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Beyond the Battlefield : New England and the Civil War

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The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife
Annual Proceedings 2011
Edited by Peter Benes

Beyond the Battlefield: New England and the Civil War

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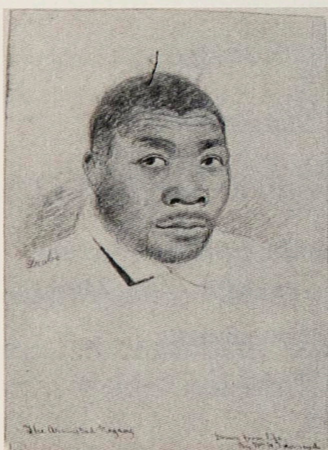

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Beyond the Battlefield: New England and the Civil War

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Introduction

When Robert Underwood Johnson wrote his *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* in 1887, using the recollections of officers on both sides, the winds of time had hardly blown the stench of gunpowder from the field. Commemoration of the Civil War was riveted to war, tactics, gallantry, and ineptitude as the country rebounded from one of the worst civil wars in human history: conservatively 618,000 American deaths during the conflict from Maine to New Mexico. When the war's centennial came in the 1960s, little had changed. The time had come to breathe life back into the tattered silk flags in each state capitol. Within the memories of our grandparents' grandparents' generation, in New England as elsewhere, regional pride was unfurled to mask the horror of Matthew Brady's haunting battlefield photography barely muted by its sepia tones. Americans took family vacations to battlefields: to stand where they stood, famous and forgotten, and within Cold War America to imagine the precipice.

For New Englanders in all six states, the hallowed ground elevated the likes of Colonel Joshua Chamberlain and the Twentieth Maine on Little Round Top at Gettysburg. The Mainers anchored the far left flank of the entire Army of the Potomac whose survival rested upon repulsing General Hood's Texans who charged three times. For New Hampshire, the ranks of the "Fighting Fifth" withstood over a thousand casualties to become one of the bloodiest regiments in the entire Union army. Their colonel, Edward Cross, was wounded twice before predicting his own death on the second day at Gettysburg. Only one of the sixteen Green Mountain regiments—the Eighth—served outside of the two Vermont Brigades. Similar units were usually composed of men from many states to reduce severe casualties for single towns or families back home. For their policy, the promise of Vermont's entire next generation withered with the sacrifice that brought distinction for the Union's highest percentage of per capita battlefield casualties (debated with Michigan) while more than a tenth of the population was in uniform. Following Maine and New Hampshire, Gettysburg held a third pivotal role for northern New England when the Vermont Brigade's General George Stannard under fire daringly deployed two regiments at ninety degrees from the Union line to stem the advance of Pickett's Charge of more than 12,000 men.

For southern New England, little stands taller on Boston Common or elsewhere than Daniel Chester French's memorial to the African American Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Infantry and their Colonel Robert Gould Shaw for untold heroism before the guns of Battery Wagner in South Carolina in 1863. Race and relevance were changed forever. Connecticut sacrificed generals to the cause: Nathaniel Lyon among the first to fall at Wilson's Creek in 1861, Joseph Mansfield at Antietam in 1862, John Sedgwick at the Wilderness in 1864, and Griffin Stedman at Petersburg in 1864.

What of Rhode Island? Filmmaker Ken Burns so poignantly brought America back to the significance of its Civil War—and why it cannot be forgotten—night after night in 1990 on PBS. Burns summarized the tragedy right at the beginning of the story in the lingering eloquence of the doomed Major Sullivan Ballou from Smithfield who wrote home to his wife, Sarah, from the camp of the Second Rhode Island on 14 July 1861, a week before the Battle of Bull Run. Ballou's words are as beautiful and revealing on the eve of the regiment's first battle as they are deeply sad: "my dear Sarah, never forget how much I love you, and when my last breath escapes me on the battlefield, it will whisper your name." On that field, Major Ballou was mortally wounded by a cannonball and died at the age of thirty-two along with ninety-three other Rhode Islanders from his regiment.

There lies the story of Sullivan Ballou in stark military terms but what of his wife, Sarah, and two boys, Edgar and William, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of other households in New England and elsewhere impacted by warfare and politics? What you hold here in the 2011 *Annual Proceedings* of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife is a partial answer. *Beyond the Battlefield: New England and the Civil War* shows that perhaps a full 150 years are required to engage the back story of the nation's darkest moment. The single, war-torn recollection—known then, remembered now but forgotten in between—is that the Civil War was a national tragedy equally at home as on the battlefield and that each region in the North and South endured different experiences during the war and certainly afterwards from Reconstruction to Civil Rights.

For New England's back story, our authors explore several topics: national identity in the face of slavery laws via two seminal events a generation before military conflict in which former president John Quincy Adams played a role from his seat in Congress—the Amistad affair and the Haverhill, Massachusetts, response in 1842 to the Congressional gag order forbidding debate on slavery; the ironies of abolition and the reasons that spurred New Englanders to war and ultimate sacrifice in the story of Connecticut cavalryman Uriah Parmelee, who died at Five Forks just nine days before Appomattox after four years of service focused for him on freeing the slaves; the complex, largely untold roles that New England women played in the war effort in munitions production, nursing care for both white and black combatants, and untold emotional support for which there were few parades and little glory at war's end; the maritime war that on both sides is still overshadowed by forced marches and dusty mayhem on land; and New England memory-making that laid the foundation for embracing unfathomable loss and reconciliation in the decades of reunions and handshakes extended across once contested ground until the last veterans passed on.

In New England places like Deerfield, Massachusetts, the impulse was the same. The town meeting appointed a committee (of men) to arrange

for a monument to the fallen. The chairman was Nathaniel Hitchcock, whose son James had died at Andersonville Prison. The monument still stands on the town common, erected in 1867 by the firm of abolitionist James G. Batterson, who also founded Traveler's Insurance in Hartford. At the substantial cost of $3,027 plus shipping, the monument is among the first in the country and perhaps *the* first with the sculptural figure of a soldier. Forty-two names are commemorated on the obelisk, which the committee also devoted to Deerfielders who had sacrificed during the colonial wars. Missing here are the women who made the same sacrifices as their fathers, husbands, and sons.

The American Civil War through all of its ironies and waste, as we imagine the talent and social advancement denied to us by battle and disease generations later, is forever held in the stories that capture the absurdity of the human condition in the hands of chaos. Take the story of a Massachusetts soldier, Brigadier General Daniel Ruggles, from Barre who graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1833, served in the Seminole and Mexican Wars, and in Texas, and fought famously at Shiloh in 1862 where his most practical, if ineloquent, famous words to his superiors were "get every gun you can find!" The result was a massed battery of sixty-two cannons, the largest artillery barrage known at the time, that broke the enemy line and at the end of the first day nearly won the battle for…the Confederacy! Yes, General Ruggles commanded the First Division, II Corps, of the Army of Mississippi for the South despite his deep New England roots. Many northerners left New England to find their fortunes in the South especially after the opening of West Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. Others saw the West during long service in the army and, like Ruggles, married southern women. After the war, General Ruggles returned to Virginia and life as a real estate agent and farmer. He died in Fredericksburg in 1897.

New England's large role in the Civil War, at home and abroad, and even occasionally for the South, is difficult to comprehend because of the myriad of facets to the story: from social complaint, domestic support, and munitions production to bravery or cowardice in the field. The Civil War is a prism forever changing in the hands of people from all walks of American life. The contribution of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife is to look "Beyond the Battlefield" and back to the home front where every day between 1861 and 1865, like elsewhere in our fractured country, demands were made on untold human commitment and resources. As such, the Civil War is a reservoir of memory and perseverance in the greater cause of national identity better understood through the lives and beliefs of those left behind than through the battles and leaders normally called upon to define our greatest national tragedy.

Philip Zea
Deerfield, Massachusetts

Picturing Violence: The *Amistad* Affair, Panorama Painting, and National Identities

Naomi Hood Slipp

In August of 1839 a major event challenged American legal policies regarding international property laws as well as domestic humanitarian concerns. The event highlighted the fraught argument regarding the peculiar institution of American slavery as a central issue for national unity. Newspapers across New England and as far south as Louisiana latched onto the story of a black ship seen off the eastern coast of America during the summer months.[1] This mysterious ship—with torn sails, a hull covered in barnacles and grass, and the presence of armed black men walking its deck—was immediately dramatized; it filled newspapers to create widespread interest in its possible origins and final destination.[2] The mystery of the "Long Low Black Schooner," as it was called, was solved when the U.S. brig *Washington* captured the ship off Montauk Point on Long Island, New York. Fifty-four African slaves were on board, having been purchased in Sierra Leone, sent on a Portuguese ship to Havana, and sold to Cubans José Ruiz and Pedro Montez.

As the story became known, four nights into a journey from Havana to Port Principe, the slaves were able to overpower and kill both the captain and three of the crew of the *Amistad*, the Spanish schooner carrying them to their destination. Deceived by the navigator, whom they spared to steer the boat back to Africa, they were brought to the American coast and, upon capture, eventually imprisoned in New Haven, Connecticut, by the United States Government.[3] Ruiz and Montez lodged complaints against Sengbe Pieh, also known as Joseph Cinqué, the leader of the revolt, and the other slaves involved, charging them with murder and piracy. The American government was forced to adjudicate the issue publicly

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The author would like to thank the organizers, presenters, and audience of the 2011 conference, *Beyond the Battlefield: New England and the Civil War*, for their comments and suggestions.

[1] Newspaper accounts were published in New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Besides those cited below, sources on the *Amistad* affair include John Warner Barber, *A History of the Amistad Captives: Being a Circumstantial Account of the Capture of the Spanish Schooner Amistad, by the Africans on Board...* (New Haven, Conn.: E. L. and J. W. Barber, 1840); Simeon E. Baldwin, "The Captives of the Amistad," in *Papers of the New Haven Colony Historical Society*, (New Haven, Conn.: New Haven Colony Historical Society, 1888), 331–71; and Tracey Birdwell, "The Strength and Influence of Abolitionist Imagery: The *Amistad* Revolt Leader in Abolitionist Propaganda" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1998).

[2] Maggie Montesinos Sale, *The Slumbering Volcano: American Slave Ship Revolts and the Production of Rebellious Masculinity* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 67.

[3] Sidney Kaplan, "Black Mutiny on the Amistad," *Massachusetts Review* 10, no. 3 (summer 1969): 493.

in court. The legal dilemma came down to the African mutineers' status as either born free or born as property. If, as the Spanish claimed, these prisoners were born as chattel, then they belonged to the men whom they had wronged and would be punished accordingly in Spanish courts. If they had been illegally taken and sold into slavery, then the Spaniards were in defiance of international slave trade agreements and lacked the legal right to claim these men as property.

Abolitionists immediately rallied to the defense of the Africans who they believed had been obtained illegally and sold into slavery. By 1840 the British had forged agreements and signed treaties with most European and Euro-American countries abolishing the seizure, sale, and trade of slaves taken from Africa. The international nature, then, of the *Amistad* affair—as it came to be known—made it much more complicated than a question of a domestic slave revolt. Instead, it came down to the minutiae of international property agreements and the question of Spanish rights within colonial territories. Furthermore, the problem of oceanic, state, or federal jurisdiction was muddled, as was the position of different states themselves on the question of slavery in contrast to a unified federal position. These judicial proceedings dug into the very heart of the question of slavery in America and demanded a more unified national response. The outcome is well known—after three trials and some two years in jail the captives (all members of the Mende people of West Africa) were given their freedom. How they were publicized and why certain formats and characterizations were more "successful" than others has not been so fully explored.[4]

The art historians Richard J. Powell and Marcus Wood have argued, for example, that abolitionists and anti-abolitionists alike worked hard to create visual images and literary narratives that would support their causes.[5] As these scholars have also demonstrated, however, African Americans themselves had few opportunities to challenge or support the circulating visual culture that addressed their status as slave or citizen. This essay considers a now lost touring panorama painting of the *Amistad* mutiny, one that had abolitionist aims but was imbued with visual contradictions. This reconsideration of a forgotten and monumental part of the abolitionist refashioning of African figures provides a new position from which to view the problematic social status of the *Amistad* participants and the artistic representations of them in period works. Of course, writing about a work that is no longer extant presents considerable difficulties. In the study of American visual culture and, in particular, in re-

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[4] Sale, *Slumbering Volcano*, 61.

[5] Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Richard J. Powell, "Cinqué: Antislavery Portraiture and Patronage in Jacksonian America," *American Art* 11, no. 3 (autumn 1997): 49–73.

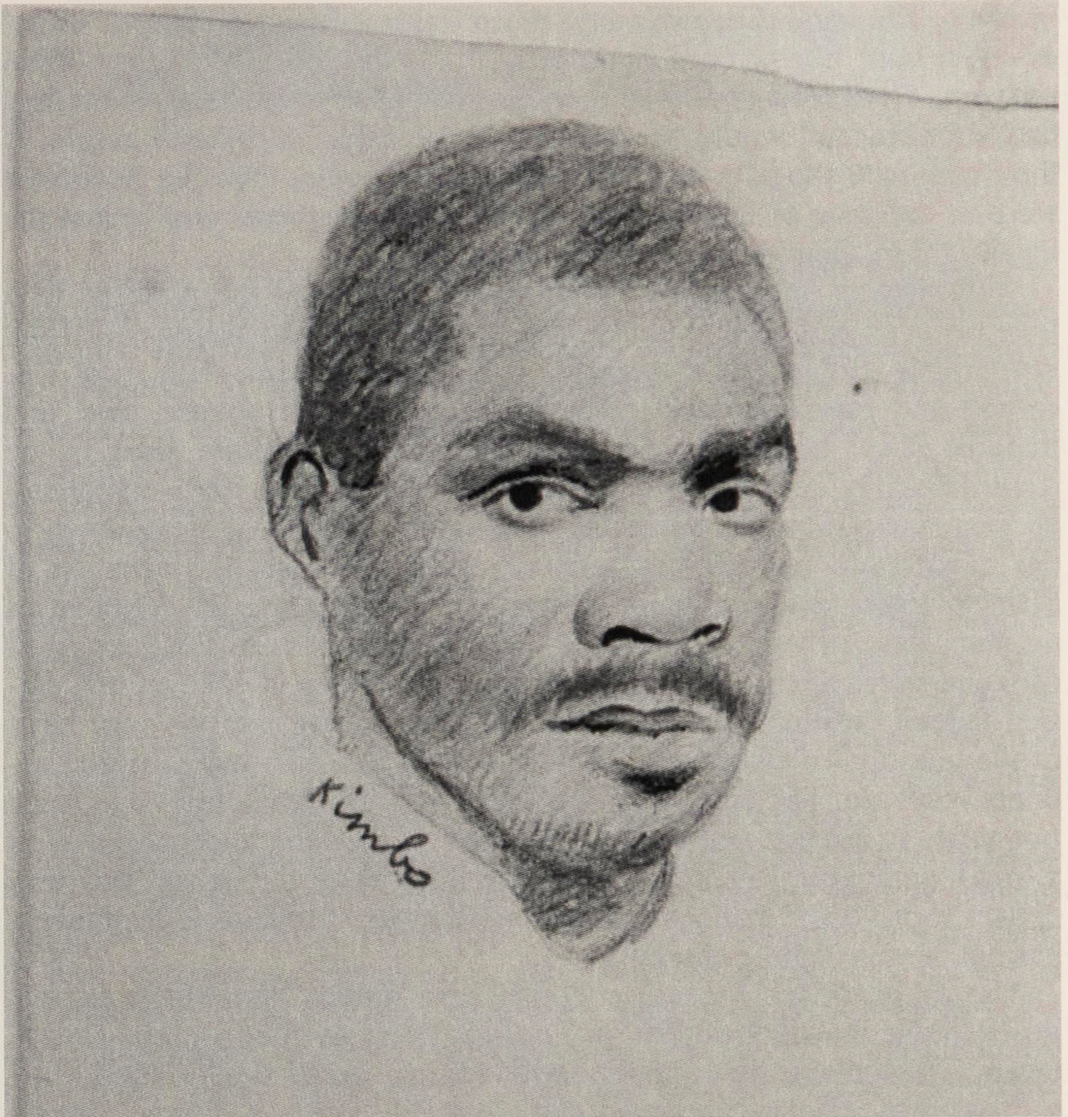

Figure 1. William Townsend, *Kimbo*, circa 1839–40. Pencil on paper, circa 14 x 13 cm, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

searching nineteenth-century panorama paintings, few of which have survived into the twenty-first century, this author's goals have been to extrapolate the panorama's visual language through contemporary narrative descriptions and to emphasize its importance within a currency of visual material that addressed period viewers with contemporary concerns.[6]

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[6] For additional background on the panorama in America, see Kevin J. Avery, "The Panorama and Its Manifestation in American Landscape Painting, 1795–1870" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1995); Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium* (New York: Zone Books, 1997); Karin McGinnis, "Moving Right Along: Nineteenth-Century Panorama Painting in the United States" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1983); and Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993).

Other scholars, including Maggie Montesinos Sale in *The Slumbering Volcano*, have suggested that depictions of the *Amistad* participants that appeared in the press portrayed them as either villainous, murdering savages or educated, moral citizens. In an anonymous official government report, for example, one of the Africans is described as:

> the most horrible creature we ever saw in human shape, an object of terror to the very blacks, who said that he is a cannibal. His teeth projected at almost right angles from his mouth, while his eyes had a most savage and demonic expression.[7]

This depiction casts the African mutineer as an actual cannibal with his teeth, eyes, and form made abnormal and deformed by his own depravity. The physical animality of the African is proffered as a legitimation of his position as slave, cargo, and property. Reports such as this one, both titillating and spectacular, played on the public's imagination while illegitimating the Africans' revolt and their bid for freedom.

Certainly part of the public anxiety surrounding this event and the figuring of its participants as savage centered around the intense fear within white America of "the slave revolt." Nat Turner's insurrection in 1831 had inflamed an already volatile issue—and for most white Americans the fear of rebellion amongst enslaved populations was a daily anxiety. The "gag rule" in effect from 1836 to 1844 prevented the reading of antislavery documents on the floor of Congress due to their inflammatory nature, and circulating stories and images of black-on-white violence worked both to perpetuate fear within white communities and to maintain distance and animosity between the races. Within this nationally divisive environment, a public vindication of slavery through the governmental proclamation of a guilty verdict for the *Amistad* defendants would uphold proslavery values and legitimate the system. A verdict of innocent, however, would inflame public passions, support the abolitionist cause, and threaten to topple an already precarious social system.

To counter this image of the African mutineers as violent and savage criminals, abolitionists worked to present the Africans as cultured men. The abolitionist effort to gain the Africans' freedom was executed through multiple approaches, most relying upon coded visual strategies of display and performance. The participants were taught to speak English and exhibited in their jail cell. Before the Africans' First Circuit Court trial in September, over four thousand Americans paid to see them to "acquaint themselves with the African character, as developed before the natives have been corrupted by intercourse with the white man."[8] In addition to events in New Haven, one Mende individual, Kale, was sent on a speaking tour, while the mutiny was dramatized as a play in New

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[7] Sale, *Slumbering Volcano,* 70.

[8] Ibid., 61.

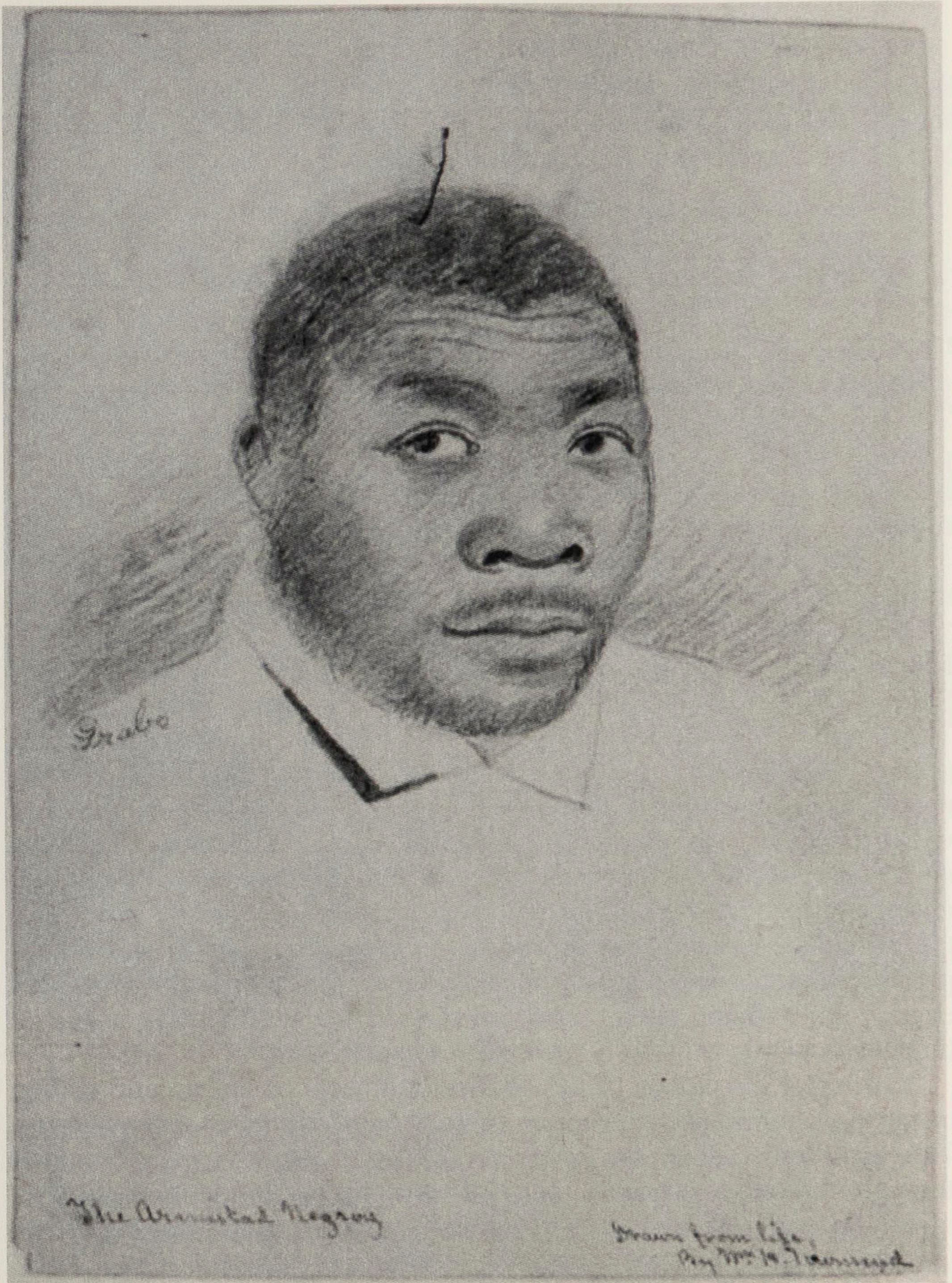

Figure 2. William Townsend, *Grabo,* circa 1839–40. "The Armistad [sic] Negroes, Drawn from life By Wm. H. Townsend." Pencil on paper, circa 14 x 13 cm, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

York City. Finally, numerous artistic renderings of the Mende prisoners sought to reveal them as civilized men. For example, William H. Townsend drew sensitive portraits of twenty of the Africans (*Figures 1* and *2*), from which were taken miniature waxes to be circulated in pub-

lic.[9] The most familiar depiction of the *Amistad* participants is Nathaniel Jocelyn's humanizing and regal portrait of Cinque, now in the collection of the New Haven Historical Society (*Figure 3*). Setting Cinqué in an idealized landscape, Jocelyn presents the leader of the mutiny as strong and determined as replicated in a print by John Sartain.[10]

Anti-abolitionists and abolitionists alike were motivated by their own causes—to prove either guilt or innocence, savagery or humanity—and chose to portray the participants in lights that would prove favorable to the outcome that they most desired. Certainly, the ideological stakes of their representation and the ultimate outcome of their trial would heavily influence the way that the United States government dealt with "free" Africans and with other slave-holding countries.

One image in particular—Amasa Hewins's *Amistad Panorama*—addressed the dilemma of the *Amistad* participants. All but forgotten today, the panorama toured Connecticut in 1840. Major advertisements for its display appeared in May in the pro-abolition *New England Weekly Review*, published in Hartford and edited by John Greenleaf Whittier, while the abolitionist leaning *New Haven Daily Herald* also ran reviews of it.[11] The enormous work addressed both the humanitarian concerns and the sensational qualities of the *Amistad* revolt and contributed to the widespread theatricalization of its participants. It also attempted to legitimate their revolt through the use of revolutionary rhetoric.

Amasa Hewins, who was born in Sharon, Massachusetts, in 1795, had been employed as a merchant in West India goods before becoming a portrait painter.[12] As is typical of the career of many itinerant American portrait painters working in antebellum New England, Hewins relocated his family frequently to New York City, Washington City, Boston, and

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[9] Marcus Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic: Sailors, Pirates, and Motley Crews in the Age of Sail* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014).

[10] Readers interested in the violent potentiality of Jocelyn's portrait should see Ross Barrett, *Rendering Violence: Riots, Strikes, and Upheaval in Nineteenth-Century American Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

[11] "Don't fail to call and see the picture…," *New England Weekly Review*, 16 May 1840, issue 20, col. D. The broadside advertising the panorama also included reviews from the *New Haven Herald*, *New Haven Palladium*, *New Haven Register*, Hartford *New England Weekly Review*, and *Hartford Daily Courant*.

[12] An advertisement for A. Hewins, portrait painter, appeared in the New York City newspaper, the *National Advocate*, 6 December 1824. For more on this artist, see Amasa Hewins, *Hewins's Journal. A Boston Portrait-Painter Visits Italy: The Journal of Amasa Hewins, 1830–1833*, ed. Francis H. Allen (Boston: Boston Athenæum, 1931); Hewins, Amasa, Papers, 1829–1855 (Boston Athenæum Special Collections, Manuscripts); John F. McGuigan Jr., "Fortunate Associations: The American Painter Amasa Hewins (1795–1855) and Florence," paper presented at *The City and the Book V International Conference: The Americans in Florence's "English" Cemetery II,* Florence, Italy, 11 October 2008. Reprinted at *http://www.florin.ms/CBVb.html*, and Susan Muszala, "Unpublished biography of Amasa Hewins with a list of exhibitions and known works" (undated, in "Artist File, Amasa Hewins," Art of the Americas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.)

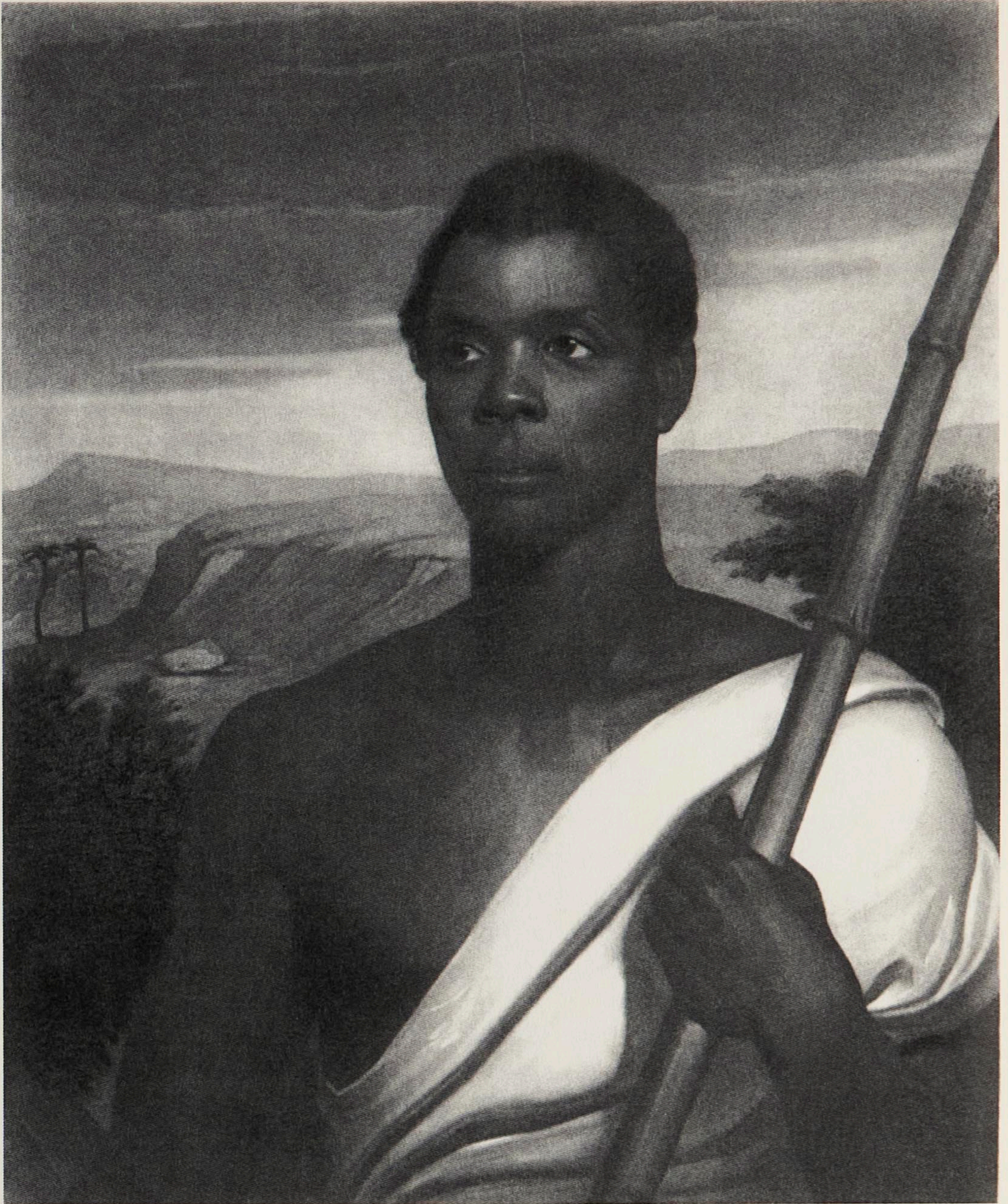

Figure 3. John Sartain, after Nathaniel Jocelyn, *Cinque: The Chief of the Amistad Captives*, circa 1840. Mezzotint, plate size: 12 1/2 x 9 3/16 in., Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut.

adjacent areas; he was also imprisoned for debt. In 1839 Hewins traveled to Baltimore and then to New Haven where he took up residence and advertised as a portrait painter. It was here, during the height of the *Amistad* affair, that he conceived the 135-foot-long "Magnificent Painting of the Massacre on Board the Schooner Amistad!!" While Hewins was not unfamiliar with public exhibitions of his works, having displayed both at Harding's Gallery and the Boston Athenæum's annual exhibitions, the massive panorama of this politically charged and violent subject was a

monumental undertaking for the artist. The broadside that publicized the exhibition exclaimed in bold, theatrical type:

> Magnificent Painting of the Massacre on Board the Schooner Amistad!! By A. Hewins, Esq., of Boston. The scene represents the rise and struggle of the Africans.… This thrilling event with 26 of the principal characters is correctly delineated on 135 feet of Canvas, and strikes the beholder as real life. Its faithfulness to the original has been attested by those who participated in the awful tragedy. The hundreds of visitors both in New Haven and in Hartford where the Africans have been seen, have bestowed the most unqualified praise upon the merits of the Painting.[13]

An article from 1900 has perpetuated the scholarly claim that an 1840 wood engraving by John Warner Barber (*Figure 4*) illustrating the death of the *Amistad*'s captain at the hands of the Africans may have been inspired by this now lost painting.[14] In particular, the engraving's unusually long, banner-like composition is cited as proof. A description of the panorama from the *New Haven Herald,* and cited on the broadside, coincides with the engraving's subject and claims that the painting "comprises the scene on board the Amistad, when the blacks rose upon the crew, and killed the Captain and the cook."[15] But another account of the panorama claims that the scene shows Cinqué in the act of taking the life of Montez, "who is retreating wounded into the companionway of the vessel. He is held back by the interference of others."[16] This description of the panorama diverges from the print. Ultimately, the painting's imagery remains a mystery. Benjamin Griswold, a professor of religion at Yale University's Theological Seminary and one of the men brought in to describe the Mende language and the prisoners' acquisition of English, wrote about the panorama in a letter to Lewis Tappan, a New York abolitionist and key figure in their liberation, in the spring of 1840.

> In respect to the painting as a work of art, I have nothing to say, as I do not consider myself a critic in such matters.… I shall do the artist injustice unless I say that he seems to feel an interest in these men.… He compares the act of Cinque in liberating himself and companions to the efforts of the men who led the armies of the US in her struggle for independence, and thinks that he has shown as much of the hero,…and asserts that to prejudice the community against these unfortunate men is the last thing that he desires. For the truth of his declaration, I give him credit, since I have no

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[13] Powell, "Cinqué," 55–56.

[14] Ellen Strong Bartlett, "The Amistad Captives: An Old Conflict between Spain and America," *New England Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly*, n.s., 22 (March–August 1900): 81.

[15] The *New Haven Herald* quoted on the broadside advertising Amasa Hewins's *Amistad Panorama*, 1840. "The Magnificent Painting of the Massacre," 1840 broadside. In the collection of the Whitney Library, New Haven Museum.

[16] *The New England Weekly Review*, Hartford, quoted on the broadside advertising Amasa Hewins's *Amistad Panorama*, 1840. "The Magnificent Painting of the Massacre," 1840 broadside. In the collection of the Whitney Library, New Haven Museum.

> reason to doubt his sincerity—the soundness of his judgment I can be permitted to question. The moral effect of his painting, so far as it has any, I do think will be bad.[17]

What Griswold describes here is the representational problem of rendering black violence. While Hewins attempted to picture the *Amistad* participants as revolutionary and heroic, the work remained provocative and, likely, for many viewers, frightening. For Griswold, an abolitionist, the work was antithetical to their cause, and so he predicted, "the moral effect of his painting…will be bad."

While most renderings of the *Amistad* participants took care to trace physiognomy or an intelligent profile, this panoramic work showed revolt and embodied fears of slave mutiny. Since the painting circulated widely throughout Connecticut, it served a public and political function. Antebellum panorama paintings were often freighted with political or nationalist meanings but also functioned as an important form of mass entertainment. The immersive experience of the panorama and the visual effects often associated with it, combined with the overt political and violent imagery of the *Amistad* affair, must have been an event unto itself. As Leo G. Mazow has written of the panorama effect, "those partaking of this wildly popular form of entertainment reported the dazzling sensation of being immersed in an all-enveloping environment."[18] But it was the long format of the panorama painting itself that may have necessitated its subject matter, since an active and engaging composition was necessary to fill the 135-foot-long work. In any event, the format was ultimately its own undoing, because Hewins—however he intended it—chose to portray the Africans in the violent act of revolt, which proved unpalatable to the white audiences towards whom it was directed.

