

# The Life of John A. Rawlins

James Harrison Wilson



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General James Harrison Wilson, author of this biography, said of his subject, "John A. Rawlins, all things considered, was the most remarkable man I met during the Civil War..." That is a remarkable statement from one who served under McClellan and Grant, and was a cavalry leader in his own right. John Rawlins wrote, "You know, I believe more in the infallibility of numbers than in the infallibility of generals, no matter how great their reputation." Yet he was devoted to Ulysses S. Grant during the Civil War and to the end of Rawlins' short life. Grant felt he could not do without Rawlins and would not give him a front-line command. A contemporary said of Rawlins: "Lieutenant-Colonel Rawlins, Grant's assistant adjutant general, is a very industrious, conscientious man, who never loses a moment, and never gives himself any indulgence except swearing and scolding." Rawlins even once lost his temper with Grant and used some pretty salty language, immediately begging the general's pardon. This interesting young man was a key background figure in the American Civil War. He was promoted general and later was Secretary of War under Grant.



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