

ANZA PUBLISHING

**A Powerful First-Hand Account of Life in
America During a Critical Phase in its History**

END OF AN ERA

*The Last Days of Traditional Southern Culture as
Seen Through the Eyes of a Young Confederate Soldier*
by John Sergeant Wise

Wise was a most attractive speaker and raconteur, an excellent sportsman, and a gifted writer. In view of his extreme frankness, his political vagaries, and his real charm and power as a writer, it is a misfortune that he could not afford to devote more time to literature—
Dictionary of American Biography

In John Sergeant Wise's **END OF AN ERA** (Bylany Press), the glory of modern chivalry, passing into the mists of history, shines out in one man's very elegant prose. Totally authentic, this unabridged memoir constitutes one of the best first-person narratives of the Civil War period. With power and candor, Wise captures the charm of the Old South, the disgrace of slavery, and the horrors of the war. Lives were changed in a moment of time, a new culture arising promising a better future. It is a poignant account of the mixed blessings of duty, honor, patriotism, victory and defeat.

END OF AN ERA reads like a novel, letting us see the world of mid-19th century southern America from the perspective of a young Confederate soldier. It is a valuable archive of sociological and anthropological information about an extinguished society. Wise investigates the cultural diversity of his social landscape. He describes many of the small towns, villages, and territories of early Virginia, recalling the demographic, economic, religious, and political aspects that made them notable. In the book's detailed and precise language, the strands that constituted the fabric of antebellum Southern culture are beautifully portrayed. Wise also depicts the privations and chaos of war with unflinching honesty. He does not glorify the Southern army or its government, nor does he try to justify his occasionally ungentlemanly conduct and speech. The full range of his emotions is exhibited in this memoir, reactions he had to the complex changes that occurred within his own circle, as well as in larger society.

The writing in **THE END OF AN ERA** is in a remarkably fluid modern style, modern in the sense that the author lets flow to the surface his true emotions: cockiness, joy, anger, boredom, bitterness, resignation. Unlike many other autobiographies of the period, there is no attempt to suppress negative feelings and unconventional motivations. The book gives compelling descriptions of many well-known participants on the Confederate side, such as Generals Robert E. Lee and A. P. Hill. It also discusses famous battles, including that of Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Manassas. This wonder-

fully written narrative is for anyone interested in the Civil War period, and the Old South, as it covers so many areas in detail. It is also suitable for young people who could learn much about this fascinating time, through a very engaging text.

John Sergeant Wise (1846-1913) was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to a wealthy and powerful Southern family. After the war, embarked on a political career. He became a leader of a reform group in Richmond politics, and accused the state Conservative party of corruption. He was also later appointed as Federal district attorney, and he successfully ran as a Republican and Coalition candidate. In 1885, he ran for governor as the Republican candidate but lost, accusing the Democrats of cheating in the election. The year 1888 was a critical one for Wise, in that he decided to leave politics, and take up the practice of law, not in his native state, but in far away New York City. In this capacity, he assisted in the development of the electrical industry.

Paul Dennis Sporer (editor) is the author of *The Dimensions of Companionship; Liberating Love; The Concept of Family; and Equal but Different*. He has also served as editor on more than 30 culturally and historically significant books, including *Painting Explained*, by Thomas Gullick; *Is Secession Treason?*, by Albert Bledsoe; *The Heart of Aryavarta*, by Lawrence Dundas; *Beauty and Art*, by Aldam Heaton; *The French at Home*, by Albert Rhodes; *From Slave Cabin to Pulpit*, by Peter Randolph; *Newer Ideals of Peace*, by Jane Addams; *Views of Old Europe*, by Bayard Taylor; *Gentle Measures*, by Jacob Abbott; *Parental Influences*, William Bacon; *Finding a Way Out*, by Robert Moton; *The New Birth*, by Austin Phelps; *Tupelo*, by John Hill Aughey; *An Incident of Travel*, Arthur Jerome Eddy; *End of an Era*, by John Sergeant Wise; *The Missionary*, by Samuel Mazzuchelli; *Half a Century*, by Jane Swisshelm; *Born Three Times*, by Thomas L. Johnson; *Dark Hollow*, by Anna Katharine Green; and *1492: Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, by Mary Johnston.

For further information about **END OF AN ERA**, or to arrange an interview with the editor, contact Cassandra Foxton, inform_at_anzapublishing.com. The publisher's website address is AnzaPublishing.com.

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