How then are we to read the description by Griswold of the proposed equation of the *Amistad* participants with American revolutionary patriots? In antebellum America the revolutionary nature of the African mutineers, who broke their bonds to escape imposed slavery, was perceived as an action that showed intense agency. Hewins, as Griswold claims, attempted to refigure the violence of slave revolt as a noble action, aligned with an idealized white American past and the struggle for national independence. This positive view of the mutineers was problematic, especially in the visual depiction of such a cause. The violence inherent in portraying a revolutionary uprising was necessary to make this parallel between the *Amistad* participants and American revolutionary patriots didactically understood, but it also visualized a feared specter—the armed African. This representational difficulty reveals the problemat-

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[17] Powell, "Cinqué," 55–56.

[18] Leo G. Mazow, "Panoramic Sensibilities in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century American Painting," in *An Endless Panorama of Beauty: Selections from the Jean and Alvin Snowiss' Collection of American Art* (University Park, Pa.: Palmer Museum of Art, 2002), 1.

Figure 4: Frontispiece from John Warner Barber, *A History of the Amistad Captives: Being a Circumstantial Account of the Capture of the Spanish Schooner Amistad, by the Africans on Board* (New Haven, Conn.: Hitchcock and Stafford, Printers, 1840). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

ic nature of independence itself as the idea of independence ideologically acts as a defining condition for white male citizens and delimits the freedom of African Americans. Independence itself then is revealed as strained and full of internal ironies.

Amasa Hewins faced a number of difficulties in figuring black violence, many of which countered the artist's professed abolitionist aims. Portrayed as self-emancipators, the *Amistad* participants are also problematically illustrated engaged in mob violence. In addition, the format of the panorama called for a scene of action and involvement, in this case violent action. Furthermore, the conflation of the *Amistad* participants with American revolutionaries proved particularly difficult to represent for a white audience. Hewins sought to reveal the conflict between America's founding doctrine of liberty against tyranny and the continuance of American slavery. By associating American heroes with armed black insurrection, however, he perhaps went too far. For Hewins the *Amistad* panorama proved a financial failure, and his next panoramic project, a four-mile-long moving depiction of the sea and shores of the Mediterranean, abandoned political motives in favor of light tourism and pure entertainment. As for the *Amistad* affair, the eventual release and return of thirty-nine of the Africans to Sierra Leone in 1842 dealt a foundational blow to the institution of American slavery. Tensions continued to escalate between abolitionists and anti-abolitionists over the ensuing two decades, leading to the outbreak of the American Civil War, a conflict which—among other issues—sought to settle the question of American slavery once and for all.

Old Man Eloquent and the Haverhill Petition of 1842

Kathleen F. Dacey

The infamous Haverhill Petition of 1842 was an incendiary document arising out of frustration over discussions taking place in the United States Congress over the right to petition on grievances arising out of slavery. Southerners denied the right of congressmen to present documents on this subject and threatened dire consequences if the subject of slavery continued to be raised. In December of 1838 Democratic States' Rights congressman Charles G. Atherton of New Hampshire composed a resolution known as the "Atherton Gag."[1] This automatically tabled all slavery petitions, which prevented them from being read or discussed. John Quincy Adams, alternately known by the soubriquets of "Old Man Eloquent" or the "Mad Man from Massachusetts," depending on one's political bent, was a frequent and vocal opponent of the gag rules. He felt that the gag rule and the subsequent standing rule, which forbade even the reception of antislavery petitions, were directed against him. In fact many congressmen expressed doubts about its constitutionality, a discussion that was not settled until the rule was narrowly defeated in December 1844 by a vote of 108 to 80, with all northern and four southern Whigs and 78 percent of all northern Democrats favoring the defeat of the "Rule."[2]

In Haverhill, Massachusetts, a small but ardent segment of the population was actively involved in discussions of current political, social, and religious issues, including slavery. At the Haverhill Lyceum, as well as the Unitarian, Baptist, and Congregational churches, antislavery lectures were regularly held by William Lloyd Garrison and Lydia Maria Child and even Frederick Douglass. The cost of tickets for these events was $1 per season;[3] they comprised part of Haverhill's social life for the politically and socially involved upper class, chiefly composed of families of merchants and shippers as well as lawyers, businessmen, large landowners, and others who could claim descent from founding families, such as the Wards, Emersons, and Whites.

For the average man there were always revival meetings held under tents or in the open air during the summer months. Chief among the popular speakers was William Miller, the millennialist who spoke in Haver-

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[1] *Congressional Globe*, 25th Cong., 3d sess., 1838, vol. 7, 26.

[2] William Lee Miller, *William Lee, Arguing about Slavery: The Great Battle in the United States Congress* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1996): 475, 479–81.

[3] "Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society," advertisement, *Haverhill Gazette*, 15 January 1842, 4.

hill twice in the early 1840s warning of the end times that he believed were coming sometime between 1842 and 1844 and that people would be held accountable at the Last Judgment if they did not take an active stand against slavery.[4] Miller inspired a group of Haverhill zealots to break away from the Congregational and Baptist churches to form the Union Evangelical Church (U.E.C.).[5]

Further stirring up an interest in abolition was John Greenleaf Whittier, who was a charter member of the Haverhill and Essex Anti-Slavery Societies. He also kept the Haverhill citizenry informed and involved in these movements through his articles and editorials in the *Haverhill Gazette*.

Fueled by intemperate confrontations in Washington, D.C., and at home, discussions in Haverhill grew hotter, with Dea. Tappan Chase of the U.E.C., an ardent believer in free speech, suggesting that hypocritical threats of secession from the South so repeatedly voiced since Andrew Jackson's day be countered by petitions from the North praying for the action and the dissolution of the Union.[6] A group of ten men, members of both the U.E.C. and the Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society and firm believers in the need for action by patriotic Americans, met every Friday afternoon at Nathan Webster's hat shop on Water Street in Haverhill to discuss both national and local affairs.

On the first Friday of January 1842, at the behest of the group, three of these militant abolitionists, Sewell Jewett, Benjamin "Black Ben" Emerson, and John P. Montgomery, wrote separate documents of a petition for consideration by the U.E.C. congregation the following day. Emerson's version was deemed so satisfying that it was adopted without changing a word.[7] The petition reads:

> To the Congress of the United States the undersigned citizens of Haverhill, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, pray that you will immediately adopt measures to peacefully dissolve the union of these states.
>
> First: because no union can be agreeable or permanent which does not present prospects of reciprocal benefits.
>
> Second: because a large proportion of the revenues of one section of the Union is annually drained to sustain the views and course of another section, without any adequate return.
>
> Third: because (judging from the history of past nations) this Union if persisted in, in the present course of things, will certainly overwhelm this whole nation in utter destruction.

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[4] Berean [pen name], "The Forty-Three System," *Haverhill Gazette*, 15 January 1842, 1–2.

[5] *Manual of the Union Evangelical Church*, Haverhill, Mass. (Haverhill, Mass.: Banner Press, 1845), 15–16.

[6] "To Break Up the Republic," *Boston Daily Globe*, 9 January 1898, 21.

[7] Ibid. The original of this petition was recently found at the Buttonwoods Museum in Haverhill and has been conserved and framed.

Since many of those interested in the petition were members of the U.E.C., the Reverend Charles Fitch decided to permit the presentation of the petition at the end of the Sunday service. After clearing the Communion table, Reverend Fitch invited all interested members to read, and if they were in agreement with the sentiments, to sign the document. Thirty-two members did (*Appendix*). The signers represented all levels of society: businessmen, artisans, laborers, farmers, and one clergyman (the Reverend Fitch). The triumvirate decided to hold onto the document for two more days to allow non-church members an opportunity to sign it. Fourteen additional proponents signed on Monday and Tuesday when the petition was carried around town by Franklin Currier, an employee of Montgomery. As voluble and volatile discussion began to build throughout the town, the petition was deposited in Nathan Webster's hat store. All who wished to sign it were conducted there, after dark, to stealthily attach their names.[8]

The event created both excitement and disgruntlement throughout the town. By 1842 Haverhill was a burgeoning shoe town of 4,000 to 5,000 citizens (the Haverhill census of 1840 put the population at 4,336) of whom 30 to 40 were shoe manufacturers and 10 to 12 were tanners and leather dealers. While some people worked full time in the shoe industry, many more, mostly farmers and their wives and children, worked at home at night and during the winter months. This meant that a large portion of the town earned at least part of their income from the shoe industry which had been hit hard by the Panic of 1837 and which was only beginning to recover. The sale of work boots and women's slippers to southern markets made up a substantial share of the profits from the approximately 1,500,000 pairs of shoes sold each year.[9] These manufacturers persuaded two of the signatories, Rufus F. Sargent and Nathan Lunt, to scratch out their names. Dea. Samuel Chase of the U.E.C. (who had signed the document) told Lunt that he had committed treason and very likely would have to hang for it. This left forty-four names.

The committee, fearful that increasing pressure would cause more defections, gave the documents to the U.S. Post Rider to be delivered to John Quincy Adams in Washington, D.C. While Adams was not Haverhill's representative in Congress, he was, according to Butters, "the only man then representing Massachusetts in Congress whom we thought we could rely on to present it, and the only man who could not be intimidated."[10] Adams was an adopted son of Haverhill, having studied there for his Harvard College entrance exam with his maternal uncle, the Rev-

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Haverhill Tercentenary Committee, *Haverhill Tercentenary Celebration* (1940 Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2004), 40.

[10] "To Break Up the Republic," *Boston Daily Globe*, 21.

erend Mr. John Shaw.[11] In Washington, Adams acted as a one-man army in the fight to protect free speech and the right to petition for redress of grievances. Early in his career Adams had no great love for slavery, but he did not condemn it either, acknowledging that it was an integral part of the Constitution.[12] Despite his respect for the Constitution, he did not feel that he needed to support the expansion of involuntary servitude. Over time Adams began to see slavery as the root of all sectional problems, from the tariff to Manifest Destiny. His antipathy toward slavery was fostered by his hatred of the South and Democrats, both of whom he blamed for destroying his presidential administration. Adams believed that if slavery was going to be abolished it would be by civil war, which he considered a potential national disaster, or through the consent of slave owners, not by the pressure of abolitionists.[13] When he received the Haverhill Petition, Adams, who had been the victim of several hoax petitions that led colleagues to dispute his qualifications for the chairmanship of the Committee on Foreign Affairs—based on the necessity of dealing with the recognition of "Negro governments" such as Haiti[14]—thought that this was one more trick. Adams subsequently wrote a letter to an old friend living in Haverhill, Isaac R. Howe, inquiring about the petition and its origins, to which Howe replied that the "signers were manufacturers, artisans and farmers who were thoroughly in earnest and determined to be heard."[15]

Adams presented the petition to the House on 24 January 1842.[16] He moved that the petition be referred to a select committee which should return the petition to its senders with an explanation for why the appeal should not be granted. Mr. Hopkins (of Goochland County, Virginia) asked if it was in order to burn the document.[17] As the House exploded in turmoil, Representative Marshall offered a resolution that accused Adams of the crime of high treason. Southern representatives erupted in anger and demanded that Adams should be censured, claiming that by presenting the petition he had "disgraced his country and merited the severest punishment."[18] This proved to be a fatal mistake. Cooler heads tried to table the censure deposition. Adams arranged for allies to defeat this resolution, which allowed him to defend himself against the charges of treason. During preparations for the hearings, Adams was ably assisted by a

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[11] Robert V. Remini, *John Quincy Adams* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2002), 137.

[12] Ibid., 142.

[13] Ibid.

[14] *Congressional Globe*, 27th Cong., 2d sess., 1842, vol. 11, 977.

[15] Paul C.Nagel, *John Quincy Adams: A Public Life, A Private Life* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1977), 386.

[16] *Congressional Globe*, 27th Cong., 2d sess., 1842, vol. 11, 977.

[17] Ibid.

[18] *Congressional Globe*, 27th Cong., 2d sess., 1842, vol. 11, 983.

few antislavery congressmen, as well as abolitionists Joshua Leavitt and Theodore Dwight Weld.[19] At the close of Marshall's arguments Adams took the floor.

> Up rose that little, feeble, gray tottering old man, his eyes dimned [*sic*] and his hands trembling.... [He] raised his voice in a high keyed, as usual, but untremulous and firm.... At first there was nothing of indignation in his tone, manner or words.... But soon a dash of contempt struck the unhappy Marshall to the earth....[20]

Adams used this opportunity to attack the southern "slaveocracy." In a vituperative outpouring of venom, he called his opposition names like "beef-witted blunderhead" and "slave-monger," even accusing one congressman of being drunk on both whiskey and slavery.[21] Adams focused his defense on the Declaration of Independence, calling on the clerk of the House to read this document into the Congressional Record. He excoriated his opponents as "befowlers of the nation's sacred freedoms"[22] and proclaimed that the Haverhill petitioners had the same rights as their predecessors to appeal for redress of grievances. Old Man Eloquent had reversed the momentum. He was no longer on trial, and his adversaries were on the defensive. Then Wise rose in rebuttal. The congressman claimed that

> slavery is a leveling principle; it is a friend to equality. Break down slavery and you would, with the same blow, break down the great principle of equality among men.[23]

Adams's silver-tongued arguments spread throughout the country; petitions of support flooded congressional offices. Bowing to popular pressure, opposition to Adams began to disintegrate. Debate continued for two weeks. On February 5 an objection arose from the prosecution that Adams was discussing the forbidden topic of slavery. The Speaker ruled against this and a subsequent appeal upheld the ruling. That night Adams mused in his diary, "I came home barely able to climb up to my chamber, but with the sound of 'Io Triumphe' ringing in my ear."[24] The debate began to take a physical toll. On 5 February 1842, his face scarlet and with perspiration streaming down, his hands gripping his desk in an effort to hold himself upright,[25] Adams declared a determination to continue but expressed a willingness to close the debate if anyone wanted to table the

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[19] Nagel, *Adams,* 385.

[20] "Haverhill Petition," *Haverhill Gazette,* 5 February 1842, 2.

[21] Remini, *Adams,* 150.

[22] Nagel, *Adams,* 386.

[23] Miller, *Adams,* 439.

[24] Remini, *Adams,* 150.

[25] Nagle, *Adams,* 386.

issue. It was so moved, and the House tabled the issue by a vote of 106 to 93.[26] With his victory assured, Adams immediately introduced two hundred more antislavery petitions before Congress adjourned.

While it would be wonderful to extol Haverhill as a bastion of freedom and equality, such was not the case. Antislavery advocate John Greenleaf Whittier stated that he would not have signed the petition. Then, local newspaper editors William Taggert of the *Essex Banner* and William E. P. Rogers of the *Haverhill Gazette,* who seldom agreed on any issue, both criticized the signers. The *Banner*, on 29 January 1842, opined that "to be notorious by some is preferred to an honest and respectable standing."[27] The *Gazette* stated: "In the name and behalf of the great body of the people of Haverhill of all parties, we disavow all sympathy with the getters up of such a petition...."[28] The only support for the group came in a declaration from the Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society on 4 July 1842, which gave thanks to the "Honorable J. Q. Adams for presenting from this place relating to the discussion of slavery."[29]

Debate over slavery and petitions relating to its retention or abolition was again legal in the United States Congress and they continued until the outbreak of the Civil War. While the Haverhill Petition did not represent even a robust minority, it is a reflection on how a small and obscure, but vocal group altered the direction of congressional discussions on sectionalism by reintroducing the controversial topic of the South's "peculiar institution," and by doing so, forever altered the course of American history.

APPENDIX

Members of the Union Evangelical Church and Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society:
Osgood Boynton (co-vice president of Anti-Slavery Society), Francis Butters Sr. (Anti-Slavery recording secretary), Edward Dike (deacon of U.E.C. and antislavery counselor), Benjamin Emerson (deacon of U.E.C. and ardent abolitionist), Charles Fitch (pastor of U.E.C.), William Hale (charter member of Anti-Slavery Society), George Harmon, John Montgomery (co-vice president of Anti-Slavery Society), Samuel Plummer, Joseph Spiller (later a deacon), Nathan Webster (charter member of Anti-Slavery Society and owner of the hat shop where the petition was planned and signed)

Members of Union Evangelical Church only:
George Bailey, Thomas Ball, Daniel Brickett, Francis Butters Sr., Francis Butters Jr., Otis Butters, Tappan Chase (deacon), Willibee Currier, Joseph Flanders, Nathaniel Foot, Alfred Gage (member of church building committee), George Harmon, John Head, Cornelius Jenness, Nathan Lunt (scratched out his signature when his employer, Dea. Samuel

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[26] Journal of the House of Representatives (7 February 1842), vol. 37, 314.

[27] "Notoriety," *The Essex Banner,* 29 January 1842, 4.

[28] "Dissolving the Union," *Haverhill Gazette*, 5 February 1842, 2.

[29] Donald P. Wright, "The Haverhill Petition of 1842," Library Notes, vol. 3, July 1956, 1, Courtesy of the Trustees of the Haverhill Public Library.

Chase, told him he had committed treason and would hang), William Noyes, Leonard Parker, John Philbrick, Edwin A. Sargent, Samuel Stewart

Shoe manufacturers (business owners):
Osgood Boynton, Tappan Chase, Charles Davis, Benjamin ("Black Ben") Emerson, John Head (declared bankruptcy in 1843), Elisha Hutchinson, John P. Montgomery, Elijah S. Tozier

Shoe industry workers:
Elbridge Davis, William N. Davis, Hiram F. Davis (shoe cutter), Oliver Delaware (cordwainer), N. P. Dresser (sole cutter), B. Greeley (shoe cutter), Cornelius Jenness, Harmon Kimball, Nathan Lunt, William Noyes (shoe cutter), Leonard Parker (shoe cutter), Rufus S. Sargent (shoe cutter; he scratched out his signature under pressure from his employer)

Shoe dealers:
George Harmon, Edwin A. Sargent

Other businessmen:
Francis Butters Sr. (tanner and currier) and his sons Francis (also a bookkeeper for Montgomery; he carried the petition around town) and Otis (also a shoe man), Ezekial Hale (manufacturer), Sewell Jewett (owned steam saw and planing mill), Truman Martin (dentist; his business was near Webster's), Nathan Webster (hat manufacturer and retailer and also a shoe man)

Other workers:
Thomas Ball (currier), Franklin Currier (clerk; he carried the petition around town), Joseph Flanders (ticket agent for Boston and Maine Railroad), Nathaniel Foot (laborer), Alfred Gage (carpenter), William Hale (hostler who ran the livery stable behind Eagle House Hotel), Washington Johnson (blacksmith), Alfred Parmelee (clerk), Willibee Currier (maintenance man for E. J. M. Hale), Walter Plummer (printer), John Plummer (sign painter and carriage painter)

Farmers:
Daniel Brickett, Joseph B. Spiller, Samuel Stuart

Minister: Charles Fitch (U.E.C.)

unknown:
Leonard Parker, George Bailey, Edward Dike, James Harmon, J. Philbrick[30]

Signers of the "Haverhill Petition" in the order of signing:
Emerson, Benjamin ("Black Ben"), deacon of U.E.C.; shoe manufacturer; abolitionist
Montgomery, John P., clerk and treasurer of U.E.C.; shoe manufacturer; co-vice president of the Anti-Slavery Society
Boynton, Osgood, member of U.E.C.; co-vice president of Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society
Davis, Elbridge, shoemaker
Davis, Charles, shoe manufacturer

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[30] *First Directory of Haverhill, Massachusetts* (Haverhill, Mass.: Banner Press, 1853). Courtesy of the Trustees of the Haverhill Public Library. John Greenleaf Whittier, *Annual Meeting of the Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society* (Boston: I. Knapp, 1834), Courtesy of the Trustees of the Haverhill Public Library.

Currier, Franklin, clerk employed by Montgomery; carried around the petition to get signatures
Dike, Edward, deacon of U.E.C.; antislavery counselor
Tozier, Elijah S., shoe manufacturer
Hale, William, member of U.E.C.; hostler who ran the livery stable behind Eagle House; charter member of Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society
Flanders, Joseph, member of U.E.C.; ticket agent for the Boston and Maine Railroad
Parmelee, Alfred S., clerk
Harmon, George O., member of U.E.C.; shoe dealer; ardent abolitionist
Dresser, N. P., sole cutter
Harmon, James
Butters, Otis W., member of U.E.C.; currier and shoe man; son of Francis Butters Sr.
Lunt, Nathan, member of U.E.C.; scratched out his signature when his employer, Dea. Samuel Chase, told him that he had committed treason and would probably hang
Noyes, William H., member of U.E.C.; shoe cutter
Sargent, Edwin A., member of U.E.C.; shoe dealer
Sargent, Rufus F., shoe cutter; scratched out his name under pressure from his employer
Kimball, Hermon, member of U.E.C.; shoe cutter
Johnson, Washington, blacksmith
Ball, Thomas, member of U.E.C.; currier
Spiller, Joseph B., member of U.E.C.; later a deacon
Johnson, J. Henry, shoemaker
Butters, Francis Jr., member of U.E.C.; currier; last surviving member of those who signed
Jewett, Sewell, one of three on the petition committee; member of U.E.C.;
saw mill owner
Currier, Willibee H., member of U.E.C.; maintenance man for E. J. M. Hale
Brickett, Daniel, member of U.E.C.; farmer
Jenness, Cornelius, member of U.E.C.; shoe man
Davis, William N., member of U.E.C.; shoemaker
Davis, Hiram F., member of U.E.C.; shoe cutter
Hale, Ezekial, manufacturer
Chase, Tappan, deacon of U.E.C.; shoe manufacturer
Stuart, Samuel, member of U.E.C.; farmer
Plummer, Samuel, member of U.E.C.; whole family were members of Anti-Slavery Society
Foot, Nathaniel, member of U.E.C.; laborer
Baker, Leonard or Parker, Leonard
Butters, Francis Sr., father of Francis Butters Jr; member of U.E.C; currier
Bailey, George, member of U.E.C.
Gage, Alfred, member of U.E.C.; on church building committee in 1839
Martin, Truman M., dentist whose home and office were near Webster's hat store
Delaware, Oliver H. F., cordwainer
Greeley, B., shoe cutter
Webster, Nathan. shoe manufacturer and retailer; his shop on Water Street was where the petition was signed; charter member of Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society
Fitch, Charles, pastor of U.E.C.; member of Haverhill Anti-Slavery Society
Head, John L., member of U.E.C.; shoe manufacturer; declared bankruptcy in 1843[31]

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[31] *First Directory of Haverhill*, 1853. Julian S. Miller, "A New View of the Haverhill Petition," lecture, 15 April 1977, 10, Courtesy of Trustees of Haverhill Public Library.

Uriah Parmelee's Ordeal: A Connecticut Yankee's Abolitionist Principles and the Reality of the Civil War

Norman MacLeod

In January 1862 Private Uriah Parmelee of the Sixth New York Cavalry wrote to his mother, "I feel as if I could strike for Liberty and the Slave. For you must know, I have turned to be a right out and out Abolitionist."[1] This twenty-year-old from Guilford, Connecticut, found his vision of an antislavery war severely frustrated throughout 1862. He learned that the Union's political and military leadership did not share his passion for emancipation, and he found his own role in the struggle a disappointment. This paper is a chronicle of Uriah's ordeal.

Uriah Nelson Parmelee was born on 24 August 1841 into a farming community of 2,600 along the shore of Long Island Sound, fifteen miles east of New Haven. His parents, Uriah and Nancy, went on to have two more children, Sam, born in 1843, and Laura, born in 1845. A Parmelee ancestor had been one of the founders of Guilford in 1639. Several descendant families still lived in town, enough to have a neighborhood called Parmeleetown, an area also known as Nut Plains.

In 1843, when Uriah was two, the ancestral Congregational church in the heart of town split, at least in part, over the issue of abolition. Dissidents with antislavery leanings founded another church 100 yards away.[2] The rising of an abolitionist friendly church by the town green was emblematic of the splintering of the national soul underway throughout Uriah's youth. The Third Congregational Church eventually became his parish home.[3] When Uriah was eleven, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* burst out into the world.

This antislavery narrative must have hit Guilford and Uriah with special energy. Harriet Beecher Stowe's cousins, the Footes, lived down the road in Nut Plains. The Foote and Parmelee children were also cousins. Uriah had only two degrees of separation from the world's most famous abolitionist. Even closer to home, Uriah's older cousin, Harriet Ward

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[1] "Uriah Parmelee to Nancy Spencer Parmelee, January 10, 1862," typescript, Historical Room, Guilford Free Library, Guilford, Conn. Original in Samuel Spencer Parmelee Papers, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C. (hereinafter cited as GFL/Duke).

[2] Linda Carleton, "'Difficulties' over Abolition: An Examination of the Conflict and Schism in First Congregational Church, Guilford, 1839–1845," MS, Historical Room, Guilford Free Library, Guilford, Conn., 2.

[3] Fanny Dudley Scrapbook, Collection Folder G-B-52, Historical Room, Guilford Free Library, Guilford, Conn., 1.

Foote, married abolitionist newspaperman Joseph Hawley in 1855 when Uriah was fourteen.

Uriah Parmelee entered Yale only weeks before John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in October 1859. The antislavery campaign in Kansas, in which Brown had played so prominent a role, had been covertly supported by the preacher and Foote cousin Henry Ward Beecher. Uriah admired Beecher and went to hear him speak when he could. In January 1861 he wrote to his mother from Yale, "I am glad you have the Independent [Beecher's abolitionist newspaper] and hope you will continue to like Beecher. There is a report that he will be mobbed next Friday night… when he comes to New Haven to lecture. I shall be on hand with a sharp stick for one."[4] Uriah was ready then to strike a blow for Henry Ward Beecher.

Fort Sumter fell in the spring of his sophomore year. In May 1861 Uriah saw Joseph Hawley heading south, an infantry officer on his way to the First Battle of Bull Run. That summer the student Uriah drilled in New Haven with his fellows, writing home that "Hawley is a hero."[5]

Uriah did not leave college out of any disappointment with the life of the mind. William H. H. Murray, a Guilford-born Yale contemporary, wrote of him: "I always regarded him as the most promising of all my friends of his age. His scholarship was good…his mind was of a high order. His candor and love of truth were remarkable; I do not think he *could* equivocate."[6]

Uriah brought his college years to a close by passing his sophomore Biennial, two weeks of comprehensive written examinations on subjects from algebra to Latin, an academic rite of passage.[7] He made clear to his mother the passage he intended, however: "I drill everyday, shan't enlist till after biennial."[8]

On 18 September 1861 Hawley, now a lieutenant colonel in the Seventh Connecticut Infantry, once again marched through New Haven.[9] Mrs. Hawley, cousin Harriet, was there that day. Uriah saw her and then, as he reflected on that day from the perspective of three years of war, "full of enthusiasm for I hardly knew what… I went and enlisted…"[10]

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[4] "Uriah Parmelee to Nancy Spencer Parmelee, January 6, 1861," typescript (hereinafter cited as UP to NSP), GFL/Duke.

[5] UP to NSP, summer, 1861, GFL/Duke.

[6] Fanny Dudley Scrapbook, Collection Folder G-B-52, Historical Room, Guilford Free Library, Guilford, Conn. Emphasis is the author's.

[7] For a description of the Yale College Biennial, see "Commencement Week at Yale," *New York Times*, 30 July 1856.

[8] UP to NSP, summer, 1861, GFL/Duke.

[9] UP to NSP, 18 September 1861, GFL/Duke.

[10] UP to NSP, 22 January 1865, GFL/Duke.

Figure 1. Uriah Parmelee. Circa 1863. From Foote Album 7. Courtesy of H. B. Stowe Center, Hartford, Connecticut.

Uriah chose to enlist in what became the Sixth New York Cavalry. We have no letters explaining why he chose cavalry over infantry or artillery, but his words home reveal how much he loved horses; he described mount after mount in minute detail.[11] If he had waited another month, he could have joined a Connecticut cavalry unit. But driven by his enthusiasm, he became a New York private instead. His trials had begun.

The fall of 1861 went by at Camp Scott on Staten Island with Uriah reporting in letters about superiors, fellow recruits, and the dearth of horses, "Our horses have not yet all come and we are drilled out in the 'school of the trooper dismounted.'"[12] The military historian Stephen Z. Starr writes of this practice, "The colonel of the 6th New York, wishing to relieve the monotony of dismounted drill…had the bizarre inspiration of

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[11] See for example, "Uriah Parmelee to Father, Uriah Nelson Parmelee, Sr.," GFL/Duke.

[12] "Uriah Parmelee to Samuel Spencer Parmelee, October 22, 1861" (hereinafter cited as UP to SSP), GFL/Duke.

handing out ropes for the men to hold on to, to form squads, companies and even squadrons, and then had them trot through the mounted evolutions on foot."[13] The ridiculous shifted to the tragic when the regiment embarked two days before Christmas for New Jersey. On an open barge exposed to the December winds, thirty rain-soaked troops were reported to have died from exposure.[14] Uriah's 1862 ordeal was ushered in by this nightmarish voyage on which he may already have been feeling the onset of infectious disease. He began the year hospitalized with measles, a prime killer of new recruits in the Civil War.[15] He survived, though he felt the effects for months. He was soon well enough, however, to complain to his mother, "It is a dull life, this soldiering with no fighting and not even arms and horse to look at."[16]

A week later, and out of the hospital, his grumbling escalated into a tirade.

> Sam better not come down to see me.... Let him be contented for the present where he is. When he has been here and exposed to the inconveniences and some of the positive suffering of even a sham soldier's life like my own, he will begin to think that there is some sense in a warm fire in the evening to sit by.... Just let him stand guard once in four or five nights, sleep on the cold, bare floor of the guard house,...shiver around [a] camp fire...and let him have with this the blessed satisfaction that he is doing not the least particle of good.[17]

Yet it is this letter which ends, "I could strike for Liberty and the Slave." The common ordeals of military life frustrated and angered Uriah, but his core motivation shone through. And it is that motivation that raised his frustration higher.

As January in Pennsylvania dragged on, Uriah's ire turned toward higher ups.

> I believe the regiment will be disbanded by the first of March. The government has more cavalry than it wants. They cannot need us, for, if so, they would have taken pains to fit us for service. We are not one week further advanced in drill then we were four months ago. Our sabers are all pewter and must be condemned and those are all the arms we have. We cannot number more than 750 men after passing the surgeon and this number to be divided among 12 companies and 3 battalions, making salaries to be paid to 36 officers of the line and 5 field officers, besides a

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[13] Stephen Z. Starr, *From Fort Sumter to Gettysburg, The Union Cavalry in the Civil War. Vol 1. From Fort Sumter to Gettysburg* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 136.

[14] Starr, *From Fort Sumter to Gettysburg*, 206.

[15] "Uriah Parmelee to Father, Uriah Nelson Parmelee Sr., December 28, 1861," typescript, GFL/Duke.

[16] UP to NSP, 3 January 1862, GFL/Duke.

[17] UP to NSP, 10 January 1862, GFL/Duke.

> large staff and a host of non-commissioned officers. I say this is a tremendous display of plumage for a small bird and no recruiting is being done.[18]

Toward the end of the month Uriah wrote Sam, "I…must go to watering horses,…a heavy, broken legged running sored set, they must be condemned. Capt. Lyon says we shan't leave here till May he thinks. Inaction and Pro-Slavery are the watch words.… I'd like to wring Gen. McClellan's and Gen. Franklin's necks."[19] Nancy Parmelee must have expressed concern about her son's negativity, prompting him to reply, "You need not think me desponding…but I should be an absolute ninny if I could not see that this regt. is the mere tool of ambitious officers, and is really nothing and nowhere as yet, with little prospect of its ever being. To show a proper spirit when a man finds he is so handsomely duped is right."[20]

Although they still had no weapons or horses after six months, things seemed to be improving when the regiment decamped in March for Maryland, but there they witnessed another New York Cavalry regiment's conversion to infantry.[21] Uriah wrote, "It is believed that we are now utterly at the mercy of the State of New York, the general government having refused to accept us…."[22] With the beginning of April, however, three companies from the Sixth, including Uriah's, were finally armed and mounted and then sent to Fortress Monroe in Virginia to participate in General George McClellan's doomed Peninsula Campaign. On 11 April 1861 Uriah penned a letter to his father:

> It stormed constantly after we left Wash. until yesterday noon. Rain mingled with wet snow and a wet dismal time we had of it. Whiskey was freely used as an internal remedy [but not by Uriah, a non-drinker].… I cannot guess as to our future course. Capt. Lyon said we should all be in Richmond or be in our graves in less than thirty days. If cavalry can be trained in that time…I am glad of it. Nothing but misrepresentation can have brought us here in my opinion.…[23]

A week later, approaching Yorktown, Uriah saw wounded men returning from the front for the first time and heard his first distant cannon fire. His unit now drilled incessantly, "trying to do in a few days, what should have been the work of past months." Contemplating combat, he wrote with both anger and conviction:

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[18] UP to NSP, 17 January 1862, GFL/Duke.

[19] UP to SSP, 27 January 1862, GFL/Duke.

[20] UP to NSP, 13 February 1862, GFL/Duke.

[21] UP to NSP, 16 March 1862, GFL/Duke.

[22] UP to NSP, 22 March 1862, GFL/Duke.

[23] "Uriah Parmelee to Father, Uriah Nelson Parmelee Sr., April 11, 1862," typescript, GFL/Duke.

> I cannot regret the danger and the hardships which must necessarily be undergone. I have sought it and had it come sooner, should have liked it better, though I never began to be so thoroughly tired and disgusted with anything else as with the soldier's life in any mood in which I have seen it. I hope the war will not come to an end until an *idea* shall have gained. I am fighting for Liberty, for the slave and for the white man alike and though my arm is but single and my poor life worthless, yet such as they are, God and my country has them.[24]

Uriah's first experience with freed African Americans, so-called contrabands now attached to the Union army, reinforced his determination. He wrote Sam, "I am more of an abolitionist than ever, right up to the handle. If I had money enough to raise a few hundred contrabands and arm them, I'd get up an insurrection among the slaves. Told Capt. I'd desert to do it."[25] Instead, Uriah's unit followed McClellan's agonizing advance up the peninsula.

