

"To Do My Duty, Not to Be Popular"¹

Seldom has the name of a man, when spoken, rankled listeners one hundred eighteen years after the man has left an area. In Harrison County Charles Leib, assistant quartermaster with the U.S. Army in Clarksburg in 1861, still is described with venomous words. At a meeting of the Harrison County Historical Society in May 1979 the speaker said, "My grandmother, in 1861 a ten-year-old, stood quietly in the woods holding her father's horses. Leib did not search the woods for the animals because her father, staring at Leib, stood in the clearing just beyond the trees, which hid the horses, with his rifle cradled in his arms."²

Leib was appointed lieutenant and "Assistant Quarter Master with the rank of Captain" in the U.S. Army on May 22, 1861. In a letter of acceptance written the same day in Washington, D.C., Leib stated that he was "thirty-five years of age, born in the state of Pennsylvania and am at this time residing in the state of Illinois." On May 24, 1861, Leib applied for a leave of absence for twenty-one days to return to Chicago to settle his business and to move his family to Pennsylvania.³

Leib was assigned on June 17, 1861, to report to General McClellan in Cincinnati, Ohio.⁴ Army personnel wired General McClellan, who had moved into Western Virginia (W. Va.), that Leib had arrived. The general responded: "Direct Captain Leib to join me at once."⁵

Leib traveled by train to Grafton, Virginia (W. Va.), and was sent by McClellan to Clarksburg which had been chosen to be the base of military operations in Western Virginia (W. Va.).⁶ Leib described what he found:

Up to this time the Quartermaster had been changed almost daily.

Entering upon our duties at once; having no experience, nor yet experienced subordinates; without a copy of Army Regulations, to familiarize us with the requirements of "red tape," we felt as does the mariner cast away in an open boat on an unknown ocean, without chart, compass, or rudder.

There were but few troops there; the Eighteenth and Seventh Ohio, Howe's Battery, U.S.A., the Sturges Rifles, of Chicago, Barker's Chicago Dragoons, Burdsall's Cavalry, and a portion of the Third Virginia Infantry, comprised the whole force.

Colonel Tyler, commanding the Seventh Ohio regiment, an officer whose intimate knowledge of every mountain path and fastness peculiarly fitted him to command the advance, was just preparing to move to the mountains. Taking advantage of the ignorance of our predecessor, he succeeded in obtaining from him a much larger amount of transportation than he was entitled to; a portion of which he was compelled to return to us, by order of General McClellan.

The regiments that had passed through the country had contracted bills of every description. Their Quartermasters had no money, but gave orders on the Quartermaster at Clarksburg, for their payment. The necessities of the service required that the articles should be had, and the vendors were happy to accept the orders. Many of the Quartermasters had no knowledge of the requirements of the regulations; and in many cases the evidence of indebtedness was worthless.

In three hours after we took charge of the department, indebtedness amounting to at least five thousand dollars, was presented to us, to all of which we found some objection, for the purpose of gaining time; stating that the accounts were not in proper shape, and that the vouchers were not sufficient; all of which, when we became familiar with the business of the department, we found to be correct.

Now our troubles commenced in earnest. Colonels, Captains, and Regimental Quartermasters — all of them as ignorant as ourselves — wanted every description of supplies.

"Certainly: anything I have you can get, by presenting the proper papers."

What were the proper papers? We did not know. Fortunately, there was a copy of Army Regulations at the office of the commander of the post. We borrowed it an hour, and were safe; for we learned that, upon a special requisition, a Quartermaster could transfer stores to a commissioned officer, and the order of the commandant of the post, was his authority for doing so....

[On June 23rd], General McClellan and staff arrived. Everything was bustle and confusion....

A few days work commenced in earnest. Whole railroad trains began to arrive, with every species of Quartermaster's property. Horses and wagons by hundreds, hats, caps, boots, shoes, tents, blankets, harness leather, horse shoes, iron, mess pans, camp kettles, axes, picks, hatchets, shovels, and every conceivable article used in a campaign, were rushed in. There were no store-houses, and no place to store the goods, while there was not a single tarpaulin to be had, to protect them from the weather.

A little store-house, belonging to a rebel who had joined the Confederate army, had been taken possession of, and was occupied by us, in conjunction with Lieutenant Charles Allen, Acting Commissary of Subsistence, (a capital officer,) but was not of sufficient capacity to store the one-hundredth part of property received.

The railroad agents would tumble off stores, helter-skelter, along the line of the road for half a mile, wherever a spot could be found, without giving our clerks time to receive them; and we were obliged to ask a detail of soldiers to guard them. By dint of coaxing and begging, we generally succeeded in securing the detail asked for; but the instant the back of their officer was turned, in most cases, the men would slip off, swearing they had come to fight, and not to watch stores.

