The Last Ditch of the Chivalry, or a President in Petticoats

PERMANENT ID:
11827

LANGUAGE:
English

DATE:
1865

IMAGE DESCRIPTION:
At the right of the page, Confederate president Jefferson Davis, disguised in women's clothing, is shown running away from soldiers of the US Army. Davis is wearing a dress, and a woman's bonnet, attached to his neck by a ribbon, has just fallen off of his head; underneath the dress, he is wearing men's riding boots with spurs. He holds a sack of gold under his right arm and clutches a dagger in his right hand. In pursuit are four Union soldiers with swords and pistols drawn. They call out to Davis to surrender, telling him that they see through his disguise. Davis, still pretending to be a woman, cries out "Let me alone, you bloodthirsty villains: I thought your government more magnanimous than to hunt down women and children!" Behind Davis, a Confederate woman tries to defend the Confederate president against the Union soldiers, telling them "Look out, you vile Yankees, if you make him mad, he will hurt some of you!" This cartoon is a sensationalized depiction of the capture of Jefferson Davis on the morning of May 10, 1865, near Irwinville, Georgia. Following his capture, rumors circulated that Davis had been found attempting to escape while disguised as a woman. According to Davis, as the troops closed in he had hurriedly put on the first coat he could find (his wife's raincoat), and his wife threw her shawl over his head for further protection. Cartoonists seized on the opportunity to make fun of the former president of the Confederacy by portraying him masquerading in full female dress, complete with hoop skirts, petticoats, and bonnets.

FORMAT:
Lithographs; Political cartoons

DIMENSIONS:
Width: 45 cm, Height: 33.5 cm

PUBLISHER:
Historical Society of Pennsylvania

ARTIST:
Unknown Artist; Moloshok, Rachel; Moloshok, Rachel; Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Jefferson Davis,
1808-1889; Currier & Ives