> Our duty…has been to attend the Provost Marshal and do Provost duty, carry despatches [*sic*], hunt and chase down government cattle, wade swamps.… But the thing which we have done which most reflect the spirit of the conservatives (I may say of the McClellan School) is to guard the property, women and children of the rebels, because their husbands and fathers have left to fight against us. We seem to think the Confederates need help and so we kindly supply the places of these natural guardians of their homes, that they may go behind the intrenchments [*sic*] and shoot us down more conveniently. Oh, Lord, how long.[26]

From his green private's perspective, Uriah excoriated General McClellan's behavior at Yorktown, "A general that coolly allows his enemy to evacuate a position which he has for months been preparing to take, merely to fall back behind stronger intrenchments [*sic*] is no man for me." He went on, "I hope (selfishly) that the war will be over soon, for I hate soldiering with a hatred more and more perfect, but I fear if this is the case, it will be a mere foolish mother's 'Hush up, be quiet' to her children while she is too lazy to look into the cause of the quarrel."[27] For Uriah that cause was the nation's "great heart wound" of slavery.[28] He spent much of June "in the ambulance corps, nothing to do until they shoot off some more legs for us."[29]

With the failure of the Peninsula campaign, Uriah renewed his attack on the high command.

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[24] UP to NSP, 18 April 1862, GFL/Duke. Emphasis is the author's.

[25] UP to SSP, 23 April 1862, GFL/Duke.

[26] UP to NSP, 8 May 1862, GFL/Duke.

[27] Ibid.

[28] UP to NSP, 11 November 1861, GFL/Duke.

[29] UP to SSP, 14 June 1862, GFL/Duke.

Figure 2. Brigadier General John Curtis Caldwell and his staff at Antietam, Maryland, in September, 1862. Photographer, Alexander Gardner. Caldwell stands at the center, with the long coat. Library of Congress, 96506896.

> The movements of the Army of the Potomac constitute the most solemn of all farces. The blunders in its leadership have been not only grave, but positively ridiculous while the dead that are rotting in the accursed Chickahominy and the swamp before Richmond, provide retrospections the saddest conceivably. No wonder the London Times pronounces the 'strategy of Gen. McClellan purely unintelligible.'[30]

Another blow to Uriah's hopes for a meaningful role in the struggle compounded his frustration with army-level failure. He wrote Sam, "Well, I am orderly for Gen. Caldwell.… It is my duty to carry despatches [*sic*], attend the General when he rides out, hold his horse when he dismounts and wait patiently till he gets ready to mount when I pull down on the off stirrup, for the General is fat and heavy and the horse he rides is round."[31] He found the job demeaning, "The post of 'orderly' is nothing more or less than a private's post…run round, carry messages… so you see the position is far from being honorable.…" The situation became somewhat more tolerable when Uriah realized how much he liked

[30] UP to SSP, 23 July 1862, GFL/Duke.

[31] Ibid.

his general, "so much of a gentleman and so smart a man that it is comparatively easy with him."[32] Brigadier General John Curtis Caldwell was a twenty-eight-year-old Amherst graduate and former high school principal, recently plucked from leadership of a Maine infantry regiment to command a brigade. He came to depend on Uriah.

After weeks of bearing what he saw as a slave-like role, the orderly's commitment to the army seemed to be unraveling. From Rockville, Maryland, he delivered a jeremiad to his mother.

> If the army were fighting for a noble and great idea, I would be proud to belong to it even if it were defeated and most wretchedly managed. But when a man is fighting wholly against his very conscience and is beaten in every battle and forever marching to the rear at that, I say, can a man much longer pursue such a course and retain any respect for himself? Do you know for what I enlisted? It was to free the slave. And though neither the army or the government were particularly imbued with the spirit of Liberty, yet I trusted that they would be. I thought that the progress of events must surely bring about universal Emancipation, this either as an indirect result of our subduing the rebels or a direct result of the light which would dawn on men's minds.... I trust in God that I shall have the moral courage to desert.... I trust I shall not remain with [the army] against every impulse of conscience to be beaten and disgraced with those who desire to enslave the bodies and souls of men.

He closed the letter, "A contraband came in two or three nights ago, beaten by his master for the last time.... He says the reason all the slaves do not run away at once is for fear of the Union, not of the Secession Army."[33]

Nine days later Uriah followed General Caldwell into the Battle of Antietam. The general commanded the First Brigade, First Division, Second Corps and saw the worst of the fighting, temporarily taking charge of the division when its commanding general was mortally wounded.[34] Added to Uriah's ordeal by frustration had now come his ordeal by battle. He performed well under fire, and while he continued to lash out in his messages home against what he saw as the incompetence of those guiding the war, his letters had no complaints about the rigors of combat. After the war, though, one of his friends eulogized Uriah with these words:

> Most who witnessed the impetuous ardor of his courage in time of engagement, thought him in his favorite element; and few even of the comrades who admired his daring, knew what it cost him to be so brave. He had an instinctive dread of battle—as the bravest of men generally have—

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[32] UP to SSP, 4 August 1862, GFL/Duke.

[33] UP to NSP, 8 September 1862, GFL/Duke.

[34] Robert K. Krick, "Confederates in Sharpsburg's Bloody Lane," in *The Antietam Campaign*, ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 245.

> but when the bugle said "forward," he was at his post, doing his duty, with his whole soul.[35]

Antietam ended with a rebel retreat and became Lincoln's trigger to announce the Emancipation Proclamation. While this presidential edict led to a sea change in Uriah's attitude to the war, he first greeted it with skepticism. Will slaves "have occasion to say on the 1st of Jan. 1863, 'You say that I am free, but your armies are kept way up in Virginia and do not appear for my deliverance'…?"[36]

Uriah revealed more of his alienation in a description of McClellan's farewell to the army. Lincoln had just replaced him with Ambrose Burnside.

> This morning there was a grand leave-taking. The army was drawn up for miles along the road and the General and his successor with their cavalcade moved rapidly forward amid cheers of the soldiers and the booming of cannon. As they passed the point where Gen. Caldwell and his little staff were standing, they also joined the train.… Your "gallant" son was there as a matter of duty merely rejoicing that "none of these things moved him." His meek but selfish heart was much more intent upon breakfast, which…as yet was not eaten, than of the rise and fall of generals and mighty men however sudden and astounding that may be.[37]

Uriah did not hold out much hope for Burnside. The new commander in November 1862, counting on the continuation of dry weather, had put the army on the move, only to have it stymied by days of rain. Uriah contrasted his personal well-being with that of the army.

> My own health is better than it has been since I was taken with the measles. Have got somewhat acclimated and keep the dysentery off with strong tea. Know of no other cause to attribute it to, except, perhaps the cool weather, and beautiful weather we have had ever since the campaign commenced, only it is a pity that so much of it should have been wasted before and now it has commenced to rain…all day long and seems likely to do so for the next week. The wheels of our cannon will undoubtedly be "stuck in the mud," the government will again resume its wonted imbecility, new and more stringent regulations will be made and enforced to protect the property of the slave holders and traitors and very possibly another strategic retreat will be made to Washington. I have no faith to believe that Burnside will do a bit better than McClellan.[38]

Despite his cynicism and his prophetic reflections on Burnside's capacities as a leader, a thread of philosophical acceptance began to appear in

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[35] Fanny Dudley Scrapbook, Collection Folder G-B-52, Historical Room, Guilford Free Library, Guilford, Conn., 2.

[36] UP to NSP, 25 September 1862, GFL/Duke.

[37] UP to NSP, 10 November 1862, GFL/Duke.

[38] UP to NSP, 20 November 1862, GFL/Duke.

Uriah's letters: "The people, the army and the government seem entirely to forget the cause of the evil that is upon us [slavery] and practically stultify themselves in every move they make. Now I am not disconsolate or downcast. That is not the reason I take such a view of the question, but it seems the necessary deduction of reason. Well…it makes a very little difference in the great summing up whether events shape themselves to one's humble liking or not and trials and sacrifices and failures here may be joys and recompenses and fruits hereafter."[39]

As Uriah feared, Burnside led the Army of the Potomac into a debacle, the Battle of Fredericksburg, 13 December 1862. While McClellan hesitated to send his troops into a fight, Burnside did not know, even when they were being uselessly slaughtered, how to take them out. Uriah's cousin George Foote lost a leg at Fredericksburg. He never recovered his health and died in 1869. Uriah wrote to Nancy Parmelee after the battle, "[George] stood manfully when all the rest were glad to lie down during that terrific storm of shells and bullets."[40]

Battle, no matter how grim, seemed to lift Uriah's spirits. Less than two weeks after the Fredericksburg disaster, he wrote his mother, "you would probably be astonished at the equilibrium enjoyed in your fortunate son in these eventful times. I…continue very hopeful, though I must confess that all my hopes are based upon no particular and present events, but upon a belief that the grand results of things must inevitably be good." He had no greater confidence, however, in the Union's military and political leadership, "God never made [Burnside] to command so many men any more then he made Lincoln to rule so big a country in perilous times like these."[41]

With the first of the year the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. The year 1862 had passed and even though Uriah did not see it at the outset, in 1863 his ordeal of conscience and frustrated ambition came to an end. The beginning lacked promise with the Army of the Potomac in winter quarters. General Joseph Hooker succeeded Burnside, but Uriah was not impressed with him either. He wrote Sam, "None of them have brains enough to whip the rebels.…"[42] But with the beginning of spring the prospects for action increased, and so did Uriah's hopes and his conviction that the Emancipation Proclamation indeed meant something. In a letter to his mother telling why he was passing up on a chance to take a furlough home, he explained:

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[39] Ibid.

[40] UP to NSP, 18 December 1862, GFL/Duke. The historian George C. Rable describes the experience of General Caldwell and his men below Marye's Heights. Rable, *Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 233.

[41] UP to NSP, 26 December 1862, GFL/Duke.

[42] UP to SSP, 26 January1863, GFL/Duke.

> I do not intend to shirk now there is really something to fight for. I mean Freedom. Since the first of Jan. it has become more and more evident to my mind that the war is henceforth to be conducted upon a different basis. Those who profess to love the Union are not so anxious to preserve Slavery.… So then I am willing to remain and endure whatever may fall to my share.[43]

Even though the Battle of Chancellorsville ended in early May with another Union defeat, Uriah wrote with supreme confidence of a final victory over the slave power, underlining this new assurance with an ecstatic description of a late night attack.

> My trust is firmer and I would fain believe higher than ever before. I do not listen with so much anxiety to the details of particular events in the great struggle, as I used to do. I have a kind of calm faith that there is a power, a principle underneath all what we can see, which will keep ever constant the main current of progress, despite the whirlpool and counter eddies that appear on the surface. During the terrible cannonading on the famous Saturday night [at Chancellorsville] when the rebels were making such desperate and persistent charges with their solid masses of infantry right upon the mouths of our batteries and our troops were firing away and terror stricken stragglers came breathless into our earthworks and word came to the general that we were falling back and he must hold that point at all hazards. Yes, even then I felt gloriously and was nerved to meet the most overwhelming feeling. It was a glorious night, the moon shone out brightly, the sky was clear, the air was warm and still. There were intervals of silence in which the tired soldiers would lie upon their arms and forget in their slumbers the dangers which threatened them, then all at once would come a terrible terrific volley of musketry and then the flashes of the cannon and one unceasing roar never breaking through all the valleys and in the farthest recesses of the woods. I will not attempt to depict the scene. It was grand beyond description. Rarely has there been heard such terrible concentrated thunder of cannon. Now the charge was repulsed and all would quickly die away in a few scattering volleys of musketry.… Remember thinking that it was worth going through all the fatigue and weary waiting and disgraces of the war, to witness so sublime a scene.[44]

In his official report of the battle, General Caldwell wrote, "I cannot pass over in silence the services of my orderly, Corpl. Uriah N. Parmelee, Company D, Sixth New York Cavalry. In the fight of the 3d, when the One hundred and forty-eighth [Pennsylvania Infantry] was staggered by the first volley of the rebels, he rendered most efficient service in rallying them and urging them on. I think him worthy of promotion, both for his

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[43] UP to NSP, 29 and 31 March 1863, GFL/Duke.

[44] UP to NSP, 14 May 1862, GFL/Duke.

gallantry and other high qualities."[45] After Gettysburg, Caldwell again officially commended his orderly. Uriah heard of the general's respect from the commander's clerk. In a letter to Sam he relayed what he heard were Caldwell's words, "I want you to say something [in the report] about Parmelee, why the best man you ever saw in a fight, worth all my staff to me."[46]

Uriah served as Caldwell's orderly for nearly eighteen months with one interruption. In August 1863 he was returned to his New York regiment. In October General Caldwell brought him back. Apparently the general could not do without him. Barely a week after returning, Uriah described an event demonstrating why the general liked to have this particular orderly by his side. "In the midst of the [Bristoe Station] fight," Uriah wrote,

> I saw [a sharpshooter] blazing away at the General as he rode up in full view. He is a large man and was in full uniform and the reb was not three hundred yards distant. "General," says I, they're shooting at you, you had better get under cover.…" "Oh, they can't see me." "They can see you and can hit you too, that shot was meant for you," said I, contradicting him squarely and with some earnestness, "Do you see that little cedar tree in front of their line of battle and that sharpshooter under it?" "Yes." "Well there's another joining him now." "Yes." He had only just turned his horse's head, when zip and a bullet came within an inch or two of his right ear. "By Jove," says he, "they are shooting at me." "Told you so now, you better get back out of the way a little."[47]

Uriah stayed with Caldwell until the end of 1863 when his transition to the officer corps commenced, a promotion probably aided by the general's recommendation but also by lobbying in Hartford by relatives and family friends.[48]

In February 1864 Governor Buckingham of Connecticut appointed Uriah as an officer in the First Connecticut Cavalry. He served with that unit for the rest of the war, achieving the rank of captain. Uriah died on 1 April 1865 at the Battle of Five Forks, eight days before Lee's surrender. A Connecticut Civil War chronicle described Uriah's last moments.

> About noon, the regiment halted, in line of battle, at a ravine in a narrow belt of woods, just in front of which lay a broad open field, and beyond that a large peach-orchard with its trees in full bloom. Every thing was quiet; not a shot had been fired for some time. The enemy was near, and

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[45] http://www.civilwarhome.com/caldwellchancellorsvilleor.htm. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* Report of Brig. Gen. John C. Caldwell, U.S. Army, commanding First Brigade, April 27–May 6, 1863—the Chancellorsville Campaign. O.R.–ser. 1–vol. 25/1 [S#39].

[46] UP to SSP, 18 October 1863, GFL/Duke.

[47] UP to SSP, 21 and 22 October 1863, GFL/Duke.

[48] UP to SSP, 5 March 1864, GFL/Duke.

> maintained a suspicious silence. In a few minutes, one of Custer's staff dashed up in front of the 3d New-Jersey, which was on the left, and shouted, "There's a rebel battery over in that orchard, entirely unsupported!" The Jerseymen gave a shout, and dashed ahead pell-mell. [Regimental commander] Col. Ives restrained the First; but they were clamorous to charge. Col. Ives says, "Officers and men entreated me by looks and words to allow them to go forward; and I think I was persuaded by Capt. Parmelee. I sat on my horse near him; and I never shall forget his eagerness to advance, nor the appealing look he gave me. Unable to resist longer, I cried, 'Forward!' and with a yell the First Connecticut charged 'on the run.' But no sooner had we reached the outer edge of the woods than the peaceful-looking peach-orchard assumed a different character. The bright pink blossoms were blown into the air by bullets, shells, canister, and grapeshot. Every man who had gone into the open field was shot down. Fortunately, another staff-officer rode up with an order for the line to retire. Just at this moment, a shell struck Capt. Parmelee in the breast, killing him instantly."[49]

Uriah vowed he would risk his life to free the slave. Throughout 1862 he suffered an ordeal of disappointment and frustration over what he saw as misguided war aims, incompetent leadership, and the waste of his abilities. He also suffered the common ordeals of the Civil War experience including disease and military tedium.

With 1862 behind him and the Emancipation Proclamation taking hold, Uriah began increasingly to see the larger purpose of the war meshing with his antislavery ideals. As this harmony of personal with national aims grew through 1863 and beyond, service with Caldwell and his Connecticut regiment allowed him at last to do what he most desired, "Strike for Liberty and the Slave."

Uriah's body is buried in a national cemetery in Petersburg, Virginia. In Guilford the returning Civil War veterans named the town's post of the Grand Army of the Republic in his honor and placed his name first on the Soldiers' Monument standing at the center of the town green.

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[49] W. A. Croffut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War of 1861–65* (New York: Ledyard Bill, 1868), 783–84.

“Armed with Needles”: New England Women in the Civil War

Juanita Leisch Jensen

American women found multiple roles in the Civil War wherever women’s deeds met soldiers’ needs. Women helped maintain morale and ministered to soldiers’ psychological requirements through social, spiritual, mental, and other emotional activities such as mourning. They provided material and monetary support by producing (or raising funds to produce), procuring, and providing food, shelter, clothing, arms, accoutrements, ammunition, and other necessary material goods. And women provided for the health, welfare, and medical care of soldiers. While this sometimes included emergency treatment on or near battlefields, it more commonly involved ongoing care in facilities well behind the front lines. Women also expanded these roles into funereal, internment, reinternment, and memorial activities. Finally, some women provided direct support to the military by donating flags and banners; by taking government employment as cooks and laundresses or as clerks, telegraph operators, and lighthouse keepers; and even by risking good names and reputations to serve as spies, scouts, and soldiers.

The primary conduit for these services were as paid laborers, as individual contributors, and as workers in benevolent organizations. The women who produced the majority of garments, ammunition, and tentage issued to soldiers worked as paid laborers for depots, arsenals, and contractors. The fruits of their labor were most often labeled or marked with the names of the depots, arsenals, or contractors that employed them. These women, hired at low pay, tended to be from the lower socio-economic strata. Only a minority had the time, the inclination, or the ability to leave written accounts of their work. A large body of physical evidence of their work, however, is found in the thousands of artifacts that survive out of the millions they produced.

When we see original Civil War uniforms, they represent to us not only the soldiers who wore them but also the women who made them. The markings on the garments in *Figure 1* provide clues about these workers. The pre– and early–Civil War three-dot size mark and later Maltese cross inspection mark indicate the garments pictured were manufactured for the main federal uniform producing facility, the Schulkill Arsenal. The women who made them very likely lived within walking distance of that Philadelphia facility. We can infer this because garment production was generally handled as a cottage industry. Depots and contractors issued kits of precut fabric, buttons, fittings, and other piece parts to women who carried the goods away, stitched in their home, and then

Figure 1. The sack coat on the left is marked in the sleeve lining with a Maltese Cross, which is an inspector's mark, and an Arabic numeral 2, which is a size marking. The musician's jacket on the right has a sleeve lining marked with three dots and an Arabic number 3. The dot-based size marking was, for a time, a characteristic of garments produced at the Schuylkill depot in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Both garments are in the collection of the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

returned with finished garments. This system permitted them to juggle their production work, household chores, and child care. In cases where this arrangement was not practical, as with the manufacture of ammunition, laborers traveled to and worked in factory settings.

As individuals, women provided support for specific soldiers who were, or came to be, known to them. Like the soldiers themselves, these women represented the entire socio-economic spectrum. Their labors tended to be marked—if marked at all—with the name of the soldier for whom they were intended. Although these goods seldom survived being eaten, used up, or worn out, a large body of archival evidence remains in the thousands of letters that survive out of the millions sent back and forth between soldiers and their correspondents—more often those sent from, rather than to, soldiers since they had few safe places to store letters, even if they wanted to save them.

This letter is an example of sentiments common to both northern and southern experiences. The writer, in Petersburg, Virginia, asserts:

> Dear Brother
>
> We are all exceedingly sorry to hear of your illness. You had better come home imediately [*sic*] and let us administer to your comfort or if you wish

> us to come down there, let us know and we will come and attend to you. We are glad to hear through Brother's letter that you are better. It would strengthen you to come up home awhile. If you cannot come *send us word if you wish any thing and we will send it to you....*[1]

From the first days of the war, both existing and new benevolent organizations turned their attention to providing support for soldiers. Women had long been involved with such organizations, large and small groups associated with churches, communities, or specific causes through which they volunteered time and other resources. While some women working through benevolent organizations enclosed personal notes with the items they sent, they usually marked them (when they did) with the names of the organizations for which they volunteered. These were women who had the time and resources to volunteer. Commonly from the middle and upper strata of society, they were often literate and educated. Many of these women and their organizations left archival records in the form of letters, journals, memoirs, and books written by, for, about, and as tributes to soldiers.

Distinctive Characteristics of New England and New England Women

While the employment of women in textile mills had spread to other regions by the time of the Civil War, New England was the forerunner and leader in employing women in both thread and textile production. Indeed, "mill girls" had entered the lexicon of common terminology from its origins in New England. The region was also the forerunner and leader in allowing, encouraging, and publicly acknowledging the accomplishments of women in leadership roles. Louisa May Alcott, Priscilla Mullins Alden, Susan B. Anthony, Catharine Beecher, Elizabeth Blackwell, Lydia Maria Child, Emily Dickinson, Dorothea Dix, and Margaret Fuller are just the beginning of the alphabet of female leaders and activists from New England.

Finally, New England was the forerunner and leading region from which reforms spread to the rest of the nation. People who wanted to promote an idea throughout the nation were more likely to be successful if they started in, or launched it from, the pulpits and public forums of New England. Abolition, temperance, prison reform, women's rights, and universal public education are a few of the reform movements that began in, or were promoted from, New England.

The three principal questions that help us explore the unique roles of women in New England are as follows. First, what happened when women's role of participating in the war as paid laborers intersected the New England infrastructure of thread and textile manufacturing? New England's thread and textile mills and an explosion in demand for tent-

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[1] Letter from E. A. W. to "Brother," 30 May [presumed 1861], Petersburg, Va. Collection of the author. Emphasis added.

age set up a situation particular to New England. A good portion of the United States sail-making industry was centered in New England, where the mills that produced the duck and drill (heavy cotton fabrics woven with a plain or twill weave) from which sails were made were mostly located. Many of these mills had long histories of employing women. By 1860, for example, the Bates Manufacturing Company employed 1,000 operatives in their mills in Androscoggin County, Maine, three-fourths of whom were female.[2]

The demand for duck and drill ensured that the mill producing the cloth ran at or near full capacity during the war, especially as owners found new overseas sources for the cotton blockaded in the South. With men away at war, these employers turned in even greater measure to using female operatives. Thus, New England women were engaged—to a larger extent than women in any other part of the country—in producing the duck and drill needed to make Civil War tentage and in constructing tentage from that duck and drill.

During the Civil War the United States Army's main tentage manufacturing facility was located in Cincinnati despite objections voiced by U.S. Army Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, "It does not seem to be good economy to make the tents so far from the mills which furnish the cloth."[3] Even though the businessmen and mercantile capitalists with contracts to supply tentage for the army were not always located in New England, the subcontractors who actually produced the tentage often were. Several additional factors identified in Mark R. Wilson's *Enterprise and Society* article, "The Extensive Side of Nineteenth-Century Military Economy: The Tent Industry in the Northern United States during the Civil War," ensured that women would be employed in the production of army tentage. During the war the army transitioned away from the use of four-man common tents to individual shelters, or "half-shelters," which were smaller and constructed of a lighter fabric, making them easier for women to handle. A wartime innovation of measuring and cutting the fabric by winding it around cylinders made this process so easy that the job of cutting transitioned from male to female workers. Finally, the firms contracted to provide tentage found it more profitable to employ women because male workers were subject to the draft, had the option of signing up for enlistment bonuses, and also demanded higher wages.[4]

It may seem like a minor distinction that New England was the primary region where women were involved in the manufacture of duck and

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[2] Mark R. Wilson, "The Extensive Side of Nineteenth-Century Military Economy: The Tent Industry in the Northern United States during the Civil War," *Enterprise and Society* 2 (June 2001): 297–337; 332n39.

[3] Ibid., 314.

[4] Ibid., 317–30 .

Figure 2. Havelock marked "Co. C 44th Reg. Mass. V." and (in oval) "Donations Committee, City of Boston, Mrs. H. G. Otis, Agent." Collection of Don Troiani, courtesy of Historic Art Prints.

drill and tentage, especially as military garment manufacturing was distributed throughout the country. The numbers tell a different story. During the four years of the war, the U.S. Army spent $30 million[5] on tentage, and some contractors grew very large from the short-lived boom in that industry. In the end what these New England women did was not so very different from the depot women and production workers in other regions. This was more a distinction of scope and scale.

Second, what happened when the venue of women as individual contributors intersected the New England culture that accommodated women in leadership roles? A portion of this research was prompted by curiosity about the identical markings in an original havelock and poncho. While a small number of Civil War soldiers' garments bear the mark of a donor organization, these two garments are remarkable because they identify both a charitable organization and an individual acting for that organization.

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[5] Ibid., 311.

A havelock is a cotton cloth covering for a cap that extends long enough in the back to cover the neck. They were first used in the Crimean War and were named for Sir Henry Havelock, who introduced them for his troops fighting in India. In the United States, havelocks were not officially mandated in either federal or state uniforms, but even before the first call for troops seamstresses were fashioning them for Civil War soldiers. They were quickly torn up or discarded as soldiers at the Battle of First Manassas found them uncomfortable in the humid Virginia climate. Few original examples survive. Yet one that does has the unique marking of both an organization and an individual: "Donations Committee, City of Boston, Mrs. H. G. Otis, Agent" (*Figure 2*).

During the war many soldiers found it practical to acquire and use rectangles of rubberized cloth as ground cloths or rain covers. Many of these had slits at the center so they might be worn as ponchos in inclement weather. The poncho that prompted this study, however, is not suitable for dual use as a ground cloth. It opens down the front, is made of blue wool flannel with red wool binding, and has a hood permanently affixed at the neck. In pattern and fabric it does not match any federal or state regulation. Like the havelock, this poncho is marked with the name of both an organization and an individual: "Donations Committee, City of Boston, Mrs. H. G. Otis, Agent." The inscription—which may have been produced by the same stencil as was used on the havelock—is marked on a piece of cotton twill tape label sewn into the poncho (*Figure 3*). Since government uniform depots and their contractors were fully occupied in producing and issuing garments that ostensibly followed official regulation, both the havelock and poncho seem to originate with an organization operating outside official standard government or contracting channels.

In fact, they originated from a Boston-based depot run by Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis, the agent recorded in those labels. At the outset of the war the City of Boston decided it should have a depot for its soldiers. The city council might have chosen a banker and businessman, a veteran, or a politician to lead this effort, but they chose someone who was none of these—and ended up being all of them: Eliza Henderson Bordman Otis, the prominent wife of the former mayor of Boston, Harrison Gray Otis. She was author of the novel *The Barclays of Boston*, published in 1854, and had been a participant in the effort to raise money to purchase and save Mount Vernon, George Washington's home near Washington, D.C.[6]

The decision to select Mrs. Otis—or any woman—as the city's agent was not without controversy, as she explained in one of her reports.

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[6] According to the official Web site for Historic Mount Vernon, *http://www.mountvernon.org*, "Women organized special events, many tied to Washington's birthday or the Fourth of July, where guests paid for a festive meal, concert, or a grand ball. One such ball, hosted by Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis, raised $4,000 and was attended by 10,000 people."

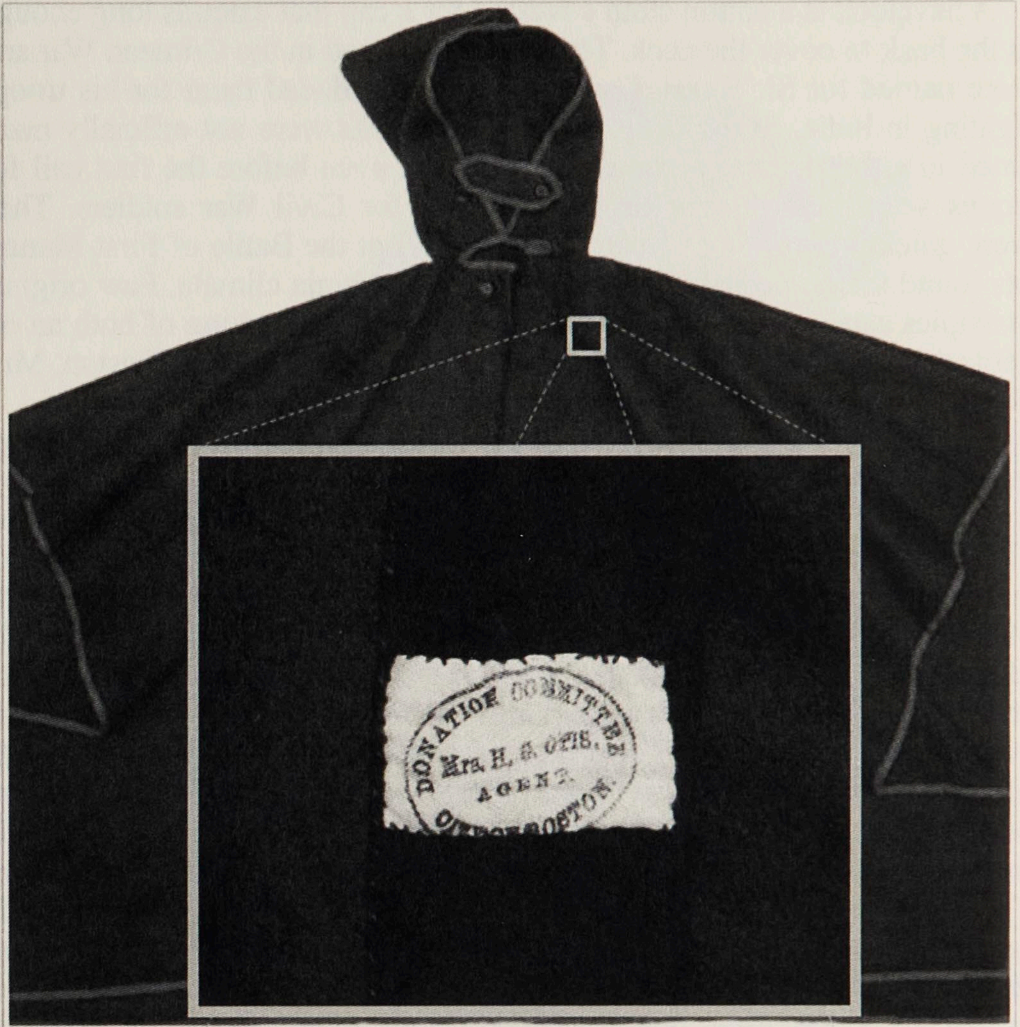

Figure 3. The blue wool poncho with red wool facings has a twill tape label sewn to the inside that says "Donation Committee, City of Boston, Mrs. H. G. Otis, Agent." Formerly in the collection of John Henry Kurtz, it is now in the collection of the author.

> The plan of placing a woman in communication with the soldiery, outside of hospitals, having been entirely original so far as her knowledge extends, and being a novelty, it was naturally, by many persons, considered wholly impracticable, and various were the prognostications issue[d] of its lack of duration....[7]

Mrs. Otis organized, managed, ran, and reported annually to the city council on the activities of the depot at "The Evans House"[8] for the first

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[7] Mrs. H. G. Otis, City Document No. 99. Report of the Committee on Military Donations, *Evans House Donations* (Boston: City of Boston, November, 1862), 5.

[8] The depot operations were sometimes referred to as the "Evans House" because they were (initially) located in the spacious home of William Evans, Esq. In the 1862 report, Mrs. Otis reported that "Mr. Evans [who had] tendered the free use of his house to the city, is desirous of taking possession of it" (Ibid., 4). As reported in her retrospective 1865 annual report, she moved the operations to 126 Tremont Street, "opposite Park Street Church," for its final two years.

two years. Later, when she moved the depot to 126 Tremont Street, she generally referred to it by the organization's name, the Committee on Military Donations.

Mrs. Otis collected, or caused to be manufactured, items of use to soldiers and then personally handed them out to soldiers who came to the depot or shipped them to soldiers who wrote from camps or hospitals asking for articles. Clothing depots run by the military generally issued caps, coats, trousers, shirts, drawers, socks, and shoes and little else. Mrs. Otis's depot distributed a great variety of goods. The following is a compiled list of all the items enumerated in Mrs. Otis's reports: bed-gowns, blankets, chocolate, cocoa, coffee, comforters, corn-starch, coverlids, drawers, dressing-gowns, dried and preserved fruits, handkerchiefs, liquors, mittens, molasses, night-gowns, pillows, pocket handkerchiefs, provision-bags, cotton and woolen shirts, sleeping caps, slippers, socks, soldiers' bags (the latter containing implements for mending clothes), spices, sugar, tapioca, tea, towels, vegetables of all sorts, and wine, as well as and "every variety of hospital garments and stores," and of course testaments, prayer books, and tracts.

We know that Mrs. Otis's reports do not list everything she distributed, as neither the havelock nor the poncho appears in the lists. And Mrs. Otis herself noted that if a box came in well packed and ready for shipment, she simply counted the entire box as a single item. Nonetheless, she reported personally distributing over half a million items.

In addition to providing "a constant distribution of…useful articles,… to the comfort and welfare of the troops, as well as sick, suffering, and dying soldiers in their tents, hospitals, and home,"[9] Mrs. Otis expanded her mission beyond soldiers to include helping those they left behind by collecting and distributing used clothes which she referred to as "All sorts of half worn garments for soldiers' families."[10] She began, too, helping discharged soldiers, even paying hotel bills when they needed lodging, until a soldiers' home was established in Boston.

Mrs. Otis acknowledged that "The thousands who have worked in this city of Boston and the state of Mass. were, one and all, volunteers who came eagerly, and have steadily labored and given money and efforts for their soldiers.…"[11] Notices published in Boston area newspapers announced that Mrs. Otis had secured cloth and sought seamstresses to sew it into garments for soldiers and also thanked individuals and organizations for their contributions. There is further evidence of these donations, as several certificates signed by Mrs. Otis exist in private and public collections. Two at the Massachusetts Historical Society are made out to a

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[9] Otis, [*1865 Report*], 3.

[10] Ibid., 5.

[11] Otis, [*1862 Report*], 7.

"Ladies' Knitting Circle" and acknowledge the receipt of "a large number of valuable hospital articles," and "7 pr socks, 21 pr hospital slippers, 2 pr mittens and 1 pr wristers."[12]

Mrs. Otis mentioned Dr. Tyler in her report to the city because he employed the ladies of his McLean Asylum in Somerville in making and finishing large quantities of garments. She especially acknowledged the Massachusetts Bible Society for its donation of testaments, prayer books, and tracts.[13]

Eliza Otis adhered to a system of not asking the city for money or other aid and documented that the city council in the four years of the war provided no funding. Instead, according to Mrs. Otis, the depot operated on the "Bank of Faith," which, while tested, never faltered but prospered under "Divine Providence."

The mayor of Boston honored Mrs. Otis in his 1862 inaugural address for her "prudent and efficient management of this department of our military affairs…while an hundred thousand useful articles have been distributed to soldiers and the hospitals and thousands of dollars paid for sewing and other female labor, the whole has been derived from voluntary offerings, and not from the City Treasury." When William Schouler, adjutant-general of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, wrote his *History of Massachusetts in the Civil War*,[14] he dedicated it to Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis.[15] In the end, as much as Mrs. Otis did, it was just one woman's organized efforts, in one city, running one depot that benefitted the soldiers in one war.

