

VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL
150TH COMMISSION
First Interim Report

Date: October 23, 2007

Submitted to: Cheryl Jackson, Project Manager and Staff Coordinator
Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission

Prepared by: Dr. James C. Kelly, Director of Museums, Virginia Historical Society

Report on: *VIRGINIA'S CIVIL WAR, AMERICA'S GREAT TURNING POINT*

The project begins at the Virginia Historical Society on 1 November 2007, the first day of employment of our Exhibit Coordinator, Andrew Talkov. Most recently, Mr. Talkov was Chief of Interpretation at Pamplin Historical Park in Dinwiddie. Previously, he worked at Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts and as a National Park ranger at Manassas Battlefield.

The Commonwealth and the VHS have contracted for salary and benefits for this position for three years and the amount has been paid to the VHS.

Among Mr. Talkov's first tasks will be to investigate artifacts available for the exhibition at the VHS and seven subsequent venues: Chrysler Museum, Norfolk; Fredericksburg Area Museum; Manassas Museum; Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, Winchester; Lynchburg Area Museum; Historical Museum of Western Virginia, Roanoke; and William King Regional Arts Center, Abingdon. Also, he will working up time slots for the exhibitions and negotiating with the partner museums on a schedule.

The in-house exhibition team consists of Dr. James Kelly, Director of Museums, who will serve as project director; Dr. Charles Bryan, VHS President and CEO, who will serve as co-curator even after his retirement in 2008; Dr. William M. S. Rasmussen, Lora Robins Curator, co-curator of *Virginia's Civil War*; Dr. Laurant Lee, Curator of African American History; Rebecca Rose, registrar and long-time employee of the Museum of the Confederacy; William Obrochta, Director of Education; and Graham Dozier, Publications Assistant, who is a member of Workgroup 2 of the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission.

The in-house exhibition team will give reports to and seek the advice of the Commission's Workgroup 2 through Dr. Kelly as project director.

The exhibition co-curators, Drs. Bryan and Rasmussen, will begin curatorial research after 1 November 2007. Dr. Bryan is a Civil War historian by professional training and Dr. Rasmussen is co-curator of *Lee and Grant*, an exhibition that opened at the VHS on 20 October that later goes to St. Louis, New York City, Houston, and Atlanta.