

Figure 1. Richard Betty's index cards. MAREN MELLEN.

Major Jonathan Ladd, Paymaster

Story in Time

by Paul Mellen (MA)

This is a story about my quest to unveil the life of Major Jonathan Ladd, a Civil War paymaster whose pocket watch was saved from the gold-melting pot in the 1970s. Luckily, the watch was salvaged by Robert Betty, owner of Alco Scrap Metal in Lowell, MA. Mr. Betty spent years researching Ladd's pocket watch but did not have the Internet as a resource. Instead, he spent countless hours at local libraries, recording information about Ladd on index cards (Figure 1, above). Robert Betty is deceased, and I am continuing the research he started.

I document here the fascinating exploits of Paymaster Ladd, who was present at Lincoln's deathbed and was connected to major battles during the Civil War. I explain how his pocket watch, presented by Colonel Elisha Kellogg, led to illegal pocket watch sales to his recruits. Included here are records and testimony on the sale of pocket watches to soldiers during the Civil War, amounts sold, wholesale cost, retail cost, and profit. Ultimately, Major Ladd paid a high price for selling those pocket watches to soldiers. The investigation of this pocket watch reveals the story of Jonathan Ladd, his relation to the first casualty of the Civil War, and his associations with Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and many others.

The Story Begins with the Purchase of a Pocket Watch

I purchased the Ladd watch from the estate of Robert Betty. It is a coveted 20-size Appleton Tracy grade watch, serial number 50,141, housed in an 18K gold Robinson and Appleton case (Figure 2). It was manufactured in a run of 99 watches from November 1, 1862, to November 30, 1862. The watch has 15 jewels with a gold balance, and it was from the first run of 20-size watches produced by the newly formed Nashua Department at the American Watch

Company in Waltham, MA, in the fall of 1862. Prior to that year the Nashua Watch Company, which specialized in producing very high-quality 16-size and 20-size pocket watches, was located in Nashua, NH. The 20-size was a rare model and was associated with highly prized presentation watches. An online NAWCC archive¹ noted that in 1863 President Lincoln obtained permission from Congress to purchase 20-size Waltham pocket watches, which were presented to masters of foreign vessels instrumental in the rescue of American ships and crews during the Civil War. These Congress-approved watches were similar to Ladd's watch: Appleton Tracy grade, 20-size, housed in 18K Robinson & Appleton cases.



Figure 2. The Ladd watch. MAREN MELLEN.

Union Master of Transportation

Jonathan Ladd, Soldier

Jonathan Ladd was born in Alexandria, NH, on September 26, 1819, and moved to Lowell, MA, in 1833 when he was 14 years old. Lowell became his home, where he was a farmer and successful lawyer. In April of 1861, Ladd's civilian life changed dramatically when President Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for troops to protect the Union of the United States. Lincoln's proclamation was in response to the attack on Fort Sumter near Charleston, SC, a few days earlier. Extreme southern secessionist fervor had gripped the Confederate States and become militarized, and Lincoln called for immediate action to preserve the Union. Ladd joined the service with other Massachusetts volunteers.

The Baltimore Riot

Ladd's hometown of Lowell, MA, became the rallying point for recruits summoned by Lincoln and mustered into action by Governor Albion Andrew of Massachusetts. Governor Andrew dispatched two of Lowell's prodigal sons, Benjamin Franklin Butler as a general and Jonathan Ladd as master of transportation, to oversee the provisioning of Massachusetts recruits en route through New York City to Washington. Ladd proceeded directly to New York City, where he was headquartered at the famous Fifth Avenue Hotel. There he set up his office and prepared for the onset of Massachusetts troops, who would arrive posthaste on their way to protect President Lincoln's White House and the Capitol. All this was accomplished in a mere 48 hours from the first call from Lincoln on April 15.

Ladd's first hurdle was to get the 6th and 8th Massachusetts regiments through New York City and then on to Washington, DC. On April 19, 1861, Ladd's Massachusetts troops marched proudly down the streets of New York City, where celebrating crowds cheered and reveled with excitement and applause at every corner. This gleeful triumphant scene changed dramatically from delightful to deadly just a few hours later in Baltimore, MD. Baltimore was well known for hostility toward President Lincoln, who had stealthily passed through Baltimore at night during his inaugural train ride to Washington. At that time, Lincoln's security forces were concerned about an assassination plot by his enemies in Baltimore. There was pro-southern sentiment in Maryland, one of the nation's 15 slave states that had earned its reputation as an anti-Lincoln, anti-union, anti-northern, pro-slavery bastion of southern sympathizers. Undoubtedly, there were pro-Lincoln inhabitants, but they remained silent in fear of the secessionists.

