

Gentlemen:

On April 12, 1961, about 28 months from now, the country embarks upon the most elaborate commemorative celebration in its history.

That day marks the 100th anniversary of the firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor and the beginning of the American Civil War.

President Eisenhower has named a commission to supervise the national observances - books and magazines are stressing the dramatic happenings of the era - TV networks are planning a series of Civil War spectacles.

Centennial programs will commemorate the great battles, the outstanding personalities, the military and political campaigns, from Fort Sumter to Appomattox.

This increasing emphasis on the entire Civil War period should assure stronger reader interest for AMERICAN CENTENNIAL.

Five times a week, beginning January 1, 1959, AMERICAN CENTENNIAL will look back to the corresponding date in 1859 for a nostalgic glance at the people, places, and events of the Tragic Era in American history.

- \* A man named U. S. Grant gives up his farm in Missouri. A failure.
- \* The clipper ship, N. B. Palmer sails into New York harbor, only 82 days out of Shanghai, a record.
- \* Attorney Abe Lincoln attends a drinking party in Springfield, Illinois.
- \* Women of the South purchase the dilapidated plantation at Mt. Vernon.

That's the kind of special reporting from the American past that AMERICAN CENTENNIAL brings alive. Stories of Lincoln, John Brown, Sherman, Grant, Lee. Of gold discoveries at Pike's Peak, of Indian wars, slave ships, stage coaches and river boats.

For personal credentials:

Fifteen years in newspaper work in and about Los Angeles - seventeen years in radio and television news, eight of them as manager of News & Special Events for NBC, Pacific Division. A life-long interest in American history, plus a file of names, dates and events extending from 1859 through 1865.

I'm attaching a two-week sample file.

Roger E. Sprague  
1542 Western Avenue  
Glendale, California



AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 1, 1859

---

LIEUT. COL. ROBERT E. LEE, NOW ON LEAVE FROM THE ARMY TO ADMINISTER THE ESTATE OF HIS LATE FATHER-IN-LAW, GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS, IS AT MAKING A FINE RECORD IN THE MEXICAN WAR, HAS GIVEN UP HIS MISSOURI FARM AND TODAY BECAME A PARTNER IN THE ST. LOUIS REAL ESTATE FIRM OF GRANT & BOGGS.

IN NEW YORK, THE NEW AND ULTRA-MODERN BATTLE SLOOP BROOKLYN OFFICIALLY JOINED THE ATLANTIC FLEET TODAY. SHE'LL CARRY 24 NINE-INCH SHELL-GUNS, AND TWO TEN-INCH PIVOT GUNS. UNDER FULL STEAM, THE BROOKLYN CAN MAINTAIN A SPEED OF TEN KNOTS, ALTHOUGH SHE'S 247 FEET LONG AND 43 FEET IN THE BEAM.

11  
11

AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 2, 1859

---

THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY THAT 120 MEN FROM THE WRECKED FILIBUSTERING SCHOONER SUSAN WERE LANDED YESTERDAY AT MOBILE, ALABAMA, BY THE BRITISH SLOOP BASILISK. THE CREW WAS RESCUED AFTER THE SUSAN STRUCK A REEF ONLY 60 MILES FROM BELIZE, HONDURAS.

CAPT. HARRY MAURY AND HIS MEN INTENDED TO LEAD A REVOLUTION AGAINST THE HONDURAS GOVERNMENT AND ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN OUTPOST IN LATIN AMERICA, OPEN TO SLAVERY AND LINKED POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY WITH THE AMERICAN SLAVE STATES.

GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN SAY CAPT. MAURY WILL BE INDICTED FOR VIOLATING THE NEUTRALITY LAWS BY CONDUCTING A MILITARY CAMPAIGN AGAINST A FRIENDLY COUNTRY.

11  
11



AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 5, 1859

---

LIEUT. COL. ROBERT E. LEE, NOW ON LEAVE FROM THE ARMY TO ADMINISTER THE ESTATE OF HIS LATE FATHER-IN-LAW, GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS, IS AT ARLINGTON FOR WHAT HE REFERS TO AS THE NECESSARY BUT UNPLEASANT TASK OF RENTING OUT SOME OF THE ARLINGTON NEGROES.

THE AFFAIRS OF MR. CUSTIS, THE ADOPTED SON OF GEORGE WASHINGTON, ARE REPORTED IN CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION, AND LEE IS QUOTED AS SAYING HE MAY BE FORCED TO RESIGN HIS ARMY COMMISSION IN ORDER TO PROPERLY OVERSEE THE ESTATE.

11  
11

AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 6, 1859

---

THE WASHINGTON UNION, REGARDED AS THE MOUTHPIECE OF THE PRO-SOUTHERN DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION, SAID TODAY THAT THERE IS A DANGEROUS PLOT AFOOT IN THE SOUTH TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN SECTIONAL AGITATION.