Finally, what happened when the venue of women's roles in benevolent societies intersected New England women's inclination to take a good reform idea and "go national" with it? In the military traditions that preceded the Civil War, soldiers were armed, equipped, and provided with food, medical care, and other supplies by the governments for which they fought or the individuals who raised their regiments. When

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[12] Boston (Mass.) Committee on Military Donations, *Certificate of Donation* (Boston: J. E. Farwell, 1861). Massachusetts Historical Society, Bdses-Sm 1861.

[13] "To the Massachusetts Bible Society, Mrs. Otis is greatly indebted for large supplies of testaments, and she can state that they have reached their destination. A corporal with 6 soldiers, accompanied by a drummer-boy, went to bathe in a river near Boston, and, observing the little fellow carefully concealing under a pile of leaves at the foot of a tree, something very precious, at least to him, their curiosity was aroused and they severally questioned him. The boy replied it was an article he very much prized and always carried with him wherever he went; they laughed and teasingly suggested various childish things, whereupon he knelt, and removing the leaves, exhibited a testament, saying that Mrs. Otis had given it to him, and begged him to preserve it. The next week the corporal and his six men all came to the house, asked for and received testaments." Ibid., 5.

[14] William Schouler, *A History of Massachusetts in the Civil War* (Boston: privately printed, 1871).

[15] Ibid., 3.

these two sources failed, the families and communities helped as they could.

When all of these sources would not, or could not, sufficiently provide needed items, soldiers simply suffered. As the Civil War loomed, activists—both men and women—wanted to ensure that soldiers would have what they required. In no time at all, boxes from home were being sidelined by trains for soldiers, and it became immediately apparent that local efforts—however well organized or intentioned—could not ensure that soldiers received all the necessary items or that the requisite aid and comfort was delivered. Some felt what was necessary was a national organization to coordinate local efforts and to distribute goods based on need.

In April of 1861 a small group of activists from New England and New York called a mass meeting to "organize the whole benevolence of the women of the country into a general and central association." The meeting was held in the "Great Hall" of the Cooper Union in the New York City borough of Manhattan. Between 2,500 and 3,000 individuals —mostly women—showed up for the organizational meeting of the Women's Central Association for the Relief of the Army (WCAR). The turnout was so positive that organizers decided to proceed on a national level with regional support and to seek federal government approval.

A group headed by the Reverend Henry Whitney Bellows traveled to Washington on a mission: "You must find out first what the Government will do, and can do, and then help it by working with it and doing what it cannot."[16] There were several areas in which the government accepted its help, first and foremost improving the sanitation in camps. Thus was born the "United States Sanitary Commission," loosely modeled on the British Sanitary Commission. Its agents inspected camps and made recommendations that were ultimately incorporated in U.S. Army orders and standard procedures. It began providing routine food, medical supplies, linens, and clothing for the army or its hospitals, and it called on its regional affiliates to produce goods, even publishing patterns for them to use. When received, the items were marked, packed, and shipped wherever they were most needed. When articles could not be manufactured by regional organizations, the Sanitary Commission contracted for their manufacture. As the war progressed, the Army Medical Department required a hospital transport service. The military provided vessels and the Sanitary Commission outfitted them, supplying everything from bed linens and pillowcases to nursing staff. The Sanitary Commission Department of "Special Relief" was organized, in part, to assist discharged soldiers in their transition back to civilian lives. The commission recognized the value to soldiers' morale of being able to send and receive let-

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[16] *The United States Sanitary Commission; A Sketch of Its Purposes and Its Work* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1863), 3.

ters, made difficult because the U.S. Postal Service charged forwarding fees if a unit had moved while a letter was in transit. Partly at the urging of the Sanitary Commission, changes were made to remove these forwarding fees for soldiers' letters, a policy that continues to this day.[17]

Men remained the executives of the organization, but women organized, managed, and operated a large number of its projects, and many accomplishments were rightly attributed to women who were involved with the Sanitary Commission. A significant portion of the finances for commission activities was supplied through fundraising fairs. New York and New England led the country in both the number of fairs they held and the money they raised through them.

Nonetheless, this ignores a major result of that meeting at the Cooper Union. The attendees also addressed the increased demand for trained medical personnel while much of the male population was involved in military service. They actively promoted the creation of an Army Nurse Corps, and a New England reformer, Dorothea Dix, was chosen to superintend the effort.

When the war ended, the Sanitary Commission officially disbanded, disbursing its funds and resources. The paradigm it so successfully demonstrated, however, of forming a national charitable organization that multiplies its effectiveness with regional branches, lives on. The innovations and reforms it prompted—organizing national charitable support for soldiers, improving sanitation to prevent illness, providing medical care, securing pensions, and promoting free forwarding of soldiers' letters, as well as advancing the nursing profession for women—affected the lives of millions of soldiers in the Civil War and tens of millions more soldiers since then.

When we consider the impact on soldiers' lives (and not just armies, armaments, politicians, or political entities), the formation of the Sanitary Commission must be considered one of the crowning achievements of men and women in the Civil War in general and of New England women in particular.The infrastructure of industries employing female operatives and the part of women as paid laborers not only ensured New England a regional position in producing tentage and other supplies for soldiers, but its culture of accommodating feminine leadership and the role of women as individual contributors provided women such as Eliza Henderson Bordman Otis an opportunity to run a depot for soldiers during the war. Finally, its propensity for promoting national reforms and the role of women working through benevolent organizations resulted in New England and New York women creating a new paradigm for national charitable organizations and ensuring their extraordinary success to the benefit of millions of soldiers in the Civil War and ever since.

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[17] Alvin Robert Kantor and Marjorie Sered Kantor, *Sanitary Fairs: A Philatelic and Historical Study of Civil War Benevolences* (Glencoe, Ill.: SF Publishing, 1992), 45–46.

Battle on the Home Front: The Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association

Lynne Z. Bassett

Both the Union and the Confederate governments were unprepared to send thousands of men to war in the spring of 1861. Civilians on both sides of the conflict stepped up to fill the enormous need and quickly became essential to keeping the soldiers not only clothed and warm, but supplied with nourishing food. In the North, where women's sewing circles to support the poor and various reform causes were common, the focus immediately shifted to sewing and knitting for soldiers and sailors. Popular historical imagination tends to paint a picture of charitable, self-sacrificing women on the home front united in their support of the troops. In fact, competition, dissent, and tension both between and within charitable organizations plagued the northern civilian war effort. This study of the Hartford (Connecticut) Soldiers' Aid Association offers an examination of some of those issues.

The administration of many soldiers' aid societies included officers as well as a managerial board and "collectors" who solicited contributions from their friends and neighbors. The ladies kept records of their accomplishments and disbursements, and the larger aid societies, such as that of Hartford, published annual reports. They issued press releases and corresponded with soldiers, officers, and doctors in the field and sent male emissaries (a local minister or businessman) to the front lines and military hospitals to assess needs. Their efforts answered a very strong emotional desire to participate in and help with the war effort, as many of these women had close associations with men on the front lines—husbands, brothers, sons, uncles, and fathers.[1]

With more than 10,000 soldiers' aid societies in the North producing thousands of garments and enough bandages to circle the Earth, it quickly became necessary to create an overarching organization to efficiently distribute all of these textiles as well as provide nurses for sick and wounded soldiers.[2] In May 1861 the Cooper Institute in New York City hosted a meeting of 3,000 women who organized themselves into the Women's Central Association of Relief and considered an even larger

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[1] For more information about northern women's efforts on the home front during the Civil War, see: Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Patricia Richard, *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003); Madelyn Shaw and Lynne Zacek Bassett, *Homefront and Battlefield: Quilts and Context in the Civil War* (Lowell, Mass.: American Textile History Museum, 2012).

[2] The estimate for the number of soldiers' aid societies comes from Richard, *Busy Hands*, 8.

scheme to coordinate the soldiers' aid societies. Following up on the ideas that came out of that meeting—and with his own agenda—the Reverend Dr. Henry Bellows, accompanied by other reform-minded men, traveled to Washington to speak to President Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. Although resistant to this civilian intrusion at first, Lincoln and Stanton ultimately gave permission for the establishment of the United States Sanitary Commission—the first national public health organization in America.

Named after the British Sanitary Commission of the Crimean War (a body formed in the 1850s and best known through the work of Florence Nightingale), the U.S. Sanitary Commission (USSC) dramatically improved the condition of military camps and hospitals by providing clean clothing and blankets, bandages and medicines, fresh and nourishing food, and trained nurses to the Federal forces. For its first two years the Sanitary Commission was directed by General Secretary Frederick Law Olmsted—famed designer of New York City's Central Park (having just won the competition three years earlier) and a Hartford native—who established a system of twelve branch offices, each accepting the contributions of as many as 1,200 soldiers' aid societies from the surrounding region and then distributing them to Union soldiers as needed.[3]

Once at one of the USSC branch offices, barrels and boxes were unpacked, inventoried, sorted, marked with the official United States Sanitary Commission stamp, repacked with a list of contents attached to the outside, and then delivered to either Washington, D.C., or Lexington, Kentucky, the two main shipping depots. From there the goods were sent wherever they were needed. The railroads provided free transportation for all of the USSC goods, and express companies carried packages for half price; telegraph messages for the USSC were also sent for free.

Another organization established to pool and distribute resources, though with a different emphasis, was the United States Christian Commission (USCC), which was formed as a support system for chaplains serving the armed forces. The evangelically minded USCC was created by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) late in the fall of 1861, after the Union's awful defeat at the First Battle of Bull Run. They provided Bibles and other religious tracts to the soldiers, but like the Sanitary Commission, they also solicited donations of socks, shirts, and blankets from soldiers' aid societies. The New England Women's Auxiliary of the Sanitary Commission committed to print its irritation with the Christian Commission in its *Third Annual Report*, complaining that the Sanitary Commission was fulfilling any spiritual duties by supplying religious tracts to soldiers of all faiths—not just Christians—whenever a

[3] Branches of the U.S. Sanitary Commission were located in Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Louisville, New York City, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.

request was made, and that the Christian Commission was not only unnecessary, but wasteful:

> It is a misunderstanding that is paralyzing activity everywhere in New England; dividing where there should be union, increasing expense where the strictest economy should be studied, and lessening the value of supplies that ought to be regarded as a sacred trust to be religiously used for the benefit of the neediest men.... For these reasons, women of New England, we ask for your unvarying, your hearty, your entire support, so far as the bestowment of your supplies is concerned. No other agency can use them as favorably as the Sanitary Commission....[4]

Such conflicts over the disbursement of money and supplies led to divisions within some soldiers' aid societies, including that of Hartford. The Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association (HSAA) was formed soon after the attack on Fort Sumter; as the association's *First Annual Report* stated,

> A few patriotic women met in sadness and secrecy in a parlor of this city, to commence the preparation of lint and bandages for the terrible exigency which was inevitably impending over the country.... Patriotic women from neighboring towns soon began to pour in supplies of clothing and bedding from their household stores, and these in a few months accumulated to such an extent that some large channel for sending relief and comfort to the soldiers of the Union Army became necessary.[5]

The list of managers of the HSAA includes many, if not all, of Hartford's leading ladies of the 1860s: the wife of the mayor, Allyn S. Stillman; the wife of Senator James Dixon; the wives of bank presidents and insurance company presidents and treasurers, along with the wives of other business leaders. In 1860 the population of Hartford was fewer than 30,000—certainly, these women all knew each other, and undoubtedly some were related. They opened an office and depot on Allyn Street in space donated by a local businessman.[6]

The "First Directress" (or president) of the HSAA in the first two years of its operation was Mary Ann [Bull] Olmsted (1801–1894), the stepmother of Sanitary Commission General Secretary Frederick Law Olmsted.[7] Both the Olmsted and Bull families could trace their Connecticut roots back to the seventeenth century, the Olmsteds being among the families who first established Hartford in 1635. Mary Ann Olmsted was remembered for her earnestness, religious conviction, and belief in

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[4] U.S. Sanitary Commission, *Third Annual Report of the New England Women's Auxiliary* (Boston: Prentiss and Deland, Printers, 1865), 8, 11.

[5] *First Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association* (Hartford, Conn.: Press of Case, Lockwood and Co., 1863), 5.

[6] Information gleaned from *Geer's Hartford City Directory* (Hartford, Conn.: Elihu Geer for the Hartford Steam Printing Company), 1862–1865 volumes, Connecticut Historical Society Library.

[7] Mary Ann Bull had married wealthy widower John Olmsted in 1827 and raised Frederick from the time he was five years old.

"the correctness of her views."[8] She was also described as "a Puritan, a model of order and system, most efficient as an organizer...."[9] With her family connections, wealth, and self-assured personality, she was a natural leader for the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association.

At first the association sent its donations of money, clothing, bedding, and food through an agent, who distributed the stores directly to soldiers (from Connecticut, especially) encamped and hospitalized in the vicinity of Washington, D.C.[10] But Frederick Law Olmsted convinced his stepmother that the Sanitary Commission was the best conduit for items for soldiers' relief. In a long, rather scolding letter from November 1861, Olmsted instructed his half-sister, Mary, and the ladies of the HSAA to forward requests from brigade surgeons to the Sanitary Commission rather than send the desired items directly to the troops: "It is wrong in my judgment for you to send directly to any soldiers. What is the use of our organization unless it is to save you from possible waste & imposition?"[11] Speaking in the same letter of mittens the HSAA had sent to Cairo, Illinois, Olmsted wrote of the greater efficiency and appropriate distribution offered by the Sanitary Commission:

> No doubt the soldiers would like each a present of a pair, but to furnish them to a regiment is just the same as voting that your society will raise the wages of that regiment. Certainly *you* should supply nothing to well-men.... At present there is not a tenth part of the *hospital clothing* ready which would be required to keep the wounded from freezing to death, if there should be a well contested battle between the two armies now face to face in Virginia. If mitts and socks should be given to men in the field, those who have been sick & wounded & are going to their tents from the warm hospitals, surely need them most. We have not enough for them yet.
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> Your affectionate brother,
> Fred. Law Olmsted.
>
> P.S. ... If we have a surplus, we can supply well-men, judiciously, which you can not.... There are extraordinary circumstances when it is important soldiers should be at once & liberally assisted with these things, but what they want never can be sent them from Hartford under these circumstances. They must be ready nearer by.[12]

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[8] Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Vol. I: The Formative Years, 1822 to 1853*, ed. Charles Capen McLaughlin and Charles E. Beveridge (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 84–85.

[9] Ibid.

[10] *First Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association*, 6–7; William House, Virgil Cornish, and E. M. Cushman all acted as agents for the HSAA in the first two years of its operation.

[11] Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Vol. IV: Defending the Union, The Civil War and the U.S. Sanitary Commission, 1861–1863*, ed. Jane Turner Censer (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 217–20. Frederick Law Olmsted in New York to his sister, Mary Olmsted, in Hartford, 6 November 1861.

[12] Ibid.

Convinced, Mrs. Olmsted published her argument in favor of the Sanitary Commission in the *Hartford Courant*: "After the experiences of a year and a half, and the most careful examination into the best modes of conveying comfort and aid to the sick and wounded, the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association is prepared to announce the Sanitary Commission as the best, safest, and most appropriate channel for the gifts of all humane and loyal citizens."[13]

Other members of the HSAA were not so easily persuaded. Throughout its tenure the Sanitary Commission had to contend with rumors that its donated supplies were pilfered by unscrupulous doctors and officers and that little ever actually reached the soldiers, that its salaried employees were also corrupt, and that its general operating expenses were exorbitant. The Sanitary Commission's biweekly *Bulletin* frequently devoted a column or two to extinguishing these suspicions—but the accusations nevertheless damaged the organization's reputation. Women who volunteered their time to make garments and other necessary items for the soldiers also resented the fact that in some cases the USSC charged the soldiers for the donated items.[14] Perhaps most significantly, however, the USSC denied women their accustomed autonomy within charitable sewing circles—the ladies resented the anonymity of pooling their hand-knit stockings and other supplies with those of other soldiers' aid societies, preferring to be in control of their donations.[15]

Mrs. Olmsted was not able to fulfill her stepson's desires to send all of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association's donations directly to the Sanitary Commission. Although the HSAA declared that it sent two-thirds of its largesse to the Sanitary Commission, and is credited as having done so in *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War*, this appears not to be accurate, even for the period under Mrs. Olmsted's

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[13] *Hartford Courant*, 27 October 1862, 2.

[14] Louisa Lee Schuyler, USSC chairman of the Committee on Correspondence and Publicity, clarified for Mrs. Olmsted a sale of lint and bandages that had angered members of the HSAA: "The result of a thorough investigation was that the lint & bandages had been sold, but not by the Commission. They were sold by a Relief Association in Washington deliberately. Other things were more needed & they determined to sell their lint & bandages & use the money to buy what was wanted. It was a perfectly fair transaction & we have had serious thoughts of doing likewise...." Louisa L. Schuyler to Mary Ann Bull Olmsted, 11 May 1863, New York Public Library, USSC Woman's Central Association of Relief records, box 19, folder 1.

[15] Attie, *Patriotic Toil*, chap. 2: "Imposing 'A Masculine Discipline': A Nationalist Elite and the U.S. Sanitary Commission," 50–86.

leadership.[16] The *First Annual Report* of the association in 1863 shows that, while two-thirds of the cash donations were forwarded to the USSC headquarters or to branch offices in New York and Chicago, less than half of the accumulated clothing, bedding, and food was sent to the USSC.[17] In addition to entrusting much of its munificence to its own agent for distribution directly to soldiers, the HSAA also donated generously to the Christian Commission and to the Connecticut Relief Association of Washington, D.C.,[18] an organization whose purpose was "to furnish relief and comfort to Connecticut soldiers who have become sick or disabled in the service of their country....the soldiers of our grand army have to undergo numerous privations and hardships, and unless some hand of pity be extended, especially to the sick and wounded, many will fall, victims of neglect, to premature graves."[19]

From the beginning of its labors, a great deal of conflict clearly troubled the HSAA regarding the distribution of their money and materials. One woman in particular, HSAA secretary Sarah S. Cowen, was a thorn in Mrs. Olmsted's side. Sarah Cowen was a young widow, who, along with her two children, had returned to Hartford to live with her father after her lawyer husband, Sidney Cowen, died at sea. She was descended from one of the Connecticut River Valley's most elite families: her great-grandfather was New England's great theologian, the Reverend Jonathan Edwards.[20] Her father, Frederick Tyler, was a wealthy coal merchant living on Myrtle Street. Like many of the women who labored for the troops on the home front, Sarah Cowen was closely related to men on the battlefield: both her brother and her uncle served as generals in the war.

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[16] In a report made to the local newspaper, HSAA secretary Sarah Cowen stated, "In reply to numerous enquiries, the managers of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association inform their contributors in this city and elsewhere that two-thirds of all their supplies are sent to the United States Sanitary Commission through the New York office, No. 10 Cooper Union. Consignments of hospital stores are sent every week through this agency, and a frequent correspondence is maintained in order to keep this association advised of the most pressing wants of the commission." *Hartford Courant*, 15 June 1863, 2. W. A. Croffut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War of 1861–65* (New York: Ledyard Bill, 1868), 467.

[17] From 1 June 1861 to 1 January 1863, the HSAA gave "20,092 articles of clothing and bedding, besides large quantities of lint, bandages, farinaceous and other food, wine, spirits, and miscellaneous hospital supplies" to the Sanitary Commission, and "15,789 articles of bedding and clothing, and similar quantities of lint, bandages, food, etc., etc." to "Connecticut Regiments and Relief Associations," or 56 percent of the total, to the Sanitary Commission. Additionally, 86 out of 404 barrels of fruit and vegetables were sent to the Sanitary Commission—or 21 percent of that total. *First Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association*, 13, 16.

[18] *First Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association*, 6–7; William House, Virgil Cornish, and E. M. Cushman all acted as agents for the HSAA in the first two years of its operation.

[19] Circular no. 2, Connecticut Soldiers' Relief Association, Connecticut Historical Society Library, Civil War box 2, folder 26.

[20] The genealogy of Sarah Cowen was researched on ancestry.com. Another great-grandfather (though by marriage rather than by blood) was Connecticut's renowned Revolutionary War hero Israel Putnam, who is credited with the famous order "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes" at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Her brother, Robert O. Tyler, heroically led batteries of artillery at Gettysburg. In contrast, history has laid at least partial blame for the Union's humiliating defeat at the First Battle of Bull Run on General Daniel Tyler.[21] *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War of 1861–1865* recognized the work of Mrs. Cowen, commenting that she was "impelled by the earnestness and energy which distinguish the family" and that she "was from the first the leading spirit in rendering the movement effective for good. She gave her entire time and care to the work."[22]

Mrs. Cowen was the main proponent in the argument that the HSAA's largesse should be distributed to Connecticut soldiers in particular rather than to the Sanitary Commission. The disagreement over policy and the personal conflict between Mrs. Olmsted and Mrs. Cowen came to a head in the spring of 1863 when the association elected its leadership for another year. The association's report for March and April, published in the *Hartford Courant*, sheds light on the power struggle that dominated the meeting. Mrs. Cowen concluded her report with this message:

> Ladies, the connection of your secretary with this association closes to-day. There are many reasons why she must decline being a candidate for re-election, and it only remains for her to thank you all for the courtesy and kindness which you have invariably extended to her. The warm hearts and ready hands which have responded to hers in this labor of love, have made her participation in your work one of the pleasantest memories of her life. She asks a kind remembrance from you all, and adds a fervent wish for the prosperity and success of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association.[23]

The managers of the association (a board of thirty-five local women), however, refused to accept Mrs. Cowen's resignation. And then—to Mrs. Olmsted's dismay—"they proceeded to elect her First Directress with entire unanimity."[24] In anger Mrs. Olmsted resigned altogether from the association. Louisa Lee Schuyler, who chaired the USSC Committee for Correspondence and Publicity, headed to Hartford to see if she could pour oil on the troubled waters of the HSAA but found it best to retreat: "The trouble in the Hartford Soldiers Aid Society had assumed such a personal character that it was useless to attempt anything there."[25]

Mrs. Cowen's unpopularity with the staff of the Sanitary Commission is clearly illustrated by a comment from Horace Howard Furness, who lectured on behalf of the Sanitary Commission in Hartford a few months

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[21] Matthew Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 57.

[22] Croffut and Morris, *Military and Civil History,* 470.

[23] *Hartford Courant*, 14 May 1863, 2.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Louisa L. Schuyler to Frederick Law Olmsted, 20 May 1863, New York Public Library, USSC Washington, D.C., archives, box 51, folder 17.

before the HSAA coup d'état in 1863. In a letter to Frederick Law Olmsted, he wrote: "The horns of the boss devil were plainly prominent protruding from the head of Mrs. Cowen on the front bench."[26] For his part Olmsted maintained a diplomatic stance. Responding to his stepmother's anger and frustration, he wrote, "Dear Mother,... It is better that no goods should come than that soreness, distrusts and divisions should arise among loyal people through a strong rivalry of competing philanthropists. I hope you will say as little as possible, [and] think as little as possible, of the differences between you and Mrs. Cowen and make light of them...."[27]

Mrs. Olmsted set off to organize a Hartford USSC auxiliary separate from the HSAA. Louisa Schuyler noted in her report back to Frederick Law Olmsted:

> Mrs. Olmsted and Mrs. Talcott...are now canvassing Hartford County for the Commission. I visited Farmington, E.Hartford, So. Windsor & Manchester. My experience is that the villages always want to work through the Com. after the principle has been thoroughly explained. It has been so wherever I have been & your mother writes that she finds it so elsewhere.[28]

Schuyler gave her opinion on the difference between working with the aid societies in the Connecticut villages versus those in Hartford: "The love of power which so blinds the eyes of the city people, does not extend into the country."[29] Indeed, as secretary, assistant treasurer, *and*—starting in the spring of 1863—first directress of the HSAA, Mrs. Cowen certainly demonstrated her desire for control of the HSAA.

In the first year under Mrs. Cowen's tenure, the proceeds of the HSAA to the Sanitary Commission remained at approximately half of the total.[30] The HSAA's manner of accounting for their income and contributions differs from annual report to annual report, so it is impossible to make exact comparisons, but according to the records published in the *Second Annual Report*, the HSAA gave $8,800 worth of goods to the Sanitary Commission—the value of 100 barrels of clothing, bedding, hospital

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[26] Horace Howard Furness to Frederick Law Olmsted, 29 January 1863; quoted in Olmsted, *The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Vol. IV*, 624n3.

[27] Ibid., 624.

[28] Louisa L. Schuyler to Frederick Law Olmsted, 20 May 1863, New York Public Library, USSC Washington, D.C., archives, box 51, folder 17.

[29] Ibid.

[30] *Second Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association, January 1, 1864* (Hartford: Press of Case, Lockwood and Co., 1864). It is impossible to state exactly what the contributions to each recipient were, as the records were not totaled in dollar amounts, except that for the USSC. An estimate of the percentage of the aid received by the USSC was made by comparing the number of barrels, boxes, and individual garments that were listed for each type of beneficiary.

equipment, and food out of 177 total—as well as $891 in cash.[31] Beyond the 77 barrels of goods sent directly to the Connecticut Relief Association in Washington, the New England Relief Association headquartered in New York, to various hospitals, and to the Christian Commission, the ladies of the HSAA distributed many hundreds of garments directly to soldiers passing through the city on their way home or back to their regiments and gave financial support to widows and needy families of absent soldiers.[32]

By its third year of operation, the HSAA's contribution to the Sanitary Commission was greatly reduced. Of 223 boxes and barrels of supplies distributed, only 43 went to the Sanitary Commission. Ninety-seven went to the Christian Commission, and 83 went directly to soldiers in camp and in the hospital.[33]

In the last year or so of its activity, the HSAA found itself in competition for contributions with local branches of the Christian Commission and Sanitary Commission. As Mrs. Cowen stated, "The channels of communication with our sick and wounded soldiers are multiplying around us, and during the past year branches of the Christian and Sanitary Commissions have been established in Hartford."[34] She wrote with abundant praise of the Christian Commission, stating that

> We cheerfully assist in preparing work for its auxiliaries, and in forwarding its stores, and while we notice a sensible diminution in our receipts from neighboring towns whose donations have recently been diverted to this favorite agency, we are glad to give our testimony to the upright and economical manner in which its affairs are conducted, and to express our belief that it is accomplishing a great amount of good in ministering to the bodies as well as the souls of our brave men in field and hospital.[35]

The Hartford Sanitary Association, in contrast, seems damned with faint praise in Mrs. Cowen's report: "under the auspices of its two official Lady Managers, Mrs. J. Olmsted and Mrs. T. G. Talcott…its first annual report affords gratifying evidence of its success in obtaining supplies, and of the favor which it has met from the public." Mrs. Cowen continued, "We shall continue our contributions through these two great general agencies in such measure as circumstances may seem to require, holding always in reserve a sufficient amount of hospital stores to meet any

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[31] Ibid., 17–18 (Note that the record gives a total of 176 barrels, but the correct total is 177). The association received $13,252 in cash contributions during the period covered by this report; $891 was especially designated for the Sanitary Commission.

[32] Ibid., 10, 19.

[33] *Third Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association, January 1st, 1865* (Hartford: Press of Case, Lockwood and Co., 1865), 16–17.

[34] *Third Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association,* 5.

[35] Ibid. The Hartford Auxiliary of the Christian Commission was established in April of 1864.

calls from Connecticut regiments, or from any other source which we know to be reliable in its ministrations to sick and wounded soldiers."[36]

The conflict within the HSAA continued to reverberate for the rest of the war period. Nearly a year after Mrs. Olmsted's resignation from the organization, Mary Shipman of Hartford wrote to another young Hartford woman, Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, who was serving as a nurse at the Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C.:

> The only war items I have to chronicle are those which grow out of a fierce rivalry here between the Soldiers Aid Soc. & the Sanitary Commission—a question of devotion to State regiments, States rights, or love to the Republic, as a whole. Are you a Connecticut soldier or only a "man and a brother'? It affords us some amusement, and yet it is rather an unfortunate controversy. Mrs. Cowen leads one party—Mrs. John Olmsted the other. Mrs. O. stumps the state & Mrs. C. uses her pen with great vigor.[37]

Not surprisingly, the rancor affected local women's interest in participating in the HSAA. Another friend wrote to Harriet Hawley, "I think there isn't quite the enthusiasm there used to be, partly…on account of a division of feeling in regard to disposition of the articles." Inquiring of Harriet, who was experiencing firsthand the care of wounded soldiers, her correspondent asked, "Doesn't it seem best to you to send as directly as we can to our own Soldiers—a surer way of doing good?"[38]

Throughout its period of work, the HSAA—like every other soldiers' aid society—held small-scale benefits to raise cash in addition to their sewing, knitting, bandage-rolling, and lint-scraping efforts. After nearly three years of mining their own and their neighbors' stores of old linens, blankets, and yarn, however, the soldiers' aid societies were forced to look elsewhere for the materials they needed. They began to organize large-scale "Sanitary Fairs" to raise cash so that they could purchase fabric for hospital shirts and yarn to knit into stockings. These grand expositions raised millions of dollars by offering themed booths and art displays, various entertainments, food, and—perhaps most importantly—pleasant distraction from three years of bloodshed and grief. Hartford participated in the Metropolitan Fair of New York City, curating a booth featuring a piano made from wood of the Charter Oak ("whose wood

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[36] Ibid. While the HSAA gave to any Connecticut troop that made a request to them and to the Connecticut Relief Association of Washington, they and other aid societies adopted particular regiments, as they posted in the *Hartford Courant*, 6 January 1862: "They also wish it understood, that the regiments apportioned to them, as their particular charge, are the 4th, 10th, and 12th. The 6th, 8th, 11th and 13th belong to the Norwich and New London Association, and the 5th, 7th and 9th to the New Haven Association."

[37] Mary C. Shipman to Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, Hartford, 23 February 1864, Joseph R. Hawley Papers, Library of Congress. The author thanks Elizabeth Stevens for providing the text of this and other letters to Harriet Hawley.

[38] Lillie Gillette to Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, Hartford, 1 May 1863, Joseph R. Hawley Papers, Library of Congress.

seems likely to prove as inexhaustible as that of Shakespeare's mulberry-tree") and other "specimens of the industry and thrift that have made Hartford so famous—the rifles and revolvers, willow furniture, foulard silks and belt ribbons…and, finally, as souvenirs perhaps of ancient ingenuity, there were nutmeg bracelets for sale here."[39]

The depth of the split in Hartford over the distribution of donations is demonstrated in a letter published by the *Hartford Courant*, proposing that Hartford organize its own Sanitary Fair—but the writer acknowledged, "There being a division in public sentiment respecting the best way of benefiting soldiers, some…plan would be necessary in order to have everything work harmoniously."[40] The writer suggested that "books could be kept in each department of the fair in which the amount of sales could be entered, each purchaser stating when passing over his money the organization he desired to aid—the Christian Commission, the Sanitary Commission, or the Hartford Soldiers' Aid."[41] The fair idea, however, was quickly torpedoed in an anonymous response, stating that those who had organized the Hartford booth for New York's Metropolitan Sanitary Fair had experienced enough of such "slavish drudgery" in "this thankless service."[42] Nine months later, even with the war's end becoming evident, Mrs. Cowen continued to agitate for a Fancy Fair (she did not call it a "Sanitary Fair"), suggesting in a letter to the newspaper that if Hartford did not organize such a benefit, "the loss will be ours, as we sit with folded hands and listen to the cries from battle-field and hospital, powerless to send any response."[43] Fatigue won out, though—Hartford never did produce its own Sanitary Fair.

Post-war encomiums on the northern war effort, such as *The Tribute Book* from 1865, *Women's Work in the Civil War* from 1867, Crofutt and Morris's *Military and Civil History of Connecticut in the War of 1861–1865*, and indeed books and essays written on the subject for decades after, speak of the unity of northern women in providing for their soldiers. Croffut and Morris wrote, "With one heart, young and old, rich and poor,…[women] plied shears and needles with unwearied diligence."[44] This study of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association shows that, in fact, women did weary, and though they may have been of one heart, they certainly were not of one mind. Similarly, the United States Sanitary Commission has received great praise and the lion's share of attention for its

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[39] *A Record of the Metropolitan Fair in Aid of the United States Sanitary Commission, Held at New York, in April 1864* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 179.

[40] *Hartford Courant*, 30 December 1864, 2.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 5 January 1865, 2. Elizabeth Jarvis Colt, widow of gun manufacturer Samuel Colt, organized Hartford's contribution to the Metropolitan Sanitary Fair.

[43] Ibid., 30 September 1865, 2.

[44] Croffut and Morris, *Military and Civil History*, 58.

patriotic work during the war—but women sometimes resented the Sanitary Commission's insistence that they were the best recipient of the goods from soldiers' aid societies. In the words of Sarah Cowen, "while we deem it a privilege to be able to pour our supplies into the larger channels of benevolence (i.e., the Sanitary Commission), and thus swell the vast tide of patriotic charity, we find it a sweeter and more pleasing office to minister with our own hands to individual necessities, to bind up the wounds of the suffering and wipe away the tears of the sorrowing."[45] Within the great national battle to preserve the Union raged small local battles, such as that of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association. Unwilling to merge their patriotic and voluntary labor with that of thousands of other women into an anonymous and faceless depository (the Sanitary Commission preferred to call it "the grand receptacle of the nation's benevolence"),[46] the women of the HSAA chose, as much as they were able, to "minister with their own hands" to their soldier brothers and uncles, husbands, and sons.

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[45] *Second Annual Report of the Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association, January 1, 1864*, 9–10.

[46] *Hartford Courant*, 20 October 1863, 2.

"To provide for the comfort of those of our race": African American Soldiers' Aid Societies and the New England Civil War Effort

Patricia L. Richard

On the morning of 28 May 1863 vast throngs of people lined the streets of Boston, Massachusetts, in anticipation of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment parading through the city on its way to war. Citizens crowded the Common and peered from rooftops, windows, and balconies; spectators climbed atop wagons and wooden boxes to gain a favored vantage point. Black and white well-wishers, relatives, and officials cheered; women waved handkerchiefs, and young and old alike donned flags as the men of the Fifty-fourth marched proudly by. Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and Lieutenant Colonel Norwood P. Hallowell led the regiment past the reviewing stand where Governor John Andrew, Senator Henry Wilson, the mayor of Boston, and a great number of other military and city officials witnessed this historic moment. About noon the regiment marched from the Common as their band played John Brown's hymn and "their sisters, sweethearts, and wives…ran along beside 'the boys' giving their parting benedictions of smiles and tears, telling them to be brave, and to show their blood." The *Christian Recorder*, an African American newspaper published in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, reported: "never were a thousand men who bore with them so many of the hopes and responsibilities of a race as are intrusted [*sic*] to these colored soldiers. May they be equal to the duty which rests upon them, and worthy of the career which opens before their victorious arms." The "hopes and responsibilities" lay on the men; and their mothers, wives, sisters, and dear ones at home rallied to support them. Not long after the boys marched off to war, black women of Springfield, Massachusetts, organized the Colored Soldiers' Aid Society, on 19 July 1863, and stated, "we cannot stand by looking idly on without manifesting some disposition to provide for the comfort of those of our race who have marched to the field of battle at the call of dear old Massachusetts." Providing for their men became a vital part of supporting the cause of the Union and of their race. The response by New England black communities reflected a combination of communal cooperation and support, patriotism, maternal concern, and a desire to end slavery and gain equality for all African Americans.