Baltimore's secessionist supporters turned their hostilities into assaults at the site of Union troops marching down their streets. Baltimore had an ordinance prohibiting railroad steam engines from traveling within city

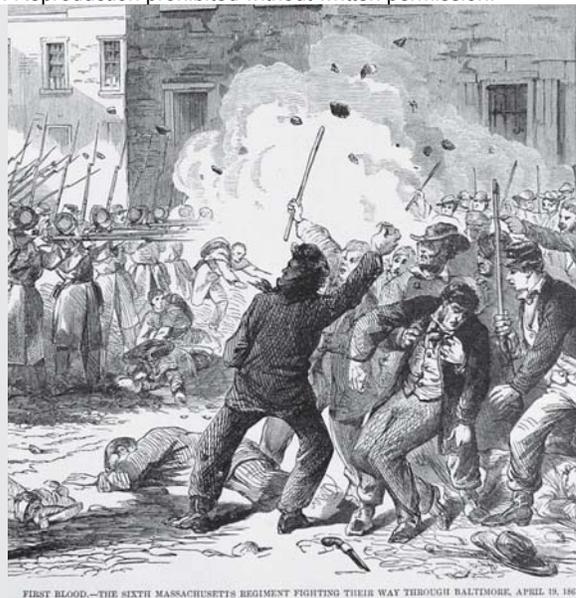


Figure 3. HARPER'S PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR.

limits, which made the troops vulnerable. Horses towed railcars full of passengers from President Street Station east of the city to Camden Station a short ten blocks west. On April 19 the mob in Baltimore halted the horse-drawn procession and forced the troops onto the street by pelting the railcars with paving stones, placing obstructions along the track, and ripping the rails up completely (Figure 3).

Jonathan Ladd dispatched the first communication about trouble in Baltimore:

From Jonathan Ladd
New York, April 19, 1861

Troops left at twelve of the clock. General Schouler has telegraphed to provide for one thousand men on Sunday Morning. Show this to General Butler.

P.S. Just got news that Penna. (Mass) Troops have been attacked in Baltimore and some killed. Telegraph wires cut.
Ladd

To Major Ames
From General Butler
Philadelphia, April 19, 1861

To: Governor Andrew, 21 Charles Street, Boston:

The Massachusetts troops were attacked in Pratt Street, Baltimore. Were assaulted with stones and pieces of iron. One man Killed with a piece of iron thrown from an iron foundry. They bore attack with utmost patience until a prominent citizen of Baltimore told them to fire upon the mob. Did so. Part of the mob responded with fire. Rest scattered. Troops fought manfully. No man offered to run. All arrived in Washington except six injured. Well cared for in Baltimore. Two killed. Twenty-five others at Washington wounded. Large meeting of citizens at Baltimore this evening. Almost unanimously denounced passage of more Northern troops through Baltimore.

B.F. Butler Brig. Genl.

This fateful Friday, April 19, 1861, was coincidentally connected to the date the American Revolutionary War started on April 19, 1775. Eighty-six years later 17-year-old Luther Crawford Ladd became the Union's first soldier to die, when his skull was crushed and he received a fatal bullet wound in Baltimore (Figure 4). Luther was Jonathan Ladd's beloved cousin, who famously expressed his dying words "All Hail to the Stars and Stripes." The War Department distributed Luther's photo and last words printed on "patriotic envelopes" that troops used to mail letters home to loved ones. Luther Ladd's memory of sacrifice boosted morale for the difficult days to come (Figure 5).

Jonathan Ladd heard the news about his cousin's death while on duty dispatching waves of Massachusetts troops to Washington. Below is an excerpt from a retrospective letter he wrote to the honorable Senator Henry Wilson from Massachusetts, chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, on July 6, 1865.

After I had got the 6th and 8th regiments thru NY City on their way to Washington, I received a telegram from the Governor to provide rations and transportation for twelve hundred men to Washington who would report to me in New York City the next day. I, a short time before, received information that the 6th Regiment had been attacked in Baltimore, in which attack, a cousin of mine Luther C. Ladd and another were slain and that communication with Washington by rail had been cut.

Ladd immediately started executing the Governor's orders to provide rations and transportation for 1,200 more men of the 5th Massachusetts regiment to meet the crisis in Baltimore and the Capitol. At first, Ladd attempted to execute his Governor's request by appealing to General Winfield Scott's staff to meet his troop's transportation needs but was told they "could not furnish it." Ladd documents his historic moment of initiative in the letter he wrote to Henry Wilson:

I immediately sought the aid of a Colonel on Gen. Scott's staff.... He referred me to Captain Tompkins whom I saw and he informed me he had no authority to furnish transportation for 1200 troops and could not furnish it. I then on my own responsibility and in the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts chartered the steamships *Ariel* and *DeSoto* and put upon them the troops and their subsistence and

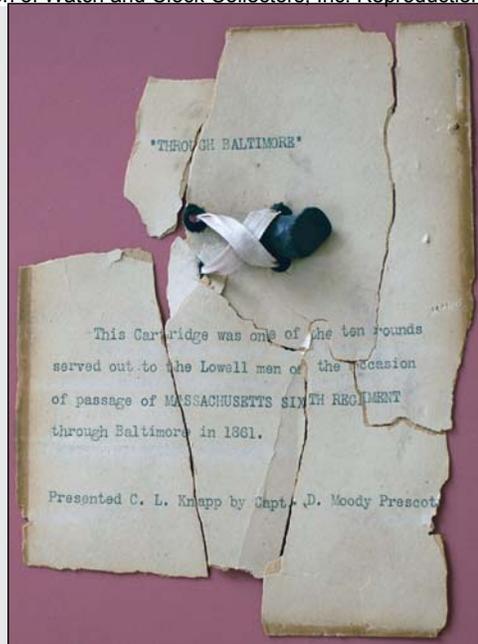


Figure 4. Luther Ladd's bullet.
LOWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



Figure 5. Luther Ladd envelope.

started them on their way to Washington which met the attention of the Governor and the Union commanders that day. I have continued in the service of my country ever since.