THIS SURPRISING REPORT FROM THE PRO-SLAVERY UNION SUPPORTS OTHER PAPERS IN CHARGING THERE IS A CONSPIRACY AMONG SOUTHERN LEADERS TO BREAK UP THEIR OWN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND INSURE THE ELECTION OF A REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT IN 1860 AS A SURE MEANS FOR DRIVING THE SOUTH INTO SECESSION.

THE NASHVILLE, TENN., PATRIOT IDENTIFIES THE LEADERS OF THE CAMPAIGN AS WILLIAM L. YANCEY OF GEORGIA AND SENATOR JEFFERSON DAVIS OF MISSISSIPPI.

11  
11



## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 7, 1859

---

DELAYED REPORTS RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON FROM GOV. ALFRED CUMMING INDICATE THAT THE MORMON LEADER BRINGHAM YOUNG HAS FINALLY ACCEPTED FEDERAL SUPREMACY OVER THE TERRITORY OF UTAH.

THE 2000 SOLDIERS STATIONED AS A WARNING TO THE MORMONS AT CAMP FLOYD, 30 MILES SOUTHWEST OF SALT LAKE CITY, ARE BEING SUPPLIED BY THE FREIGHTING OUTFIT OF RUSSELL, MAJORS AND WADDELLS. EACH TRAIN SENT IN TO THE CAMP FROM NEBRASKA TERRITORY CONSISTS OF 35 MEN, 26 WAGONS, 160 YOKE OF CATTLE, AND FOUR MULES.

EACH WAGON CARRIES 5500 POUNDS OF FREIGHT, AND IN GOOD WEATHER, A TRAIN MOVES ABOUT 20 MILES A DAY. THE FREIGHTERS ARE WELL ARMED, EACH CARRYING A COLT REVOLVER, A BOWIE KNIFE, A RIFLE, AND A BIBLE.

11  
11

## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 8, 1859

---

ADVENTURERS FROM EVERY STATE IN THE UNION ARE THRONGING INTO KANSAS TERRITORY IN PREPARATION FOR THE SPRING RUSH TO THE NEW GOLD FIELDS NORTH OF PIKE'S PEAK.

MEN JUST BACK FROM THE FIELDS SAY THAT GOLD IS TO BE HAD FOR THE DIGGING ALL ALONG CHERRY CREEK. THEY REPORT THAT THE MINERS HAVE ORGANIZED TWO COMMUNITIES, NAMED AURARIA AND DENVER.

EDITOR HORACE GREELEY OF THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE ADVISES SINGLE MEN WITH \$50 CASH AND PLENTY OF "GET UP AND GO" TO AT LEAST SET OUT FOR PIKE'S PEAK. FINE WORK ALONG THE WAY IF NECESSARY, HE SAYS, DECIDE LATER WHETHER TO KEEP ON TO THE GOLD FIELDS.

11  
11



## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 9, 1859

---

SENATOR SLIDELL OF LOUISIANA SAYS HE WILL INTRODUCE A BILL TOMORROW APPROPRIATING \$40,000,000 FOR THE PURCHASE OF CUBA FROM SPAIN AS PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT BUCHANAN IN HIS ANNUAL MESSAGE TO CONGRESS.

THE PROPOSAL IS MEETING BITTER OPPOSITION FROM NORTHERN SENATORS AS A SCHEME FOR SPENDING FEDERAL MONEY TO EXPAND THE POWER OF THE SLAVE STATES INTO THE CARIBBEAN.

IN SAN FRANCISCO, THE PLACERVILLE AND HUMBOLDT TELEGRAPH COMPANY ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF ITS NEW LINE TO GENOA IN THE CARSON VALLEY, PUTTING THE PACIFIC COAST INTO TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH UTAH TERRITORY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

11  
11

## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. <sup>12</sup>~~11~~, 1859

---

PRESIDENT BUCHANAN TODAY SENT CONGRESS A SPECIAL MESSAGE ANNOUNCING OFFICIALLY WHAT ALL WASHINGTON HAS KNOWN FOR DAYS, THAT THE SLAVE SHIP WANDERER HAS LANDED A CARGO OF AFRICAN NEGROES ON THE GEORGIA COAST.

SENATOR DOUGLAS OF ILLINOIS, JUST BACK FROM A TOUR OF THE SOUTH, SAYS THAT DOZENS OF SLAVE SHIPS HAVE LANDED THEIR ILLICIT CARGOES AT SOUTHERN PORTS IN THE LAST TWO YEARS.

