

Editor's Note

This issue reminds us that preservation of and access to historical documentation is vital in a republic. The Founders were emphatic in that tenet. The Constitution's requirement that Congress keep a "Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same" is one affirmation of the need for recordkeeping and access, an informed citizenry, and open debate. Those needs grew as the franchise expanded in the Early Republic period so that by 1861 the Department of State published its first documentary edition titled *Diplomatic Correspondence*, precursor to the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series. Each of the articles in this issue is a statement on the scope and importance of federal records, the need to preserve those records, and the value they provide to scholars exploring the many facets of federal history.

Stephen Randolph's Roger R. Trask Lecture opens our issue by tracing the history of the *Foreign Relations* series. Randolph writes from his experience as chief historian in the State Department's History Office from 2012 to 2017, where he ably guided the *Foreign Relations* series back to its publication schedule after serious publication delays and leadership crises. He traces the series' evolution from a mandatory submission of foreign affairs documents to Congress in the early 19th century to its later format as a documentary collection for the benefit of diplomats, historians, students, and the general public. Over the first decades of the 20th century, the increasing volume of state documents, expanding requirements of classification, and involvement of key intelligence agencies in the declassification process all forced changes in content, format, and compilation duties and release schedules. The often turbulent story of those changes in the series over the decades is closely tied to the larger political and administrative transformations of the modern American state. The story is told in more detail in a book published by Randolph's office in 2015: William B. McAllister, et al., *Toward "Thorough, Accurate, and Reliable": A History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series*.

Frank Leith Jones takes a close look at the passage of the Nunn-Lugar Act in 1991 and the difficult process to achieve it. The presence of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the breakaway republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union posed one of the greatest existential threats that humankind had yet faced. Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar were able to forge a bipartisan coalition and ultimately convince the George H.W. Bush administration to support their plan

for removal of those materials. Jones's use of new oral testimonies, presidential records, and NSA and CIA records yields a deeper understanding of that urgent legislative-executive process—of the senators' foresight and statesmanship and the complex national security deliberations that produced this landmark legislation.

Scott Mobley undertakes a close analysis of the diaries that Lt. Comm. William D. Leahy (later fleet admiral) created during the U.S. intervention in Nicaragua in 1912. While in charge of Corinto's defenses, Leahy reflected on the Nicaraguan people and their capacities for self-government, and on the interventionist role of U.S. forces. The result is a rare personal look at the ambivalence some U.S. officers may have felt in their military roles as they reflected on the inherent contradictions in U.S. actions that reflected contemporary racial beliefs set against the paternalism of imperial leadership.

Jessica R. Pliley examines the difficulties in combating international sex trafficking in the period 1885–1927, specifically, on how traffickers used illicit marriages to bring women across borders. Conceptually, she stresses that existing laws and policies demonstrate “the extent to which women's citizenship has been bound by their sexuality, reproductive potential, and marital status,” allowing a fresh perspective on those activities. She finds that U.S. immigration officials undertook strict inspections of women's backgrounds, and a policy of “suspicion of non-Christian marriage practices, and the reification of women as wives and mothers”—practices that influenced the League of Nations' investigations and the policies of many nations.

Stephen D. Engle provides extensive and convincing evidence that Union war governors were active and critical partners with President Abraham Lincoln and the U.S. Congress in the war effort. The governors recruited troops and arms, boosted morale, protected river access, and urged new war policies and war aims where needed. Lincoln did not “tower” over them as “men of lesser minds,” as many have argued, but listened, learned, and grew through partnership with Union governors. The result was not only victory but a reaffirmation of a revived federalism.

Jeff Strickland's reassessment of the work of the American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission in 1863 examines Northern racial beliefs during the Civil War. Strickland finds that the commission members' acceptance of the tenets of contemporary racial pseudoscience—of the inferiority of mulattoes and Northern black's increased susceptibility to disease—led to poor survey methods and false

readings of their research. Their beliefs conditioned their report to Congress, which discouraged black migration to the North and recommended limited assistance for former slaves. The commission's faulty conclusions directly influenced the design and limited the mission of the new Freedmen's Bureau in March 1865.

John H. Sprinkle, Jr., traces the story of the National Park Service's gradually expanding concept of "national significance" in the first half of the 20th century to include the criterion of "historic districts." The unprecedented impact of 1960s urban renewal projects compelled the NPS to formally accept that standard through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Ultimately, Sprinkle's story is a window into one federal agency's bureaucratic operations and record, reflected in its long-delayed adoption of practices and standards advocated by private preservation groups. Are such self-imposed limitations on mission, based on shortage of funds and personnel and overwhelming workloads, suggestive of self-defined limits in operations at other federal bureaucracies?

I thank Terence Christian for his compilation of our book review section. Please contact him with questions and interest at terence.a.christian@gmail.com. Thanks also to Judson MacLaury for his editorial assistance on all articles and to our anonymous readers for their important contributions.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and that you will support the work of the Society for History in the Federal Government (www.shfg.org) with a membership, if you have not already done so.

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