



The Salmon P. Chase Papers: Correspondence, 1865-1873

Salmon P. Chase, John Niven

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Salmon P. Chase is usually remembered for his service as Treasury secretary during the Civil War. Earlier, he had attracted national attention as an antislavery attorney and politician and was twice elected U.S. senator from Ohio and served two terms as governor. For the final volume of this series, John Niven has chosen 215 significant letters that shed light on the last phase of Chase's life, the eight and one half years that he presided over the United States Supreme Court as chief justice.

During this period, Chase and the Court grappled with an array of issues that redefined the rights of individuals and legal relationships among citizens, the federal government, and the states. Correspondence selected for this volume is particularly rich with insights into the inner workings of the Court and the judicial process. Other themes include Chase's quest for the Democratic nomination to the presidency in the elections of 1868 and 1872, his role as presiding officer during the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson, and the scandalous breakup of the marriage of his socialite daughter, Kate Chase Sprague, and her millionaire husband, U.S. Senator William Sprague of Rhode Island. The volume closes with Chase's death on May 7, 1873, at the New York City residence of his youngest daughter, Janet ("Nettie") Chase Hoyt.

Representative correspondents in this volume include such national leaders as Stephen Field, Horace Greeley, Andrew Johnson, and Charles Sumner, as well as relatives and personal friends such as Jay Cooke. As in previous volumes, the editors have supplemented their meticulous transcriptions of the manuscripts with detailed notes, a chronology, an index, and a narrative introduction. The National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and Claremont Graduate University provide support for the edition.

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