

OUR CAMP JOURNAL

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"We are but few in number but formidable." -Pvt. James Shelton, 7th Md. Co. B

September 2025

William Howard Russell, Reporter

By Bill Hart...reporter.

William Howard Russell was a reporter for *The Times of London*. He became world-known after spending 22 months covering the Crimean War. His dispatches from Crimea to *The Times* are regarded as the world's first war correspondence.

For the first time the public could read about the reality of warfare before it became refined for history. Public outrage at the handling of sick and wounded soldiers generated from his reports led the Government to examine the treatment of troops and led to Florence Nightingale's work to reform battlefield medical treatment.

Russell later covered the Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1858 and in March, 1861, his editor dispatched him to the United States as a special correspondent because of the tensions there. He landed at New York, moved on to Philadelphia and Washington City, Baltimore and in April traveled into the Southern States. He visited Norfolk, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, Pensacola, New Orleans, Vicksburg, Memphis, and Columbus, Kentucky before returning to the North at Cairo, Illinois. Subsequent stops included Chicago, Niagara Falls, and Pittsburgh before returning to Washington City. His reputation gave him access to many influential individu-

als including Abraham Lincoln, General Winfield Scott, General P.G.T. Beauregard, Jefferson Davis, Louis Wigfall, Judah Benjamin, General Braxton Bragg, William Seward, General Irwin McDowell, and General George McClellan as well as meeting and talking to ordinary citizens who are for the most part otherwise unknown.

He was a sharp critic of many aspects of American culture in both sections and stirred up hostility in the South by not respecting the social good of slavery and in the North with his criticism of the general unreadiness of the Union Army and an accurate but critical description of its disorganized retreat from the Battle of First Bull Run at which he was present.

The Northern press pilloried him for his criticism of the army. The administration subsequently restricted his travel and prohibited him from visiting military sites thereby preventing him from doing what he had been sent to do. That prohibition and the many threats of violence he received for his various criticisms caused him to leave the United States in April, 1862.

His book titled *My Diary, North and South*, based on his experience in the United States, was published in 1863. It is available online without charge as an eBook through the Gutenberg Project. It is well worth reading for its observations by a



somewhat biased but honest to his own values observer of many ordinary people as well as some who had an extraordinary influence on events in the United States during the first year of the American Civil War. Among his criticisms of the habits of Americans was that of chewing tobacco and its consequent results. Some of his observations of this largely inconsequential aspect are highlighted here.

April 2, 1861, on a tour of Mount Vernon. The house is in keeping, and threatens to fall to ruin. I entered the door, and found myself in a small hall, stained with tobacco juice.

April 6, 1861, hallway in Willard's Hotel, Washington City: As to the

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Upcoming Campaigns

SEPTEMBER

NEWLY ADDED: Sept. 12-14: **Shafer Farm - 163rd Anniversary of the Battle of Crampton's Gap:** To be held at 1606 Gapland Road, Jefferson, MD 21755; (can set up Friday night, main event on Saturday, and then Sunday is minimal). The focus is mostly going to be more on living history, maybe some drill, and just interfacing with any public that stops by the site.

Sept 19-20: **Civil War Tactical Event** at the Daniel Lady Farm.
*(FVB Event)

(7th MD COMPANY Event)

Sept 26-28: **Shadows of 1864; New Birth of Freedom Council Scout Camporee** (Individual event).

OCTOBER

October 16-18: **160th Battle of Cedar Creek, Middletown, VA.** Register www.ccbf.us *(FVB Event)

(7th MD COMPANY Event)

TBA: **Bristoe Station Event:** Details and exact date to come.

NOVEMBER

November 14-15: **FVB Annual Meeting & Remembrance Day Parade** *(FVB Event)

(Parade: 7th MD COMPANY Event)



W.H. Russell Reporter

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condition of the floor it is beyond description [from the depredations of spitting tobacco juice].

April 14, 1861, aboard a ferry from Portsmouth to Norfolk: The steam ferry was a rickety affair, and combined with the tumble-down sheds and quays to give a poor idea of Norfolk. The infliction of tobacco juice on board was remarkable. Although it was but seven o'clock every one had his quid in working order, and the air was filled with yellowish-brown rainbows and liquid parabolas, which tumbled in spray or in little flocks of the weed on the foul decks.

April 14, 1861, the Atlantic Hotel in Norfolk: It is a dilapidated, uncleanly place, with tobacco-stained floor, full of flies and strong odours.