The New York Tribune of April 22, 1861, documented Ladd's success in dispatching the Massachusetts 5th for a secret mission aboard the steamships *Ariel* and *DeSoto*:

The Fifth Massachusetts Infantry arrived in this city last night at 8 o'clock, 1000 picked men from BOSTON and vicinity..... At a late hour the regiment marched to Pier No. 4, North River, and went aboard the steamers *Ariel* and *DeSoto*. This fleet will be conveyed by armed vessels, but its destination at present unknown. There is a detachment of engineers on board and the whole fleet is commanded by a United States Officer whose orders are secret. Massachusetts has, within six days, responded to the President's proclamation with five full regiments of Infantry, a Battalion of Rifles, and a splendid corps of Flying Artillery.

The Massachusetts 5th made their way to Washington, DC, where they protected President Lincoln and the nation's Capitol. The movie *Lincoln*, produced by Steven Spielberg, opens with a scene of an African American soldier from the Massachusetts 5th addressing President Lincoln with hopes about his future. I was excited to see a soldier from the Massachusetts 5th, knowing that Ladd made this meeting possible.

Ladd also was instrumental in transporting the Massachusetts 8th en route to Baltimore to quell the secessionist insurrection and bring that city under Union control. This was accomplished on May 13, 1861, when General Benjamin Franklin Butler led the 8th Massachusetts to permanently take over Baltimore for the duration of the war.

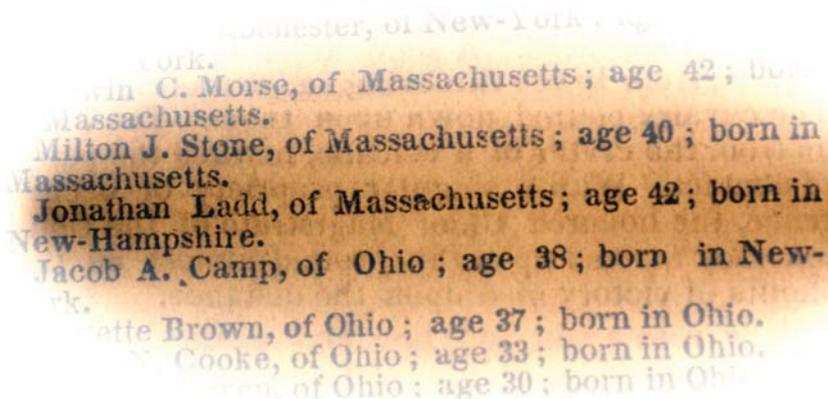


Figure 6. *New York Times*, August 7, 1861.

Jonathan Ladd, Major, and Additional Paymaster U.S. Volunteers

By the summer of 1861, Ladd had distinguished himself as an able administrator, articulate communicator, and trusted ally of President Lincoln, Governor Andrew, and General Butler. After the Baltimore Riot, Ladd's success in dispatching the Massachusetts 5th, 6th, and 8th Corps was acknowledged by Lincoln's administration, and he was promoted to major and additional paymaster in the Paymaster's Department Regiment of the U.S. Volunteers on June 1, 1861. Ladd's name appeared on the front page of the *New York Times* on August 7, 1861, immortalized in the list of military appointments confirmed by the Senate. I was fortunate to acquire an original copy of this *New York Times* (Figure 6). Ladd was stationed in Washington, DC, in the Paymaster's Department, where he developed strong contacts with Washington's elite in the Lincoln administration, especially in the Treasury and War Departments. Ladd also had some very powerful family connections. His cousins were Hannibal Hamlin, Lincoln's first term vice-president, and Lafayette Sabine Foster, president of the Senate in Lincoln's second term.

The Watch Presented to Paymaster Major Ladd by the Officers of 2d C.V.A. March 1864

As the Civil War ascended to its apex after Gettysburg, Major Jonathan Ladd was about to receive his 20-size 18K gold pocket watch. It is well known by watch collectors that 20-size Appleton Tracy movements in Robinson Appleton 18K gold cases were prized presentation watches. Earlier, I mentioned the 20-size pocket watches acquisition by President Lincoln and approved by Congress in 1863. Was Ladd's one of these watches? Why was Ladd presented with such a valuable and prestigious symbol of esteem? The watch was presented to Jonathan Ladd by Colonel Elisha Kellogg and the other officers of the 2d Connecticut Volunteer Artillery in March 1864 (see the engraving on the cuvette in Figure 7). March 1864 is a historically significant date because it heralds a major reorganization of the Army of the Potomac under General Winfield Scott Hancock, who had recently recovered from wounds sustained at the Battle of Gettysburg. Hancock's mission was to consolidate and expand the Army