SOUTHERN LEADERS ARGUE THAT THE SLAVE TRADE SHOULD BE RE-OPENED LEGALLY. THE PRICE OF SLAVES HAS RISEN SO GREATLY THAT FIELD HANDS NOW SELL FOR AS MUCH AS \$1500, AND THE IMPORTATION OF NEGROES FROM AFRICA IS SEEN AS THE ONLY WAY TO BRING THE PRICES DOWN.

11  
11



## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 13, 1859

---

THE FREE-SOIL AGITATOR JOHN BROWN ARRIVED YESTERDAY IN OSSAWATOMIE, KANSAS, TO JOIN THE NEGRO SLAVES STOLEN IN HIS MISSOURI RAID LAST MONTH. HE'LL ESCORT THEM OUT OF THE TERRITORY AND ON TO FREEDOM IN CANADA.

PRESIDENT BUCHANAN HAS OFFERED A REWARD OF \$250 FOR THE APPREHENSION OF BROWN, BUT BROWN REPLIED BY BRAZENLY OFFERING \$25 FOR BUCHANAN.

WITH A DOZEN OR MORE FOLLOWERS, BROWN CROSSED INTO MISSOURI FROM KANSAS, INVADED TWO PLANTATIONS, AND TOOK AWAY ELEVEN SLAVES, AND CONSIDERABLE LIVE-STOCK. ONE MAN WHO RESISTED WAS SHOT AND KILLED.

H  
H

## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 14, 1859

---

FIGURES FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU SHOW THAT IMMIGRATION FELL OFF SHARPLY LAST YEAR.

THE NUMBER OF ALIENS ENTERING THE COUNTRY WAS PUT AT 123,126 COMPARED TO 251,000 IN 1857 AND MORE THAN 400,000 IN THE PEAK YEAR OF 1854. THE DECLINE IN IMMIGRATION FROM IRELAND APPEARS TO BE A MAJOR REASON FOR THE DECREASE. THE LARGEST SINGLE GROUP LAST YEAR CAME FROM GERMANY.

THE CLIPPER SHIP ADELAIDE HAS ARRIVED IN SAN FRANCISCO, 133 DAYS OUT OF NEW YORK. AFTER TRAVELLING 10 DAYS IN COMPANY WITH THE GREAT REPUBLIC, THE ADELAIDE FELL BACK AND THE GREAT REPUBLIC BEAT HER IN BY 13 DAYS.

H  
H



## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 15, 1859

---

CRITICISM OF THE ATLANTIC CABLE IS BECOMING UNIVERSAL. ALTHOUGH THE CABLE TRANSMITTED SOME INTELLIGIBLE MESSAGES LAST SUMMER WHEN FIRST LAID, IT HAS SINCE LAPSED INTO WHAT LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER CALLS "SILENT CONVULSIONS."

THE PAPER SAYS THE WIRES SEEM TO BE SAYING: "I'M NOT DEAD, BUT SPEECHLESS." IT THEORIZES THAT THE INDECIPHERABLE IMPULSES THAT COME THROUGH ARE CAUSED BY ELECTRIC EELS CONTACTING THE CABLE.

DESPITE THE RIDICULE, DR. S. F. B. MORSE AND CYRUS FIELD, THE PROMOTERS, SAY THEY WILL TRY AGAIN, PERHAPS WITH A MORE HEAVILY INSULATED CABLE.

||  
||

## AMERICAN CENTENNIAL

JAN. 16, 1859

---

THE CLIPPER SHIP N. B. PALMER SAILED INTO NEW YORK HARBOR TODAY, ONLY 82 DAYS OUT FROM SHANGHAI, EQUALLING THE WORLD'S RECORD ESTABLISHED IN 1857 BY THE CLIPPER SURPRISE.

THE N. B. PALMER IS ONE OF THE DWINDLING NUMBER OF TRUE CLIPPERS, AND DOCK-SIDE GOSSIP SAYS SHE TOO WILL BE CONVERTED. MOST OF THE CLIPPERS BUILT IN THE EARLY 1850'S ALREADY HAVE HAD THEIR MASTS LOWERED AND THEIR YARDS SHORTENED.

OWNERS HAVE BEEN DISCOURAGED BY THE FREQUENT EXPENSE OF REFITTING THE CLIPPERS. NEARLY EVERY SHIP OF THIS TYPE HAS BEEN DISMASTED AT LEAST ONCE, AND MOST ARE LEAKY FROM THE STRAIN IMPOSED BY THE LEVERAGE OF THEIR IMMENSE SPARS.

||  
||



MR. ROGER E. SPRAGUE

1542 WESTERN AVE.

GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

PLEASE SEND US AMERICAN CENTENNIAL BEGINNING JAN. 1, 1959, AT OUR USUAL RATES.

NAME: .....

PAPER: .....

ADDRESS: .....