April 14, 1861, the citizens of Nor-

folk: The people, I observe, are of a new and marked type,—very tall, loosely yet powerfully made, with dark complexions, strongly-marked features, prominent noses, large angular mouths in square jaws, deep-seated bright eyes, low, narrow foreheads,—and are all of them much given to ruminate tobacco.

April 19, 1861, visiting South Carolina Governor Francis Pickens at the State Capital: . . . through the doorways could be seen men in uniform, and grave, earnest people busy at their desks with pen, ink, paper,

tobacco, and spittoons.

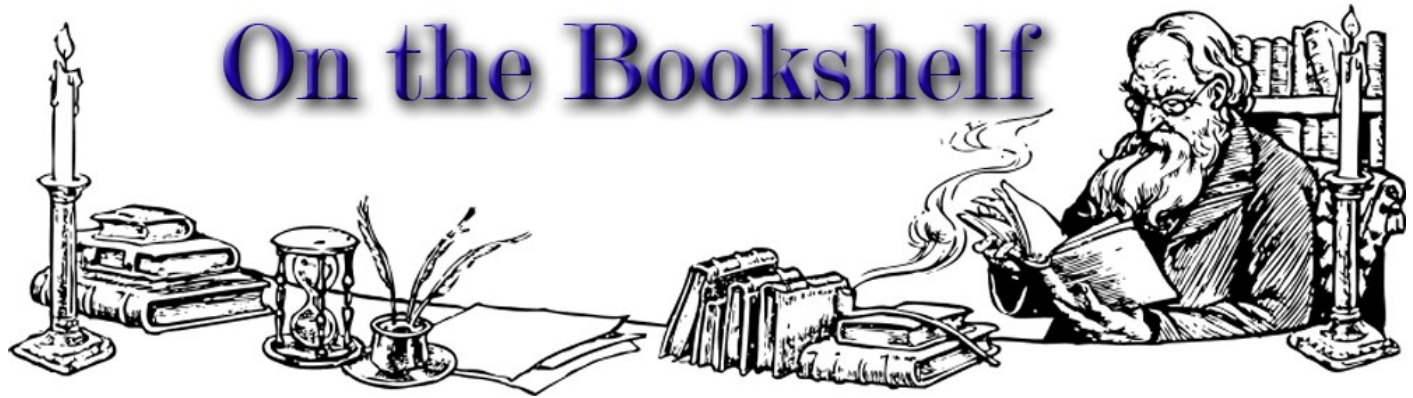
April 17, 1861, aboard a steamer in Charleston off to visit the batteries on Morris Island: When we had shipped all our passengers, nine-tenths of them in uniform, and a larger proportion engaged in chewing, the whistle blew, and the steamer sidled off from the quay into the yellowish muddy water of the Ashley River.

May 4, 1861, on the train from Macon to Montgomery: The people are rawer, ruder, bigger—there is the same amount of tobacco chewing and its consequences.

May 4, 1861, Montgomery, Alabama: I was glad, when bed-time approached, that I was not among the mattress men [those sleeping on mattresses on the floor]. One of the gentlemen in the bed next to the door was a tremendous projector in the tobacco juice line: his final rumination ere he sank to repose was a mas-

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On the Bookshelf

Grant's Enforcer

Author Guy Gugliotta's book, 'Grant's Enforcer,' tells the story of how President Ulysses S. Grant picked a little-known postwar official in Georgia named Amos T. Akerman to become his attorney general and fight the Ku Klux Klan.

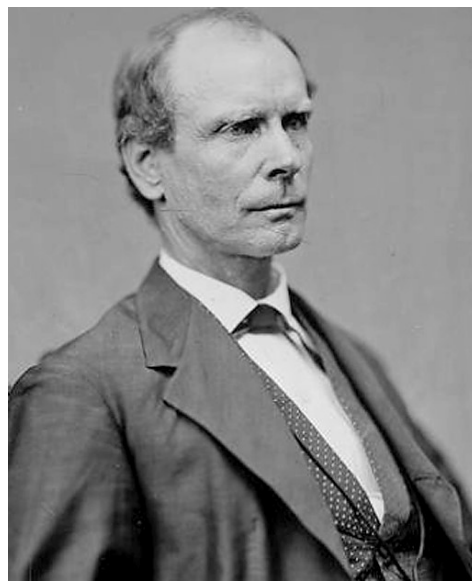
Review by Richard Sisk / Military.com

President Ulysses S. Grant had put the night riders of the Ku Klux Klan on notice that he was ready to use the full powers of his office to break their white terrorist grip on the states of the former Confederacy. But he needed to pick an enforcer to break the Klan's hold on the South.

