

Tradecraft and Technology – Intelligence in the Civil War

Lecture Two: Espionage Tales and Bureaucratic Battles

A. Pinkerton's spy – the story of Timothy Webster, continued

- Pinkerton sends rescue team
- Identity discovered
- Arrested and imprisoned
- Webster's sad end

B. Elizabeth Van Lew – “Out Lady in Richmond”

- Background – prominent, wealthy Richmond family
- Providing aid and comfort to Union POW's in Libby Prison
- “Crazy Bet” emerges – new cover
- Union Spymaster – runs her own espionage ring
- Van Lew's successes – praised by Union generals
- Final act of defiance – raises U.S. flag over her home
- Post-war years – shunned as a traitor to the South

C. Lafayette Baker – Intelligence officer for Scott, Seward and Stanton

- Baker at Manassas – fantastic stories
- Seward's “Federal Detective Bureau” – creates agent network
- Moved to the War Department under Secretary Stanton
- Baker named “Special Provost Marshal” with extraordinary powers
- Clashes with Provost Patrick over jurisdiction, methods
- Baker-Stanton split – Baker his own worst enemy
- Role in Lincoln assassination case
- Baker's mysterious end

D. The Fourth Estate – Newspapers & Photographers Provide Intelligence

- Newspapers – reporters are natural intelligence officers. Over 500 war correspondents, aided by telegraph and photography, accompany all armies (imbedded).
- Photography, relatively new technology, brings the horrors of war home to civilians.

- Press had huge impact on public sentiment and support for the war – especially critical as casualties & costs mounted