of the Potomac to strike a final blow to the Confederate military force in the Shenandoah Valley. Ladd's expertise as Paymaster would have been critical to Hancock in organizing the Connecticut Volunteer Artillery. Ladd would have been responsible for administering payments to the Connecticut troops undergoing reorganization and aggressively recruiting soldiers to fill the expanded ranks in the army. Ladd would have assisted in shaping the 2d Connecticut Volunteer Artillery into the fiercest fighting force the Union could muster. From archival letters and regimental history, I learned that Jonathan Ladd and the newly formed 2d Connecticut Volunteer Artillery (2d C.V.A.) was sent to the Army of the Potomac, where it was assigned to the Second Brigade, First Division, VI Corps. The 2d C.V.A. fought at the Battle of Cold Harbor, VA, in June of 1864. Sadly, over 323 of Ladd's men were killed or wounded, including Colonel Kellogg, who suffered two bullets to the head. Because the Connecticut regiment was newly formed, battle reports mentioned that the men's pristine uniforms were distinguished on the battlefield and magnified the horror of the scenes of death and destruction. Soon after this tragedy at Cold Harbor, Ladd was present at one of the most exciting adventures in Civil War history, the Greenback Raid.

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Figure 7. Ladd's watch showing inscription.
MAREN MELLEN.

The Greenback Raid

Confederate Colonel John Singleton Mosby, the legendary “Grey Ghost,” deployed guerilla warfare tactics to stymie the conventional defenses of the Union Army of the Potomac. Jonathan Ladd was on the scene during the most famous of Mosby’s raids, the “Greenback Raid” on October 14, 1864. Early that morning, Jonathan Ladd was sitting comfortably in the parlor of the United States Hotel in Martinsburg, VA, pocket watch in hand, timing the arrival of the B&O train carrying his payroll for General Philip Sheridan’s army. Meanwhile, Mosby’s gorillas had their pocket watches set to attack the same train and deny the disbursement of greenbacks to the troops anxious to receive payment. Colonel Mosby, in his published memoirs, documented the “timing” of their attack:

It was a lovely night, bright and clear, with a big Jack Frost on the ground. I believe that I was the only member of my command who went through the war without a watch, but all my men had watches, and we knew it would not be long before the train would be due....the catastrophe came so suddenly that my men at first seemed to be stunned and bewildered. Knowing that the railroad guards would soon hear of it and that no time was to be lost, I ran along the line and pushed my men down the bank, ordering them to go to work pulling out the passengers and setting fire to the cars.

Mosby’s men succeeded in robbing passengers of watches, wallets, and purses and taking two paymasters prisoner, Major Edwin Moore and Major David Ruggles. These were colleagues of Jonathan Ladd, who dispatched the first news of the raid in a telegram to his superiors in Washington:

Ladd’s Military Records Discovered

The information you are about to read was obtained from the National Archives in Washington, DC, where Major Jonathan Ladd’s personal military records were available. I also retrieved a file of Ladd’s military papers at the Lamont Library at Harvard University. The most significant document of my research was procured from the Goshen Historical Society in Goshen, NY, which places Ladd at President Lincoln’s deathbed. You can imagine the difficulties in retrieving these documents, which were hidden away for over 150 years. Now you are about to join me in the excitement I felt when reading this treasure trove of information about Ladd’s life as a military officer and a watch salesman in 1865.



Figure 8. B. W. Brice’s business card.

Paymaster, U.S. Army MARTINSBURG,
October 14, 1864.

Maj. B. W. BRICE:

MAJOR: I have my funds in the parlor of the United States Hotel here, guarded by a regiment. The express train was burned eight miles west of Harper’s Ferry between 2 and 3 o’clock this a.m. Major Ruggles clerk escaped, and is now with me. He reports Major Ruggles and money taken. I also have the fact of his and Major Moore’s capture from other passengers on the train. Cannot say certainly about Major Moore. It is reported that Major Ruggles is recaptured, and is safe at Harper’s Ferry. Was up most of last night. General Seward, who is in command here, says he will use all his efforts to protect us and our money. I shall make no move until I can do so with safety, and in the meantime wait orders from yourself and Major Paulding. Please show this to him.

JONATHAN LADD

The telegram was sent to Major Benjamin William Brice, paymaster general (Figure 8). The soldier guarding Ladd at the hotel was William Henry Seward Jr., the son of Lincoln’s Secretary of State William Henry Seward. Later, they learned that Paymasters David Ruggles and Edwin Moore were incarcerated in a Confederate prison. Major Ruggles died in prison and Major Moore survived.

Elmira Prison Camp, “Helmira”

On December 31, 1864, Major Jonathan Ladd received orders from Secretary of War Edwin Stanton directing him to report to Elmira Prison Camp, NY, without delay. The camp was known as “Helmira” to the Confederate troops incarcerated there. Ladd was dispatched to manage the massive “rendezvous” of new recruits who were arriving in Elmira to be assigned to the Army of the Potomac and elsewhere. Elmira was ideally located where the Erie Railway and the Northern Central Railway converged, making it a prime location to muster in troops (Figure 9).

