



West Virginia Sesquicentennial Exhibit June 20, 2013

Special Section:
Joseph Andrew Jackson Lightburn

West Virginia and Regional History Center
WVU Libraries

Joseph Andrew Jackson Lightburn

Who was Joseph A.J. Lightburn? Lightburn (1824-1901) grew up in Pennsylvania and Lewis County, (West) Virginia along the West Fork River. One of his closest friends was Thomas Jackson, a neighbor boy of the same age who would later be known as “Stonewall” Jackson. Sadly, the bonds of friendship were broken as each took up arms on opposite sides during the Civil War. Lightburn was solidly against secession, throwing his support in favor of establishing a Loyal Government of Virginia. He was elected as a delegate for Lewis County to the Wheeling Conventions. After the war, he became a Baptist preacher and served in the West Virginia State Legislature.



Joseph Andrew Jackson Lightburn, 1824-1901

Joseph A.J. Lightburn grew up in Lewis County, (West) Virginia along the West Fork River. One of his closest friends was Thomas Jackson, a neighbor boy of the same age who would later be known as “Stonewall” Jackson. Sadly, the bonds of friendship were broken as each took up arms on opposite sides during the Civil War. Lightburn was solidly against secession, throwing his support in favor of establishing a Loyal Government of Virginia. He was elected as a delegate for Lewis County to the Wheeling Conventions. After the war, he served in the West Virginia State Legislature.



Compass and Sun Dial Used by Lightburn During the War

Lightburn's 1860 Model Colt Revolver

Also known as an “Army Revolver,” this .44 caliber weapon was used by Lightburn during some of the fiercest fighting of the war including the battles at Vicksburg, Missionary Ridge, Kennesaw Mountain, and Atlanta.

Compass and Sun Dial Used by Lightburn During the War (left)

Lightburn's 1860 Model Colt Revolver (bottom right)

Also known as an “Army Revolver,” Lightburn used this .44 caliber weapon during some of the fiercest fighting of the war, including the battles at Vicksburg, Missionary Ridge, Kennesaw Mountain, and Atlanta.

Lightburn's Weapons



Honorary Sword from a Grateful Lewis County, July 4, 1865 (center left, inset)

During an elaborate Homecoming Celebration in Weston, General Lightburn was presented this sword and a gold sash by the citizens of Lewis County. The inscription on the scabbard reads, "Brigadier General J. A. J. Lightburn from the Citizens of Lewis County, West Va. as a testimony of their appreciation of his gallant service in the suppression of the Rebellion of 1861. Weston, [West] Va., July 4th, 1865".

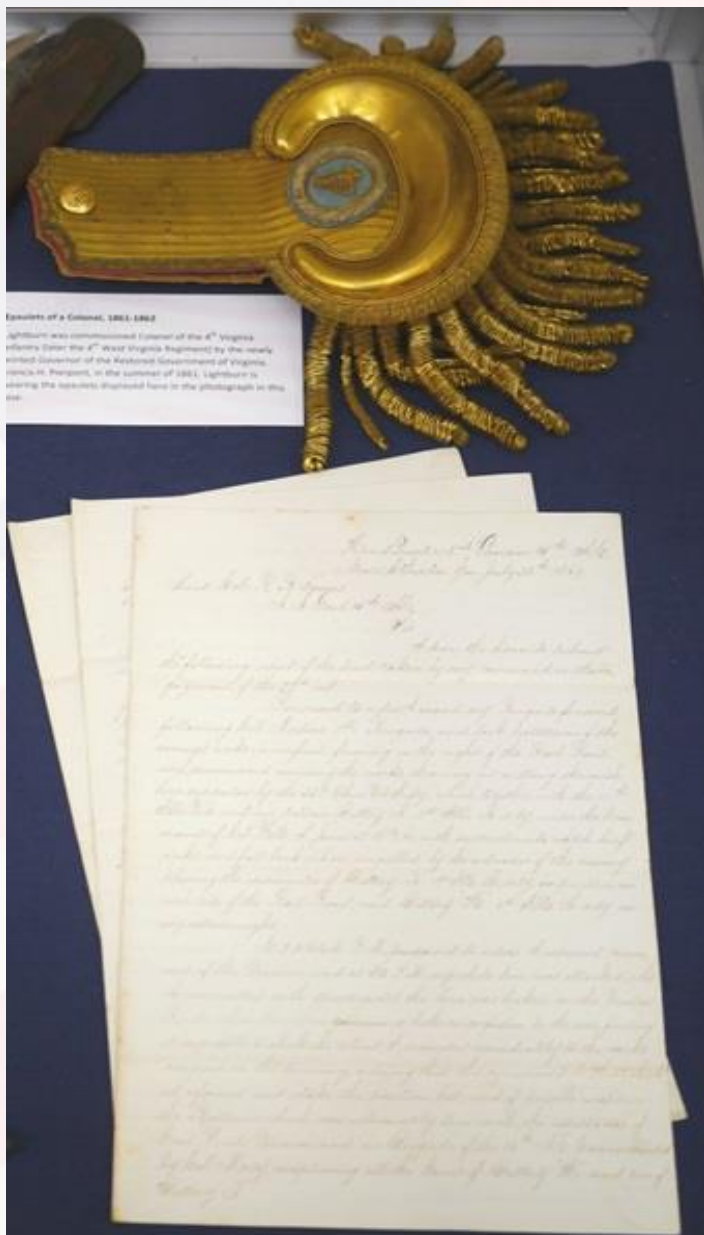
Lightburn's "Wounded" Scabbard (center right)

Lightburn narrowly escaped a mortal wound during battle at Vicksburg when a bullet hit his sword's scabbard instead of shattering his thigh. During the Civil War, amputation was the usual treatment for leg and arm wounds. Amputations of larger portions of a limb were associated with lower chances for survival.

Lightburn's Bullet Mold and Cap Box (bottom right)

Designed for making two different shapes of bullets, this mold can turn out a round, smooth bore ball like the one on display, as well as a minie ball. The minie was conical shaped and proved more accurate. The cap box stored the percussion caps placed over the nipple of the weapon.

Lightburn's Military Career



Epaulets of a Colonel, 1861-1862

Lightburn was commissioned Colonel of the 4th (West) Virginia Infantry Regiment by the newly minted Governor of the Restored Government of Virginia, Francis H. Pierpont, in the summer of 1861. Lightburn is wearing these very epaulets in the photograph in slide 2.

Lightburn's Battle Reports Pertaining to the Campaign in Georgia, Summer, 1864

Lightburn commanded the 2nd Brigade, and several times led the 2nd Division, in the 15th Corps of McPherson's Army during Sherman's Atlanta Campaign. The last report in this group is dated July 23, 1864 and documents the fighting to capture the portion of the Georgia Railroad between Atlanta and Augusta.

Lightburn's Military Career



Colonel's Epaulet (top)

See previous slide for description.

**Commission as Brigadier General of
Volunteers, 1863 (bottom)**

Joseph A. J. Lightburn was appointed Brigadier General by President Abraham Lincoln on March 16, 1863. This document bears both Lincoln's signature, on the lower right, and that of his Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, in the lower middle.