General McClellan remained but a short time. He was to move the Sunday following to Buckhannon, and was anxious to take with him a train of at least one hundred wagons, loaded principally with commissary stores. We had the different parts of several hundred wagons, but they had been so mixed, in shipping them at Cincinnati, and reshipping at Belle-Air, that it was next to impossible to get them together properly. A large force was detailed for that purpose; but upon examination only ten were found fit for immediate service. Hind wheels had been put on front axles, linchpins lost or thrown away by the men, who were anxious to get through in the shortest space of time, wagon-hammers stolen, bows broken, and swingletrees carried off. We were disappointed and mortified, and reported the condition of affairs to the General, who said,

"Get the wagons in running order as soon as possible. I will depend upon your prompt forwarding of supplies."

"You may, sir. At what time will you move in the morning?"

"At five o'clock, precisely."

"The wagons will be ready at that hour."

As the minute hand denoted the hour of five we were at the General's marquee, with watch in hand. He had just risen, and was performing his morning ablutions.

"General, it is just five o'clock. Your teams are ready to move."

"You are prompt, Captain. Do not forget the supplies."

"Your order shall be strictly obeyed."

In the course of two weeks we received and had in the government corral, two thousand horses; many of them fine looking animals, but too young for the service required of them, while others had been "doaped," for the purpose of sale, and by the time they returned from one trip to the mountains, were fit subjects for the hospital; especially as a large majority of the men we were compelled to employ as teamsters, bestowed no care upon them.

It was not in horses alone the government was swindled; but it seemed to us, that the contractors who furnished supplies, vied with each other in furnishing the poorest articles the market could afford.

The Commanders, or Quartermasters of a large majority of the regiments coming to Western Virginia, were sent to Clarksburg for their transportation. Every one was determined to select the best horses in the "corral," and the finest wagons at the post. This could not be permitted. It was right they should have a fair average of horses and wagons; but we could not, and would not, comply with a demand that would work manifest injustice to those who had not been supplied.

A Colonel, noted alike for his ignorance of military matters and want of good breeding, came to Clarksburg to select transportation for his regiment. He did not call on us until he had examined all our horses, when he came blustering into the office, and in an imperious tone demanded of one of our clerks:

"Is Captain Leib about?"

"Yes, sir; that's him," pointing to us.

"Captain Leib, I have some business with you."

"Very well, sir; as soon as I get through with Lieutenant....., I will attend to you."

"I want to see you at once."

"As soon as I get through with the Lieutenant, but not before, sir." . . .
Having disposed of the Lieutenant, we turned to the Colonel, and said, blandly:
"What can I do for you, Colonel?"

"I have a requisition for twenty-five teams."

"Let me look at it."

"Can't you take my word?"

"I can; but I must see that it is correct, and in proper form."

After a moment's hesitation, he handed it to us, and looking over it, we said:

"Colonel, do you want horses, harness, halters, wagons, covers, tar pots, and water buckets?"

"Of course I do."

"This is not sufficient. You must specify every article. The Department holds me to a strict accountability for every article that comes into my hands, and I must have a receipt for everything I turn over to you."

"That is sufficient. I don't intend giving a receipt for every d—d thing separate."

"Then, sir, you can't have them; besides, you can't have but twenty-two teams."

"By G—d, sir, I want twenty-five teams, and I mean to have them."

"Very well, sir; if you get an order from the Department Commander, or Chief Quartermaster, you can have them; but not without."

He became terribly excited, cursed "red tape", and all Quartermasters; whereupon, we ordered him to leave the office, which he did, swearing he would see about it.

In the course of an hour, he returned in a better frame of mind, and presented a requisition for twenty-two teams, etc. The papers were right, and we gave an order for them.⁷

Leib's strict adherence to army regulations and his testiness produced a kind of order. Wagonmakers and blacksmiths working steadily day and night had in operation by July 4 one hundred nine wagons with horses matched and broken to pull them.⁸ A Cincinnati newspaper correspondent wrote:

Masses of men and material are pelted after each other along every line of railroad here with the rapacity and sublimity of billows in the rolling ocean. Never did these grand hills and glorious old forests resound with such an incessant, such a terrible murmur as that which echoes through their passes now. And as the eye stares at the moving multitude of equipped thousands, the acres of military furniture strewn in a confusion of wheels and axles, and munition boxes, and gun carts, and horses and horse fodder, and miles long of moving baggage wagons, the mind becomes amazed at the magnitude of the power that can wield and wield with facility in perfect order such a chaos of living and material power.⁹

But the "magnitude of the power" that put the wagons on the road could not keep them from disappearing once they set out for the front:

By three o'clock the train was loaded, and at four it moved toward Buckhannon, where it arrived late in the afternoon of the following day. The few rations the troops already there had taken with them had given out, and the arrival of the train was hailed with delight. They at once surrounded it, and in spite of the Wagonmaster, who insisted on being permitted to deliver the stores to the Quartermaster, they took possession of everything edible and carried it to their respective camps, leaving their officers to arrange the matter with the Quartermaster and Commissary, as best they could. But this was not all. The teamsters had hardly finished unhitching their horses, until they were surrounded by a crowd of officers, who, without ceremony, took possession of horse and wagons, and refused to give receipts for them. They insisted they must have the teams; the Wagonmaster protested against their being taken; and finally, after begging and coaxing, succeeded in obtaining lead-pencil receipts, on slips of paper, not two inches in width; in two instances on the margin of a newspaper: such vouchers would be scouted at the Quartermaster-General's office, especially as nothing was specified, save horses and wagons.

We could do nothing. They had taken nearly all the train, and we have seen but few of the officers since. When the matter was mentioned to them, they were wofully [sic] ignorant of everything connected with it.¹⁰

Leib, determined to keep supplies moving, impressed horses and wagons owned by farmers in the area. A correspondent of a Cincinnati newspaper saw the situation differently from the view of the farmers¹¹ whose property was taken:

A squad of Company K had been out in the country several days, pressing teams into the service. The farmers, though they owe all to our gallant troops, and were offered four dollars a day and rations for the use of two horses, a wagon and a teamster, refused to volunteer to assist in carrying supplies to our troops up in the mountains. The teams were needed, and the only resource of the Government was to impress them. So small squads were sent out, seizing horses and wagons, and farmers to drive the horses, and marching them into Clarksburg. When it became known that teams were being impressed, the farmers resorted to all sorts of means to avoid the impressment. Some hid the wheels of their wagons; others tied their horses up in the woods, but they could not avoid the keen eyes of the K's, who mended wagons, found lost horses, no matter how they had been disposed of.

This conduct on the part of the farmers about Clarksburg is shameful in the highest degree. I can attribute it to nothing else than a miserable selfishness and sheer cowardice. They are too mean to assist those who protect them, and afraid to venture from their homes for fear they may run against secesh. Great numbers of teams and farmers have been pressed into the service. They are well paid, but it would be only justice if compelled to labor without remuneration.¹²

The farmers filed claims with Leib for vandalization of property and loss of horses and wagons. They received no payment. Leib even could not pay Harrison County men he hired as civilian employees. He borrowed money to meet this payroll as he explained in the following letter:

It is true that I paid some of my employees in Wheeling money, which then as now passed here at par, and I paid them because many with tears in their eyes begged me for money, declaring that they had not a cent, that their families had nothing to eat, and that they were almost naked, which was true.

Many of the employees, who were sent me, proved almost worthless, and it was due the government I should get rid of them. I had not a dollar, I knew not how soon I would receive it, and accepted the offer of John List, Esq.,¹³ to loan me what money I wanted.

The first loan was for \$6,500, which was approved by Brig. Gen'l W.S. Rosecrans, who endorses my due bill for that amount, the second was for \$3000 after he left here, all of which I have paid, and have the due bills in my possession.

I also borrowed of Mr. D. Koonce \$900, of A. Hayes \$160, of T.L. Moore \$300, of T. McKinley \$155, and of other persons smaller sums, all of whom are leading citizens, who will testify, that I got the money in good faith, and that they were apprised of the purpose for which it was to be used.¹⁴

Citizens whose property had been commandeered hated Leib; civilians who were forced to take the oath of allegiance to the United States before leaving Clarksburg hated Leib. Eli Marsh, a power politically in Harrison County who before Leib's arrival had his Union friend Waldo P. Goff speak to the post commandant who then excused the man from taking the oath before leaving the city limits to travel to his home, was refused a pass by Leib. Marsh had his Union friends call on Leib. Leib was adamant as to the oath taking. "[Marsh] remained in town six weeks, growling at the Government, the tyranny of the military authorities; and had his pseudo-Union friends write and telegraph the Commanding General, requesting that an order might be issued giving him permission to leave, but to no purpose.

"After six weeks of lamentation he took the oath."¹⁵

To be ready to travel in inclement weather the mountains of Braxton County after Rosecrans¹⁶ had moved south to launch his Kanawha campaign, Leib imported mules which proved to be "wild as so many deer." Leib did not enhance his reputation in Clarksburg when he solved the problem by sending for men who could break the animals:

At considerable expense, and after much trouble, we succeeded in securing a party of French Creoles and Mexican Greasers, from the prairies and mountains of the far West, who were so familiar with them, that, as if by magic, the mules became tractable and gentle, and in

less than two weeks they had two hundred ready for packing. It was a matter of wonder to the Rip VanWinkles of the town, to see two hundred wild mules running loose in the streets, following, like so many sheep, on old grey horse, from whose neck was suspended a cow-bell; but their indignation was excited, that the animals, instead of wading through mud a foot deep, preferred the sidewalks. The hideous and uncouth appearance of some of the men, their unintelligible jargon and wild war-whoops, as they sometimes dashed through the streets when off duty, was a great cause of complaint, to say nothing of the grumbling of a Nabob, whose palatial residence was erected too near the mule-yard, and whose morning slumbers were disturbed by their hideous braying; nor yet the indignation of some antiquated beldam, when a refractory brute, upon being driven to water, would breach her dilapidated and rotten fence. Over a cup of tea was the Quartermaster freely discussed for permitting these things, his official conduct criticised, and his most sacred private relations canvassed.¹⁷

And the soldiers, most of them, hated Leib:

The notorious "Q. M.," Capt. Leib, has charge of the post at Clarksburg, and immense army supplies are in his possession. I made his acquaintance on my way out, and renewed it on my return, and personally I am greatly indebted to him for courtesies. But, notwithstanding this, I feel it a duty to say that my impressions of the gentleman were very unfavorable.

Everybody about Clarksburg, except those in his immediate employ, seem to despise him. From Clarksburg to Cheat Mountain, I heard him cursed along the whole line and frequently spoken of as a disgrace to the position. Yet his business powers are great, and he transacts an immense amount of business with great ease. He seems to enjoy to the fullest extent, the confidence of General Rosecrans, and the War Department appointed him to his present position, after his nomination [as lieutenant] had been rejected by the Senate.¹⁸ He is either a great scoundrel, holding important political secrets, which prevent his removal, or is the worst abused man in the country. I leave you to discuss the case further.¹⁹

Late in July the consensus had Leib a scoundrel. Why would he have borrowed money personally from a Wheeling bank and from individuals in Clarksburg if he were not speculating in government funds? Didn't he require receipts for goods in duplicate so that he could twice collect from the government for purchases?: "One wiseacre announced very triumphantly that he had caught us cheating the Government. We purchased a small amount of oats from him, and took duplicate receipts for the money, when he declared he had been obliged to give two receipts for the same thing; that Captain Leib had told him he must have two, and he knew Captain Leib was 'cheating the Government, doing that way.'"²⁰

Worst of all, Leib had alienated Senator John S. Carlile.²¹ Leib gave his view of the cause of the rupture with the senator:

Feeling more and more the necessity of having a storehouse for the protection of the large amount of public property in our hands, we resolved to build one. It was to be rapidly erected; the order for the lumber given to parties, who represented that they could, and would, furnish it by a specified time, but the time passed; new promises were made daily, and as often broken, until we rescinded the order; and sending to Parkersburg, obtained it at once.

The building was finished, and a magnificent one it is, being eighty feet front, and one hundred and forty-four deep.

The lumber firm, feeling aggrieved and indignant that we would not wait their pleasure, and permit them to take their own time to furnish the material, reported us to Washington for having annulled the order, and refusing to give them "satisfaction." Their papers were indorsed by a United States Senator, who recommended our removal from that post, and we regretted that his recommendation was not acted on favorably, as for six months we begged to be relieved from duty there. For daring to do right, and not permitting thirty carpenters to be idle, at the expense of the Government, to oblige a wealthy lumber firm, we were shamefully persecuted and misrepresented. The Quartermaster-General sent us the charges, which we returned with a simple statement of facts, and we have not since heard from it.

At a later period, when erecting two large Commissary buildings, we positively refused to purchase a foot of lumber from them, and were again reported, with a statement that we had refused to take their offer, which they said was two dollars per thousand less than we were purchasing it from a Seseessionist at Parkersburg — both of which statements were false, as we paid less than they asked; and the party from whom it was procured, was a devoted friend of the Union, and had voted for Mr. Lincoln for President.²²

By July word had reached Clarksburg that Leib's appointment had been rejected in Washington by the Senate. A stream of letters was sent from Clarksburg. On August 7, 1861, General Rosecrans wrote Quartermaster General Meigs: "Quartermaster Leib is a man of energy and ability and I think, considering the short time he has been on duty, the ablest I have seen and I think it a great pity if you could not keep him. You could get many worse and few better." On August 8 Clarksburg citizens Charles Lewis, Luther Haymond, Nathan Goff, Thomas L. Moore, J. M. Bowcock, Burton Despard, Notley A. Shuttleworth, C. L. Lewis, John Irwin, and Benjamin F. Shuttleworth wrote Simon Cameron, secretary of war: "The undersigned citizens of Clarksburg without solicitation or knowledge of Capt. Chas. Leib desire to bear testimony to his gentlemanly deportment since he has been among us to his energy, promptness, and business qualification... We believe him to be the right man in the right place, and that his services could not be dispensed without detriment to the public service." On August 9 Captain and Assistant Quartermaster J. G. Chandler wrote the secretary of war: "His [Leib's] removal from office at this juncture would be severely felt here and his place cannot be filled here without serious inconvenience to the service, in my opinion, and without embarrassing the operations of the Army of Occupation in Western Virginia."²³ John List wrote for a Wheeling newspaper: "The charge that Capt. Leib has been speculating in Government funds, so far as I have any knowledge, is incorrect; and instead of being abused, he should have credit for having exerted himself to the extent he has in endeavoring to facilitate, by every means in his power, the operations of the army in Virginia."²⁴