As the men of the Fifty-fourth marched by on that May morning, the enthusiasm that was being lavished on them had not always existed

among northern whites.[1] After the fall of Fort Sumter on 14 April 1861 and President Abraham Lincoln's call for troops to put down the rebellion, black men and women of Boston gathered at Bethel Church on Anderson Street within thirty-six hours of Lincoln's order and proclaimed, "we are ready to stand by and defend the Government with 'our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.'" They resolved to organize into drilling companies and suggested that "the colored women could go as nurses, seamstresses, and warriors if need be." But Lincoln hoped to return the seceded states back to the Union without any change to slavery, thus denying African Americans a role.[2]

Enslaved blacks, however, did not listen to how northern and southern whites defined the conflict. The exigencies of war created opportunities to escape, and on 23 May 1861 three slaves ran from the Confederate battery to the Union troops at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, and asked for protection. Massachusetts general Benjamin Butler accepted them as "contrabands" of war and gave them shelter and food. This opened a floodgate for fugitive slaves seeking freedom, and by the end of July 1861 almost 1,000 slaves escaped to the safety of the fort. By 1862 the *Christian Recorder* reported that fugitive slaves "of both sexes and of all ages,...flee to" Washington, D.C., "in all the wretchedness and poverty incident to their former condition as chattels." They arrive "hungry, and in rags their whole appearance piteously appealing for succor." Four hundred fled to the capital that year and 10,000 were there in 1863. Uncertain about whether to aid these people or not, the editors of the *Christian Recorder* were initially opposed to it, fearing the United States government would send them back to their masters. They argued, "We entertained doubts as to whether we would not uphold and encourage Slavery by contributing to their support." By 1862 they decided sending clothes, food, and aid in the form of missionaries was the most humane response.

Black women involved in abolitionist work were the first to answer the needs of the fugitives. As historian Julie Roy Jeffrey argues in *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism*, both black and white female abolitionists prior to the war had become accustomed to public involvement. They had "created and circulated propaganda, raised thousands of dollars for the cause, made speeches, petitioned the government, assisted fugitives, taught blacks how to read and write, opposed segregation, and lobbied their churches to take a public stand against slavery." They contin-

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[1] *Christian Recorder*, 6 June 1863; *Anglo-African*, 3 October 1863; Luis F. Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment: History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863–1865* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 31–32; William Wells Brown, *The Negro in the American Rebellion: His Heroism and His Fidelity* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1867), 155. There was concern that Boston rowdies would attack the soldiers, and so 100 policemen were on duty and lined the parade route. Thankfully, the rowdies either stayed away or were silenced by the overwhelming outpouring of support and goodwill by the more progressive Bostonians.

[2] Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953), 26–27, 29.

ued their interest in the slave during the war and they changed their society names and their focus to reflect the shifting political tides. For instance, the Dover, New Hampshire, Anti-Slavery Sewing Circle became the Dover Anti-Slavery and Freedmen's Aid Society.[3]

Elizabeth Keckley, seamstress to First Lady Mary Lincoln and a former slave herself, started her own society for fugitive slaves in August 1862 entitled "Contraband Relief Association" and acted as its president. She called it a "labor of love" and encouraged northern blacks to help their brethren. "It has been asserted that we, as a people, do not sympathize with this oppressed portion of our race. Let us, my friends, by our benefactions, by words, and by acts of kindness, disprove these assertions. Let us emulate those brethren of Boston who have so nobly extended relief." She was referring to the Fugitive Aid Society of the Joy Street Baptist Church organized by Sarah Martin and the Colored Ladies' Relief Association established by Octavia Grimes of the Twelfth Street Baptist Church. Keckley cooperated with these New England women and other black churches and individuals to meet her supply needs for the fugitives.[4]

As the war continued to transform from a war to preserve the Union to one to end slavery, blacks were called upon to serve their country. The Emancipation Proclamation of 1 January 1863 and the Enrollment Act of 1 March 1863, which allowed African American men to be drafted into the military, opened the way for African Americans to respond with patriotic fervor. New England communities were some of the first to raise black regiments. Governor John Andrew of Massachusetts began recruitment for two state regiments of black soldiers, the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Voluntary Infantry, on 9 February 1863. Not long afterwards, on 13 March 1863, a meeting of ladies and gentlemen, including Colonel Shaw, assembled at a private house in Boston to discuss the progress of the Fifty-fourth. Shaw reported that the enlistment was going well and the behavior of the men good, but there was a need for "necessary comforts" as the cold weather produced suffering among the men of Camp Meig. A committee of six ladies and four gentlemen was created and Mr. J. H. Stephenson made treasurer. Stephenson promptly published a request in the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* asking for donations of "socks, towels, handkerchiefs, thread, needles, or any other articles necessary for the soldier" to be received at his office at

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[3] Julie Roy Jeffrey, *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism: Ordinary Women in the Antislavery Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 211–12.

[4] *Christian Recorder*, 14 March 1863; Ella Forbes, *African American Women during the Civil War* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998), 68, 70–72; Jeffrey, *Great Silent Army*, 218. Another former slave, Harriet Jacobs, who told her story of enslavement in *Incidents of the Life of a Slave Girl,* published in 1861 under the pseudonym Linda Brent, moved to Washington, D.C., and began working for the relief of the freedmen. She, however, appealed to whites for contributions because she believed they should pay for the condition of these people.

No. 12 Arch Street or the office of the U.S. Sanitary Commission at 22 Summer Street.[5]

The response was impressive. On 21 March 1863 the committee held a "subscription levee" "for the purpose of supplying the Fifty-fourth Regiment with an outfit similar to that of other Massachusetts regiments." A large number of gentlemen and ladies attended and among the speakers were Wendell Phillips and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Stephenson reported he had received $686.75 from private subscription prior to the meeting, including $100.00 by letter "from a citizen interested in the movement." The levee was seen as a great success, both socially and financially, and, as Stephenson put it, "a good influence in favor of the regiment." In April Stephenson reported again that the committee received money and goods in the form of stationery, socks, needle books, buttons, shears, and towels. These supplies came from and were guided by whites. The men of the Fifty-fourth appreciated the assistance of the white citizens but believed help from relatives and ladies from their own communities would show the men of the Fifty-fourth that they too supported the cause of freedom and equality. George Stephens, a volunteer of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts, and a writer for the *Anglo-African*, a black newspaper published in New York City, explained, "Ladies it would be strong evidence of your patriotism, intelligence and noble-heartedness, did you organize your Sewing Circles in every locality from whence your friends have come to unite their destines with the Fifty-fourth."[6]

African American women of New England responded in 1863 and 1864 by either transforming their sewing circles, as Stephens suggested, or by expanding their freedmen's aid societies to include support for black soldiers. The congregation of the Twelfth Street Baptist Church in

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[5] William A. Gladstone, *Men of Color* (Gettysburg, Pa.: Thomas Publications, 1993), 34; *The Liberator*, 13 March 1863. There were many examples of whites cooperating with blacks either by holding a joint fair with a freedman's society, or as in the case with the Stockbridge Colored Ladies and Freedman's Relief and Soldiers' Aid Society, having elite and well-connected whites furnish rooms and lights and/or attend and donate to fairs. Unfortunately, the acts of discrimination by whites were more frequent than acts of cooperation. See *Anglo-African*, 10 September 1864; Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment*, 134; Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 233–34; Patricia Richard, *Busy Hands: Images of the Family in the Northern Civil War Effort* (New York: Fordham University. Press, 2003), 108.

[6] *Anglo-African*, 27 March and 10 April 1863; Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment,* 15; George E. Stephens, *A Voice of Thunder: The Civil War Letters of George E. Stephens,* ed. Donald Yacovone (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 236. The men of Company C of the Fifty-fourth also received supplies from the editors of the *New Bedford Mercury.* James Henry Gooding acknowledged the receipt of "a bundle of magazines, and serials. Also some unknown friends, for towels, looking glasses, blacking and brushes, and three barrels of apples. These acts of kindness make us feel that we are not forgotten by the good people of New Bedford." See James Henry Gooding, *On the Altar of Freedom: A Black Soldier's Civil War Letters from the Front, Corporal James Henry Gooding,* ed. Virginia M. Adams (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991), 9.

Boston, for instance, as noted earlier, started the Colored Ladies' Relief Association for fugitives in 1862 and opened their stores to black soldiers in 1863. Their pastor, Rev. Leonard A. Grimes, was a recruiter for the Fifty-fourth and he enlisted many members of his own congregation. His wife, Octavia Grimes, united her destiny with the regiment by becoming a founding member of the society and serving as its treasurer. The black women of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, started the Freedman's Relief and Soldiers' Aid Society. The women of New Bedford helped to fully fit their company before they left for Meig Camp at Readville outside of Boston. Black women and men of Wilmington, Delaware, organized the Colored Soldiers' Relief Association of Wilmington and Vicinity to assist the black soldiers and their families. In Connecticut the ladies of Bridgeport created the Colored Soldiers' Aid Society, as did the ladies of New Haven and Hartford, and twenty-five black women of Norwich met to establish a Soldiers' Aid Society to "administer aid and comfort to the gallant colored soldiers of Connecticut" that were raised for the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Connecticut Colored Regiments.[7]

The unique fashion in which black regiments were raised shaped the way in which blacks across the North united to support the cause and their men. With Governor Andrew's establishment of the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Regiments in February 1863 and Governor William Buckingham's organization of the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Connecticut Colored Regiments in November 1863, they created committees to begin mustering troops. Because there were not enough black residents in these states to fill the regiments, recruiters placed ads in local newspapers and cast their nets beyond Massachusetts and Connecticut to include all northern states. Recruiters, like James W. Grace of New Bedford, Massachusetts, visited the black churches and arranged for prominent abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Frederick Douglass to address war meetings. Local black ministers became enthusiastic recruiters themselves and encouraged many members of their own congregations to enlist. Even the clergy joined and became chaplains of the regiments. Samuel Harrison, of the Second Congregational Church of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, became the first black army chaplain when the officers of the Fifty-fourth elected him. William Jackson of the Salem Baptist Church of New Bedford became chaplain of the Fifty-fifth. It was from the congregations, such as the Twelfth Street Baptist Church in Boston and the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, that the soldiers' aid societies emerged. As mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives of these recruits, these women knew the men personally and had an interest in their welfare. But just as

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[7] *Anglo-African*, 12 September 1863, 3 October 1863, 14 November 1863, 27 February 1864, 28 May 1864, 1 October 1864; *Christian Recorder*, 16 January 1864; Stephens, *Civil War Letters*, 294; Forbes, *African American Women*, 70.

the recruitment went beyond their own towns and state lines they too extended their community to include the support of black men and women of the other states. The Colored Ladies Sanitary Commission of Boston proclaimed in the *Anglo-African,* "We first intended to make the Society a State affair, but on more mature consideration have concluded to invite the co-operation of the friends of the regiments in the different States, as the men who compose these regiments are from almost every State in the Union." Therefore, they noted, "we think there are ladies in each State who have as deep an interest for their welfare as we of Massachusetts."[8]

It is not surprising that blacks extended their cooperation beyond state lines as northern free blacks prior to the war were accustomed to relying on each other. More than poor whites, African Americans had no other forms of aid than the ones they created for themselves. Northern blacks formed benevolence societies initially to "pay sick and death benefits and to assist widows and fatherless children." They took in boarders for money but also from a sense of responsibility to their community. Blacks created a massive networking system through their churches. James and Lois Horton note in their study of black Bostonians that "church was the major black institution outside of the home for most black people of all ranks and stations." The church provided social contacts, economic aid, and cultural events and acted as a socializing agent for new residents. It was this networking and cooperation that became the foundation of success for the black women's soldiers' aid societies.[9]

Indeed, northern blacks saw it in their interest to support all black troops in order to promote the advancement of the race as a whole. At the annual conference of the AME, church leaders published their "sentiments" in "relation to colored soldiers." They stated "that considered in the light of self-interest and mutual protection alone, it is the duty of the entire colored people of the North, to throw their arms and influences around these truly patriotic men, and inspire them with the most exalted devotion to the cause in which they have enlisted, and that no pains be spared by us at home to advance the general interests of our soldiers in the field." They then forwarded their "sentiments" to the separate com-

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[8] Gladstone, *Men of Color*, 38; Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment*, 8–12; Edwin S. Redkey, "Black Chaplains in the Union Army," *Civil War History* 33 (December 1987): 332; *Anglo-African,* 28 May 1864. This seems to be one of the differences between black and white soldiers' aid societies. Although the United States Sanitary and Christian Commissions were created as national organizations, local white societies did not always cooperate with these entities and if they did it was usually after first meeting their own local regiments' needs. See Richard, *Busy Hands*, 191–96; Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Silber, *Daughters of the Union,* 166–84.

[9] Sterling, *We Are Your Sisters,* 105; James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), 21–25; Forbes, *African American Women,* 94.

mands of the black troops and requested that the officers read them to the soldiers, presumably to let the soldiers know of the support that the church and black community had given them.[10]

One of the first demonstrations of patriotism and support for their men was the making of flags for the local regiment and or company. Already ritualized by the white ladies soldiers' aid societies, the women bestowed a flag upon the volunteers during a ceremony that was usually followed by a dinner for the men. The historian Reid Mitchell notes the festivities "became stereotyped early in the war—a speech given by a leading citizen, a reply by the company commander, and perhaps a picnic or banquet." Blacks continued this tradition and presented their men with flags in ceremonies that pledged the commitment between home and the soldiers. The importance of women's roles in this ritual was not lost on the soldiers. The *Anglo-African* reported upon hearing that the ladies were raising money for a flag for the Fifty-fourth, "It is…especially gratifying…to recognize every movement in which the ladies are interested for their sanction is always an assurance of its worthiness, and their influence guarantees its success." The Fifty-fourth, the article noted, "should carry with them the cheering recollections that they went forth to duty in the service of the republic and our race, followed by the inspiring wishes of our venerated mothers, respected sisters, and dearly beloved daughters." The Twenty-ninth Connecticut received a "handsome flag" from the black ladies of Norwich, presented by Miss Diantha Hodge to Dr. Bacon, who addressed Colonel Wooster for them. "We give you this flag…in behalf of the citizens of this place, and in behalf of the people of Connecticut, that we expect you to do well for your country, well for your State, well for yourselves and for the race with which you identify."[11]

Once the excitement of the flag ceremony and the departing parade subsided, the life of the soldier became one of hardships and at times, drudgery. The adjustment from home to the camp was a jolt to many of the new recruits. In the camps the distinction between civilian and army life soon became apparent. Borrowed blankets replaced clean sheets, the hard ground functioned as a bed, a cold stream served for bathing, and moldy rations substituted for hearty, homemade meals. To cope with the ascetic environment men petitioned family members and friends for personal belongings. Private John H. Jenkins of the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts, for instance, had his chaplain write his wife to ask for tobacco, paper, and stamps. Others, like George Stephens of the Fifty-fourth, made their plea in the pages of the *Anglo-African*. "There are many of the essentials to the soldiers toilet which the government does not furnish

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[10] *Christian Recorder*, 23 May 1863.

[11] Reid Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1988), 19–20; *Anglo-African*, 4 April 1863, 26 March 1864.

to her troops: such as coarse towels, needles, pins and buttons, besides some items of reading matter, such as testaments (pocket), newspapers, tracts, *etcetera*." He asked, "Will the fair friends at home withhold their regards from the noble 54th and refrain from giving them some few [*sic*] of these testimonials of their admiration and respect?"[12]

Friends and families could not always provide for their men, and black soldiers' families especially suffered from hardships. Although blacks enlisted into the Massachusetts and Connecticut regiments with the understanding that they would be treated and paid the same as white troops, they soon discovered that they would receive $10 a month, with $3 deducted for their uniforms (a deduction white soldiers did not have to pay), while white soldiers of equal rank received $13 a month. Men of the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth refused the pay, stating, "we did not come to fight for money.... it was for the love of our country and love of our government based upon terms of equality." The lower pay combined with the fact that black troops were routinely the last to receive rations and were forced to do more fatigue duty than white troops resulted in low morale. Men felt the blow to their manhood even further when the hardships were passed on to their families. Many blacks received "suffering letters from home." Wives and children were starving and freezing. Others were sent to the poor house. Taking these factors into account, it makes sense that blacks would turn to communal cooperation in the form of soldiers' aid societies. Yet even white-run soldiers' aid societies had difficulties. As noted by Jeanie Attie in *Patriotic Toil,* the soldiers' aid society was a fragile entity. Collecting lint, sewing shirts, and preserving jam did not guarantee the week in and week out life of a society. Higher transportation costs, war-inflated prices, and the increased amount of labor placed on women during the war pulled their limited energies and resources in all directions. Add to this that black women faced discrimination and, as Nina Silber puts it, "significant economic obstacles" on the home front, and their work in freedmen's and soldiers' aid societies becomes even more impressive and the supplies they sent even more precious to the men who received them. The goods sent by the societies helped to stem the hardships these men endured, but they became more than just physical relief; they represented ideological support for the cause for which the men fought and gratitude for the volunteers' personal sacrifices. Whether relatives or society members sent the domestic articles, the fact that the wares came from homes, were touched by loving hands, and sent with patriotic intentions appealed to the soldiers' feelings of love and importance. Rev. J. W. Hood of the AME Zion Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, explained while encouraging the women of his congregation to organize a soldiers' aid society that if in the lonely moments of camp, "there come[s] a small token of rememberance [*sic*] from

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[12] Richard, *Busy Hands*, 108; John Jenkins quoted in Redkey, "Black Chaplains," 348; Stephens, *Civil War Letters*, 235–36.

loved ones at home, it would cheer their drooping spirits; it would be a balm to their wounds, a cordial for their fears, and it would nerve their arms to acts of heroism." In other words, the psychological benefits of a package equaled and at times surpassed the physical value of many materials sent from home.[13]

When the men of the Fifty-fourth from Albany, New York, received a box of delicacies, they "gathered around it like a brood of chickens around the hen at twilight." Not just the soldiers from Albany but the whole company "felt a deep interest in the reception of it." Once the box was opened, "the packages were seized by as many as could get hands on them, and while the inscription" on each package was being read, "the company remained in breathless silence." Of the contents the men wrote that "the Ladies have not only in their generosity been mindful of our every little want, but have taken upon themselves a mother's care and provided us with necessities of every description." They acknowledged that "while there have been received such donations in the 54th regiment, the manner of reception of the present one is without a precedent: while some of the men were frantic with joy, others were moved to tears." They all joined in one accord and exclaimed, "God bless the Ladies of Albany!" The ladies of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, sent goods with "kind advice given us in those little missives traced by your gentle hands" attached to them. James Walton of the Fifty-fourth thanked the Philadelphia ladies for the box they sent. "Such attentions on the part of friends at home, mitigate much the hardships of a soldier; both mental and physical. Beside the physical comfort which they bring, there is also the equally important mental satisfaction that he is not forgotten."[14]

Most of the items sent by the societies were in the form of food, clothing, sewing, and toiletry goods. The black citizens of Wilmington, Delaware, for instance, sent preserved peaches, crackers, sugar, cocoa, lemons, jelly, tamarinds, "and other articles too tedious to mention." They did make it clear that "in every instance, before purchasing articles, inquiry is made by the committee, as to the wants of the soldiers." The

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[13] *Christian Recorder*, 2 January 1864; Richard, *Busy Hands,* 109, 189–90, *Anglo-African*, 12 September 1863; Attie, *Patriotic Toil,* 99–103; Silber, *Daughters of the Union,* 63–64. Equal pay was one of the most divisive issues that black soldiers dealt with during the war. They felt that if they could not receive equal treatment while sacrificing their lives and the welfare of their families then they would have little hope of achieving civil rights and suffrage after the war. This issue pushed some men to mutiny and others to desert. The officers of black troops tried to keep their men under control while appealing to state and federal officials to resolve this issue. Much is written about this issue; see: McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War,* 197–208; Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862–1865* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998); and Keith P. Wilson, *Campfires of Freedom: The Camp Life of Black Soldiers during the Civil War* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2000).

[14] *Anglo-African*, 20 June 1863, 19 November 1864, 25 July 1863. The goods sent by the Albany ladies may have elicited such a response because of the sheer size of the box. The men noted that it took four soldiers to carry it and did so "in the same manner you would carry a four-handed bureau."

New Bedford ladies sent Company C of the Fifty-fourth "sewing purses containing needles, thread, buttons, yarn, a thimble and paper of pins, one for each man." It is, however, from the description of the contents of the box sent by the ladies of the Colored Soldiers' Aid Society of Springfield, Massachusetts, that we get a sense of how the women made it a point to meet specific needs of the soldiers. Their package contained:

> dozen handkerchiefs, three dozen towels, two cases of tamarinds, one box of lemons, one package of dried apples, two packages of crackers, two packages of prunes, one package of sugar, one box of figs, one-hundred and thirty-two yards of bandages, five papers of farina, eight papers of pins, four spools of thread, one box of lead pencils, eight combs, ½ dozen shirts, one box of Herriage [*sic*], four cans of condensed milk, one box of mutton tallow, four packages of chocolate, one package of arrowroot, two packages of gelatin, one package of castile soap, two bottles of currant wine, eight papers of corn starch, three papers of needles, four quire of letter paper, four packages of envelopes, two cakes of scented soap, and two hair brushes.

The men of the Fifty-fourth never received the box because it was broken into and the contents stolen by soldiers of the Forty-seventh New York.[15]

The soldiers also needed mental stimulation and a way to stay connected to home beyond the personal letters they received from friends and relatives. Both soldiers and civilians were aware of the importance of reading matter and, in particular, of newspapers to keep the "boys" tied to home. Indeed, George Stephens informed the black community as a whole before leaving Massachusetts for the front that "we desire to have a goodly number of copies of the Anglo-African sent to the address of our chaplain, for this shall be the medium through which all of the affairs of the regiment of public interest, shall be made known." The newspaper proved to be helpful to both soldiers and their families left behind. As Stephens noted, "when sickness, accident or anything else shall take place, the friends and relatives of those in it can know all, learn all, through the columns of the Anglo-African."[16]

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[15] Gooding, *On the Altar of Freedom,* 12; Stephens, *Civil War Letters*, 293–94; *Anglo-African*, 20 August 1864. The Springfield ladies sent their box to the "Colored Ladies Union Soldiers' Aid Association" of Norfolk, Va., who then distributed these goods to wounded black soldiers in hospitals in and around Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia.

[16] Stephens, *Civil War Letters*, 236. An exception to the usually racist white papers was the *New Bedford Mercury*. Corporal James Henry Gooding of Company C of the Fifty-fourth provided a stream of letters to his home newspaper which they published to inform the public of the progress of their men. See Adams Gooding, *On the Altar of Freedom*. The other exception was the *Philadelphia Press,* whose John W. Forney hired Thomas M. Chester as a war correspondent. He was the only black war correspondent employed by a major white paper. Even so, the historian R. J. M. Blackett notes, "the *Press* had a decidedly mixed record in its attitudes toward blacks." See Thomas Morris Chester, *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches from the Virginia Front*, ed. R. J. M. Blackett (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 38.

Black soldiers and civilians turned to the *Anglo-African* and the *Christian Recorder* because these were black-owned newspapers. White-owned newspapers rarely included news about blacks or for blacks, and when they did it was generally in a derogatory light. These two papers became more than just sources of local news but instead took on a national character uniting the northern black community. During the war black soldiers from a variety of state regiments and the United States Colored Troops routinely sent letters to the editors of these papers to inform black civilians of their material wants, their regiments' battlefield successes, and their combined efforts towards the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery and discrimination. Articles about the ladies', soldiers', and freedmen's aid societies proclaimed their own work for black troops, thus informing soldiers that they were not forgotten nor alone in the fight for equality. This important link between home and camp cannot be overstated. Black soldiers felt connected and cared for and had a way to vent their frustrations about the abuses they suffered at the hands of white Union soldiers. Black civilians also used these newspapers to share both local and national news and discuss the Lincoln administration's policy towards black soldiers and equal rights. The importance of these newspapers to the men was noted by a volunteer from the Fifty-fifth who wrote, "I wish you and the many fair ladies and other friends who have so generously given their money to send the Anglo to the soldiers, could know what genuine comfort and solid benefit it imparts them." He assured the readers, "When the mail arrives, we inquire as earnestly for 'My Anglo' as for 'my letter from home', or almost, not quite of course." As a soldier who was serving without pay, he and his comrades wanted "our noble sisters who send us the spicy Anglo to know how heartily their soldier brothers appreciate their kindness. Bless them!"[17]

Through the *Anglo-African* and *Christian Recorder* they stayed connected with the mundane news from home and with the daily headlines of the progress of the war. Black women used the newspapers to announce the creation of their societies, the fairs held to raise money for supplies, the boxes sent, and acknowledgments received from the appreciative soldiers, and to proclaim their rationale for their work. Black women responded to the sentiments of George Stephens to "unite their destines" with the Fifty-fourth. They understood that by so doing, "our destiny is united with that of the country. With its triumph we rise, with its defeat we fall." In Norwich, Connecticut, the black women formed a society "for the purpose of rendering aid and assistance to the sick and

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[17] *Anglo-African*, 13 August 1864. The black ladies of West Chester, Pa., held a fair "for the benefit of the colored soldiers." When deciding how best to help the men, they said they would "aid them by sending them what they seem most anxious to read—the *Recorder*." See the *Christian Recorder*, 27 August 1864.

suffering" soldiers. "Our citizens will doubtless see the merits of this claim upon their benevolence and contribute cheerfully for the relief of the colored soldier." Springfield ladies invited all black citizens to join them "so that when we look back upon what we have accomplished we may feel proud of the part we have enacted in this great revolution of free principles and free institutions against the lesser and more degrading elements of slavery." The ladies of Bridgeport, Connecticut, understood the historic ramifications when they organized their society "to assist our brethren who have offered their bodies a sacrifice to the cause of liberty" and in so doing "would carry the name of colored American down with honor through all coming time."[18]

By April 1865 much had changed for black Americans since that spring day in Boston when the Fifty-fourth paraded through the city streets. They had served as Union soldiers, organized soldiers' aid societies, pushed for their rights as men and women to be treated equally, and helped to end slavery and win the war for the Union. African American women played a vital role in the cause of the Union. Not only did they provide desperately needed supplies that black soldiers did not receive from the government and could not afford to buy, but they boosted men's morale and helped to support the united cause of freedom and equal rights for their race. As a volunteer of the Fifty-fourth noted in a letter acknowledging receipt of a box of goods, the ladies "have shown their true devotion to the government by their readiness to extend a benevolent hand to the men that are now going to fight the battle of our country." They had in fact assisted the soldiers "in putting down…Southern despotism."[19]

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[18] Stephens, *Civil War Letters*, 288; *Anglo-African*, 27 February 1864, 3 October 1863, 12 September 1863.

[19] *Anglo-African*, 20 June 1863.

"I should like to feel that I was doing some real good to somebody": The Civil War Sacrifice of Harriet Ward Foote Hawley

Elizabeth C. Stevens

When the people of Guilford, Connecticut, celebrated the town's two hundred fiftieth anniversary in 1889 with a three-day celebration, one speaker praised the wartime contribution of Guilford's Harriet Ward Foote, whose "exhausting labors" as a worker in the Civil War had "run down her health" and "shortened her life." Her wartime contribution as an aid worker was so significant, John Todd, the speaker, asserted, that Harriet Ward Foote Hawley's name should be inscribed on the soldiers' monument at the heart of the Guilford Green alongside the names of fifty-six male citizens who had died for the Union cause.[1] In the years following the Civil War, middle-class northern white women like Harriet "Hattie" Hawley were portrayed as self-sacrificing "angels of the battlefield" who had no self-interest or personal benefit in leaving their homes to labor on the front lines as aid workers. Yet a study of Guilford's Harriet Ward Foote Hawley suggests that the Civil War may have provided some of New England's middle-class white women with a positive and welcome opportunity to claim an authentic role in the war. Depictions of New England's female aid workers as self-sacrificing heroines obscure the complex nature of their wartime experiences.[2]

Born in 1831, Hattie Foote grew up on her family's farm at Nut Plains, a few miles from the center of Guilford. She was a first cousin of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher, who were almost a generation older than she. It was during an 1854 visit at the Hartford home of Isabella Beecher Hooker that country cousin Hattie Foote first encountered ambitious lawyer Joseph Roswell Hawley, a passionate abolitionist, five years Hattie's senior, who was soon to become a rising star in the Repub-

[1] *Proceedings of the Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Settlement of Guilford, Conn. Sept. 8th, 9th, 10th, 1889* (New Haven, Conn.: Stafford Printing Co., 1889), 242. In these citations Harriet Ward Foote Hawley is referred to as "HWFH" and Joseph Roswell Hawley as "JRH."

[2] In her study of women aid workers in the Civil War, Jane E. Schultz observes that, in the postwar years, "assessment of women's wartime contributions read like the lives of saints: the war generation held that the women who nursed soldiers were angelic and motivated by Christian sacrifice." *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 12.

lican Party in Connecticut.[3] According to Hawley, Hattie Foote did not fit a conventional ideal of beauty, was devoid of "style," and lacked the "ability to shine among strangers in any large circle." Yet he admitted that he was "irresistibly drawn" to her. She was a "woman of very superior intellectual & moral endowments," who, "without the benefit of a formal education," had on her own studied languages and mathematics, "all while fulfilling her duties as the eldest child of ten children." This "quiet little woman...would be very sorry to cut your head off & would do it gently, but if that were the only true way, she would go straight along & never think it possible to do otherwise," he asserted.[4]

Joe Hawley and Hattie Foote married in December 1855 and settled into housekeeping in Hartford, where Joe, an ardent antislavery advocate, became editor of the *Hartford Evening Press*, a Republican newspaper. There is no evidence that Hattie Hawley herself took part in any public activism in the years leading up to the Civil War. Her "private activism" consisted of providing a home for her editor public activist husband. "I've finally concluded that as I can't go to Kansas to fight, nor make speeches for Fremont, I'll stay at home & do what little good I can in the way of comforting poor Joe & sewing for Kansas," Hattie wrote to her family in 1856. Her health was an issue. Hattie suffered from various ailments, including a "periodic neuralgia" that rendered her incapacitated for several days each month. In the antebellum years she despaired of ever having the constant vitality of other women and was viewed by friends and family as someone in delicate health.[5]

In the early months of the Civil War, Hattie Hawley struggled to conceive a home front role for herself that would enable her to act on her antislavery beliefs. Joe Hawley was one of the first men in Connecticut to enlist in the Union Army. A constant stream of letters to her husband, an officer in the Seventh Connecticut regiment, formed the heart of Hat-

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[3] E. F. Jenkins, "Notes on Nutplains," 1928, MS in private hands; Foote Genealogy, MS in Foote Collection, Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, Conn. (hereafter cited as "HBSC"); John Niven, *Connecticut for the Union: The Role of the State in the Civil War* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1965), 24, 27; Maria Huntington and Kate Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley* (New Haven, Conn.: Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor, 1886), 5–7.

[4] Joseph R. Hawley to Charles Dudley Warner, 20 April 1855, in "Letters from Joseph and Harriet Foote Hawley, mainly to Charles Dudley Warner," ed. and comp. Everett C. Wilson, bound typescript, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.

[5] HWFH to Kate Foote, September 1856, Foote Collection, HBSC. For letters regarding HWFH health in the antebellum period, see HWFH to family members, Foote Collection, HBSC, for example, HWFH letters to Kate Foote (13 September 1856 and ca. 1858). HWFH visited Dr. Gleason at the Elmira Water Cure at least twice between 1857 and 1862, JRH to Charles Dudley Warner, December 1859, 16 January 1860, Wilson, ed., "Letters"; JRH to HWFH, 27 July 1862, Papers of Joseph Roswell Hawley, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as "JRH Papers, LOC"). Mary C. Shipman wrote to HWFH on 1 July 1861 that she had given HWFH's letter "detailing her [HWFH's] symptoms" to "Dr. Peaslee," a prominent New York physician specializing in the treatment of "uterine" problems, JRH Papers, LOC; HWFH to Kate Foote (1858, before May), Foote Collection, HBSC.

tie's own supportive activism at this time. When a younger brother enlisted, Hattie spoke of her role and that of other northern women: "I believe in no half sacrifice. Give God the best and all; we women have to do the giving though we cannot do the fighting." Deputized by Joe Hawley, she visited soldiers from his regiment in a military hospital in New Haven and wrote letters to families whose husbands, brothers, or sons in the Seventh Connecticut had died of wounds or disease or accidents while in the war zone.[6]

Hattie Hawley's particular "sacrifice" in giving up her husband to the war and providing support from afar was unbearable for her. She did not "mean to undervalue women's work," Hattie told her husband. "I *must* work, and work steadily and hard. I can't live without it, but I should like to feel that I was doing some real good to somebody." If she were "sure of her health," she wrote Joe, she would "compass Heaven and Earth to get some situation as nurse somewhere...." Paradoxically, her struggle with home sacrifice seemed to impair her health. "It makes me sick to think that I can do nothing; to think how we are going on quietly here at home when our best and bravest are suffering and dying,—and the good cause goes on so slowly. I am not sure that I can bear it much longer—," she lamented to her husband, then a lieutenant colonel stationed with his regiment in the Sea Islands off the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina.[7]

Seeking essential war work, Hattie Hawley considered the possibility of joining her husband in the Southern Department. She had no economic or family responsibilities to detain her in New England. During the fall of 1862 Hattie and her twenty-two-year-old sister, Kate Foote, applied to the New York–based National Freedman's Relief Association for positions teaching formerly enslaved people in the Sea Islands. Their applications were accepted. Kate Foote left for the South in mid-October 1862; Hattie followed a few weeks later.[8]

The voyage south in November 1862 took Hattie Hawley from her known and ordered New England world to a world turned upside down by war and dislocation. Although she traveled south under the auspices of the Freedman's Relief Association, Hattie did little teaching, preferring to keep house for Joe, who had been commissioned a full colonel, and for her sister Kate. Soon Hattie combined her domestic support role

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[6] Stephen Walkley, *History of the Seventh Connecticut Volunteer Infantry* (Hartford, Conn., 1905), 7; HWFH to JRH, 21 June [1861], JRH Papers, LOC; quoted excerpts from HWFH to JRH are in Huntington and Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*, 7–8, 12; JRH to HWFH, 27 July 1862, 14, 16, 29 December 1861, JRH Papers, LOC.

