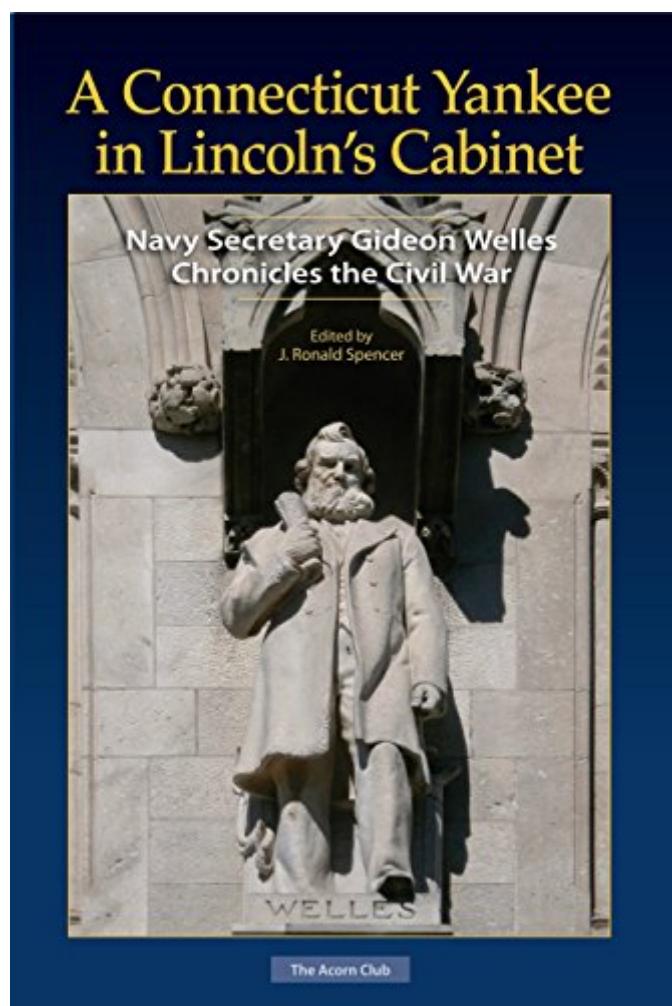


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A Connecticut Yankee In Lincoln's Cabinet: Navy Secretary Gideon Welles Chronicles The Civil War



Synopsis

The Civil War through the eyes of a key member of Lincoln's cabinet

Book Information

File Size: 4677 KB

Print Length: 194 pages

Publisher: Acorn (August 12, 2014)

Publication Date: July 29, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00LF5GTA4

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #881,805 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #122

in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Naval Operations #1754

in Books > History > Middle East > Israel & Palestine #1837 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Americas > United States > Civil War

Customer Reviews

This is how editing a diary by a historical figure should be done. Gideon Welles was Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy; he kept a detailed diary of his thoughts before, during, and after the Civil War. The editor, J. Ronald Spencer, has chosen to extract portions of Welles's diary entries for the period during the war and then organize them into categories such as the Emancipation, problems within the cabinet, and his view on many of the key people of note, as well as other categories of interest. Spence also offers thoughtful and informed annotation to provide needed background and context behind the diary entries. The decision to extract and organize makes this volume even more valuable to the reader than simply annotating the entire voluminous diary. Edited out are miscellaneous notes of relative unimportance, and key relevant portions are shown in chronological order within each category in order to show Welles's evolution of thought process as new information unfolded. In the chapter on the cabinet, Welles candidly notes where he agrees and

disagrees with the President and with other cabinet members. In "Taking the Measure of Men" and "Generals and Admirals at War" he provides his frank opinions of key people from the cabinet, the legislature, and the military. In "Navy Department Challenges" he comments on both successes and failures under his watch. There is even a chapter on his reflections on the war. And of course, there is a long and insightful passage lamenting the assassination of the president. While rummaging through Welles's extensive full diary is likely neither interesting or of value to most people, Spencer's annotated and organized extract of the diary will both educate and engross the reader. I highly recommend.

Very cool book for nutmeggers (those who live in Connecticut) to learn about how our own native son played a role in the Civil War as part of Lincoln's cabinet. Who knew???

It was a gift. All I know is that it arrived in a reasonable amount of time. Thanks.

mr. spencer made the reading a pleasure with his behind the scene insights. would that we had PUBLIC SERVANTS like welles today.

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