

A SESQUICENTENNIAL MOMENT

APRIL 6 – 12, 1863

Soldiers arriving at Camp Mechanicsburg Gap near Romney in Hampshire County on April 10, 1863, were delighted to find the paymaster there with money for “the old folks at home.”

Soldiers were supposed to be paid every two months during the Civil War, but Union soldiers were lucky if they got paid every four months. Payments to Confederate soldiers were even slower and less regular.

So when Esquire Jacob Hornbrook offered to take between \$15,000 and \$17,000 back to the soldiers’

families in Wheeling for distribution, members of the 1st Virginia Regiment of the Volunteer Infantry gladly accepted his offer.

A letter to the *Wheeling Intelligencer* signed with the initials M.H. said “Many a heart will rejoice at receiving what is only their just due--their husband’s pay.”

Early on, Union privates were paid \$13 per month while their Confederate counterparts were paid \$11 a month. After June 20, 1864, the monthly pay for Union privates rose to \$16, while the pay

for Confederate privates was raised to \$18 per month.

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

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