[7] Walkley, *Seventh Connecticut*, 27–69; excerpts from letters of HWFH to JRH, in Huntington and Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*, 12.

[8] JRH to HWFH, 12 March 1862, 24 March 1862, 25 March 1862, 6 June 1862, 12/13 October, 7 November 1862, Isabella Beecher Hooker to HWFH, n.d., HWFH to [Gideon] Welles, n.d., Charles C. Leigh to HWFH, 15 October 1862, 29 October 1862, JRH Papers, LOC; Kate Foote to Eliza Spencer Foote, 21 October 1862, 20 November 1862, Foote Collection, HBSC.

with a more public activism. She began to write dispatches for the *Hartford Evening Press.* Her first published "letter" was a heartfelt description of the Emancipation Day celebration in Beaufort on 1 January 1863. Hattie sought to convey the thrilling solemnity of the occasion. Her friends "at the North" were aware that it was Emancipation Day, Hattie began, but "we *saw* and *felt* it with every breath we drew." The celebration was held at the camp of the First South Carolina Volunteers, a "colored regiment" under the command of Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson. A crowd of several thousand refugees, soldiers, and guests gathered under a stand of live oak for a reading of the president's proclamation, speeches, and prayers. When a "beautiful stand of colors" was presented to Higginson's regiment, the crowd spontaneously began to sing "America." "Tears filled many eyes around me," Hattie wrote, "for myself I could hardly check the sobs, as I thought, 'for the first time—now they have a Country—it is to them *now* a Land of Liberty.'"[9]

Housekeeping and attendant "home" chores under wartime conditions soon consumed much of Hattie Hawley's time and attention. By January 1863 Hattie chronicled her nomadic journey following Joe's Seventh Connecticut Regiment through various army posts in the Southern Department—Fernandina, St. Augustine, and Jacksonville, Florida, as well as Hilton Head and Beaufort, South Carolina. Wherever she went, Hattie sought to "do good." She started a sewing class of African American refugees in Fernandina. Several young women in the class, formerly field hands, had learned to sew "quite neatly" from their mothers after a day's grueling work in the fields. "I wonder how many Yankee girls would have done as well in their place," Hattie remarked to her northern readers.[10] Over the next eighteen months some ten of her missives found their way into print in the *Hartford Evening Press.* If her articles for the *Press* sought to convey the complex nature of life in the southern war zone for her Hartford readers, they were also a medium through which she herself could make sense of her topsy-turvy life far from her New England home.[11]

Hattie Hawley was now, by necessity, forced to practice improvised housekeeping, which she found a delightful challenge. A military setting

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[9] Charles Dudley Warner to JRH, 30 November 1862, HWFH to Susan and Charles Dudley Warner, 7 December 1862, HWFH to Susan Lee Warner, 14 June 1863, Wilson, ed., "Letters"; HWFH, "New Year's Day at Beaufort, S.C.," *Hartford Evening Press*, 14 January 1863. In *Firebrand of Liberty: The Story of Two Black Regiments That Changed the Course of the Civil War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 13–28, Stephen V. Ash gives a detailed account of the Emancipation Day ceremony; he identifies Rivers and Sutton as the speakers from Higginson's black regiment; HWFH does not identify the men in her account.

[10] HWFH, "Life at Fernandina," *Hartford Evening Press*, 22 April 1863.

[11] For a description of Hattie Hawley's work as a journalist while in the Southern Department, see Sarah Whitmer Foster and John T. Foster Jr., "Harriet Ward Foote Hawley: Civil War Journalist," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 83, no. 4 (spring 2005): 448–67.

Figure 1. Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, ca. 1870. Photograph courtesy of the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, Connecticut.

rendered orderly New England–style housekeeping very odd indeed, with armed sentries out front and the noise of bugles drifting into the parlor "twenty times a day." It was a challenge to hunt up rudimentary furniture, crockery, and tableware. Hattie traded commissary staples, pork, and beef with formerly enslaved people for sweet potatoes and rice, and grew other produce herself. For preserves she bottled local fruits, "citrons and guavas." Such improvised housekeeping "taxes my Yankee ingenuity somewhat," she informed her family and friends in the North.[12] In the balmy winter climate Hattie's health was "never better in my life." She could "ride & walk & talk & work, to an incredible extent," she informed her mother. Viewing tropical flora and fauna, excursions, jolly beach picnics and parties and receptions were restorative and fun.[13]

An all-day Thanksgiving festival at Fort Pulaski shortly after her arrival in the Southern Department illustrated the odd juxtapositions of Hattie Hawley's world turned upside down. Hattie, her sister Kate, and Joe Hawley traveled by steamer over to the fort with other guests and were greeted by a military band. The three viewed foot races and a burlesque dress parade as well as a "magnificent" real dress parade from the parapets of the former Confederate fort, the scene of a fierce bombardment the previous April. The women guests were allowed to shoot off one of the fort's impressive guns. In the evening Hattie and Kate danced reels with generals and other officers and dined on oysters in a magnificent improvised banquet hall decorated with military flags and adorned

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[12] L. J. D. [Dickinson] to HWFH, 12 March [1863] in undated letters to HWFH, JRH Papers, LOC; HWFH to Mary Foote, 30 November 1862, HWFH to "My Dear Friends All," 15 February 1863, Foote Collection, HBSC; there are numerous accounts of HWFH's adventures with housekeeping in her letters to her family, November 1862–July 1863, Foote Collection, HBSC. See also Kate Foote's letters during the same time period in the Foote Collection, HBSC.

[13] HWFH to Charles Dudley Warner and Susan Lee Warner, 28 March 1863, Wilson, CtHi; HWFH to George A. Foote and Eliza Spencer Foote, 14 January 1863, HWFH to Eliza Spencer Foote [after January 1863], HWFH to "Parents, brothers and sisters," 23 November 1862, HWFH to Eliza Spencer Foote, 28 January 1863, HWFH to Kate V. Foote [cousin], 6 February 1863, Foote Collection, HBSC. HWFH, "Life at Fernandina: Experience of a Lady," *Hartford Evening Press,* 6 March 1863.

with evergreen wreaths. The two Guilford women delighted in the evening's revelry, retaking the fort, not for the army this time, but for domesticity. "[I] thought, with a little strange sadness of 'the folks at home' spending their quiet New England Thanksgiving. Nothing but the sea looked familiar to me," Hattie remarked to her sister Mary.[14]

Hattie Hawley did not become "a perfect amazon" in her "present warlike surrounding" as a cousin jokingly suggested she might. She visited camp hospitals daily, however, bringing delicacies and cheer to the men. In Hattie Hawley's first months in the South, the men of Joe Hawley's regiment saw little action. But that changed in the summer of 1863 when some men of the Seventh Connecticut participated in the first unsuccessful assault on Fort Wagner; Joe Hawley did not take part in the mission. Hattie Hawley and her sister, visibly shaken when news of the failed assault reached St. Augustine, "took scraps from the only silk dresses they had brought" to repair the tattered regimental colors that had led "their" men into action. By January 1864 Hattie was living in a tent on St. Helena Island with Joe; she started a school for recent conscripts, many of whom were illiterate.[15] Before leaving the South, she made a pilgrimage to Fort Wagner, where she collected grass from "a spot made sacred to me by the blood of brave men" she had "known and loved."[16]

Far from endangering her health as friends and family had feared, Hattie gained vigor during her sojourn in the Southern Department. She returned to Guilford in March 1864 determined to become a nurse in an army hospital. She arrived in New York en route to Guilford where she experienced profound shock at the disjuncture between the military hospitals she had recently left and everyday life in the northern city. She watched "the elegant carriages and fine horses and superb dresses of the ladies as I drove up Broadway." She confided to Joe, "But suddenly I seemed to see far more plainly the bare rooms with long rows of narrow cots, in each one a worn, patient, manly face, and before I knew it I was sobbing. I must go back and do what I can for my poor boys."[17]

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[14] HWFH to Mary Foote, 30 November, 3 December 1862; Kate Foote wrote a fourteen-page letter to Eliza Spencer Foote describing Thanksgiving at Fort Pulaski, 1 December 1862. Both letters are in the Foote Collection, HBSC.

[15] Kate V. Foote to HWFH, 5 January 1863, JRH Papers, LOC; HWFH to Eliza Spencer Foote, 4 January 1863; Walkley, *Seventh Connecticut*, 69–85, 218; Kate Foote to Mary Foote, 20 July, 3 August 1863, Foote Collection, HBSC.

[16] HWFH to Susan Lee Warner, 11 December 1863, Wilson, CtHi; HWFH to Kate Foote, January 1864, Foote Collection, HBSC; HWFH, "The Florida Expedition—A Visit to Folly and Morris Islands," *Hartford Evening Press*, 17 February 1864. The grass from Fort Wagner is in HWFH album in Foote Collection, HBSC.

[17] Excerpts from HWFH letters, Huntington and Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*, 53–55; on HWFH becoming a nurse, see Dorothea Dix to HWFH, 17 March [1864], Ella Wolcott to HWFH, 27 March 1864, Charles L. Reber, to HWFH, 7 April 1864, "E. J. D." [Dickinson] to HWFH, 1 April 1864, Edward Everett Hale to HWFH, 19 April 1864, Ella Wolcott to Dorothea Dix, n.d. [1864], all in JRH Papers, LOC.

Hattie Hawley was accepted as a ward matron in Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C., in May 1864; Joe Hawley and his regiment had joined the Army of the James in Virginia a few weeks before. Gone were the concerns that Hattie's health was too fragile to sustain hospital work. Her tour of duty in the South had empowered her. "I saw plainly the growth in your mental strength and self confidence of which you speak," Joe wrote Hattie in early May. She thanked God "most heartily that at last I have something to do better than crochet-work!"

Like many stalwart women who volunteered as army nurses during the Civil War, Hattie Hawley was unprepared for the unspeakable agonies she witnessed. She assumed her duties as the wounded arrived from the horrific Battle of the Wilderness in Virginia. Hattie was "on duty from six in the morning until ten at night, with only a few minutes for hurried meals." She informed cousin Isabella Beecher Hooker shortly after arriving, "I know of no words to describe the amount and intensity of the suffering I see around me at *every moment*. As I wrote that, I stopped to look at the peaceful face of a poor fellow who has just died, eight feet from my chair. One leg had been amputated above the knee, ten days ago—and he had suffered terribly and was much wasted. Pray for us, you good Christians at the North.... You do not dream of what these men undergo." She was "watching" two eighteen-year-olds "almost breathlessly." Their lives hung "by a thread. I can't let them die—if they do, a piece of my life goes too," she lamented. "There's an amputation going on 12 feet from me—of the leg—on one of my best and dearest boys—and my mind is a little distracted," she apologized. When friends in Washington sent a carriage to take her out for a ride on June 11, it was the first time Hattie had left the premises of the hospital since she had arrived three weeks earlier.[18]

Work in the army hospital was traumatic. It was necessary for Hattie to suppress her emotions in order to fulfill her duties. "I am learning not to let myself *feel* as much as I did at first, yet I can never get used to it. O, my men are dying so fast!" she exclaimed. Sudden, unexpected death was common due to rampaging infection. "One of my men died last night very suddenly indeed," Hattie wrote Joe some months after arriving at Armory Square. "Such things are exceedingly painful for they leave me with a mingled grief and remorse and self reproach, that I had not done more for the poor fellow—had not realized how sick he was."[19]

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[18] HWFH to Isabella B. Hooker, 31 May 1864, HWFH to Charles Dudley Warner, 11 June 1864, JRH Papers, LOC.

[19] Excerpts of letter quoted in Huntington and Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*, 56, 63, 65–66. In her memoir, *The Lady Nurse of Ward E*, Amanda Akin Stearns wrote of one stressful period at Armory Square: "Still they come! And we are overflowing.... it seems I had forgotten how to feel." (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1909), 38. Excerpt from HWFH to JRH, 15 January 1865, in "A Woman in the War: Letters of Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, 1855–1865," ed. Edward J. Foote, typescript, Foote Collection, HBSC.

During her time at Armory Square, Hattie wrote few personal letters. "I never sit down to write a private letter without feeling as if I were neglecting some duty," she confided to her sister. She did, however, advocate with congressmen for Seventh Connecticut men who were captives in prisons in South Carolina. "If everything else fails, I shall go directly to the President. I *won't* give it up, till I am successful," she wrote to captive Captain Valentine Chamberlain.[20]

Amidst the misery and distress at the ward Hattie sought to create as orderly an atmosphere as possible. By August her ward was "clean and nice and quiet." Once she had brought her ward "up to her ideal," Hattie told Joe, "I shall be as proud of it as you of your regiment." At Christmas 1864 she decorated the ward with greens and plants and arranged for special treats and plum pudding for her patients. She mused, "It is a strange life we live here, monotonous enough, yet very intense, very absorbing and very exciting. Isolated to a degree which is really absurd considering where we are, we have a little world of our own and there is a great deal of pleasure to it and a strange fascination." If her convalescents showed interest in religious subjects, she gathered them around her table, read from the Bible, and conversed with them. Hattie protected the soldiers in her ward like a lioness. When the unconventional Walt Whitman, who volunteered as a nurse at the hospital, came around to her ward, Hattie interrupted a letter she was writing to Joe, remarking, "There comes that odious Walt Whitman to talk evil and unbelief to my boys.... I shall get him out as soon as possible."[21]

As the war wound down in the early spring of 1865, Joe Hawley, recently appointed as commandant and provost marshal in Wilmington, North Carolina, summoned Hattie to join him. Joe, who had been appointed a brigadier general in the fall of 1864, was occupied by a myriad of military duties. Over nine thousand Union prisoners from Andersonville had been "delivered" to the city, Hattie reported to her influential cousin Harriet Beecher Stowe. "No human tongue or pen can describe the horrible condition which [the men] were in...oh God! I cannot endure to speak of it."[22] The men had brought highly contagious typhoid fever with them, she related, "yet they must be fed and cleaned and clothed and cared for." Makeshift, temporary hospitals were understaffed. Scarce medical personnel were falling sick and dying of typhoid. Supplies were desperately needed. "And as if this were not misery

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[20] HWFH to Captain [Valentine] Chamberlain, 9 January 1865, JRH Papers, LOC.

[21] Excerpts of letters from HWFH to JRH, in Huntington and Foote, *Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*, 12 June 1864, 57; 14 August 1864, 59; 25 December 1864, 61–62; 12 March 1865, 66; Excerpts, HWFH letter, 1 January 1865, and HWFH to JRH, 19 February 1865, in Foote, ed., "Woman in the War."

[22] HWFH to Harriet Beecher Stowe, 7 April 1865, Foote, ed., "Woman in the War," HWFH to Kate Foote, 19 April 1865, Foote Collection, HBSC.

enough for one poor little city," Hattie related, "Sherman sent here six thousand refugees, black and white, old men and women, children and babies." The refugees "must be housed and fed with the city already crowded and the fever spreading among the citizens." She could "find no words to describe" the "misery" she had witnessed. In response to the overwhelming humanitarian crisis, Hattie "called a meeting of the ladies" in Wilmington, who would sew and hired "poor women" to make up "over 1,100 yards of cloth, into bedding and pillows." Hattie Hawley herself "tore up & cut out nearly every yard of the cloth."[23]

In Wilmington Hattie Hawley acknowledged that the depth and breadth of suffering she witnessed had untethered her from her ordered New England roots. "You at the North will never be able to conceive of our prisoners. You may see all the pictures and read all the accounts and believe or think you believe, every word of them and then you will have but a faint idea," she related in her long missive to Harriet Beecher Stowe. "Men have lain on the ground here, dying, with the vermin literally swarming in steady paths up and down their bodies, as ants go in lines about the ant-hills." The legs of a sergeant who had died were permanently bent and a special coffin was constructed for him. "'Cultivated' men were reduced to utter and hopeless imbecility." The desperate conditions there cast a pall over northern victory. "To-day we have been firing salutes and ringing the bells for the capture of Richmond," Hattie wrote her cousin. "You should have heard the hoarse voices of the boys in the hospitals as they tried to cheer, when they heard the bells this noon. I stood still in the street and cried like a child as I heard them and it all rushed over my mind at once how much it meant to them."[24]

With her husband as commandant Hattie was also expected to play the hostess. She wanted to give "all her time & strength to visiting the Hospitals & the sick who are outside of the Hospitals," yet when she returned home from her daily labors, "all worn out, & tired," she would find callers waiting, "I am expected to be entertaining & agreeable, when I'm so tired I can scarcely speak & long to go to bed for an hour...." News of Lee's surrender arrived, and Joe Hawley led a "grand cavalcade" of one hundred riders to the Hawleys' house where Hattie organized an "impromptu reception" for hundreds of guests on two hours' notice."[25]

By the end of May, Hattie was immersed in relief efforts in Wilmington. No longer managing an orderly hospital ward, she spent mornings going about the city ministering to "the sick and poor" wherever she found them. "I load up my little buggy with a miscellaneous stock of

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[23] HWFH to Harriet Beecher Stowe, 7 April 1865, Foote, ed., "Woman in the War"; HWFH to Mary Foote, 12 April 1865, Foote Collection, HBSC; Walkley, *Seventh Connecticut*, 196–208.

[24] HWFH to Harriet Beecher Stowe, 7 April 1865, Foote, ed., "Woman in the War," Foote Collection, HBSC.

[25] HWFH to Mary Foote, 12 April, 16 April 1865, Foote Collection, HBSC.

shirts, corn-starch, socks, condensed milk, tin cups, cologne, rags, towels, tin plates, farina, whiskey, pillow-cases, diarrhea medicine, knives and forks and smelling-salts," Hattie wrote her sister. She had been "exposed to about every disease I know—measles, small-pox, typhus fever and spotted fever, but I seem to come out safely." Hattie felt as if she "never should have a resting spell" as she assisted families of paroled prisoners, nursed patients recovering from typhoid fever, and visited the "colored hospital."[26]

Hattie Hawley's "resting spell" finally came in mid June when she moved with Joe to Richmond where he served as chief of staff to General Alfred Terry, commander of the Department of Virginia. Just before leaving Richmond for the North in October 1865, Hattie Foote Hawley was thrown from a carriage and sustained a traumatic head injury. She remained an invalid for several years following her accident and never recovered the robust health she had enjoyed while serving her country in the Civil War.[27]

Hattie Hawley's unfortunate accident at the war's end gave an even greater impulse to a heroic, sacrificial interpretation of her war work. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote an essay on Hattie for *Woman's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism and Patience*, a compendium that was published soon after the war's end. Mrs. Hawley was "of a fragile and delicate constitution," yet she was "ever at her post" in relieving suffering in hospitals and army camps during the war, Stowe asserted. Such tributes, like the encomiums pronounced by the speaker at Guilford's Two Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary, enshrined Hattie Hawley in an aura of heroism and self-sacrifice. Yet Hattie Hawley's war work, through which she gained physical vigor, self-confidence, and purpose, can hardly be termed a sacrifice. Living out the Civil War at home in New England was the unbearable sacrifice for Harriet Ward Foote Hawley, and going to the front was the welcome realization of her ardent desire to "do some real good to somebody."[28]

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[26] HWFH to Kate Foote, "May 18th or 17th or something else," 1865, 28 May 1865, Foote Collection, HBSC.

[27] HWFH to Kate Foote, 28 June [1865], 20 July 1865, and HWFH to Mary Foote, 4 August 1865, Foote Collection, HBSC. Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Mrs. Harriet Foote Hawley," in L. P. Brockett and Mary C. Vaughan, *Woman's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism and Patience* (Philadelphia: Zeigler, McCurdy and Co., 1867), 418.

[28] "Mrs. Harriet Foote Hawley," in Brockett and Vaughan, *Woman's Work in the Civil War*, 416–19; Huntington, *HWFH*, 104; Walkley, *Seventh Connecticut*, 219; *250th Anniversary of Guilford*, 242.

New England's "Other War"

Catherine Lynch Deichmann

On a bright May afternoon in 1861, Master George W. Powe and the crew of the brig *Panama* cruised the Gulf of Honduras hunting for whales. Scanning the horizon, the mate and boatsteerer aloft probably did not suspect anything sinister when they spied a lone side-wheel steamer heading in their direction. Coming alongside, the steamer hoisted a flag unfamiliar to the Yankee crew. Suddenly, several armed men scrambled over the rail onto the whaler's deck, demanded the ship's papers, and declared her a prize of the Confederate States of America! The confused whalemen rushed below to collect their personal belongings as a prize crew took control of the *Panama*. Soon the steamer set a course for two other nearby whalers, the schooners *John Adams* and *Mermaid*, with the same result.

The steamer *Calhoun* was acting as a privateer for a nation that did not exist when these whalers left Provincetown, Massachusetts, in 1859. In two hours, without firing a shot, the *Calhoun* captured sixty-three civilian mariners and three fully equipped whaling vessels. As night fell, the little fleet headed north for the Confederate coast. When they arrived at New Orleans, the Yankee vessels were condemned and sold. Three captains, two mates, and a steward eventually made their way to Boston by rail; the rest of the crews were left to fend for themselves hundreds of miles behind enemy lines. With no money, and no way to acquire any, some sailors were induced to join the Confederate Navy. Others shipped aboard British merchantmen loading cotton for Liverpool, hoping to find berths on United States–bound vessels once they reached England.[1]

Some other New England mariners were not so fortunate. Two weeks earlier, a similar steamer had approached the New Haven schooner *W. C. Atwater* off the Florida coast. According to First Mate Giles Latham, when the steamer came alongside, "thirty-one armed men rushed out of [her] cabin," boarded the schooner, and demanded her surrender "in the name of the Southern confederacy." The Confederates took the *Atwater* to Apalachicola, placed her crew of nine under armed guard, and stripped their vessel of provisions and anything else of value. Four crew members were convinced to join the rebel army. The Confederates tried the remaining five in a mock court and then sent them by train to Richmond. While in transit, they were "often ordered out of the cars to be observed." Angry Southerners crowded around the frightened Yankees, taunting and threatening to hang them. In Richmond they were held in Libby Prison

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[1] *The Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchant Transcript* [*WSL*] 19, no. 15, 18 June 1861.

until early October, five months after their capture, when they were finally exchanged and allowed to return to their homes.[2]

The seizures of these civilian vessels were not random episodes of collateral damage. These attacks signaled a deliberate offensive strategy to disrupt and destroy the maritime commerce of the United States, a strategy the Confederacy clung to even after their slightest hope of victory had disappeared. The *Panama, John Adams, Mermaid,* and *W. C. Atwater* and the men who sailed them were early casualties in a protracted and costly war between armed Confederate raiders and northern civilian mariners that was eventually fought on every ocean of the world, a war that claimed more than 1,000 U.S. merchant vessels between 1861 and 1865.

New England, the center of the nation's shipbuilding, fishing, and maritime commerce, had the most to lose on this vast and unmarked battlefield. In Mystic, Connecticut, and in many other communities along New England's extensive coastline, building, outfitting, and manning ships were the mainstays of the local economy. Fishing smacks, whaling barks, tramp schooners, and graceful clippers were proud to have the homeport "Mystic" on their transoms. Vessels commanded and crewed by Mystic men transited sea lanes around the world. With their deep investment in maritime commerce and broad exposure on the world's oceans, the citizens of Mystic found it difficult to escape the impact of rebel attacks on civilian shipping.

Storm clouds began to appear over the southern coast months before the first rebel shells arced over Charleston Harbor. Connecticut fishermen engaged in the winter salt fishery off the Florida coast were among the first Northerners to feel the changing winds. In late December 1860 Florida officials seized several Mystic and Noank fishing schooners at Key West on charges of violating the fishery laws of the State of Florida. Some of the fishermen were imprisoned until they could pay their fines.[3] In January the "Notice to Mariners" columns in many New England newspapers reported the removal of light ships and other navigational aids along the southern coast and the darkening of lighthouses at harbor entrances from Charleston to Pensacola.[4] By March the situation had grown so contentious that some civilian vessels flying the U.S. flag were fired upon when they tried to enter southern ports.[5]

The surrender of Fort Sumter brought the war on civilian maritime commerce onto the open sea. When a Philadelphia schooner arrived at Fall River with sixty buckshot holes in her sails, fired from three vessels

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[2] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 26 October 1861.

[3] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 26 January, 2 February, 9 February 1861.

[4] *WSL* 18, no. 45, 12 February 1861.

[5] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 30 March 1861.

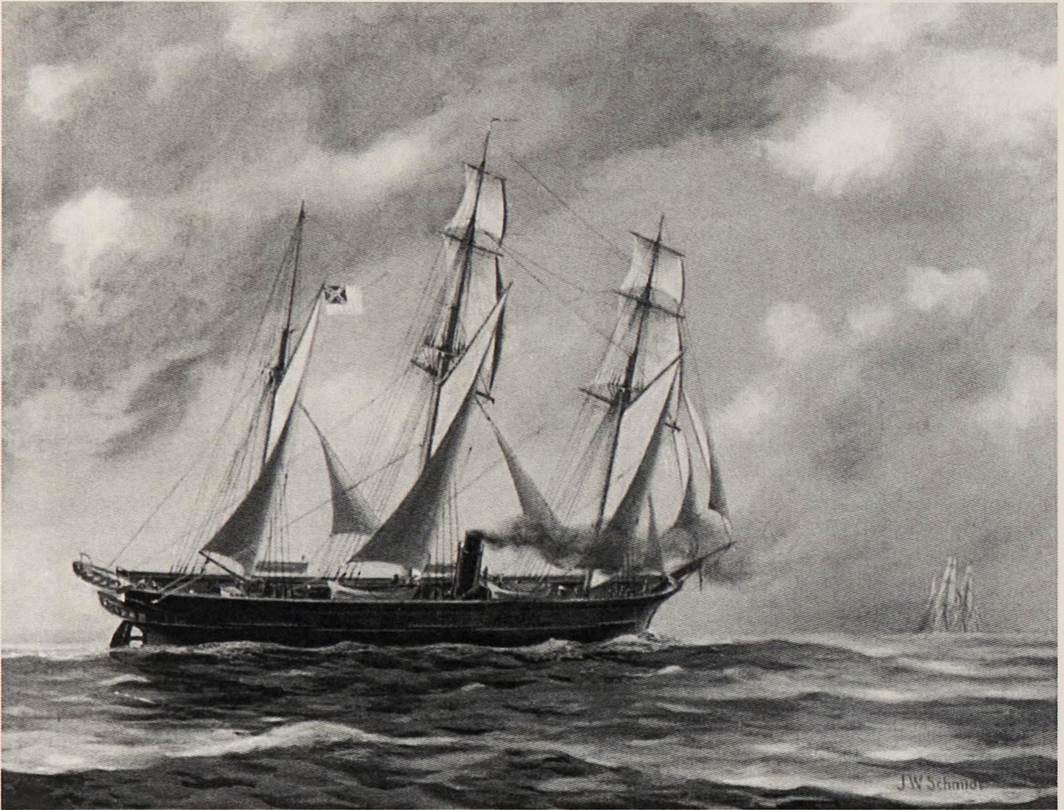

Figure 1. CSS Sumter *Running the Blockade at Pass à L'Outre, 30 June 1861.* From a lithograph by A. Hoen and Co., Baltimore. Library of Congress.

that chased her off the Virginia coast, New England mariners realized that their work space was now a battlefield. For the thousands of men engaged in fishing, whaling, and the carrying trades, the war began, not at the enlistment camp, but at the sea buoy. As their traditional fishing grounds and sea lanes became areas of conflict, they struggled to adapt to the new dangers of open war on the open sea.[6]

Five days after Sumter, in response to President Lincoln's announcement of a blockade of the southern coast, Confederate president Jefferson Davis offered letters of marque to anyone willing to attack Union shipping. Patriots and entrepreneurs hurried to sign up; while some acted from conviction, many were attracted by the profits to be made from selling potential prizes. As the experience of the Provincetown whalers and the *W. C. Atwater* illustrates, merchant vessels were easy prey. The immediate economic impact of a disruption of northern shipping was not lost on Confederate strategists. The War Department in Richmond moved quickly to arm and commission ships under naval command to operate as commerce raiders alongside the independent privateers. The potential rewards far outweighed the risks. As summarized by three twenty-first century naval historians, "lacking a mer-

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[6] *WSL* 19, no. 9, 7 May 1861.

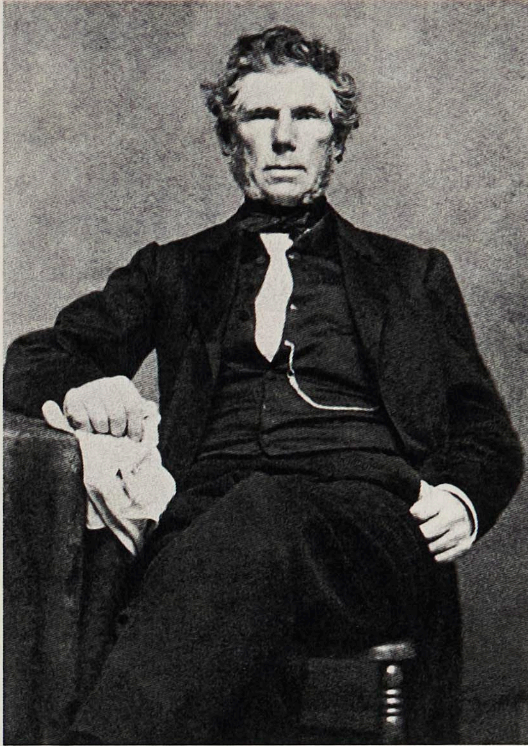

Figure 2. Charles Mallory, Photograph, n.d. Mystic Seaport Museum Collection.

chant marine itself, the South could attack Northern ships without fear of reprisals, and the Northern merchant marine was far too large and dispersed for the U.S. Navy to defend."[7] The first of these government-sponsored commerce raiders, the CSS *Sumter (Figure 1)*, a refitted merchantman, ran the blockade at Pass a l'Outre, at the mouth of the Mississippi, on June 30, the first audacious move in the long and successful raiding career of her commander, Raphael Semmes. In the single month of July 1861, Confederate privateers and commerce raiders seized twenty-one U.S. merchant vessels in the North Atlantic and the Caribbean; sixteen of these were home-ported in New England.[8]

As the Union blockade of southern ports began to tighten, even the most determined New England shippers realized that the days of the lucrative southern trade were numbered. In early June the *Whalemen's Shipping List* reported: "[o]ur ships are many of them on distant voyages; about 40 are in New York, and an immense fleet in the Atlantic trade. Many of these last are now on their way to Southern ports, but all will be ordered North.... Only a few more Southern cargoes are to come into Boston."[9]

The closure of the southern ports, along with the dramatic success of the privateers and commerce raiders, prompted New England ship owners to develop strategies to protect their fleets. Charles Mallory, Mystic's most successful businessman *(Figure 2)*, devised a long-term plan for reducing his exposure through a combination of rerouting, laying up, and selling off. As the historian James P. Baugham reports, Mallory ordered that "whaling was to be liquidated as soon as possible; sloops and schooners were to forego the coastal market south of Philadelphia, and to be laid up if necessary or sold if feasible; barks and clippers were to be

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[7] Alex Roland, Jeffrey Bolster, and Alexander Keyssar, *The Way of the Ship: America's Maritime History Reenvisioned, 1600–2000* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), 195–96.

[8] Naval History of the Civil War, http://www.historycentral.com/Navy/cwnavalhistory.

[9] *WSL* 19, no. 13, 4 June 1861.

Figure 3. CSS *Nashville* burning the *Harvey Birch* in the English Channel, 19 November 1861. U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command Center, New Hampshire 59350.

kept at sea, changing flags if necessary and sold if possible." Despite this cautious business plan, two of the three Mallory-flagged barks engaged in the transoceanic trade, *Lapwing* and *Tycoon*, were destroyed by Confederate raiders before the end of the war.[10]

Insurers also acted quickly to protect their investments. *The Whalemen's Shipping List* reported that just a week after Fort Sumter, a clause limiting claims "arising from seizure, detention, or any other hostile act" perpetrated by the Confederates had already been posted at Lloyd's office in London.[11] The Confederate threat to northern shipping pushed insurance rates for cargoes far above what the market could bear. The danger to the economy did not go unnoticed. *The Mystic Pioneer* reported "[n]o business is injured by the war more than shipping.... *American* vessels cannot obtain freight except they take it at one-half the usual rates, while the insurance offices...have trebled their rates. For instance, the brig G. T. Ward of Mystic, could not obtain freight at any price, while

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[10] James P. Baugham, *The Mallorys of Mystic: Six Generations in American Maritime Enterprise* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), 106–10.

[11] *WSL* 19, no. 7, 23 April 1861.

Figure 4. "Sloops and Schooners at dock in Noank." Photograph. Mystic Seaport Museum Collection.

in Hamburgh [*sic*]."[12] In November 1861 the Mystic-built clipper *Harvey Birch,* unable to find freight on the competitive transatlantic route, was sailing in ballast from Le Harve to New York when she was captured and burned by the CSS *Nashville (Figure 3).* Her officers and crew were landed at Southampton, England, where the American consul arranged their passage home.[13]

Hoping for protection from the navy at Union-held Key West, the Mystic Valley fishing fleet once again headed south in the fall of 1861. The foolishness of this plan became apparent when the rebels seized several smacks, including the *Ocilla* of Noank *(Figure 4)*, in Tampa Bay in November. After the rebels confiscated their vessels and took their personal belongings, sixty-seven fishermen were transported to Tallahassee for trial. The Cubans and Floridians on the crews were released; the remaining men were sent to Richmond and imprisoned there. The *Ocilla*'s captain, Rhodes Burrows, arrived home in mid-January; his crew was exchanged a few weeks later.[14] For the remainder of the war the Mystic fishing fleet was laid up at home over the winter.

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[12] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 29 June 1861. Italics in original.

[13] *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1894–1922), ser. 1, vol. 1:156.

[14] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 14 December 1861.