Grant's Groundwork

Grant already had the legal and legislative tools at his disposal for the job. In May 1870, Congress had approved the Civil Rights Act, also known as the First Enforcement Act, which was aimed right at the hooded thugs of the KKK. The law made it a felony with up to \$5,000 in fines and up to 10 years in jail for two or more people to "band or conspire together, or go in disguise upon the public highway or upon the premises of another, with the intent to violate the civil rights of any citizen."

In a later proclamation, Grant



Amos T. Akerman

called on the people of the South to reject the KKK and recognize the rights of former slaves "through their own voluntary efforts." But if that failed, he said, he would "not hesitate to exhaust the powers thus vested in the Executive, whenever and wherever it shall become necessary" to keep the peace and guarantee equal protection of the laws for former slaves.

Amos T. Akerman, Grant's Enforcer

Grant needed an attorney general to turn the newly enacted 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments on citizenship, the right to vote and entitlement to due process of law for "freedmen" into courtroom weapons that would decimate the "Lost Cause" imaginings of the Klan.

To do that, Grant made the unlikely choice of Amos T. Akerman, a minor postwar official in Georgia, to become the top law enforcement officer in the land.

Akerman was a curious case, as depicted in Guy Gugliotta's exhaustively researched new book on what amounted to the twilight of the Reconstruction era, "Grant's Enforcer: Taking Down the Klan." In the book, Gugliotta draws heavily on firsthand accounts of Klan members and their victims taken from diaries, newspaper accounts, court records and congressional testimony to turn what could have been a dry procedural into a historical page-

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Pvt. Simon G. Gailey, Co. "C"

By Jeff Joyce

Private Simon G. Gailey was born in 1843 to farmer Robert Gailey and Sarah Dorris, one of four children.

Census records reflect a birth in Pennsylvania but his military records state he was born in Harford County, Maryland. His family may have moved to Maryland around the time of his birth.

In August 1862 Simon enlisted for three years in Company C, 7th Maryland Volunteer Infantry. A farmer at the time, he was described as 5' 9" tall with blue eyes and red hair.

Over the next two years Simon served faithfully with the 7th Maryland with no recorded absences or illnesses. In May 1864 the 7th Maryland left its winter camp outside Culpeper to begin the Overland Campaign with the Army of the Potomac.

The next three months Simon and the 7th Maryland fought in the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania Court House, Cold Harbor and Petersburg. On August 18, 1864, the Union Fifth Corps (including the Maryland Brigade and 7th Maryland) seized part of the Confederate Weldon Railroad southeast of Petersburg near Globe Tavern.

The Weldon was a vital railroad that connected Petersburg with Wilmington, North Carolina. That afternoon three Confederate brigades from Major General Henry Heath's division attacked the Fifth Corps. Major Edward M. Mobley of the 7th Maryland wrote in his diary:

"Moved to railroad south of Petersburg, tore up the railroad. At 2p.m. got into a fight and had to fall back, rallied and drove the Rebs over the same track. Got wounded slightly in the neck. Loss of the Brigade heavy."

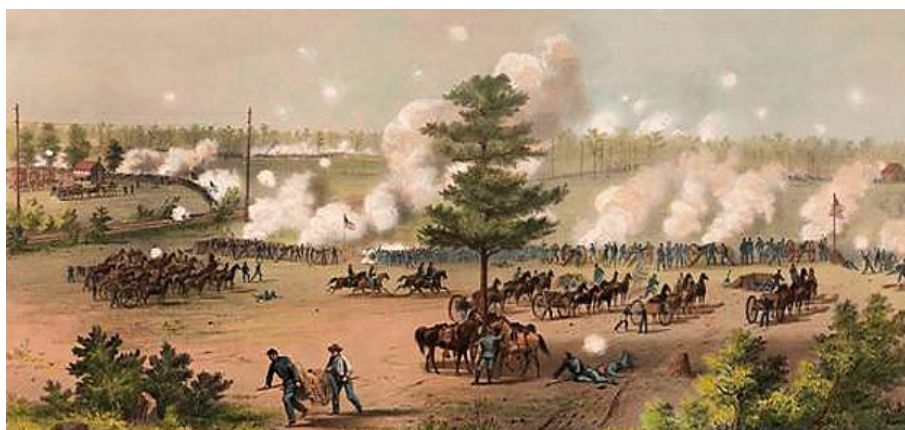
During the fighting Simon was killed (some reports record him dying the following day). Buried in a temporary cemetery, Simon was moved to City Point National Cemetery after the war. His father Robert died in 1865 and his mother Sarah in 1869. Both are buried at Centre Presbyterian Cemetery in York County, Pennsylvania, near Simon's older brother John, who died in 1928.