Ladd’s job was extremely difficult in Elmira, where working conditions were poor, his office staff inadequate,

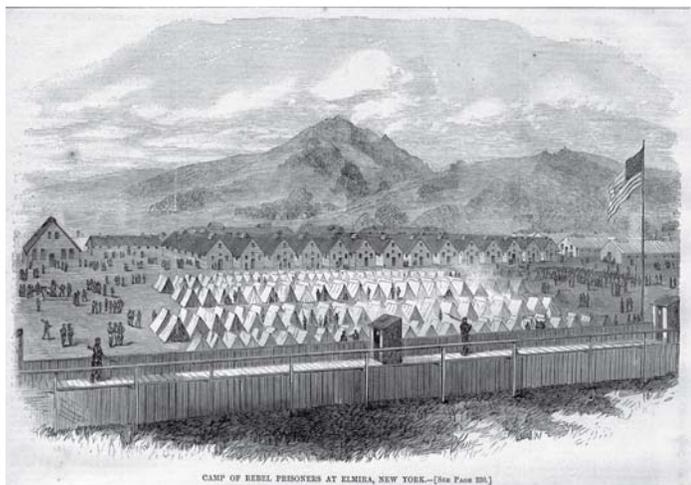


Figure 9. Elmira, NY. HARPERS' WEEKLY, MARCH 1865.

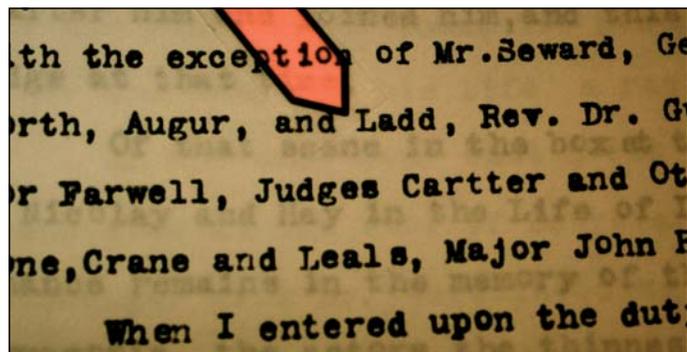
and the workload overwhelming. Although he worked in Elmira, Ladd rode the train back to Washington, where he felt more at home near his friends and family and close to the seats of power, including his beloved President Lincoln. A weekend visit that changed his life forever occurred on Friday, April 14, 1865.

Ladd at Lincoln's Deathbed

On April 14, 1865, President Lincoln attended a play entitled "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre in Washington. While sitting in a balcony seat, Lincoln was mortally wounded by an assassin's bullet. You can imagine the chaotic scene as the president of the United States was taken from the theatre to the Petersen Boarding House a few blocks away. Many citizens and government officials stood vigil inside Lincoln's sick house, hoping that Lincoln would recover. Major Paymaster Jonathan Ladd was one of those government officials at the president's deathbed when he died at 7:22 a.m. on the morning of April 15, 1865. Like his cousin Luther, who was shot by a resident of Baltimore, Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth, who had a house in Baltimore, a short distance from where Luther Ladd was killed.

I first learned of Jonathan Ladd's presence at Lincoln's deathbed in research postings found on the Ladd genealogy website. I needed proof that he was actually at Lincoln's deathbed and could not rely upon confirmation from his relatives. My search for proof culminated with

Figure 10. GOSHEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



an exciting and significant document received from the Goshen Historical Society, Goshen, NY. Goshen houses an archive of the original speech delivered by General Henry Burnett, chief judge advocate in charge of investigating the Lincoln assassination. This is what the cover letter from Goshen stated:

Enclosed is the speech from General Burnett on the assassination of President Lincoln and the trial of the assassins. Also, I am enclosing a letter written by General Burnett so you can see his signature.

Behind the cover letter was an original typed speech written by Henry Burnett that contained his personal handwritten notes. Burnett was a personal choice of Edwin Stanton, secretary of war, and was charged with investigating Lincoln's assassination to put to rest conspiracy theories surrounding the president's death, present the facts clearly, and bring the perpetrators to justice. Please read Henry Burnett's original narrative, which is posted on <http://majorjonathanladd.com> (Lincoln's Deathbed link). Look closely at page 4 and read the following paragraph that places Major Jonathan Ladd at Lincoln's deathbed (Figure 10):

At twenty-two passed seven the President passed and Mr. Stanton exclaimed, "Now he belongs to the ages." Besides the persons named there were about the deathbed his wife and son, Vice President Johnson, all the other members of the cabinet with the exception of Seward, Generals Halleck, Meigs, Farnsworth, Auger, and Ladd, Rev. Dr. Gurley, Schuyler Colfax, Governor Farwell, Judges Carter and Otto, Surgeon General Barnes, Drs. Stone, Crane and Leales, Major John Hay and Maunsell B. Field.

Note: There was no General Ladd serving in the Civil War, which eliminates the possibility that Burnett was referring to a General Ladd, because none existed.