The Confederate commerce raiders jarred New Englanders' nerves as well as their account books. Frequent "pirate sightings" were breathlessly reported in the press from Bridgeport, Connecticut, to Portland, Maine. Stories of mariners imprisoned in the South, or stranded in foreign ports, stirred a sense of outrage in maritime communities. In October 1862 the Boston bark *Lamplighter*, bound from New York to Gibraltar, was captured and burned by the CSS *Alabama* southeast of Nova Scotia. When her first mate Charles Wheeler arrived home in Mystic, he provided an eyewitness account of his ordeal to the local newspaper. While the *Lamplighter*'s crew was put in irons, "the pirates" took their watches and extra clothing, the ship's navigational instruments, and "all other valuables they could lay their thievish hands on." After being held as prisoners in the hold of the Confederate cruiser for two weeks, the men were finally transferred to a Boston-bound brig.[15]

In the early summer of 1863 a visit to New England waters by the Confederate raider *Tacony,* a tender to the CSS *Florida,* raised the region's "pirate frenzy" to new heights. The local papers gave equal weight to fact and rumor. As Lee's army advanced into Pennsylvania, several New England governors threatened to bring their states' soldiers home from the front lines to protect their coastal cities. Dozens of vessels lying at wharves from New Haven to Newburyport were armed with whatever weapons could be found and sent out to hunt for rebels. Mystic shipbuilder William Maxson noted in his diary, "[g]reat activity in moving troops and in fitting out vessels to chase the Confederate pirates."[16]

Most of the targets in the *Tacony*'s path were family-owned schooners that fished for cod and mackerel on the shallow banks off the New England coast. The nature of their work made them especially vulnerable. Unlike ships transiting the open ocean, the fishing smacks lay at anchor while they worked, often with several dozen vessels in close proximity. The prevailing fogs that hovered over the fishing grounds prevented crews from seeing approaching danger in time to escape.

The *Tacony* was quick to take advantage of the situation. After several days at sea in a heavy gale, she happened upon the Noank smack *L. A. Macomber* anchored on Fishing Rip, southeast of Nantucket. The fishermen watched the black bark heave to and lower her tender with curiosity rather than fear; it was not uncommon for larger vessels to buy fish directly from the smacks on the banks. But minutes later when the fishermen were lined up on deck at gunpoint, it was clear this was no innocent encounter. The rebels dragged the fishermen's bedding and other possessions onto the deck, covered the pile with turpentine from the paint locker, and set the schooner ablaze. Captain James Potter convinced the

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[15] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 8 November 1862.

[16] William Ellery Maxson Diaries, 16 June 1863, Collection 166, Manuscripts Collections, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Conn.

raider's master, Lieutenant Charles Read, to allow the fishermen to row to shore rather than be taken as prisoners aboard the rebel ship. After rowing all night and the next day, they made the lightship at Old South Shoal, while the *Tacony* continued her voyage of destruction, capturing and burning nine more fishing schooners along the New England coast.

News of the destruction in the fishing fleet rocked the region. Most of the vessels engaged in the transoceanic trade were owned by wealthy men or groups of investors who could afford insurance against potential loss. But local fishing boats were family owned and operated; the captains and crews were members of the laboring class who could not afford to insure or replace them. The *Boston Post* caught the area's mood: "When we reflect that on one schooner alone some ten or twelve men depend for a year's livelihood upon the catch of cod or mackerel, and that the majority of every crew...are men with families to sustain, the wide-spread suffering may be imagined. The apprehension created in every fishing port is evidenced in our coast exchanges."[17] William Maxson, usually a reserved journalist and an accurate speller, betrayed his outrage in his diary: "[t]he Rebel Pirates are making havoc among our vessels on the Northern coast fisermen [*sic*] among the rest one from Noank was burned belonging to Mr. Potter."[18] For a few weeks the *Tacony* brought the "other war" right to New England's front doorstep.

The *Macomber* was not the only Mystic vessel lost in June of 1863. The bark *Texana*, built at the George Greenman shipyard, was captured and burned near the mouth of the Mississippi River. Her officers and crew were first imprisoned in Mobile and then transferred to Richmond. In November, five months after their capture, letters from Captain Thomas Wolfe and Mate Albert Sawyer finally reached their families in Mystic with news of their fate. They reported they were well and in good spirits, and requested "eatables" and soap to be sent to them at their new address, Richmond's infamous Castle Thunder prison.[19]

The bark *Lapwing*, built and owned by Charles Mallory and Company, was en route from Boston to Batavia with a cargo of coal when she was seized by the CSS *Florida* in March. In his journal the *Florida*'s commander, John Newland Maffitt, reported the *Lapwing*'s master "was not dreaming a Confederate man-of-war in his locality."[20] Maffitt armed *Lapwing,* renamed her *Oreto,* and sent her out with a prize crew to hunt down other northern ships. In June, after capturing one prize of her own, she was spotted by Union warships. To avoid recapture, her rebel crew

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[17] *Boston Post*, 27 June 1863.

[18] W. E. Maxson Diaries, 26 June 1863.

[19] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 21 November 1863.

[20] *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, ser. 1, vol. 2:677–78; vol. 3:670.

set her afire off Barbados and rowed ashore to make contact with the Confederate agent on the island.

Meanwhile, the *Florida* sailed northward, following the Atlantic shipping lanes. South of Bermuda she captured and burned the Mystic clipper *B. F. Hoxie*, built by William Maxson at the Maxson and Fish shipyard. The *Hoxie* had sailed from the west coast of Mexico around Cape Horn en route to England with a valuable cargo of logwood and silver. Captain George B. Crary and his officers were put on board an Italian brig bound for Falmouth, while twenty members of the crew were held as prisoners on the *Florida* for ten days and then put ashore at Bermuda. When word of her destruction reached Mystic, William Maxson closed his daily entry with a grim report on the fate of the lovely vessel he had designed and built: "[t]he ship B.F. Hoxie burned by the Pirate Florida."[21] In a single month the Mystic community lost four vessels, more than 2,600 tons, valued at more than $140,000.

Mystic's losses were local evidence of the raiders' global success. Confederate commanders Semmes, Maffitt, and their colleagues quizzed the officers of neutral vessels they encountered for intelligence about American shipping. In the spring of 1864 Semmes bespoke an Italian bark bound for Antwerp whose master reported "three or four Yankee vessels at Buenos Ayres [*sic*], which could get no freights." Later the same day, when the captain of a French ship carrying guano from Callao reported there were no American ships at the Chinca Islands, Semmes recalled, "[i]n July last when we burned the guano ship *Express* there were between seventy and eighty sail of Americans there."[22] After four years of war, no ocean was safe for Yankee ships and their crews. In 1860, 66.5 percent of U.S. imports and exports were carried on U.S.–registered vessels. By 1865 that percentage had dropped to only 27.6.[23]

Faced with widespread losses of cargoes and ships, and the continuing rise in insurance rates, many New England owners decided to sell their vessels abroad. In the prewar years Great Britain purchased an average of 40 American-built vessels annually. For the period from 1861 to 1865, however, 1,000 American merchant ships transferred registry from the United States to Great Britain. In the fall of 1863 a reporter for the *New York Herald* observed that of 176 vessels in New York harbor, only 19 flew the American flag.[24] Mystic's ship owners, including the Mallorys, followed this trend. In 1863 and 1864 at least 15 Mystic-built vessels were sold to foreign owners, a devastating blow not only to local mariners, but also to the chandlers, riggers, blacksmiths, coopers, sailmak-

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[21] W. E. Maxson Diaries, 15 July 1863.

[22] *Official Records*, ser. 1, vol. 2:677–78; vol. 3:670.

[23] Roland et al., *The Way of the Ship*, 430.

[24] Emerson David Fite, *Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War* (Williamstown, Mass.: Corner House, 1976), 148–49.

ers, and other shore-based tradesmen who supplied and serviced them.[25] For the most part these vessels continued to sail the same routes, but under the flags of Great Britain, Bremen, France, or Denmark they were immune from the threat of capture by Confederate raiders and freed from the high insurance premiums that made them unable to compete under the American flag.

In April 1865 the people of Mystic joined their fellow Northerners in celebrating the news of Lee's surrender. But just as New England mariners had felt the impact of the war before Sumter, danger lurked on the open seas after Appomattox. The CSS *Shenandoah*, the last of the Confederate raiders, still prowled the Pacific Ocean under orders to destroy the Yankee whaling fleet. In eight months the *Shenandoah* captured and burned or bonded thirty-eight civilian vessels, thirty-two from New England homeports. The eleven whaling ships she destroyed on 28 June 1865 were the final battlefield casualties of New England's "other war." His mission completed, the *Shenandoah*'s commander, James Waddell, assessed its success. "I made New England suffer," he boasted.[26]

Like the town's fallen soldiers, the burned and sold-away vessels, the economy they supported, and the local pride they inspired did not return to Mystic after the war. In prewar days the local newspaper ran a regular feature listing vessels owned or commanded by Mystic men in operation around the world. In the spring of 1861 the list included almost fifty ships, barks, brigs, schooners, and sloops, fishing on the banks, whaling in the Indian Ocean, hauling lumber or cotton from southern states, or carrying cargo to ports around the world. By the spring of 1865 the number of Mystic vessels had declined so sharply that the weekly "Marine Matters" column recorded only a few arrivals, none of them Mystic built, owned, or crewed.[27] The tramp trade with southern ports had disappeared. The last of the whalers that had supported many ancillary trades and provided investment opportunities for a quarter of the town's citizens were gone too: *Meteor* and *Robin Hood* purchased by the government in 1861 and sunk as part of the Stone Fleet, *Coriolanus* condemned in Mauritius, and *Cornelia* sold away to New London. Many strong and graceful Mystic-built ships still sailed the seas but now with homeports of Rotterdam, Liverpool, Hamburg, or Havana on their sterns.

For four years the war between the Confederate raiders and northern mariners was fought beyond the horizon, far removed from the battlefields where the "real war" occurred. With the coming of peace, the civil-

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[25] See William N. Peterson, *"Mystic Built": Ships and Shipyards of the Mystic River, Connecticut, 1784–1919* (Mystic, Conn.: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1989) for information on individual Mystic vessels.

[26] George W. Dalzell, *The Flight from the Flag: The Continuing Effect of the Civil War upon the American Carrying Trade* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), 228.

[27] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 3 August 1861, 20 May 1865.

ians who were unwilling conscripts in the "other war" remained unrecognized. In July 1865, when the Federal government announced that honorably discharged soldiers who had been prisoners of war would be entitled to an extra three months' pay, no compensation was offered to the crews of the *Atwater*, *Ocilla,* or *Texana,* or the hundreds of other civilian mariners who had shared the same hardships.[28] It took another ten years for any official acknowledgment of their sacrifice.

Since early in the war New England politicians and businessmen had urged the Federal government to file claims against Great Britain for damages inflicted on U.S. maritime commerce by the Confederate commerce raiders built at British yards. When the war finally ended, these calls increased in volume. Following a lengthy and contentious proceeding, known as the "*Alabama* Claims" after the most notorious and successful of these ships, an international tribunal awarded the United States a judgment of more than fifteen million dollars. Congress established a court to hear claims from those who had suffered financially from the "other war." Lawyers for the owners and insurers were quick to file the necessary papers. They were eventually joined in the queue by cooks, mates, harpooners, and fishermen who had all but abandoned any hope of restitution for their losses. Nearly two thousand petitions for compensation were ultimately submitted.

The process of filing a claim was difficult to navigate and costly to complete. A lawyer or advocate had to be retained; witness statements regarding the capture of the vessel, surveys of lost property, and statements of lost wages or lays had to be collected, sworn, notarized, and submitted on the proper claims court forms. Finally, each claimant had to take a loyalty oath, swearing that he "at all times during the late rebellion bore true faith and allegiance to the Government of the United States and was entitled to the protection of the same." The large insurance companies hired entire New York law firms to shepherd their cases through the court. In Mystic the survivors of the *L. A. Macomber* and the families of the captain and two crew members who had died since the attack sued for the loss of the uninsured vessel, her stores and fittings, and $475 for the value of the fish in her hold. Individual claims included $30 for bedding, $14 per month for lost wages, $9 for foul weather gear, and $22 dollars for underclothing.[29] The tenacious pursuit of these small claims through the difficult multiyear process reveals the determination of these men and women to be recognized for their losses on an unmarked and forgotten field of battle. Eleven years after the Confederacy fell, a small notice in the lead column of the Mystic paper announced the successful

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[28] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 15 July 1865.

[29] Legal Records of the smack *L. A. Macomber,* Collection 45, Manuscripts Collections, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., Mystic, Conn.

settlement of the *L. A. Macomber* claims. The "other war" in Mystic had finally come to an end.[30]

The Confederate war of destruction against northern maritime commerce did not decide the outcome of the Civil War. Except for the *Tacony*'s dramatic coastal raid, the attacks on Union shipping occurred on the open ocean or outside foreign ports, beyond the nation's field of vision. Weeks-old reports of vessels captured and destroyed thousands of miles away paled when compared with the descriptions, and accompanying photographs, of the carnage and glory of battles fought closer to home. Aside from the attention paid to the more notorious raiders and their daring commanders, this aspect of the war has been largely omitted from all but economic histories of the conflict. But events on the blue-water battlefield forever changed the economy and character of Mystic and many of her sister communities along the New England coast. In the spring of 1883, when the citizens of Mystic gathered to dedicate a monument to their victorious "boys in blue," thousands of people crowded East Main Street for a day of parades, patriotic speeches, and refreshments. Just steps away the abandoned wharves, deserted shipyards, and empty ways along the river served as silent reminders of the somber legacy of New England's "other war."

[30] *The Mystic Pioneer*, 18 February 1876.

Bunker Hill and Fort Moultrie: The Revolutionary Centennials and Reconciliation

Jeffrey Kosiorek

Before the Civil War, Charleston and Boston proudly maintained a tradition of commemorating Revolutionary events. Of course, Independence Day held a central place in the patriotic calendar of both cities. But each place also celebrated more local events rivaling the national holiday. In Boston the anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill, on June 17, had long been a day of parades and speeches at the foot of the monument, organized by the Bunker Hill Monument Association (BHMA). For Charlestonians the recurrence of the twenty-eighth of June brought out the populace in memory of heroes like Sergeant Jasper and Colonel Moultrie who had, at a small palmetto fort on Sullivan's Island, repulsed a British fleet bent on taking the city in 1776. Ever since the tariff controversy the commemoration of the Battle of Fort Moultrie often took on a states' rights cast, trumpeting South Carolina's self-defense before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Representing opposite poles in the sectional crisis, the cities shared multiple personal ties and pride of place as the cultural and intellectual centers of their respective sections. The festivities in both cities had illustrated the deep truth about antebellum devotion to the Revolution: universal allegiance to liberty, republicanism, and their forefathers, combined with basic disagreement about the social and political meaning of the war and its memory.

Immediately after the Civil War, Charleston's ex-Confederates abstained from commemorating the Revolutionary anniversaries. Some felt any such celebration insulted the memory of their ancestors. Others simply reacted to defeat with resignation and indifference, making social exertions seem insufferable.[1] By contrast, northerners, and Bostonians in particular, redoubled their Revolutionary commemorations. Many used the observances as opportunities to wave the bloody shirt, arguing that the Confederacy gravely departed from the Revolutionary ideals. These Unionists trumpeted northern victory as their own generation's virtuous defense of the founders' values and highlighted emancipation as another strike for liberty. But some, including the BHMA, attempted to employ Revolutionary commemoration to reunify the country by stressing the nation's common history and values. After a decade of Reconstruction

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[1] Edmund Ruffin provided an extreme example of the latter sentiment. Distraught over defeat and believing life under northern rule would be intolerable, he committed suicide. See vol. 3 of Edmund Ruffin, *Diary of Edmund Ruffin*, 3 vols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972–1989). On southern responses to defeat, see Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 155–72.

even some ex-Confederates in South Carolina and throughout the South were also willing to entertain the hope that commemoration could heal and bring together whites in both sections. For them such an outcome offered the means of overthrowing Republican government, ending Reconstruction, and reestablishing white supremacy.

At the centennials of the Battles of Bunker Hill and Fort Moultrie conciliatory messages carried the day. Across the North these celebrations helped advance a sentiment that southern whites were fellow citizens, adherents and believers in national identity, and inheritors of the Revolution, not the ex-rebels and secessionists who brought on the Civil War. In the South centennial commemorations allowed Democrats to further develop an image of themselves as revolutionaries in the spirit of 1776 and to refine their use of the commemorative sphere for political purposes. National commemorations also physically brought people together, providing the environment, particularly in South Carolina, for practical political associations that became critical to Democratic success. The commemorative sphere proved to be an important aspect of ending Reconstruction in South Carolina and across the country.

Many historians argue that the end of Reconstruction and the enshrining of the Lost Cause presented the ultimate failure of the northern side in the Civil War, causing the North "to win the war but lose the peace."[2] But southerners' newfound attachment to the nation, born in the centennial commemorations, can be viewed as the final victory for one aspect of the northern cause. Throughout the antebellum period and into the first years of the Civil War most northerners did not fight for abolition or black equality. The preservation of the Union was their paramount goal. The centennial commemorations offered northerners the triumph of nationalism and Union in white southerners' ebullient profession of fealty to national identity and the Revolution. Though some of this enthusiasm for the nation derived from calculated political acumen on how best to return their society to one of white supremacy, southerners still voiced, and to some degree exhibited, their acceptance of a unified nation.

In the wake of Appomattox few white Charlestonians could endure any thoughts of celebrating national anniversaries, even the local Revolutionary holidays such as the Battle of Fort Moultrie. Less than a year af-

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[2] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Rollin G. Osterweis, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865–1900* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Fred Arthur Bailey, "Free Speech and the Lost Cause in the Old Dominion," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 103 (1995): 237–66; Sarah E. Gardner, *Blood and Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of Civil War, 1861–1937* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865–1898* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005).

ter Charleston's surrender to Union forces, the former Confederates chafed under occupation. They also found black liberty and what they viewed as the audacity of the freedmen exasperating. Moreover, the war wreaked a heavy financial toll on individuals and southern society while the future promised little hope of economic deliverance. Blaming their problems on the North and the federal government, the native white population wanted nothing to do with honoring anything associated with the nation.[3] This was no truer than in Charleston, where in 1865 Major General Quincy Gilmore, in command of the Department of the South, had to order the observance of the Fourth of July in that city. Gilmore's order explicitly called for the public reading of the Emancipation Proclamation and Declaration of Independence. The combination of the two readings suggested the Civil War as a second Revolution, bestowing on black Americans the same liberty attained by whites in 1776. Black Charlestonians—who numbered approximately twenty-five thousand, 55 percent of the city's population—and their supporters participated enthusiastically in the citywide revelry and mounted their own commemorative activities, presenting an even more radical interpretation linking Revolutionary and Civil War memory. Native white Charlestonians stayed away, viewing the celebration and the message promulgated there as a renunciation of their forefathers and a further reminder of their inability to control both blacks and politics.[4] In the coming months, however, whites in Charleston and across the South began violently opposing such exhibitions of black rights at commemorations and in daily life.

After the 1868 presidential election, in an effort to combat the constant threats and bloodshed against blacks, South Carolina's Republican governor appealed to Grant to allow the reorganization of the state militia, previously dismantled under the Reconstruction Acts. With presidential approval, blacks and other Republicans organized militia companies in the spring and summer of 1869. In response white Democrats formed rifle clubs meant to "protect" whites from armed blacks and further intimidate Republican voters. Aligned with the antebellum militia companies, the rifle clubs served as an arm of the Democratic Party, resulting,

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[3] Bernard E. Powers Jr., *Black Charlestonians: A Social History, 1822–1885* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 73–80; Wilbert L. Jenkins, *Seizing the New Day: African Americans in Post-Civil War Charleston* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), esp. 46–48.

[4] General Orders, no. 99. David Blight calls memory of the Civil War that stressed black equality "emancipationist memory" and claims it was especially influential in the first years after the war. Blight, *Race and Reunion,* 93, 380, 399.

together with the KKK and black attacks, in the most extreme outbreak of violence since the war.[5]

Charleston's Washington Light Infantry (WLI) Rifle Club was one of the first of these groups to form in the fall of 1869. Their antebellum militia company model, the WLI, had played a major role in Charleston's antebellum commemorations, and the membership lists of both the WLI and its rifle club contained the names of some of the most prominent Charleston families. After the war, on Washington's Birthday in 1866, former members of the company had formed the WLI Charitable Association "for the purpose of preserving the memory of their comrades who died during the war, and also for assisting the families of those whom death or wounds, or the results of the war, had rendered destitute." The WLI Charitable Association, as well as the social standing of its members, certainly provided the rifle club with a claim to legitimacy as a social organization. But, as one member explained, the club was only "ostensibly for social intercourse and amusement…[but] it is not hard to appreciate that its hidden defensive object was not so peaceable as its constitution professed."[6] The real object of the WLI, like other rifle clubs, was to resist federal and state governments and intimidate and control Republicans and blacks through violence.[7]

In 1875 the WLI planned an "Easter Fair" to ensure the long-term viability of their Civil War widows' and orphans' fund. At about that time Confederate general R. S. Ripley, formerly of Charleston, sent to the governor of Massachusetts the flag of the famed Massachusetts Fifty-

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[5] Richard Zuczek, *State of Rebellion: Reconstruction in South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1996), 47–87; Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina during Reconstruction, 1861–1877* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 259–66; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 412–59; Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 70–73, 115–17, 349–80; George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 59–121.

[6] C. Irvine Walker, *Carolina Rifle Club, July 30, 1869* (n.p., 1904), quoted in Zuczek, *State of Rebellion*, 138. For a more general discussion of the use of Revolutionary appeals in the election of 1876 in South Carolina, see Andrew Slap, "The Spirit of '76: The Reconstruction of History in the Redemption of South Carolina," *Historian* 63 (2001): 769–86.

[7] Public statements by the WLI on the reasons they formed were a little more circumspect than those of the Carolina Rifle Company. But given their comments on black rule and the "deplorable" condition of the state which led to their formation, their motivations can be little doubted. *Public Ceremonies in Connection with the War Memorials of the Washington Light Infantry, with the Orations of Gen. Wade Hampton, Hon. C. H. Simonton, Dr. A. Toomer Porter, with the Rolls, Monumental Inscriptions, &c., &c.* (Charleston, S.C.: Edward Perry and Co., 1894), 3, 6–17; "The Washington Light Infantry, 1807–1861," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 31 (1903): 3–6; *A Testimonial of Public Services: The Washington Light Infantry to Major R. C. Gilchrist, 3rd November, 1891* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans, and Cogswell Co., 1892), 2; The *Washington Light Infantry of Charleston, S.C., An account of the revival of the company, with the proceedings in commemoration of its sixty-sixth anniversary, including the oration of the Hon. William D. Porter, senior ex-captain and an honorary member of the corps. 22d February, 1873* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans and Cogswell, printers, n.d.), 5–6.

fourth Regiment, along with a conciliatory letter praising the valor of the black troops and their white leader, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. With the sympathy engendered by *The Prostrate State* and other works, along with the overture from Ripley, Boston's militia contributed significantly to the Easter fair through northern friends of the WLI chaplain, A. Toomer Porter. The Bostonian table at the fair was one of the most outfitted, ornamented, and profitable, and the attendants represented a cross-section of the city's elite. Throughout their stay the guests told Charlestonians that the outpouring of support was "an expression of the feeling of the militia of Boston" and a sign of Bostonians' cordial regard, concern, and desire for renewed friendship. In itself the donations and sentiments they brought offered an auspicious sign of rapprochement, especially coming from the perceived center of antebellum abolitionism and postwar hatred of the South. But the Bostonians also presented a beautiful flag, accompanying the gift with two speeches that seemed to go even further, offering reconciliation.[8]

Presenting the stand of colors, Dr. Robert White Jr. recognized that Charleston and Boston stood as "antipodes of each other in sentiment and feeling" in recent decades. But White turned to the Revolution to provide evidence that the two cities shared firmly held beliefs and a common history. Revolutionary memory demonstrated "that the estrangement which has existed is an unnatural one."[9]

The standard White gave the WLI reinforced the sentiments he had just expressed. Mounted on a staff engraved with palmetto and laurel leaves, the large American flag was made of heavy silk and trimmed with gold fringe. The coat of arms of South Carolina stood in the center of the blue field on one side, encircled by thirty-seven stars (one for each state). Emblazoned across the stripes were the words "Presented to the W. L. I. of Charleston, South Carolina, by the military officers of Boston." On the reverse was written "One flag—one country—one destiny" with the blended coat of arms of Massachusetts and South Carolina and a "drawn sword and two clasped hands complet[ing] the touching allegory."[10]

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[8] "At the State House," *Boston Globe*, 4 March 1875; "The Legislature," *Boston Globe*, 2 April 1875; [No title], *Boston Globe*, 2 April 1875; "The Pine and the Palmetto," *Charleston News and Courier*, 3 April 1875; "Pine and Palmetto," *Boston Globe*, 8 April 1875; R. L. Schreadley, *Valor and Virtue: The Washington Light Infantry in Peace and War* (Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1997), 298, 302–3, 306. On Porter, his work after the war, and his relationship with northerners, see A. Toomer Porter, *Led On! Step by Step: Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South, 1828–1898* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), 209–96. On the positive effect of the warm reception Bostonians received in Charleston on the northern city's feelings for white southerners and renewed relations with them, see "The Charleston, S.C., Fair," *Boston Globe*, 5 May 1875; [No title], *Boston Globe*, 8 April 1875.

[9] "The Pine and Palmetto," *Charleston News and Courier*, 3 April 1875.

[10] Schreadley, *Valor and Virtue*, 302.

In presenting the standard, Captain John K. Hall said it testified to the earnest regard Boston's militiamen had towards the people of South Carolina. Its design and writing, however, suggest it signified more than mere esteem. The United States flag at the heart of the design symbolized alliance, harmony, and unity. Further, the imagery on Boston's gift reinforced the concept of South Carolina as a constituent and necessary part of the union. But the flag also made clear the state was only a part of a more important whole. Surrounded by the other states in the field of blue, South Carolina stood as an equal among thirty-six others. The clasped hands and intermingled heraldry of Massachusetts and South Carolina suggested friendship between the two states and sections and indicated an end to the Civil War's fratricide. Explicitly stating the message of unity, the words written in bold letters made certain everyone understood the standard's double significance: one side asserted union and the other friendship. Additionally, as a gift, the flag offered friendship while also demanding a certain fealty on the part of the recipient. Finally, the banner also served as a commemorative device, meant to be, in the words of Hall, "handed down in future ages to the coming generations," so that its meaning would never be lost.[11]

Though Charlestonians showed their gratitude for the Boston militia's gifts—something the southerners might not have given so freely a few years previously—most still felt little regard for northerners, especially Bostonians, or an eager willingness to adopt nationalism. Even Colonel A. O. Andrews, after accepting the flag from Hall, made a display of placing the flag "*under* the sheltering branches of our own palmetto."[12]

Despite the ambivalent feelings, during the weeks following the fair, the WLI accepted an invitation from Boston's Bunker Hill Centennial Committee and the BHMA to attend the coming festivities. The Boston groups had invited the WLI months before Easter. But the WLI only decided to venture north after they had witnessed the generosity of the Boston militia and the warm reception they received in Charleston.[13]

The outpouring of good will which greeted the WLI at every point along the trip still came as a shock. In New York City, where they stopped on the way, and throughout Massachusetts, northern militia

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[11] "The Pine and Palmetto," *Charleston News and Courier*, 3 April 1875. On the increased importance of the American flag during and after the Civil War, see Guenter, *American Flag*, 85–113; Robert E. Bonner, "Star-spangled Sentiment," *Common-Place* 3 (January 2003), http://www.common-place.org/vol-03/no-02/bonner/.

[12] "The Pine and Palmetto," *Charleston News and Courier*, 3 April 1875 (emphasis the author's).

[13] BHMA, *Proceedings of the Bunker Hill Monument Association* (Boston: Bunker Hill Memorial Association, 1875), 29. Attesting to Charlestonians' opposition to the WLI trip, the militia company found it extremely difficult to rent a warehouse to drill in preparation for their trip. Finally, the Union Wharf Company allowed them use of their cotton press shed. Schreadley, *Valor and Virtue*, 313–14; "Off for Bunker Hill," *Charleston News and Courier*, 14 June 1875.

companies paraded them through the streets; ladies threw flowers and kissed them, and dignitaries welcomed them with effusive greetings. The reception pleasantly shocked the members of the WLI and influenced perceptions across the South. As one southern newspaper recognized, the WLI went "in a representative capacity" and, as such, "every kind word uttered in their presence was intended to reach the ears of the southerners who, perforce or by chance, remained at home."

Throughout the WLI's travels in the North, and at the Bunker Hill centennial generally, northern commentators implied that the South's return to equal and friendly relations with the rest of the country relied on their rekindling of national sentiment and recognition of the federal government as their primary political loyalty. For instance, *Harper's Weekly* went so far as to state explicitly that:

> at a time when the national heart is open and generous, and there is a general wish to allay all bitterness of feeling, it is indispensable that the ardor of reconciliation shall not be suffered to obscure the fundamental principles that triumphed in the war, or be made in any way instrumental in weakening or overthrowing them. The great truth established by the war is that the American Union constitutes one nation and many States are under the protection and guarantee of the nation.

According to the magazine, ex-Confederates needed to recognize what the North fought for in the Civil War and accept those principles as their own before they would be accorded full status in the nation. In *Harper's* formulation, accepting black equality seemed to matter less than conceding the fundamental power of national over states' rights.[14] In another article on the Bunker Hill Centennial, *Harper's* argued "one of the greatest of the Revolutionary lessons is the essential necessity of union, and they honor the fathers who carefully cultivate that sentiment." The magazine also suggested that if the Bunker Hill affair was a portent of things to come, the entire centennial year would appeal

> to the national sentiment in the hearts of those in the southern States who have cherished more pride in the State than in the nation. They will feel the force and depth of a genuine national emotion. They will see that the glory of the Revolution was a united, not a divided, glory.

For its part, the *New York Tribune* felt that reconciliation was already accomplished. After Bunker Hill the *Tribune* argued (echoing Webster), "Henceforth we can honestly wear the motto which was once little better than satire—'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.'" Whether the Bunker Hill centennial set reunion in motion or fully com-

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[14] "The National Idea," *Harper's Weekly*, 26 June 1875, 514. Issues of black freedom, citizenship, and equality seemed to be largely absent from the concerns of northerners in general. Only one *Boston Globe* article mentioned black participation in the celebration, and speakers did not mention civil rights issues. "Centennial Crowds," *Boston Globe*, 15 June 1875.

pleted it, the northern papers concluded that the celebration generated more friendly relations between the sections and proved that the hostilities of the Civil War lay definitively in the past.[15]

Comments by southerners suggest that the commemoration aroused many in that section to a higher regard for the nation and, by northerners' gracious reception of the WLI and other southern units at Bunker Hill, opened the way for friendly relations between North and South. In addition, it seems southerners began to understand that an acceptance of the primacy of national over sectional, state, and local interests and affiliation would help facilitate the end of Reconstruction. For instance, Fitzhugh Lee commented that all the southerners who attended were made to feel "that this is a great country and that we form a part of it." Moreover, Lee "said he believed this celebration and attendant circumstances would do more than almost any other event to bring about the old fraternal feeling between North and South."[16]

Southern newspaper coverage of the centennial and its effects also suggested the commemoration enlivened nationalism and Union sentiment in that section. In some cases the papers also implicitly argued acquiescence to the nation would allow white southerners to regain control over their local affairs. For example, an editorial in the *Charleston News and Courier* gushed about the exuberant welcome accorded southerners at Bunker Hill. The paper continued, contending that through the commemoration

> The South has learned to look to the Government of the United States as her government, to the United States flag as her flag, and understands that the grievances she has must be removed, and can only be removed, by peaceful and constitutional means.[17]

People across the nation and in Charleston voiced their desire that the reconciliation begun at Bunker Hill continue at the other coming centennials. Planning a grand jubilee on the centennial of the Battle of Fort Moultrie, Charlestonians invited the Boston Light Infantry to attend.[18]

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[15] "Bunker Hill," *Harper's Weekly*, 3 July 1875; "The Meaning of It All," *New York Tribune* reprinted in *Charleston News and Courier*, 22 June 1875; "Centennial Good Feeling," *Boston Globe*, 17 June 1875; "After the Battle," *Boston Globe*, 19 June 1875.

[16] Lee quoted responding to Boston Mayor Cobb in "The End of Estrangement," *Charleston News and Courier*, 21 June 1875. "Aftermath," *Boston Globe*, 19 June 1875; "A Significant Letter," *Boston Globe*, 21 June 1875.

[17] "The South at Bunker Hill," *Charleston News and Courier*, 21 June 1875.

[18] "Carolina Day in '76," *Charleston News and Courier*, 18 June 1875. The Palmetto Guard's address is in "The Day We Celebrate," *Charleston News and Courier*, 27 June 1876 (emphasis in the original). The printed account of the celebration said "every white military company in the city had exerted itself to make the greatest possible turnout," suggesting many white Charlestonians may have wished the celebration could be less than wholly national. A number of black militia companies did participate, however, and, undoubtedly, a large number of black citizens attended. *Moultrie Centennial,* 2:1; [no title], *Charleston News and Courier*, 29 June 1876.

Though stressing nationalism and accepting, or acquiescing to, Union principles, the plans for the celebration departed from the tenor of the Bunker Hill theme in a few ways that had significant repercussions for the fate of Reconstruction and black civil rights in the South. Charlestonians made sure the Moultrie Centennial stressed the oppressive conditions and political corruption in the state. Presumably they hoped that by doing so they could highlight the supposed crimes and unvirtuous behavior of carpetbaggers, blacks, and southern Republicans generally, thereby gaining northern consent for the end of Reconstruction. Additionally, the message of Charleston's centennial commemoration asserted that Americans remembered the Civil War, when they did at all, as a noble and valorous undertaking for both sides, with Confederates as well as Unionists struggling over interpretations of the Revolution and the meaning of the Constitution.[19]

At the outset of the festivities on the twenty-eighth of June, it would have been hard to miss the reverence for Confederate bravery and the lost cause amongst the event's planners and the southerners in attendance. Ex-Confederate General Wade Hampton, as ceremonial commander of the militia companies, led the festive procession, and "lusty Rebel Yells" echoed through the streets.[20] Later, on Sullivan's Island, ex-Confederate General J. B. Kershaw served as orator of the day. Like the choice of Hampton as the commander, the selection of Kershaw highlighted a heroic memory of the Civil War and, by associating arch-secessionists and Confederate heroes with Revolutionary memory, stressed the origins of the conflict in mutually held respect for, but differing interpretations of, the founders and their principles.[21] While Kershaw's oration emphasized the national significance of the Battle of the Palmetto Fort and the need for Union, he focused more on corruption and the need to overcome it—virtual code words for ending Reconstruction—and drew

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[19] Rev. W. H. Campbell, chaplain of the Palmetto Guard, also described the purpose of the centennial as a way to bring about reunion without sacrificing the memory of southern valor in the Civil War in a sermon preached on the meaning of the Battle of Fort Moultrie and its commemoration just three days before the centennial. Recognizing the main object of the celebration was "to preserve the remembrance of an event in the history of our State, glorious in itself and of potent influence in shaping the institutions of the United States," Campbell also realized it would "do much to promote good feeling and restore the harmony that existed between the several States after the war of the revolution." He warned, however, that "we shall not forfeit self-respect" by abnegating memory of their honorable participation in the Civil War because any peace brokered by losing dignity would only bring about continued oppression and injustice. Campbell's sermon in "The Coming Centennial," *Charleston News and Courier*, 26 June 1876.

