

Last Signal Message (Civil War) ^[1]

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by Jo Ann Williford, 2006



"The Old State Capitol at Raleigh."

Image courtesy of the North Carolina War Between the States

Sesquicentennial Commission.

^[2]The last signal message of the Civil War ^[3] in North Carolina was sent by Lt. George C. Round of the U.S. Signal Corps from atop the State Capitol ^[4] in Raleigh ^[5]. Round was among the first Federal occupation troops to arrive in Raleigh on 13 Apr. 1865. As a Union signal officer, he established his station on the top of the capitol. Having received word of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston ^[6]'s surrender to Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman ^[7] at the Bennett House ^[8] near Durham ^[9] on 26 April, Round obtained permission to proclaim the news using signal rockets. He spelled out the word "peace" and lit a rocket indicating the end of the word. When it failed to fire, Round went back to relight it. As he leaned over the rocket, it exploded in his face, singeing off his eyebrows and eyelashes. But after an extended pause, Round resumed his message, which read: "Peace on earth, goodwill to men."

Reference:

George C. Round, "The Last Signal," *The State* (June, July 1980), ^[10]

Additional Resources:

State Capitol in the War, NC State Historic Sites: http://www.nchistoricsites.org/capitol/stat_cap/civwar.htm ^[11]

Letter from Lt. George C. Round discussing the fiftieth anniversary (1911) of the 1st Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), Nancy S. Darden Papers, ECU Libraries: <http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/findingaids/0489/> ^[12]

State Capitol Interactive, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources: <http://www.ncdcr.gov/StateCapitolInteractive.aspx> ^[13]

Image Credit:

"The Old State Capitol at Raleigh." Image courtesy of the North Carolina War Between the States Sesquicentennial Commission. Available from <http://www.ncwbts150.com/> ^[2] (accessed October 16, 2012).

Subjects:

Civil War (1861-1865) ^[14]

War ^[15]

Authors:

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Origin - location:

Raleigh ^[17]

From:

Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. ^[18]

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Source URL: <https://ncpedia.org/last-signal-message-civil-war?page=0>

Links

^[1] <https://ncpedia.org/last-signal-message-civil-war> ^[2] <http://www.ncwbts150.com/> ^[3] <https://ncpedia.org/history/cw-1900/civil-war> ^[4] <https://ncpedia.org/state-capitol> ^[5] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/raleigh> ^[6] http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Johnston_Joseph_E_1807-1891 ^[7] <http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com/history/maj-gen-william-t-sherman/> ^[8] <https://ncpedia.org/bennett-place> ^[9] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/durham-city> ^[10] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/documents?>

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