Note: Likely due to poor record keeping Simon's last name was recorded as Gailey when he was re-interred at City Point National Cemetery, which is reflected on his headstone today.

Below, clockwise: The battle of Weldon Railroad, August 18, 1864.

Pvt. Simon G. Gailey's marker at City Point National Cemetery.

A view of the Globe Tavern near Petersburg.



Grant's Enforcer

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turner with the riveting impact of a novel.

Akerman, the ninth of 12 children, was born in New Hampshire and was an 1842 graduate of Dartmouth College. He moved south and read for the law, became a slave owner and enlisted in the Georgia militia in 1863 but never saw action.

His obscurity was probably a factor in his favor in the cutthroat politics of the era in Washington, D.C., where the Southern Bloc of Democrats saw political power emanating from white supremacy and the planter class while the Republicans, at least initially, looked to protect the rights of four million newly freed Black men and women.

So why did Grant pick this virtual unknown?

"Eventually, the theory arose that Akerman, rather than having been selected in spite of being a Southerner, had instead been appointed because he was a Southerner," Gugliotta wrote. "The Civil War had been over for five years. And Grant had decided that diversity was a good idea. It was time to bring the prodigals back into the fold."

A Dangerous Job

Akerman would have little support from the military in going up against the Klan. After the defeat of the Confederates, the Army had a force of 250,000 occupation troops in the South, but that force had dwindled to 88,000 by the fall of 1865. By the time Akerman appeared before Congress in 1870, there were 22,000 federal troops in the South.

Akerman also knew well that he was taking on a dangerous job as attorney general, once it became known in Georgia that he was now a member of the hated "radical" Republican Party.

"On the road, innkeepers frequently refused him lodging and once, when they did not, Akerman checked out of his hotel only to find that his horse had been shaved and painted with black and white zebra stripes," Gugliotta wrote. "That was not his horse, he said, and he refused to mount. Later, he learned that a gang of Ku Klux had planned to ambush and perhaps kill him. They had painted the horse so they could identify him as he rode out of town."

Grant's thinking on his choice of Akerman as the only Southerner in his cabinet is still something of a puzzle, but in 1870, "Klan terrorism was on a massive upswing, and Grant was losing patience," Gugliotta wrote. "He understood violence as well as anyone then living, and when he named Akerman as his attorney general he picked a man who had as much or more experience with white terrorism as anyone

he might have chosen. Whether he knew it or not, Grant had found his enforcer."

Justice for Jim Williams

Akerman decided to go after the Klan first in South Carolina, particularly in York County. He thought if he could beat the night riders there, he could use the same types of prosecution and courtroom tactics in other southern states.

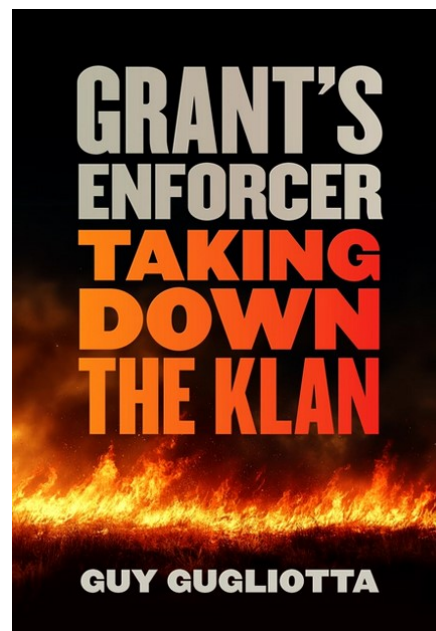
One of the most consequential cases Akerman oversaw was a case against Klan leaders who lynched black militia leader Jim Williams in York County in March 1871. Gugliotta's chilling account of Williams' death, gleaned from newspaper accounts, diaries, and court and congressional records, and the heartbreaking testimony of his wife afterward serve to underscore the fundamental and deranged villainy of the Klan.

"Jim Williams and his wife Rose heard the Klan coming through the woods around 2 a.m.," Gugliotta wrote. "Williams had enough time to dash outside and duck beneath the house." Rose Williams said later that maybe nine or 10 Klansmen had barged through the front door: "I was scared because I thought they were going to kill me too."

