dare not say for I have none, May god help me. I cannot write anymore, ever. Your affectionate Brother Chas Brewer

There was a breach between Charles and his father Judge Nicholas Brewer of Baltimore who was a staunch Unionist. Four of his brothers (Nicholas, George, John and Julian) were pro Union while he and two other brothers (Richard and Isaac, who were both killed in battle) were CSA.

It is interesting to note that Charles's younger brother John William Brewer, whose medical career Charles encouraged, pursued a military career as a surgeon under Grant and became a captain in the Grand Army of the Republic. Michael P. Parker Presidents Hill p.18 Charles and Maria had only been married for five months at this point, and probably had no idea prior to their wedding that such a devastating rift on both sides of their families would occur.

1861 May John Rogers Cooke who was stationed in Texas with the 8th Infantry, resigned from the US Army, joined the Confederate Army, was commissioned as a first lieutenant, and ordered to report to General T.H. Holmes at Fredericksburg, Va.

1861 June 1 Anita Dwyer Withers's Diary: "We arrived in Richmond on the 2nd of the month &

stopped at the Spotswood, the same place where President Davis and family stayed." This diary is the property of the U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and can be accessed through [www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/w/Withers.Anita\\_Dwyer.html](http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/w/Withers.Anita_Dwyer.html) I am grateful for permission to use excerpts from this diary as Anita Withers was to become a close friend of my great grandparents Charles and Maria Brewer and gr gr aunt Flora Stuart. Charles acted as their family doctor. In 1861 Maria was 21, Charles 29, Flora 25, Jeb 28, Anita Withers 22. Her diary has been very helpful to the story. In 1914, John Rogers Cooke and Nannie Patton's son, Philip St. George Cooke married Louise Withers McAdams, but I don't know whether Anita and Louise were related.

1861 June 6 Philip St. George Cooke declared his allegiance to the North while still in Utah. This momentous event took place two months after his nephew John Esten Cooke signed up for the Confederate Army followed by Jeb, Charles Brewer, and finally his own son John Rogers. In *The National Intelligencer* in Washington Philip declared "...the national government adopted me as its pupil and future defender; it gave me an education and a profession, and I then made a solemn oath to bear true allegiance to the United States of America... This oath and honor alike forbid me to abandon their standard at the first hour of danger. In the national service, I have been for 34 years a Western man, and if my citizenship be localized, a citizen of Missouri... I owe Virginia very little, my country much... and I shall remain under her flag so long as it waves the sign of the national constitutional government."

In making his decision to remain loyal to the Union, he must have considered the imbalance it would cause in the family, the agony of having to fight with relatives and former close friends on the other side. The question of his faithfulness to the Union in his own mind was probably so unshakable that he may not have considered the fact that this loyalty might incur a degree of suspicion from the North because of his connections and roots in the South. Despite all these factors and probably because of his single-minded focus on duty, he remained with the government under which he had so long and faithfully served, openly declaring that he had "the hope that he would die before he would be disloyal". The public reaction was swift, and on June 17th, in a letter to Adj. Gen. L. Thomas, Philip wrote: "Instead of sympathizing with the unhappiness of my family disunion, they taunt and impute it as a crime! The Department, I doubt not, knew of the acts of my far distant, long absent, unhappy sons... But I dismiss the subject - with loathing". *The West of Philip St. George Cooke* by Otis Young p.324 What a situation to be in. And even now, many years later, I am moved by it.

When PSGC heard about his son, son-in-laws and nephew joining the South he apparently said "Those mad boys. If only I had been there!" Did he think that he could have persuaded them to stay in the U.S. Army? Cooke had had many more years of service and commitment with that organization. Then too he would have remembered that his father had fought for the United States. Could this have been part of his decision to go with the North? As far as I can tell the

issue of slavery didn't come up with any of the men.

1861 Summer Jeb Stuart became a lieutenant colonel in the 1st Virginia Cavalry, and ironically, with skills learned from his father-in-law, was instrumental in demoralizing the Federal Cavalry.

1861 July Philip St. George Cooke, still at Fort Crittenden in Utah Territory received the May 17th order directing him to shut down the Utah command, to dispose of government property, to report to Ft. Leavenworth, and then to go on to Washington. He did this, and started the long hot dry march east with his men . Presumably he visited Rachel and his 19-year-old daughter Julia along the way. At 25 miles a day, the march to Leavenworth took two months. Then, with the 2nd Cavalry, they proceeded to Washington. As he traveled along those many miles, did he envision that, because of his West Point training, his loyalty, vast experience, and achievements, he would be in the position of being head of the Northern Army?

1861 July 16 Jeb was commissioned as a full colonel of Cavalry of the Confederate States Army. At this time Jeb said, "All I ask of fate is that I may be killed leading a cavalry charge."

1861 July 20 Anita Withers's Diary: "My own babe was gradually and quietly fading away, like a little Angel that he was, traveling to his Heavenly Home, where no pain, sickness, or sorrow will ever reach him"... "It was difficult at that time of intense grief and anguish of heart. I felt as if they were tearing my soul from my body."

... "The next day he was put in the coffin, buried on Sunday afternoon, the day the Grand battle at Manassas was fought." ... "My own was layed in the Bishop's Vault, so as to take him home with us when we return".

1861 July 21 First Battle of Bull Run/ First Manassas. Jeb Stuart led the 1st Virginia Cavalry unit, and John Rogers Cooke fought with troops from Aquia Creek. John Esten Cooke, served as a sergeant in this battle. It was a triumph for the South as the Union troops, led by Brigadier General Irvin McDowell, beat a hasty retreat back to Washington.

1861 July 27 McDowell stepped down and General George Brinton McClellan, age 34, assumed command of the Washington troops. In the fall McClellan was made general in chief of all the Union armies.

1861 Sept 7 Ann Withers's Diary: Mentioned that she and Mrs. Brewer "went to Pizzinis to get some ice cream". The week before that Maria and Anita had gone to the market to buy some peaches, so despite the stress of five months of war, life went on.

1861 Sept 13 Jacob Sharpe (Julia Cooke's future husband) enlisted on the side of the Union and began his Civil War service as a 1st Lieutenant in the 20th NY Militia.

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