Jonathan Ladd's name is listed next to Reverend Dr. Phineas Densmore Gurley, Lincoln's religious advisor. I discovered this quote by Gurley² (describing Lincoln's death:

The Rev. Phineas D. Gurley, who was also present, recalled that when the president was pronounced dead "there fell a silence so profound that "the watches in all the men's pockets" seemed to him to be "ticking loudly."

No one can be sure why Major Jonathan Ladd was at Lincoln's deathbed, but he was a lawyer and known to the other government officials who were present.³ Washington, DC, was a very small city back then, and Ladd had his office there from 1861 to 1864. An associate of Jonathan Ladd, who worked as a clerk in the Washington, DC, Paymaster's office, was also present the night Lincoln was shot. His name was William T. Kent, who testified during the Lincoln assassination that he was at Ford's Theatre the night Lincoln was shot and assisted Dr. Leale, the physician who attended to Lincoln im-

mediately after he was attacked. Kent provided the knife used by Leale to cut open Lincoln's clothes to examine the president at Ford's Theatre minutes after being shot. Kent also retrieved the gun that Booth used from the balcony where Lincoln was seated. The connection here to William T. Kent, a clerk in the Paymaster's office where Ladd worked in Washington, DC, is interesting and adds credence to Ladd's "Paymaster" connection at the deathbed. Perhaps, Ladd met up with Kent and was admitted to Peterson House as a lawyer and military officer to assist the president. Kent was a clerk and would not have had access to enter Peterson House, but Ladd was a senior officer and would have been admitted to Lincoln's deathbed. Was the watch Gurley heard ticking Jonathan Ladd's?

Back to Elmira

Ladd returned to Elmira after Lincoln's assassination and began his work in earnest. He communicated to headquarters that the workload to administer his duties was overwhelming, and he needed additional clerks to get the job done. His request for help was refused by his boss Benjamin Brice, paymaster general, in Washington. However, Ladd was determined to get more help, so he solicited the assistance of his friend Colonel Luther Caldwell, a former soldier from Ipswich, MA, a wealthy owner of the local Elmira newspaper, and an influential sutler. During the Civil War a sutler was a civilian merchant who sold provisions to an army in the field, in camp, or in quarters. Luther Caldwell was appointed sutler at Elmira, which meant he had exclusive access to Union military installations and sold everything from cigarettes to pocket watches. Ladd influenced Caldwell to give him money, *quid pro quo*, to pay overtime wages to his clerks. In return, Caldwell received access to the troops and Ladd's cooperation in paying him for merchandise ordered by the troops on credit. The soldiers were not allowed to have cash, so Ladd controlled all payments to Caldwell. Ladd tried to explain that the reason he accepted money from Caldwell was to pay his clerks in a letter, which he wrote to Senator Henry Wilson, MA, after he was caught and arrested.

.... finding that I must in some way meet the emergency, I, after consulting with my clerks agreed to give them each extra compensation at the rate of 100 per month, that this accumulation of work might be done. Which could only be accomplished by their working from eight o'clock in the morning till twelve and one o'clock at night and which they did admirably on cooperation with my help doing work myself to pay them and a great deal of my labor..... Caldwell, editor and proprietor of the paper at Elmira, volunteered on his own part to give me money to pay my clerks their additional compensation. I was relieved from duty something over a month ago.....

What Ladd didn't mention to Wilson was that he also received money from Caldwell on the sales of hundreds

of pocket watches sold to Elmira recruits. Ladd was arrested for profiting on the sale of those watches and for accepting gratuities from Luther Caldwell and the Bank of Elmira where he allegedly received a commission on the large sums of government money he deposited at the bank. The affidavits prepared for his trial give us insight into the sale of pocket watches and their value to soldiers and the profit realized by the agents who sold them. I wonder if Ladd's fascination with his own pocket watch compelled his eventual interest in selling watches to soldiers. He would have known about the American Watch Company in Waltham, MA. The company was the largest producer of American-made pocket watches and aggressively marketed them to Union troops through advertising. Even today, the key-wind Waltham pocket watches are coveted by Civil War reenactors.

Ladd's Pocket Watch Trial

Major Ladd was arrested in June 1865 and prosecuted for earning a commission on the sale of pocket watches, general merchandise sold to the troops, and bank transactions. Below are excerpts from sworn testimony by sutler Luther Caldwell, spoken in his own words 150 years ago. This is a unique and fascinating "recording in time"—the only historical account of Civil War pocket watch transactions taken under oath.

Luther Caldwell's Testimony, Sutler, June 10, 1865

Lawyer: I need you to state as briefly as possible the arrangement between you and Major Ladd in reference to the profits on certain watches sold in camp.

Caldwell: The facts in the case of selling watches was this: My partner Mr. Fairman was Sutler here. After Major Ladd had been here for some time some other parties got accepted to the barracks there, and were selling watches to the injury of our regular Sutler business, and Major Ladd was accepting their orders. Mr. Fairman said we must stop it, it was injuring our business, and I went and saw Major Ladd. He told me that the parties who were selling watches there were giving him a portion of the profits. I told him we could not afford to share one half with him and half left with the rest of us, that I was ready to make some arrangement with him by which we could go in and sell the watches and do that business ourselves. We accordingly made an arrangement by which he was to have one quarter of the profits on all the watches we sold at the barracks.