The Klansmen tore up the floorboards to find Williams. "We hauled him out and placed a rope around his neck and started back toward our horses," Klansman Milus Smith Carroll recalled, and then "someone spied a large tree with limbs running out, 10 or 12 feet from the ground, and suggested that was the place to finish the job."

Williams grabbed at a branch to

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Grant's Enforcer

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break his fall until one of the Klansmen hacked at his hand with a knife to force him to let go. "He died cursing, pleading and praying all in one breath," Carroll said.

Rose Williams would testify at the trial of her husband's killers under questioning from David T. Corbin, one of Akerman's prosecutors. She described how she peeked through the window when the Klansmen dragged her husband from the house while she waited, terrified, with her children before going out at around noon the following day. Gugliotta's book captures the chilling exchange.

Lasting Impact

By the time he left office in December 1871, Akerman had overseen more than 1,100 prosecutions, according to the National Park Service.

At a July 20 book signing in Washington, D.C., Gugliotta said that in some ways, Akerman's methods endorsed by Grant could be seen as the beginnings of the civil rights movement in the U.S., although Akerman resigned after only 18 months in office and the North lost interest in imposing reform on the South, allowing the Jim Crow era of segregation and voter suppression to fill the void.

But Akerman's actions against the Klan essentially put the night rid-

ers out of business as a significant presence in the South until after World War I, Gugliotta said.



Richard Sisk has more than 45 years of journalism experience in reporting and editing in the U.S. and abroad for United Press International,

the N.Y. Daily News and now for Military.com. He has covered police beats, the courts, transportation and politics in New York City and Washington, D.C., and had numerous assignments in the Mideast, Europe and Latin America. He has covered six presidential campaigns and since 2016 has been Military.com's Pentagon reporter. Sisk is a Vietnam veteran who served with the 2nd Battalion, Fourth Marines, in 1967-68.



At the Hearth...

Carbonated Syrup Water

Put into a tumbler lemon, raspberry, strawberry, pine-apple, or any other acid syrup, sufficient in quantity to flavor the beverage very highly. Then pour in very cold ice-water till the glass is half full. Add half a teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda (to be obtained at the drug-gist's), and stir it well in with a teaspoon. It will foam up to the top immediately, and must be drank during the effervescence.

Godey's Lady's Book, July, 1862

Nectar.

Take a pound of the best raisins, seeded and chopped; four lemons, sliced thin; and the yellow rind pared off from two other lemons; and two pounds of powdered loaf-sugar. Put into a porcelain preserving-kettle two gallons of water. Set it over the fire, and boil it half an hour; then, while the water is boiling hard, put in the raisins, lemons,

and sugar, and continue the boiling for ten minutes. Pour the mixture into a vessel with a close cover, and let it stand four days, stirring it twice a day. Then strain it through a linen bag, and bottle it. It will be fit for use in a fortnight. Drink it from wineglasses, with a small bit of ice in each.

Godey's Lady's Book, July, 1862

Pot Pies

Make a crust like soda biscuit, i.e. take one quart of flour, half a pint of milk, butter size of an egg, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar in the flour, one teaspoonful of soda in the milk. Mix well together, and drop into your chicken, or veal, or beef stew, when the stew is boiling.

It will warrant you light crust. A better way to cook it is to cut into biscuits, lay on a large plate, and set it in the steamer, over the stew, to



cook.

Lay on the platter with your meat, and pour over the seasoned and thickened gravy, and you have something a little better than common.

-- *Arthur's Home Magazine, January, 1862*

W.H. Russell Reporter

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terpiece of art—a perfect liquid pyrotechny, roman candles and falling stars. A horrid thought occurred as I gazed and wondered. In case he should in a supreme moment turn his attention my way!—I was only seven or eight yards off, and that might be nothing to him!—I hauled down my musquito curtain at once, and watched him till, completely satiated, he slept.

May 4, 1861, Montgomery, Alabama. The auctioneer, who was an ill-favoured, dissipated-looking rascal, had his “article” beside him on, not in, a deal packing-case—a stout young negro badly dressed and ill-shod, who stood with all his goods fastened in a small bundle in his hand, looking out at the small and listless gathering of men, who, whittling and chewing, had moved out from the shady side of the street as they saw the man put up.