On August 9 Leib was granted a ten-day leave of absence with Capt. J. G. Chandler assigned to perform the duties of the post and depot during Leib's absence.²⁵ Leib traveled to Washington. On August 20 he was reappointed first lieutenant and assistant quartermaster and on the same day he wrote from Washington accepting the appointment.²⁶

Senator Carlile, on September 13, 1861, wrote General Meigs from Wheeling:

I have sent to the War Dept. to Mr. Scott quite a number of communications as to Leib. The fact is the whole atmosphere is full of loud complaints against Leib and his continuance in this region is injuring our cause to say nothing of the loss the gov't suffers. The annexed statement is from a young man represented to be thoroughly reliable and truthful and I am satisfied he is entitled to full credit having taken pains from quite a lengthened conversation with him to satisfy myself as to his reliability. He is candid and frank in his manner and feels an interest in the success of our cause and in the honest discharge of public duty. I forwarded to Mr. Scott yesterday a letter from Mr. Lawhead of Clarksburg, a gentleman well known to be [sic] and I will add the correspondents of all the papers in this region and Pittsburg denounce this man Leib. Either dismiss him or take him away from here.

[The annexed statement, in Carlile's handwriting, reads as follows:]

I, Thomas Totten, am a citizen of this city [Wheeling]. At the request of Capt. Craig of the U.S. Army I left here in charge of horses to Clarksburg on the 11th July last and on the 12th July I engaged as teamster at Clarksburg and acted as such until the 6th day of this month I left. I received my pay up to the 1st from Capt. Leib, Quarter Master at Clarksburg, who paid me in Wheeling Bank paper. The habit of said Leib is to treat in a rude and insulting manner all who had business with him frequently telling them with an oath to leave him. I have frequently seen said Leib so drunk that he was incapable of attending to business. The statements here made can be corroborated [sic] by an indefinite number of other witnesses who like myself have had the misfortunate [sic] to be brought in contact with said Leib.²⁷

Leib was too busy keeping supplies flowing to Gauley Bridge to pay heed to complaints as to his manner of operation:

The body of the rebels had been driven from the country lying between Harrison County and Gauley River. It was not deemed necessary to retain a large force there and, by degrees, the troops were withdrawn, only part of the Thirty-sixth Ohio Regiment having been left to protect the Union citizens, and to keep open the roads.

This fact becoming known to the rebels, a number of parties of guerrillas, or bushwhackers, returned, shot down Union men, cut the telegraph wire, stole the horses of the couriers, and occasionally took one a prisoner, and sent him to Richmond.

The bushwhackers are composed of a class of men who are noted for their ignorance, indolence, duplicity, and dishonesty; whose vices and passions peculiarly fit them for the warfare in which they are engaged, and upon which the civilized world looks with horror. Imagine a stolid, vicious-looking countenance, an ungainly figure, and an awkward if not graceful, spinal curve in the dorsal region, acquired by laziness and indifference to maintaining an erect posture; a garb of the coarsest texture of homespun linen or linsey-woolsey, tattered and torn, and so covered with dirt as not to enable one to guess its original color; a dilapidated, rimless hat or cap of some wild animal covering his head, which has not been combed for months; his feet covered with moccasins [sic], and a rifle by his side, a powder-horn and shot-pouch slung around his neck, and you have the beau ideal of a Western Virginia bushwhacker. Thus equipped, he sallies forth with the stealth of the panther, and lies in wait for a straggling soldier, courier, or loyal citizen, to whom the only warning given of his presence, is the sharp click of his deadly rifle. He kills for the sake of killing, and plunders for the love of gain. Parties of these ferocious beasts, under cover of darkness, frequently steal into a neighborhood, burn the residences of loyal citizens, rob stores, tan-yards, and farm-houses of every thing they can put to use, especially arms, ammunition, leather, clothing, bedding, and salt. They do not stop at pillage, for oftentimes is their track marked with blood. The leaders of some of these bands have acquired great notoriety by their cold-blooded brutality and adroitness at theft. One of these is a man who, in days gone by, enjoyed, to a great degree, the confidence of the people of Western Virginia. He, together with ex-Governor Wise, did much to make bushwhacking respectable in the estimation of the depraved and ignorant. The political leaders, who instigated these men to engage in bushwhacking, generally keep aloof from actual participation in the war, only planning forays, participating in the gains of theft, and conveying stolen horses and goods to a market where they can be disposed of to an advantage.....