Lawyer: Which was how much on a watch?

Caldwell: Well the watches cost us \$33.50 and we sold them for \$60.00. He had a quarter of that which was \$6.50 or something like that.

Lawyer: How many watches did you sell under that arrangement?

Caldwell: Well I don't know exactly. I should say something over four hundred.

Lawyer: What did you pay for those watches?

Caldwell: \$33.50.

Lawyer: From whom did you purchase them?

Caldwell: Thos. Johnson (jeweler), excepting a few which we purchased from Collingwood Brothers (jeweler).

Lawyer: Did you sell anything besides watches under this arrangement?

Caldwell: No sir.

Lawyer: You paid Major Ladd one fourth of the profits on all watches sold in camp?

Caldwell: Yes sir.

Note: The following excerpt is from the sale of a watch by Ladd's clerk Captain Johnson, who received a commission from Caldwell.

Lawyer: What service did he render that entitled him to any payment?

Caldwell: He sold a watch. Well, I will tell you all the circumstances from beginning to end, and then you can see:

When this watch business first commenced there, Captain Johnson was on duty there with Major Ladd. We bought from Johnson (jewelers) and Collingwood Brothers (jewelers). I was in to Johnson's one day to get some watches, one noon time, and made arrangements to have a dozen fixed up, and just as I was going out this officer came in. I didn't know him, but had heard of him and just as nearly got across the street when Mr. Collingwood came out of his store and hollered for me to come back and, says "Here's Captain Johnson he wants to see you." I went back and he introduced me to Captain Johnson and Captain Johnson says "I have sold this watch, picking one out, to a man up at the barracks and Mr. Collingwood don't know me, and I want to have it charged to your account." I said "all right" and he took the gold watch and chain, not such a one as we had ever before sold, and it was understood as being Captain Johnson's trade, but the order was given in my name, and I received the money and paid back the profits on that watch. I forget how much it was, something like seventy five or one hundred dollars, and paid it back to Johnson.

Lawyer: Seventy Five or one hundred dollars profit on a watch?

Caldwell: Yes sir. It was a gold watch and chain.

Lawyer: What was paid for the watch?

Caldwell: A hundred and fifty dollars, or thereabouts.

Lawyer: Did Major Ladd want to enter into any other arrangements?

Caldwell: He invited me to go to Auburn and go into the watch business. I suppose on the same terms.

Note: I have omitted the next section of the testimony regarding Ladd receiving a 4 percent commission on all Sutler sales receipts from the barracks.

Lawyer: What amount have you paid Major Ladd in all?

Caldwell: Well that I don't know exactly. I could tell by figuring. From that \$100,000 (total Sutler sales) you have got to deduct the watch trade, which was say, \$35,000 that would leave \$65,000, four percent on that allowing that I have the right figures in regard to the total sales.

Lawyer: You have paid him \$6,000?

Caldwell: I should say \$5,000 or \$6,000 and perhaps more. I should say on a rough guess that we had paid him nearly \$6,000, it may be over that. I never kept a record of it.

Major Jonathan Ladd Dismissed

Major Jonathan Ladd never testified or went on trial after the above inquest. However, he was dismissed from service on July 5, 1865. His dismissal was regarded as a blight on his esteemed service record but fell short of the stigma associated with a dishonorable discharge. Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts was instrumental in influencing the decision not to court-martial Jonathan Ladd. Wilson wrote a note to the War Department encouraging them to accept Ladd's resignation, thus dismissing him from the service and ending the litigation against him.

Ladd Returns to Lowell

After his dismissal, Ladd returned to Lowell, MA, where he became president of the Middlesex North Agricultural Society and purchased a large farm in Tewksbury, MA. He also continued practicing law and was an active member of the Lowell Bar Association.

In 1869 Ladd hired well-known Boston attorney Richard S. Spofford to appeal the government's decision to dismiss him from the army. Spofford wrote the following note to the War Department, which brought Ladd's case to the attention of President Andrew Johnson, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, General William Tecumseh Sherman, Assistant Secretary of War Thomas Eckert, Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt, and many others. Spofford's note reads as follows:

Major Ladd volunteer Paymaster was dismissed July 5, 1865. Seek to have the record changed from dismissed to "mustered out." The man never was court-martialed but was summarily dismissed to gratify the revenge of Baker. His record right and accounts all straight. I beg to request that an order may be issued so modifying the record that it may stand "mustered out" in the stead of "dismissed."

