



A Philadelphia Perspective: The Civil War Diary of Sidney George Fisher (The North's Civil War)

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Invaluable. many insights into the life and thought of the nineteenth century.. [Fisher's] comments are stimulating, often barbed.. the narrative is smooth-flowing and fascinating. -American Historical Review
An important literary event.. an invaluable historical source. Unexcelled. -Pennsylvania History
Fisher was an astute and acerbic commentator on politics and society in Philadelphia, Washington, and the country as a whole during the Civil War. While legal, historical, and literary scholars will mine this diary for its penetrating insights, lovers of history will delight in Fisher's ability to record the quotidian and the monumental with clarity, force, and lasting effect. -Herman Belz, University of Maryland
An indispensable source for the Northern home front during the Civil War. -Mark E. Neely, Jr., The Pennsylvania State University
An aristocratic member of a prominent Philadelphia family, Sidney George Fisher (1809-1871) was a prolific man of letters. Between 1834 and 1871, he kept a detailed diary that chronicled not only daily life in America's second city but also the key political, social, and cultural events of the nineteenth century. Published in 1967, Fisher's diary quickly became one of the most remarkable works of its kind; few published diaries are as incisive and illuminating of their era. This book makes available once again the pages of Fisher's diary written during the Civil War. As he wrote on November 9, 1861, My diary has become little else than a record of the events of the war, which occupies all thoughts and conversation. His record of the events is a uniquely valuable portrait of a city, and a nation, at war. Fisher recorded everything from conversations on street corners to arrests of civilians for treason (including some members of his family), critiques of partisan speeches and pamphlets to descriptions of battles, accounts of runaway slaves, and tales of mob violence. At the same time, he reports on dinners, parties, weddings, and funerals among the city's elite. Brilliant journalism, the Diary is rich with Fisher's own observations- on secession, war and peace, on his admiration for Lincoln and his complicated feelings about slavery and emancipation. The Diary, with a new introduction by Jonathan W. White, joins those of George Templeton Strong and Mary Boykin Chesnut as classic windows on American life. During the War Between the States. Jonathan W. White's articles on Civil War politics have appeared in such journals as Civil War History, American Nineteenth Century History, The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, and Pennsylvania History. Awarded a John T. Hubbell prize for the best article in Civil War History, he is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Maryland, College Park. Cover illustrations: Cover design by Fordham University Press
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