The result of this devilish mode of warfare in Western Virginia, has been the destruction of every interest, and almost every pursuit, save that of the soldier. Towns have been burned or pillaged, farm-houses deserted, agriculture has been neglected, commerce destroyed, and interests of education disregarded

Notwithstanding the threats that the Courier Line should be broken up, it was kept in running order. As fast as a horse was stolen, we replaced him, armed the Couriers with Navy revolvers, and directed them to shoot whoever attempted to interfere with them when in the discharge of duty. This, to some extent, intimidated the bushwhackers, who are mostly cowards, and do not care to get within the range of a pistol.²⁸

Leib set the date as "about the middle of October" that Captain Chandler telegraphed: "General Rosecrans has concluded to commence the transportation of supplies for this column by way of the Kanawha. By this, we shall save some thirty-five miles land transportation, which is important for many reasons. I shall give you notice of the change; do nothing until you hear further, and send on as usual."²⁹ But the shift of the base for supplying the forces in the Kanawha Valley may have been earlier since a correspondent wrote late in September: "Rosecrans lies at Cross Lanes, and a portion of the 'brigade of the Kanawha' is still guarding Gauley Bridge which has become the base of operations instead of Clarksburg."³⁰

The pressure of supplying federal forces was off the Clarksburg base. Carlisle had a change of heart when he visited Clarksburg, where he instructed Leib to wire Simon Cameron, secretary of war, on October 26, 1861: "Will write you fully on my return to Wheeling. Perhaps it would be well to make no change here, until you have seen what I will write."³¹

Citizens continued to hold indignation meetings. Letters continued to flow to Washington, one of which, addressed to the secretary of state, is copied below in the original spelling and punctuation:

Clarksburgh Va. Oct [1861]

Hon. W. H. Seward

Sir I most honorably wish your attention upon my unhappy circumstances. I am a British subject born and raised in Kingston City Canada West. Came to Ohio on a visit to my friend in Aprile last. At Bellefontain Logen Co. thair was a man heiring men to come here to drive too horse teems for the Government at twenty five dollars pr. month. I came along to drive when here wee wor told by the yard master Mr. Ronyon that thair was no teams except mules which had six mules in a team and only wood give \$25 pr. month for driving. most of the men went home. I got four horses to drive at \$25 pr. month made a trip with a mule train under Cpt Wells. When we returned Cpt Lybe [Leib] was paying all the men up to the first of this month and sweering them in to the servis of the Government to be redy to take up arms when ever caled upon. I refused to take the oath the clark of the office said if I would not take the oath I wood be discharged as it was an act of Congress to discharge anny person refusing to take the oath and that I would see Cpt. Lybe in the morning Cpt. Lybe is quartermaster. Next morning Mcentosh came he attends to geting teams. loaded and started he told me to hitch my horses and go with a train of presed teames. That wass taking me from the train I belonged. In afew more minits came Mr. Runion he said I had beter be quick and go and take that oath or he wood send a squad of soldiers after me. I told him he mite do as he pleased that I wood not take the oath. he then said I wass an english son of abitch meaner than anny greenhorn irish man. after my team wass loaded Mcentosh told me to go to the office Capt Lybe wanted to see me and pay me before I started as I had signed the pay role the evening before. I got Cpt Wells to go with me. Cpt Lybe wished to now why I objected the oath. when I gave him the reason which I have explained to you he asked Cpt Wells if I wass a good four horse driver. Cpt Wells said I wass and allways on hand to do my duty. Cpt Lybe said I mite go to work he would not discharg me. I then asked him for my pay he said for me to leve the office he wood pay me when he plesed. The train wass redy I refused to go untill I wood get my pay. in the afternoon Mcentosh told me to come to the office and he wood get me my pay wee went and when the clark wass paying me he asked me if I had taken the oath. I said Cpt Lybe had given me liberty to work without takeing oath he then told Mcentosh that I had aught to be discharged and paid in full. I told Mcentosh I wanted to buy some things in the store that I needed he said no I must get on my wagon and drive untill I overtook the rest of the teames. I told if that wass the way I wood drive no more. I got a man whoo said he wood go in my place. Mcentosh got two soldiers and sent me to the Gaurd house where I wass kept untill that day two weeks then I wass brought before Cpt More Commander of the post he asked me whot I wass charged with. when I stated my cercumstances, he said thair wass no charg against me. He asked if I wood take an oath not to take up arms against the united stats, which I did take he then gave me a permit to pass on the Railroad by paying my one fair. I then went to Runion and asked him whot I wass to do that Cpt More had gave me a relese. he went to the clark and told him I wass discharged to make up my time and take out the 15 days I wass in the guard house. he then said to me that would doo. I mite leve. I told him if he could pay me, with whot mony I had, I could get home. he said I could get no mony untill the first of the next month, and if I attempted to stay untill then, he wood put me in the Guard house again. thay wood not give a due bill that I mite leve it with some person to collect and send it to me. I have to pay four dollars per week for my board. I offered to go to work. thay wood not give me anny. I asked Cpt Lybe for a pass to go to gually bridge whare thay need men verry much. he wood not. he said I could get no pass. thair is severl men hoo is as bad of as I am. a few of them wass in the Guard house when I wass, whoo after driving over three months and wass all moste naked refused to drive untill thay got some monny to buy close thay wore put in the Guard house by Runion. one man served over three months in the army over three months teaming and is over 46 years old and thay will not let him go. Cpt Lybe, Runion and Mcentosh I think is not fitt for thair posishion for every man that has had anny dealings with them says thay ar robing the Government, the paymaster of the soldiers told Cpt Lybe he had beter leve here for that he had too many anamys here. The Guard house is a most miserable place windows broke you may sleep on the flore. I could not eat anny thing in it. I am sure I wood have died only for the sargent of the guard he let me go to the Hotell once a day by sending a soldier to guard me. For the fact that I am a British subject you can refer to Sir Henery Smith Kingston City, C.W. Member of parliment, or to J. S. Jordan, Bellefontain, Logen Co. Ohio.