R.S. Spofford

Spofford's comment "to gratify the revenge of Baker" refers to Lafayette Baker, one of the most enigmatic figures in Civil War history. Baker was a United States investigator and spy, who became well known for retrieving the diary of John Wilkes Booth on the day he was killed by Union troops. He withheld this diary from prosecutors during the Lincoln assassination military tribunal because it may have implicated Edwin Stanton. The diary was suppressed by the Department of War and Secretary Stanton during the trials for the conspirators. When the diary was eventually produced, Baker claimed that 18 vital pages were missing. It was suggested that these were the pages that implicated Stanton in Lincoln's assassination. Assistant Secretary of War Thomas Eckert was to attend "Our American Cousin" as Lincoln's bodyguard on the night he was shot but was not allowed to do so by Stanton. Eckert and Stanton were among the many officials involved in reconsidering Ladd's dismissal. Most controversial was Lafayette Baker, who frequented the

Elmira prison camp, presumably to garner intelligence from Confederate prisoners. Lafayette Baker was instrumental in prosecuting Major Jonathan Ladd, but we don't know what was meant by "gratify the revenge of Baker."

Ladd's Appeal to President Johnson

There are several pages of documents relating to the appeal presented by Ladd's lawyer Richard S. Spofford. I present these brief documents dated in sequence in my website on this topic: <http://majorjonathanladd.com> (see "NAWCC Page" top-menu link). These include papers signed by Judge Advocate General Henry Holt, General William Tecumseh Sherman, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, and President Andrew Johnson.

There is no doubt that Ladd profited on the sale of pocket watches, but I strongly believe that his service during the Civil War was "honorable" and outweighs his indiscretion in profiting from the sale of pocket watches. Think of what might have happened if Ladd did not take initiative to commandeer the steamers *Ariel* and *DeSoto* to get the 5th Massachusetts to Washington, DC, in the first days of the Civil War. Would the Confederates have succeeded in kidnapping President Lincoln or capturing Washington, DC, in April 1861? Perhaps, Andrew Johnson had similar reasons for modifying Ladd's record "let the order dismissing Major Ladd, be so modified as to honorably discharge him from the date of dismissal" (Figure 11).

Major Jonathan Ladd, Paymaster "Story in Time"

Major Jonathan Ladd died in Lowell, MA, on April 9, 1889. Eerily, Ladd's life ended the same day in April that the Civil War ended when Lee surrendered his troops at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. Jonathan Ladd was forgotten until his pocket watch was saved from being melted down by Robert Betty, owner of Alco Scrap Metal in Lowell, MA. Mr. Betty made it possible to learn the historical importance of Major Ladd's pocket watch and his contributions to the Union war effort. Most importantly, Major Jonathan Ladd was a witness at the deathbed of President Lincoln at the official time of death at 7:22 a.m. on April 15, 1865.

Without Ladd's pocket watch as a catalyst for research, we never would have learned about his connection to the Baltimore Riot, Luther Ladd, Mosby's Greenback Raid, the sale of pocket watches at Elmira Prison Camp, or President Johnson's decision to grant him an Honorable Discharge. This article is dedicated to the memory of Robert Betty and the years of research he devoted to Paymaster Major Jonathan Ladd so that we could experience this "Story in Time."

Notes

1. <http://www.awco.org/seminar2002/american/Wyrtma20/Wyrtma20size.htm>
2. The Dr. John K. Lattimer collection of *Lincolniana* - page 73 - Google, this was part of a listing selling Edwin Stanton's pocket watch.
3. For example, Ladd stood next to General Auger, whose men had served alongside Ladd's 2nd Connecticut Volunteer Artillery at the battle of Fort Stevens (formerly Fort Massachusetts) on July 11-12, 1864. This significant battle was fought just a few miles northeast of the Lincoln White House. Theodore Frelinghuysen. *History of the Second Connecticut Volunteer Heavy Artillery* (Winsted Printing Co., 1868), 83.

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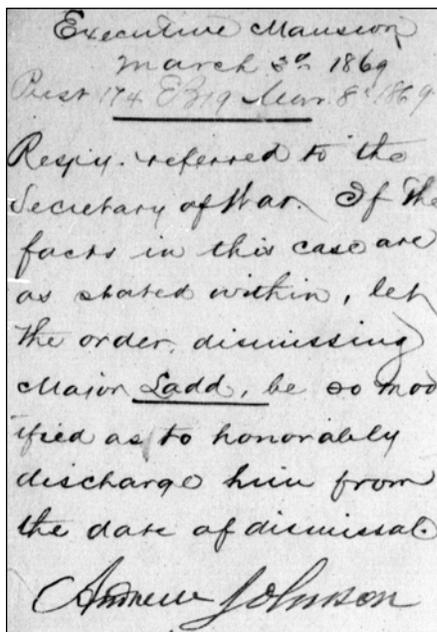


Figure 11.

About the Author

Paul Mellen began collecting pocket watches in the summer of 2009 when he and his 13-year-old daughter, Maren, purchased a key-wind Waltham pocket watch, S/N 292,155, made in April 1867. Mellen became a member of the NAWCC and immersed himself in research about the Waltham Watch Company. NAWCC members Ron Price, Chris Carey, and Paul Regan have become mentors to Mellen, with patience and generous amounts of their time, and have assisted Mellen in his quest for knowledge about pocket watches. Mellen resides in Duxbury, MA, and may be reached by email at Paul@majorjonathanladd.com See the website <http://majorjonathanladd.com> for more information about this article topic.