May 9, 1861, meeting with Jefferson Davis. Wonderful to relate, he (Jefferson Davis) does not chew, and is neat and clean-looking, with hair trimmed, and boots brushed.

May 9, 1861, with Confederate Secretary of War LeRoy Walker. He is the kind of man generally represented in our types of a “Yankee”—tall, lean, straight-haired, angular, with fiery, impulsive eyes and manner—a ruminator of tobacco and a profuse spitter.

May 11, 1861, aboard the steamer Southern Republic enroute from Selma to Mobile on the Alabama River. [Captain Meagher] then turns a quid, and, as if uttering some sacred refrain to the universal

hymn of the South, says, “Yes, sir, they’re [Negro slaves] the happiest people on the face of the airth!”



Reporter William Howard Russell

May 16, 1861, aboard the schooner Diana traveling from Mobile to Fort Pickens. When the sailors came after us [into the cabin to shelter from the weather] the skipper said, through a mouthful of juice, “Deevide! pull your hardest, for there an’t a more terrible place for shearks along the whole coast.”

May 20, 1861, aboard the steamer Florida from Mobile to New Orleans. The live-long day my fellow-passengers never ceased talking politics, except when they were eating and drinking, because the horrible chewing and spitting are not at all incompatible with the maintenance of active discussion.

May 31, 1861, visiting the jail in New Orleans. It was filled with a crowd of men and boys; some walking up and down, others sitting, and groups on the pavement; some moodily apart, smoking or chewing

June 7, 1861, on a visit to one of South Carolina Governor John Manning’s plantations in Louisiana. Mr. Bateman, the overseer, a dour strong man, with spectacles on nose, and a quid in his cheek, led us over the ground.

June 14, 1861, at a meeting with Mississippi Governor John Pettus in the statehouse in Jackson. “Well, sir,” said he, [Governor Pettus] dropping a portentous plug of tobacco just outside the spittoon, with the air of a man who wished to show he could have hit the centre if liked, “England is no doubt a great country, and has got fleets and the like of that, and may have a good deal to do in Europe, but the sovereign State of Mississippi can do a great deal better without England than England can do without her.”

June 16, 1861, on the train from Jackson to Memphis. The carriages were of course, full of soldiers or volunteers, bound for a large camp at a place called Corinth, who made the night hideous by their song and cries, stimulated by enormous draughts of whiskey and proportionate consumption of tobacco, by teeth and by fire.

June 17, 1861, with General Gideon Pillow and other Confederate officers aboard the river steamer Ingomar steaming from Memphis to Chickasaw Bluffs. Another general of a very different type, was among our passengers—a dirty-faced, frightened-looking young man, of some twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, redolent of tobacco, his chin and shirt slavered by its foul juices.

June 23, 1861: Describing a typical village while traveling by train from Cairo, Illinois to Chicago. Before each grocery let there be a

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OUR CAMP JOURNAL



*Civil War Re-enactors;
America's Living Historians.*

W.H. Russell Reporter

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gathering of tall men in sombre clothing, of whom the majority have small newspapers and all of whom are chewing tobacco.

July 5, 1861: on a visit to the Capital Building in Washington City. All the encoustics and the white marble and stone staircases suffer from tobacco juice, though there a liberal display of spittoons at every corner. *And later in the Senate chamber:* the constant use of the spittoons beside their desks did but derogate from the dignity of the assemblage.

July 20, Representatives at work in the Capitol Building, Washington City. They drank their iced water, ate cakes or lozenges, chewed and chatted.

September 2, 1861: visiting the Washington City headquarters of General George Maclellan. The General consumes tobacco largely, and not only smokes cigars, but indulges in the more naked beauties of a quid.

September 18, 1861: Traveling from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh by train. It is infinitely to the credit of the American people that actual offence is so seldom given and is still more rarely intended—always save and except in the one particular, of chewing tobacco. Having seen most things that can irritate one's stomach, and being in company with an old soldier, I little expected that any excess of the sort could produce disagreeable effects; but on returning from this excursion.

Mr. Lamy and myself were fairly driven out of a carriage, on the Pittsburg line, in utter loathing and disgust, by the condition of the floor. The conductor, passing through, said, "you must not stand out there, it is against the rules; you can go in for a smoke," pointing to the carriage. "In there!" exclaimed my friend, "why it is too filthy to put a wild beast into." The conductor looked in for a moment, nodded his head, and said, "Well, I concede it is right bad; the citizens *are* going it pretty strong," and so left us.



A *Punch* cartoon of reporter W.H. Russell