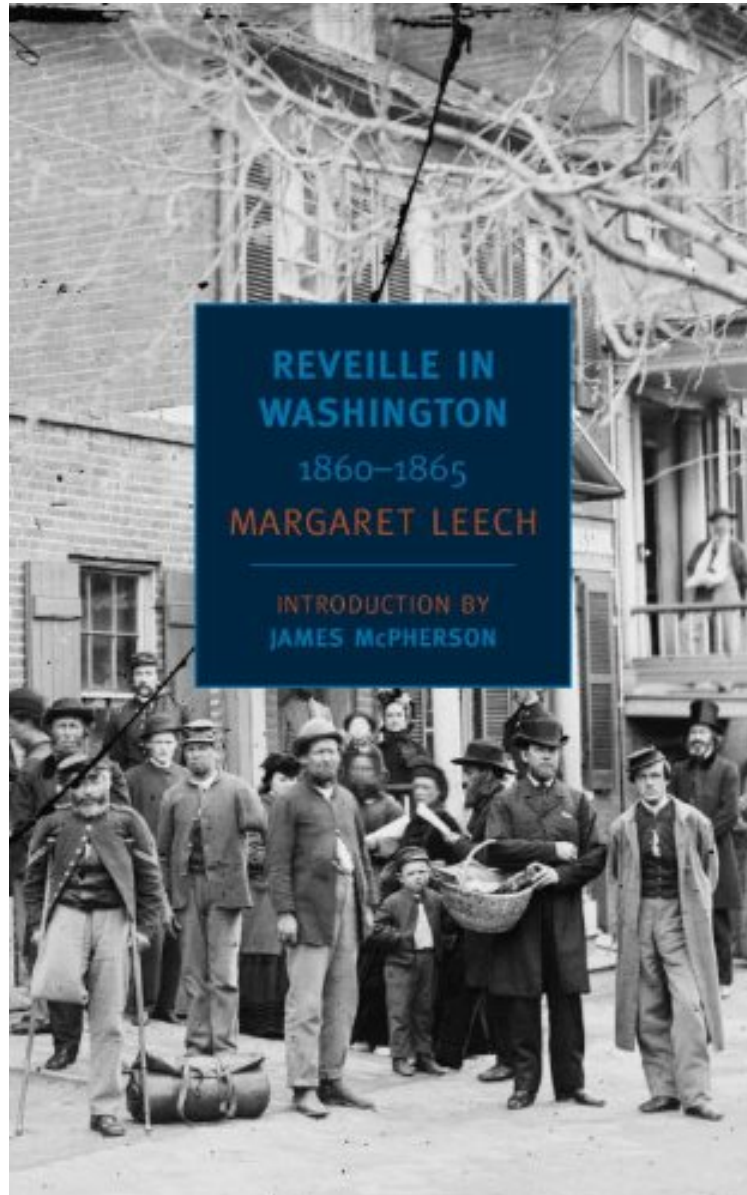


(Mobile pdf) Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865 (New York Review Books Classics)

## Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865 (New York Review Books Classics)

*Margaret Leech*

DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#391331 in Books NYRB Classics 2011-06-07 2011-06-07 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 1.26 x 5.27l, 1.40 #File Name: 1590174461624 pages | File size: 67.Mb

**Margaret Leech : Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865 (New York Review Books Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865 (New York Review Books Classics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Helpful HistoryBy Sibyl GoernerThis is an interesting book which cleared up some falacies that I had learned earlier. However I was not interested in the amount of detail that the author used to describe which person was in charge of each of the army divisions etc. in the Union Army.. and where the battles were. I suppose a true historian would find that very helpful. I had not known that John Wilkes Booth had first intended to Kidnap Pres. Lincoln, and appreciated the amount of research the author did to tell the story. Her analysis of Mary Todd Lincoln was helpful.17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Weep, wretched man, I'll aid thee tear for tearBy LlonyaAnd let our hearts and eyes, like civil war;Be blind with tears, and break o'ercharg'd with grief.The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth, Act II. Scene VOn March 4, 1861, President Lincoln, in his First Inaugural Address, expressed the hope that the "mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature." Exactly, four years later, on March 4, 1865, President Lincoln, in his Second Inaugural Address, called on all Americans to go forward with "malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." Those two stirring pleas to our better natures serve as ironic bookends for an American Civil War which unleashed carnage and bloodshed on American soil the likes of which had never been before, and hopefully never will be seen again.Margaret Leech's magisterial "Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865" was originally published in 1941. As James McPherson notes in his brief Introduction, Leech wrote and published the book just before WWII transformed a rather provincial capital city (aptly described by JFK as "a city of Southern efficiency and Northern charm") into a world capital. As the book opens, Washington, D.C. barely qualified as a city, let alone a nation's proud capital. As the Civil War began there was no dome on the Capitol and the Washington Monument was not much more than a pile of granite. The streets were dirty and unkempt, open drainage ditches carried raw sewage across most of the avenues, and the town was filled with bawdy houses and transients. The book highlights not just the progress of the war but also the transformation of the city into a true national Capital.I was captivated by Reveille for a number of reasons. Leech's research seemed very thorough and her writing was excellent. She has an exceedingly fine eye for detail and was able to convey those details to the reader. This is particularly true when she describes the city itself. I've worked in Washington for the last 20 years and my office sits right in the middle of "old Washington." I see the old General Post Office and Ford's Theatre from my office. Every day I walk the streets and look up and see remnants of Civil War era Washington. As Leech tells her story those streets and buildings came alive for me with almost a fresh set of eyes. That is a rare feeling for me, that sense of living and walking though history. Leech's book invoked those feelings throughout.In addition to her ability to bring a city to life, Leech has also done an admirable job of bringing the city's characters to life. Leech has a sharp eye not just for Lincoln, Seward, McClellan Grant and the larger than life big players in the war, but also casts a sharp and detailed eye on lesser-known figures. Washington was a southern city in those days and sympathy for secession and slavery was more the norm than the exception. Leech is able to weave these characters, large and small, seamlessly into her narrative while also providing a wealth of information of the war that was waged in the Virginia countryside within `spitting' distance of the capital.Written in 1941, some contemporary readers may find Leech's prose-style a bit dated and perhaps a bit too florid. Some have even suggested (elsewhere) that Leech's prose-style seemed to almost channel what may have been the prose style in fashion during the Civil War. I did not have any such problem and in fact Leech's writing had the same page-turning effect on me that some of the best fiction has. The only jarring notes I heard involved her use of common terms for slaves and freemen (`colored' for example) which while they may have been perfectly acceptable in 1942 seem quite out of place in 2011. Again, that is a reflection on our national evolution and not a criticism of Ms. Leech and I set it out for the benefit of potential readers who may have qualms about such things, even in period pieces.I think Leech's "Reveille in Washington" is a tremendous addition to accounts of the Civil War. One may despair that we have never consistently acted upon the better angels of our nature or lived our lives with malice toward none, but Leech's book brings to life a time in our nation's history where much blood was shed to swell the chorus of our union. In that sense this book is one that bespeaks a mighty hope.Highly recommended. L. Fleisig0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Anecdotes about Washington during the Civil WarBy Beans NevadaI was interested in reading this book as one that would give me a feeling for the 'home front' during the Civil War. Drawing on newspaper accounts, memoirs etc, it does do that. Much of what Leech presents is quite interesting. Some sections as, for example, descriptions of the tent hospitals prisons were engrossing. In other places, however, Leech goes on about particular people in a way that seemed gossipy. Her presentation of the way various battles affected the mood in Washington was moving , but I felt that I needed more information about the battles to appreciate these changes in mood. Obviously the author couldn't do both. Perhaps someone with more familiarity with the events of the war wouldn't have had this problem. For my tastes, the book was simply too anecdotal. It lacked a narrative line or an argument.