I think you will allow me pay for the time I wass in the Guard house and the time thay have kept me here paying my board. I would most kindly ask your honer to return me a few lines by telegraph to let me know whot you do in this case. I would like it before the first of the month. I will be most cincerly thankfull ever yur deter

Adress

your Truly
Robert Irwin Jordan
Clarksburgh
Harison Co., Va. 32

General Rosecrans wrote General Meigs on December 18, 1861, asking that the order for Leib's removal be withdrawn.³³ Rosecrans wrote Henry Wilson, chairman of the military committee of the U.S. Senate December 23, 1861:

Captain Charles Leib was sent to this Department inexperienced, and without experienced clerks; stationed at Clarksburg at a time when large and imperative demands were made on the Quartermaster's Department for every kind of service and supply. His devotion to duty was untiring, and his success very creditable.

After his rejection by the Senate, I have continued to watch his course, and it has been carefully observed by the Chief Quartermaster. My conclusion is, that he is a capable, energetic business man, and that his appointment will be a benefit to the service. I hope he may not be refused it.³⁴

Leib scratched a note to General Meigs on February 22, 1862, to inform the general that the Cincinnati Commercial had stated that Leib had received \$1,000,000 not accounted for. Leib told Meigs that he had received a little over \$153,000 all paid out. He had the receipts on file. The 1861 third quarter papers had been sent the day before and the fourth quarter papers would be sent soon.³⁵ Next day Leib received a telegram notifying him that his appointment had been rejected by the senate. Leib explained the reason for the rejection:

It was a cowardly lie invented by an enemy, who desired to do us an injury. We were rejected for reasons of a political character, through the influence of a Senator noted for his heartlessness, and the pertinacity with which he follows those who will not do his bidding, and act in concert with his tools in the State he represents, and of which we are a citizen [Illinois?!].

For months, parties in his interest at Washington City, boasted that we would be defeated, and yet no charge was brought against us but what we could meet. We were aware of the hostility of this Senator, but our duties were so arduous and pressing, that, in justice to the service, we could not, nor would we ask leave of absence to go to Washington to secure our confirmation.

He defeated us at the former session of Congress, but we were re-appointed upon recommendation, and at the urgent request, of Brigadier-General William S. Rosecrans, Commanding the Department; Brigadier-General B. F. Kelley, Brigadier-General James Oakes, Captain John G. Chandler, A. Q. M., the Chief Quartermaster of the Department of Western Virginia, and a large number of officers then stationed at Clarksburg. Their letters in our behalf were filed in the War Department; but when they were wanted, while our confirmation was pending before the Senate, they could not be found.³⁶

Leib refused to ask for re-nomination, the move army officers urged. Instead he went to Cincinnati to close his books and to write a book telling of his experiences as quartermaster. He closed the book with these words: "On the first day of April we were relieved from duty by Captain J. M. Huntington, A.Q.M. We had no regrets at retiring from the Department. We had done our duty, and gained the confidence of the General commanding the Department, and the Chief Quartermaster ... We served the Government faithfully, and have nothing to ask of those who have done us such gross injustice."³⁷

In 1933 a reporter interviewed Patrick Flannery who for a time in 1861 had served as orderly to Captain Leib. At the time of the interview Mr. Flannery was eighty-nine years old. He remembered Leib as a big man physically and "as ugly in looks as a street corner." Flannery said that Leib's head was big, and that his coat scarcely went halfway around his chest. He was low and heavy-set and weighed about 300 pounds. There were barrels and barrels of whiskey in the commissary department, the aged man recalled, and while he was Leib's orderly, the latter gave him money frequently to get him a "bimper" and then had him hold the liquor to his mouth so that he could drink it. And while the captain sometimes had "jim jams", yet the liquor never got the officer down Flannery added. "Despite his faults, Captain Leib was a good fellow," Flannery concluded in speaking of the quartermaster.