1860: The American capital is sprawling, fractured, squalid, colored by patriotism and treason, and deeply divided

along the political lines that will soon embroil the nation in bloody conflict. Chaotic and corrupt, the young city is populated by bellicose congressmen, Confederate conspirators, and enterprising prostitutes. Soldiers of a volunteer army swing from the dome of the Capitol, assassins stalk the avenues, and Abraham Lincoln struggles to justify his presidency as the Union heads to war. Reveille in Washington focuses on the everyday politics and preoccupations of Washington during the Civil War. From the stench of corpse-littered streets to the plunging lace on Mary Lincolns evening gowns, Margaret Leech illuminates the city and its familiar figures among them Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, William Seward, and Mary Surratt in intimate and fascinating detail. Leech's book remains widely recognized as both an impressive feat of scholarship and an uncommonly engrossing work of history.

This teeming Washington, described in all its wonderful, eccentric detail, provides the perspective from which Leech examines the overall pursuit of the war, among whose elements were the ineptness, intransigence, and obstructive jealousies of many of the Union generals. This is a character-driven history and a chronicle of a city, but it is, also, a deft review of military strategy and of political maneuvering between and within political parties. It is, too, a fast-paced account of the developing exigencies that resulted in, among other things, the suspension of habeas corpus, the levying of income tax, conscription, and, most momentously, in the emancipation of slaves, first in Washington and then universally. "Katherine Powers, BN In 1860, Washington was a raw country town, a symbol trying to be a city. By 1865 it had become the nations capital. Reveille in Washington is packed and running over with the anecdotes, scandals, personalities, and tragi-comedies of the day. Here you will meet young Andy Carnegie organizing military transport; a Patent Office clerk named Clara Barton suddenly discovering she has a real vocation; Matthew Brady, obsessed with the idea that he could make a photographic record of a war; Louisa M. Alcott and Walt Whitman finding their great moments in hospitals. Its a wonderful story. Clifton Fadiman, *The New Yorker* Published in 1941, this remains the best single popular account of Washington during the great convulsion of the civil War. Vividly written, with hundreds of cameo portraits, from president Lincoln to the humblest citizen. *The Washington Post* "Leech, who published three novels before this work of history appeared in 1941, offers a smart and witty account of wartime Washingtons transformation from an administrative backwater to the locus of renewed federal power. This encyclopedic portrait won Leech, who died in 1974, her first of two Pulitzer Prizes for history...Reveille in Washington could stand on its own as a first-rate chronicle of how the political elites handled the war. Many of Leech's characters are familiar names from American history, and they are brought to life in a new way with the spark of her pen...But the books main character is really the city itself...Several writers Walt Whitman in *Specimen Days*, Louisa May Alcott in *Hospital Sketches* wrote more intimately and movingly about life in the capital during the Civil War, but neither did so with the scope or the ambition of Leech. The steady clip of Leech's accomplished book is in a way perfectly suited to Washington." -- *The New Republic* Winner of the 1942 Pulitzer Prize, this history of the nations capital during the Civil War is a rich, beautifully written narrative. *Ten Neglected Classics*, *The American Scholar* About the Author Margaret Leech (1893-1974) was an American historian, novelist and dramatist. She twice received the Pulitzer Prize in history, for *Reveille in Washington* (1942) and *In the Days of McKinley* (1960); with the former she became the first woman to receive a Pulitzer in that category. James McPherson was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1989 for *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. His other bestselling books include *For Cause and Comrades*, *Drawn with the Sword*, *What They Fought For*; *Gettysburg*; and *Fields of Fury*. A professor at Princeton University, he lives in Princeton, New Jersey.