Leib had a stupendous task in handling army supplies, teams and the like, when first he took charge in Clarksburg, as recalled by Flannery, but within two weeks' time Flannery said that Leib had everything in running order.³⁸

FOOTNOTES

1. "I suppose that man [a "horse doctor"] and his friends, like many others who can't control this Department, will curse me, but I guess I can stand it. I came here to do my duty, not to be popular." Charles Leib, Nine Months in the Quartermaster's Department; or The Chances for Making a Million, p. 165.
2. Arthur Bennett, Jr., in a speech before the Harrison County Historical Society, May 16, 1979.
3. National Archives, microcopy 619, roll 34, frames 123-L to 125-L.
4. *Ibid.*, microcopy 619, 11Q 1861, roll 49.
5. Leib, p. 17.
6. "The surrounding hills [at Clarksburg] are less steep than those of Grafton; the landscape here is more open; and as a matter of course this position in a military point of view is more accessible. This topographical circumstance is perhaps the cause of those breastworks which front our camp on the peak of an opposite knoll, and which remain to testify to the vigilance of our brave Indiana predecessors at this post. This circumstance likewise, in connection with the fact of our more interior position here, is also the explanation of the complete environment of this city by camps." Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10, 1861.
7. Leib, pp. 18-26.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 28
9. Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10, 1861.
10. Leib, pp. 28-9.
11. "I can assure you from personal observation that there is much sympathy with the Southern cause, or at least much badly concealed antipathy to the soldiery now on Virginia soil in every place we have halted since we crossed the frontier river. This feeling ... may be nothing more than a property apprehension of individual licentiousness. And I am forced in truth to admit that there are grounds in their short experience for such apprehension. They tell us of such petty depredations as stealing chickens, killing hog, firing into bar rooms when more whisky is refused, etc. But it is not fair to blame the whole body for an act of a member as one or two ruffians can disgrace in this way an entire regiment." Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10, 1861.
12. Cincinnati Times, Cincinnati, Ohio, n.d. National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
13. John List was a Wheeling financier whom the Restored Government of Virginia sent to Weston to carry to Wheeling the portion of the fund appropriated to build an asylum at Weston deposited before the outbreak of hostilities in a Weston bank. Ambler and Summers, West Virginia: the Mountain State, p. 205. A newspaper reported on July 5, 1861, that federal forces had captured five prisoners, including a rebel paymaster, and \$27,000 deposited in a Weston bank, all on the way to rebel forces. The same newspaper on August 16, 1861, stated that \$27,000 had been removed for safety in Wheeling by Col. Tyler of the 7th Ohio. Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, July 5, August 16, 1861.
14. Charles Leib in a letter to General Montgomery C. Meigs, quartermaster general, September 30, 1861, National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
15. Leib, p. 185.
16. General Rosecrans replaced General McClellan who was assigned to The Army of the Potomac July 22, 1861.
17. Leib, p. 111.
18. "In July, 1861, his [Leib's] appointment expired by constitutional limitation not having been confirmed by the Senate. The various communications on file in this office show that he continued on duty at Clarksburg to the date of his second appointment as Assistant Quarter Master." National Archives, Personal Histories of Regular Officers of the Quartermaster Department, 1846 - 1905, R.G. 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Volume L-P, pp. 59-60.
19. Cincinnati Times, Cincinnati, Ohio, n.d., National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
20. Leib, p. 39
21. Citizen of Clarksburg elected to the U. S. Senate in July 1861 by the Restored Government of Virginia.
22. Leib, pp. 36-8.
23. National Archives, microcopy 619, roll 36, 426-L.
24. Wheeling Intelligencer, n.d., National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
25. National Archives, Personal Histories of Regular Officers of the Quartermaster Department, 1846-1905, R. G. 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Volume L-P, pp. 59-60.
26. National Archives, microcopy 619, roll 35, 237-L.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Leib, pp. 125-8.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
30. Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 1, 1861.
31. Leib., p. 67.
32. National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 491, "Charles Leib."
33. *Ibid.*, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
34. Leib, p. 188.
35. National Archives, Quartermaster Consolidated File, Box 553, "Charles Leib."
36. Leib, pp. 186-7.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.
38. Sunday Exponent-Telegram, Clarksburg, West Virginia, July 23, 1933.

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