[20] William Arthur Sheppard, *Red Shirts Remembered: Southern Brigadiers of the Reconstruction Period* (Atlanta, Ga.: Ruralist Press, 1940), 80. Chamberlain quoted in *Moultrie Centennial*, 2:14.

[21] D. Augustus Dickert, *History of Kershaw's Brigade, with Complete Roll of Companies, Biographical Sketches, Incidents, and Anecdotes, Etc.* (Newberry, S.C.: Elbert H. Aull Company, 1899), 86–88.

inspiration from the Revolution in this regard. He described the South's problems as the impact of war, economic ruin, the end of slavery (in a veiled reference), and "their governments in stranger and hostile hands—debased, corrupted and oppressive." Still, Kershaw believed that the centennial year offered hope as the nation's "children go in memory to the time when the Republic suffered the pangs of birth." They could then "stand beside the graves of the forefathers, hand in hand, and heart to heart, and there and thus renew the pledges of brotherhood, and receive an inspiration for the great battle for the redemption and restoration of American constitutional liberty—the inalienable birthright of the American people."

Kershaw claimed, as so many others across the nation had, that Revolutionary memory could help preserve the nation. But for him that preservation required redemption, a word which few in his audience would not realize meant the return of white rule. Concluding his speech, Kershaw intoned that "The day of wrong and misrule, I fully believe, is passing away; the day of deliverance is near at hand."[22]

Amongst the many people who traveled to Charleston for the centennial, Martin W. Gary, a completely unreconstructed southerner, might have done the most to deliver the state from the alleged "misrule" that concerned Kershaw and other ex-Confederates. On the train out of town Gary talked with Hampton and Kershaw. In conversation "Hampton expressed the hope that South Carolina might somehow be redeemed." Recognizing the possibility, Gary immediately said he would put forward Hampton's name for governor at the coming Democratic state convention.[23] Violence and intimidation marked the election that followed, far from the peaceful end of corruption advocated at the Bunker Hill and Moultrie centennials. Hampton's Red Shirts, with Gary at their head, in-

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[22] Kershaw's oration in *Moultrie Centennial*, 14–22. Following the oration, Kershaw took his seat before returning to the podium as if another thought had struck him. Kershaw announced he realized "that a certain portion of [my remarks], in which I alluded to the sad political condition of our State, might have been misunderstood and accepted as a reflection upon my honored friend [Chamberlain], who sits here to-day." Kershaw then explained that was the furthest thing from his mind; he only "refer[red] to the condition of the State prior to the time that Governor Chamberlain assumed the charge of her interests." Graciously, Chamberlain responded that he took no offense, having heard nothing unjust. If Kershaw really meant to implicate the governor in his oration, he would have joined many of the Democratic papers across the state in doing so. In reality, Chamberlain was personally honest and appeared to be doing everything possible to end corruption in the state. *Moultrie Centennial*, 2:22; Zuczek, *State of Rebellion*, 150–53; Walter Allen, *Governor Chamberlain's Administration in South Carolina: A Chapter of Reconstruction in the Southern States* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), 192–243. See also the exchange at the banquet that evening in which Kershaw pledged his "cordial and hearty support" to Chamberlain. Allen, *Chamberlain's Administration*, 343–44.

[23] Sheppard, *Red Shirts*, 83–88. There is some confusion as to when the *Journal of Commerce* began publishing and when Rhett took control of the paper. Zuczek claims it was on May 1, but Sheppard intimates it began shortly after the centennial. Zuczek, *State of Rebellion*, 162; Sheppard, *Red Shirts*, 82.

timidated and attacked blacks and Republicans despite the presence of federal troops.[24]

Together with Bunker Hill, the Moultrie centennial led directly to the Compromise of 1877. In fact, some years later ex-President Hayes told Charlestonian William A. Courtenay "that the political influence of [the WLI's visit to Boston] had made it possible for him, when President, to recognize the government of South Carolina under General Hampton."[25] The settlement tacitly offered at the centennials eventually came about; reunion occurred on the basis of national identity offered through Revolutionary commemoration. Southerners learned that by showing an attachment to national identity and acknowledging federal power they could redeem their states. For their part northerners accepted southerners' depictions of corruption and allowed the end of Reconstruction, along with the concomitant stripping of blacks' civil rights, with the 1876 presidential election. Through the commemorative sphere the reunification following the Civil War became enshrined in sentiment as well as law.

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[24] Slap, "Spirit of '76." Partly because of the Democratic rhetoric linking their cause with the Revolution, a small number of blacks voted and campaigned for their candidates. Edmund L. Drago, *Hurrah for Hampton!: Black Red Shirts in South Carolina during Reconstruction* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1998). On the South Carolina election see Zuczek, *State of Rebellion*, 159–205. On the national election see Foner, *Unfinished Revolution*, 564–601; Sidney I. Pomerantz, "Election of 1876," in *History of American Presidential Elections, 1789–1968*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1971), 2:1379–1435.

[25] Porter, *Led On!*, 303. On the near total absence of black participation and emancipationist memory presented at the Philadelphia Centennial, see Philip S. Foner, "Black Participation in the Centennial of 1876," *Phylon* 39 (1978): 283–96.

"They come not with fire and sword": Sheridan's New England Veterans and the Opening Campaign for Remembrance and Reconciliation in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley

Jonathan A. Noyalas

Nearly two decades after the Civil War's end, veterans of the Eighth Vermont Infantry and First Vermont Cavalry assembled for a reunion in Montpelier, Vermont. During the gathering, Union veteran Colonel Herbert Hill reminisced about the Vermonters' exploits in General Philip H. Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign. "The campaign was a notable one. No campaign during the four years of bloody war attracted more attention," Hill commented.[1] In the years after the Civil War's conclusion, veterans such as Hill reflected positively on Sheridan's campaign and viewed it as their defining moment as citizen soldiers.

In the immediate postwar years many of Sheridan's veterans longed to immortalize their fallen comrades and erect monuments on the valley's battlefields. That proved impossible, however, as former Confederates coped with federal Reconstruction. Additionally, economic hardships fueled bitterness toward Union veterans. In the Shenandoah Valley most former Confederates believed they owed their destitute status to Sheridan and his army, who in late September and early October had laid waste to significant portions of the region during "The Burning."[2]

Animosity softened approximately fifteen years after the conflict's end, since by the 1880s the valley's economy began to stabilize as crop outputs rose to prewar levels.[3] Consequently, the valley's inhabitants, as did many throughout the entire former Confederacy, looked toward reconciliation as the economic condition stabilized. Additionally, northern attitudes toward the former Confederacy—a region which in their eyes committed treason—changed in the late 1870s and early 1880s as Union veterans and their families made the South a vacation destination.[4] One

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[1] Col. Herbert E. Hill, *Campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, 1864: A Paper Read Before the Eighth Vermont Volunteers and First Vermont Cavalry, at Their Annual Reunion, in Montpelier, Vermont, November 2, 1866* (Boston: Published by the Executive Committee, 1886), 3.

[2] For further discussion of "The Burning," see John L. Heatwole, *The Burning: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley* (Charlottesville, Va.: Rockbridge Publishing, 1998).

[3] Kenneth E. Koons,"'The Colored Laborers Work as Well as When Slaves': African Americans in the Breadbasket of the Confederacy, 1850–1880" in *Archaeological Perspectives on the American Civil War,* ed. Clarence R. Geier and Stephen R. Potter (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 241–42.

[4] Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 66–70.

former Union veteran noted, "Instead of a battle field the Valley of Virginia has been changed to an immense summer resort."[5]

In the autumn of 1882, amid this new climate, the veterans of the Fourteenth New Hampshire discussed the possibility of holding their regimental reunion in Winchester in September 1884 to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the Third Battle of Winchester. When the veterans of the Fourteenth published notices in New England newspapers about their plan to visit the Shenandoah Valley, they caught the attention of not only those who served in the Fourteenth, but other veterans who also fought in the oft-contested region with Sheridan. Those veterans viewed this as a tremendous opportunity.[6] One of the Fourteenth's veterans recalled of the outside interest: "The enterprise finds greater favor among those who served in the Valley than was first expected."[7]

As curiosity in the trip grew among other Union veterans, the Fourteenth New Hampshire reunion morphed into the Sheridan's Veterans' Association (SVA)—a temporary organization that oversaw a onetime visit to the valley. As interest intensified, SVA president Colonel Carroll Wright recommended that the group not wait until 1884 but rather take the trip in 1883.[8] Wright and the association's officers agreed, and preparations began for the SVA's visit to the Shenandoah. The officers also concurred that Winchester should be the SVA's temporary home during their visit.

Throughout much of the literature sent out to the various regimental associations, the SVA paid close attention to how they identified their sojourn to old battlegrounds. The reunion was not referred to as such but rather was called an "excursion." The use of the word *excursion* un-

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[5] W. C. King and W. P. Derby, comps., *Camp-Fire Sketches and Battle-Field Echoes* (Springfield, Mass.: King, Richardson, and Co., 1886), 513. For further examination of the valley's emerging role as a tourist destination, see Kenneth W. Keller, "The Best Thoroughfare in the South" in *The Great Valley Road: Shenandoah Landscapes from Prehistory to the Present*, ed. Warren R. Hofstra and Karl Raitz (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 180–82. For additional general discussions on the emergence of reconciliation in the 1880s, see David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2001), 198–206; Thomas J. Brown, *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford St. Martins, 2004), 3–7.

[6] Francis H. Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans: A Souvenir of Their Two Campaigns in the Shenandoah Valley, The One, of War, in 1864, The Other of Peace, in 1883, Being the Record of the Excursion to the Battle-Fields of the Valley of Virginia, September 15–24, 1883* (Boston: W. F. Brown and Co., 1883), 9.

[7] "Sheridan's Veterans: Excursion to the Shenandoah Valley, September 15–25, 1883, Reunions and Camp Fires on Old Battle Fields, Plan of the Trip and Programme of Exercises," Sheridan's Veterans Materials, Nicholas P. Picerno, private collection, Bridgewater, Va.

[8] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans*, 10; For a brief biographical treatment of Carroll D. Wright, which largely focuses on his postwar life, see James Leiby, *Carroll Wright and Labor Reform: The Origin of Labor Statistics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

doubtedly aimed at presenting this visit as a vacation-like experience rather than a visit of veterans of a conquering army.[9]

When the Winchester City Council received word from Wright about the SVA's intent, they discussed how this formerly staunch Confederate community should receive the veterans of Sheridan's army. During a council meeting on 21 August 1883, city leaders adopted a resolution which urged citizens to offer warm welcome. The council recognized that the veterans intended to revisit the valley and its battlefields in "peaceful array" and were now "sons of a common country."[10]

Some of the community's private citizens, however, did not fully embrace the visit. One Winchester resident, identified clandestinely as "Vale," did not have a problem with Union veterans visiting the valley but did have issues with the excursion's timing—the nineteenth anniversary of the Third Battle of Winchester. Vale wrote: "In a slight degree the time of their visit was unfortunate.... to many it seemed as if this visit was meant to add humiliation to defeat."[11]

Despite the animosity, some valley citizens exhibited the approval of Winchester's city council toward the idea of the visit, and a burgeoning spirit of national reconciliation steeled the 148 Union veterans (138 of whom represented twenty-seven New England regiments) as they prepared to return to the Shenandoah Valley.[12]

When the SVA arrived in Winchester on September 18, members of Winchester's United Confederate Veterans Camp No. 4 greeted their former foes at the train station and then led them to the Frederick County Courthouse. "Through crowded streets the procession marched, strange thoughts and conflicting emotions crowding the heads and hearts of the Union veterans as they again trod the rough, familiar pavements of that conflict-battered town," one veteran recalled.[13] The column stopped in front of the courthouse—a place which had served as a hospital and prison for men of both armies. It was a remarkable moment as they climbed the steps on which secession was advocated in 1861.

Once the veterans collected inside, Winchester's mayor, William Clark, addressed the gathering: "You have come, gentlemen, from a distant portion of our country, to visit a battle-field which is in the neighborhood of this city, in which battle many of you took an active and no doubt a gallant part." Typical of postwar reconciliation, Clark stated that he admired the "gallantry" of the Union veterans in battle and expected

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[9] See Sibler, *Romance and Reunion.*

[10] Resolution of the Winchester City Council, 21 August 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 22–23.

[11] "Vale" to editor of *Boston Daily Globe*, 22 September 1883, *Boston Daily Globe*, 27 September 1883.

[12] For a complete roster of all who attended, see Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans*, 121–28.

[13] Ibid., 22.

them to pay the same tribute to the Confederate veterans. "I am sure you do not grudgingly concede that you met on that field a foe worthy of your steel," Clark asserted.[14]

After a round of cheers and applause from the veterans, Colonel Wright addressed the crowd. In an attempt to reaffirm that the SVA had not come to the valley as conquerors, Wright stated, "We have come into your beautiful Valley…with peace in our hearts and with prayers for the welfare of our whole country." Also typical of reconciliation's timbre was Wright's assertion that this visit provided an opportunity for soldiers to honor soldiers—regardless of what uniform they wore. "We do come as soldiers, to meet brave men who withstood us manfully in battle," Wright remarked.[15]

Wright's address was exemplary of the era of reconciliation not only for what it said, but also for what it did not. Although Wright addressed issues of gallantry and heroism, nowhere in his remarks did he address the causes of the war or the role that slavery played in the coming of the conflict. While some former Union veterans, such as Albion W. Tourgee, condemned Union veterans who refused to acknowledge the conflict's emancipationist legacy, many Union veterans were willing to ignore the conflict's greatest legacy if it meant an opportunity to memorialize their battlefield exploits and fallen comrades. Many Union veterans understood, as the historian David Blight has pointed out, that casting up the causes of the war, and particularly slavery's role, stood as the greatest obstacle to postwar reconciliation.[16]

Following the reception, the SVA made its way to its camp—"Camp Emory." With a large majority of Nineteenth Army Corps veterans on the journey and with General Emory, the highest ranking officer on the trip, the camp could be named in honor of no one else. While the name served as a tribute to General Emory, it had additional meaning for the veterans of the Nineteenth Corps as it stood on the farm of John W. Jarrett, the place where nineteen years earlier Emory's corps fought against Confederates from General John B. Gordon's division.[17]

On the morning of September 19 the veterans awoke to throngs of area civilians who came to Camp Emory to participate in the day's commemoration of the Third Battle of Winchester. After some brief remarks that morning the veterans marched to the Winchester National Cemetery. For more than a decade after the war, tributes to Union soldiers who fell in battle during Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Campaign were confined to

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[14] Address of Mayor William Clark, 18 September 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 24.

[15] Speech of Col. Carrol D. Wright, 18 September 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 27.

[16] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 218–19.

[17] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans*, 28.

northern cemeteries, but now they could be properly honored as reconciliation took hold. The Fourteenth New Hampshire's captain, Charles P. Hall, had certainly not lost sight of the moment's significance. Hall remarked: "We have stood, on Memorial Day, in the cemeteries of our home-land.... We stand on Southern soil.... we place upon their graves flowers.... [We] stand here with flowers in our hands and tears in our eyes because loved forms lie buried 'neath this turf."[18]

Following the ceremonies in the National Cemetery, and much to the surprise of Winchester's citizenry, the SVA formed a column and marched to the Stonewall Confederate Cemetery across the street.[19] Charles Carleton Coffin, a prolific author who during the war served as a correspondent for the *Boston Journal*, observed the look of astonishment on the faces of Winchester's civilians.[20] As the veterans marched into the cemetery and gathered around the monument to the unknown Confederate dead, Coffin spied an elderly man leaning against the Virginia state monument. Coffin approached the unidentified man. "Some of your folks burned my house nineteen years ago," the elderly gentleman told Coffin, "and made me, my wife and children homeless." After casting up the destruction perpetrated by the Army of the Shenandoah, the man inquired what the veterans intended to do. Coffin informed him that they intended to offer prayers and place flowers on the graves of the Confederate dead. Coffin noted that the man's "hand went up quick to his eyes, there was a convulsive movement in his throat, a heaving of the heart. He turned away to hide his emotion."[21]

Standing in the shadow of the unknown monument, Wright addressed the crowd: "Here lie buried the unknown Confederate dead.... we... come with loyalty to noble lives, to brave and gallant soldiers, and with the prayer for peace on earth on our lips and in our hearts." After Wright addressed the crowd, the veterans knelt while two Union soldiers placed flowers at the base of the unknown memorial.[22]

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[18] Address of Capt. Charles P. Hall, Winchester National Cemetery, 19 September 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans*, 57–58.

[19] *Boston Globe Supplement*, 24 September 1883.

[20] For a brief biographical treatment of Charles C. Coffin, see John W. Schildt, *Charles Carleton Coffin: Eye Witness to Antietam* (Chewsville, Md.: John W. Schildt, 2005), 3–6.

[21] *Boston Globe Supplement*, 24 September 1883.

[22] Address of Col. Carroll D. Wright, Stonewall Confederate Cemetery, 19 September 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 63. For an additional discussion of the issues of the commemoration of Civil War dead by veterans after the Civil War, see John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 6–7.

Action had now replaced rhetoric as the tool for healing animosity in the region.[23] Coffin noted that "tears rolled down the cheeks of some" and that former Confederates who had been "nursing their pride, who have in their hearts refused to accept the results of the war, went out from that cemetery with new emotions." Even the elderly gentleman who informed Coffin that his family suffered terribly during Sheridan's Campaign turned to Coffin and said, "I must say that I could not keep back the tears just now when I saw your folks kneel and lay their flowers on the graves." Another area civilian reportedly caught up with Coffin after the ceremony and informed him that with this act the veterans of Sheridan's army "have indeed conquered us."[24]

Two days later the SVA moved south to explore the battlefields of Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek. One member of the party noted that when they encountered area civilians who lived on the Cedar Creek battlefield, they engaged in "interesting reminiscences." Some residents used the opportunity to remind the veterans how Union soldiers perpetrated economic hardship among valley residents and brought some families to the brink of starvation and financial ruin.[25] Encounters such as these sobered the veterans to the reality that although their work of remembrance and reconciliation had a seemingly widespread positive impact, not all former Confederates were yet willing to forgive.

On September 22 the veterans journeyed south by train to Harrisonburg. As the train steamed up the valley, some wondered if they would receive the same sort of treatment in Harrisonburg as they did in Winchester. After all, the residents of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County suffered some of the most significant devastation during "The Burning."[26] Any anxiety proved unwarranted since Colonel D. H. Lee Martz, who commanded the Tenth Virginia Infantry during the conflict, wrote a "stirring appeal to his veterans to turn out and welcome the New England veterans."[27] Martz's efforts proved successful as hundreds of Rockingham's residents, including scores of Confederate veterans, worked tirelessly to provide "a sumptuous entertainment for the Veterans."[28]

After their visit to Harrisonburg the SVA boarded the train cars and began their journey home. As the train steamed north, the SVA took stock

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[23] For further discussion of Union soldiers participating in ceremonies to honor Confederates, see William Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865–1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 154–61.

[24] Charles C. Coffin, account of ceremony in Stonewall Confederate Cemetery, 19 September 1883, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans, 1883*, 64–65.

[25] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 88.

[26] Heatwole, *The Burning*, 192–93.

[27] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans,* 106.

[28] Charlestown, W.Va., *Spirit of Jefferson*, 25 September 1883.

of their experiences. The governor of Rhode Island, A. H. Littlefield, believed that their excursion would be the beginning of "bringing about a warmer friendship between those who had met in deadly conflict."[29]

Meanwhile in the Shenandoah Valley the inhabitants too reflected positively on the experience. An anonymous resident of Winchester, so moved by the visit of the SVA, sent a note to the *Boston Globe* which stated, "The visit has done more to cement together two sections and to harmonize the differences than all the sermons that have been preached since the war."[30]

Despite the apparent success of their efforts, the mood among the veterans proved bittersweet because each knew that the SVA was created as a temporary organization. During the journey home some of the members proposed that the SVA be organized into a permanent organization with annual reunions.

In honor of the new agreement, the SVA gathered in Boston, Massachusetts, on 10 December 1884, at the Quincy House for their now annual reunion. Reflection on their visit to the Shenandoah Valley the previous year and the prospect of a return visit dominated the gathering. The *Boston Journal* reported that during the 1884 reunion a member of the association "expressed his belief that by such means more than by any other is the much-desired fraternization between the North and South to be brought about." With such positive reflection and perceived significance to national reconciliation, the SVA determined it would return to the valley in 1885 and continue its campaign of reconciliation.[31]

As the association planned for the 1885 excursion, the organization's leadership determined that the visit would include the usual slate of reunion activities: memorial addresses, monument dedications, and battlefield exploration. Some, however, believed that it would take more to cement relations among former enemies. A contingent of the veterans determined to add a new dimension to the visit, one they believed would provide not only entertainment, but a crucial building block of reconciliation—rifle competition between the veterans of Sheridan's army and Confederates who fought in the 1864 Shenandoah Campaign. When initially suggested, a member of the association's executive committee recalled: "several of the committee looked askance upon this scheme at first, because they anticipated that a contest between those who fought with such sanguinary bitterness on that very ground…would revive that bitterness to a degree which would at least chill the relations of those

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[29] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans*, 114.

[30] *Boston Daily Globe*, 27 September 1883.

[31] *Boston Journal*, 11 December 1884.

who were old time foes."[32] While an understandable reaction, the Fourteenth New Hampshire's Francis Buffum did not believe, based on the positive experience in 1883, "that there was…the slightest foundation for such a fear."[33]

Once various members allayed any fears about the rifle competition, the SVA organized rifle teams and the SVA's leadership made preparations for their second campaign of reconciliation. In Winchester the city council and its residents eagerly made arrangements for the visit. During the several weeks prior to the veterans' arrival, the *Winchester Times* chronicled the work and anticipation of both sides: "The enthusiasm over this trip is something phenomenal.… A hearty welcome awaits the party from our entire people and many pleasant hours are looked forward to with our Northern brethren."[34]

As had been the case in 1883, not all valley residents seemed to embrace the idea of the visit. Less than one week before the veterans were scheduled to arrive in Winchester, the *Winchester News* published a note written by an unidentified group of veterans from the Stonewall Brigade. The note simply stated: "We, as members of the 5th Virginia Infantry, Stonewall Brigade, don't want any re-union with any…Yankee regiment."[35] This reaction shocked the Union veterans.

A number of the SVA's members were "outraged by the unwarrantable, unjust, and utterly groundless imputation that the members of the…Stonewall Brigade…are opposed to holding a reunion with veteran Union regiments."[36] Others appeared a bit more understanding. One veteran mused: "It was impossible for many to forget the lost cause.… how could they be expected to forget the lost cause sufficiently to welcome as friends those who had been their conquerors?"[37]

Still, some of Sheridan's veterans had become so incensed by the incendiary statement they contemplated not making the trip. Sensing the loss of a great opportunity to further advance national healing, the editors of the *Boston Daily Globe* intervened and urged the SVA's members to make the trip despite the venom spouted from the pen of some former Confederates. The *Globe* cautioned the veterans to be cognizant that even though they may encounter individuals who refused reconciliation, their visit to the valley set an important tone for the nation. "That such excursions result in great good there can be no doubt. They serve to bind to-

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[32] Francis H. Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II: A Souvenir of Their Third Campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, 1864–1883–1885, September 15–24, 1885* (Boston: W. F. Brown and Co., 1886), 8–9.

[33] Ibid., 9.

[34] *Winchester Times*, 26 August 1885.

[35] *Winchester News* article quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 16.

[36] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 17.

[37] Ibid., 15.

gether more firmly the people of a once divided country," the *Globe* reminded the veterans, "and to teach the children lessons of love of country that will serve in the future to prevent 'discordant and belligerent States from warring against each other.'"[38]

That advice eased anxieties enough to convince the veterans to make their return trip to the Shenandoah. When the SVA arrived in Winchester on September 16, hundreds of the city's residents and Confederate veterans greeted them warmly, just as they had done two years earlier. As the veterans disembarked from the train, they immediately began to mingle with ex-Confederates in the crowd in an attempt to gauge the true sentiment toward this return visit. The ex-Confederates informed the Union veterans that even though many would never forgive General Sheridan, they were willing to move with the "tide of progress" and do whatever necessary to effect national healing. One former Confederate soldier informed the Union veterans that he, as well as some of his comrades, had become extremely unpopular with others in the valley who refused reconciliation and would rather remain "at home nursing their venom."[39]

This unidentified Confederate veteran also noted that many of the individuals who snubbed their nose at reconciliation also did so to the idea of serving in the Confederate military during the Civil War. They refused to fight "for the principles they professed to have," and now that the war has ended in Confederate defeat these individuals continue to "live in the traditions of the past."[40] Another former Confederate veteran within earshot of this conversation believed that these individuals who refused to fight for the Confederacy, but who now blocked reconciliation, had become a copperhead to postwar peace. "We have in the valley what you called copperheads in the North…who…now when there is peace all over the land are fostering a spirit of hatred for the North."[41]

After the initial welcome the SVA made its way to their home for the excursion—Camp Russell. Named in honor of Union general David A. Russell, who was killed during the Third Battle of Winchester, the semicircular camp of tents stood on the north side of the Berryville Pike (present-day National Avenue) opposite the National Cemetery.[42]

September 18 marked the first official day of activity in the valley as the veterans boarded train cars that carried them south to Harrisonburg—the location of the much anticipated Blue-Gray rifle match. When the

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[38] *Boston Daily Globe, 27* September 1885.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid. For further discussion on the importance of winning over children after the war, or people who were children during the war, to further reconciliation, see Anya Jabour, *Topsy-Turvy: How the Civil War Turned the World Upside Down for Southern Children* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2010), 214–15.

[42] *Boston Daily Globe*, 23 September 1885; Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 16.

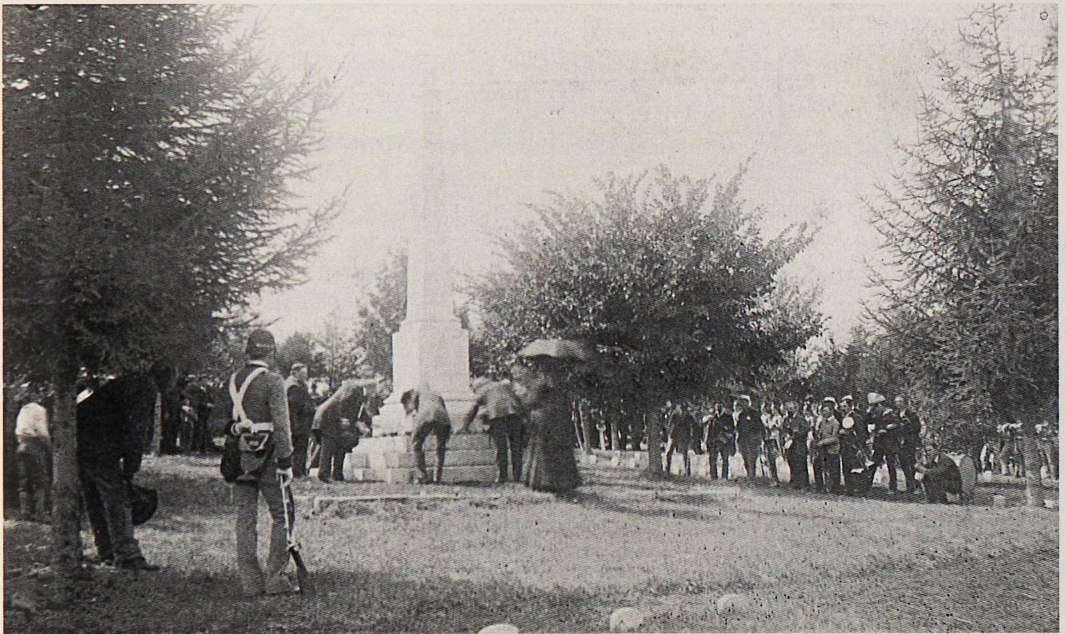

Figure 1. Members of the Sheridan's Veterans' Association in 1885 placing flowers at the base of the Confederate monument in the Confederate section of Woodbine Cemetery in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Jonathan A. Noyalas, private collection.

veterans arrived in Harrisonburg, representatives of the town's government welcomed the SVA. After a brief response by the SVA's vice-commander Elisha Hunt Rhodes, the veterans formed a column and, unanticipated by Harrisonburg's residents, marched to the Confederate section of Woodbine Cemetery (*Figure 1*). As they had done two years before in Winchester, the veterans understood that one of the most useful strategies in furthering reconciliation was to engage in outward displays of respect to Confederate dead. "This was entirely unexpected to the citizens," recalled a Harrisonburg resident, "and had a very pleasant effect."[43] A female resident of Harrisonburg who had vociferously supported the Confederacy was shocked into forgiveness by the display. This seemingly irreconcilable Confederate explained, "They come not with fire and sword, but with countenances beaming with peace and good will and the right hand of fellowship extended to express their willingness to be brothers again."[44]

Following the ceremony at the cemetery and reception, the veterans gathered that afternoon for the rifle matches. While the Gray team outmatched their counterparts, scores shot by both teams proved anything but remarkable. A member of the Blue team recorded: "It will be seen that as between the teams goose-egg honors were easy."[45] Although the

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[43] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 35.

[44] Unidentified former Confederate woman's perspective on the Union reunion in Harrisonburg, 18 September 1885, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 34.

[45] Ibid., 41.

veterans might not have displayed the finest marksmanship, the veterans believed it an important exercise to foster healing. "It was demonstrated that with proper facilities, easily obtainable," one veteran recalled, "these rifle competitions may be of great value in cementing veteran companionship."[46]

The day after the rifle competition—the twenty-first anniversary of the Third Battle of Winchester—the veterans shifted their focus to memorialization. On the morning of September 19 the veterans gathered on the bloody Middle Field to honor the Eighth Vermont—a regiment which had been pinned down for more than an hour under constant fire and then launched a bayonet charge against Gordon's men.[47]

Typical of postwar reconciliation, those who spoke at the monument's dedication did not want to say anything to offend former Confederates and instead offered a monument marking a specific regimental deed as a symbol of enduring heroism exhibited by both sides. Colonel John B. Mead, who read Colonel Hill's dedicatory address due to Hill's absence because of illness, noted: "The Eighth Vermont, in erecting this monument, knows to-day no North, no South. This shaft speaks to American valor…and while the heroic action of a Vermont regiment is designated, the Confederate veteran may proudly point to this very spot as proving his own bravery and heroism in contending in a hand-to-hand conflict, an American himself, with an American."[48]

On the following day the veterans visited Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek. While some toured the fields, others retraced the path of Sheridan's famous ride—immortalized in poetry and in art—from Winchester to Cedar Creek. During the afternoon all of the veterans made their way to a wooded ridge on the east side of the Valley Pike to dedicate a monument to the Eighth Vermont, which, as part of Colonel Stephen Thomas's brigade, had played a crucial role in slowing the Confederate attack to allow the Nineteenth Corps sufficient time to readjust its lines.[49] Beyond its role of memorializing the loss of 106 out of 159 men engaged at Cedar Creek, the Vermonters believed it served as another symbol of reconciliation. Captain S. E. Howard, who had been wounded on that spot, informed the onlookers that the veterans placed the marble stone there as a "pillar stone which shall forever mark an era of genuine frater-

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[46] Ibid., 42; Charlestown, W.Va., *Spirit of Jefferson*, 22 September 1885.

[47] Brandon H. Beck and Roger U. Delauter, *The Third Battle of Winchester* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, 1997), 59–60; Jeffry D. Wert, *From Winchester to Cedar Creek: The Shenandoah Campaign of 1864* (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1997), 62–63.

[48] Eighth Vermont Dedication speech of Col. Herbert E. Hill, read by Col. John B. Mead, 19 September 1885, quoted in Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II*, 57.

[49] For further discussion on the stand of Thomas's brigade and the fate of the Eighth Vermont at Cedar Creek, see Noyalas, *The Battle of Cedar Creek*, 43–45; George N. Carpenter, *History of the Eighth Vermont Volunteers, 1861–1865* (Boston: Press of Deland and Barta, 1886), 209–12.

Figure 2. Members of the Sheridan's Veterans' Association gather on the steps of Belle Grove—the location of Union army headquarters during the Battle of Cedar Creek—at their excursion to the Shenandoah Valley in 1885. Jonathan A. Noyalas, private collection.

nal feeling between *us.*"[50] After the dedication the veterans gathered for dinner at Belle Grove (*Figure 2*)—the location of army headquarters during the battle.

The following day, Tuesday, 22 September 1885, the SVA bade farewell to Winchester and the Shenandoah Valley. As the train cars steamed out of the valley, the third campaign of Sheridan's veterans in the valley had come to its end. Despite the inability of those Union veterans to convince every former Confederate in the valley of reconciliation's merits, their campaigns of 1883 and 1885 proved significant in advancing the cause of reconciliation in a region so horribly devastated by the conflict.

Although the SVA never returned to the valley as a group after 1885, member regimental associations continued to visit the valley well into the early twentieth century. Each time they recorded being greeted with cordiality.

When Sheridan's army fought in the valley in 1864, none of its soldiers ever dreamed they would return to the region and be welcomed as friends. Their work in the military campaign played a significant role in bringing about the war's end, but perhaps the greatest campaigns Sheridan's men ever waged in the valley were those of reconciliation in 1883 and 1885. It was a Vermonter who may have best captured the significance of the postwar work of the Sheridan's Veterans' Association: "I am more than ready to put the past behind me, to look forward only. Our comrades of the gray are our fellow citizens. We should have, and I trust

[50] Buffum, *Sheridan's Veterans No. II,* 99.

do have, one common purpose, one common hope—that the Union of our fathers may be preserved.... let us clasp hands with our once brave foes, and all vie with each other in being true and loyal citizen of our common country."

New England and the Civil War Bibliography

Sections:

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Notes

Conference Program

Beyond the Battlefield: New England and the Civil War

June 24 through 26, 2011

The Dublin Seminar was assisted in preparing the program by the Society of Civil War Historians. This organization may be consulted at SCWH@scwhistorians.

Friday evening, June 24

PRELUDE TO THE CIVIL WAR

Naomi H. Slipp, Boston University: *The* Amistad *Affair, Panorama Painting, and National Identity in Antebellum America*

Kathleen F. Dacey, Haverhill, Massachusetts, Historical Society: *Old Man Eloquent and the Haverhill Petition of 1842*

Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai, East Tennessee State University: *Becoming a Leader: New England College Students, Northern Character, and the Coming of the Civil War*

Saturday morning, June 25

ADDRESSING THE WAR'S AIMS

Stephen Douglas Engle, Florida Atlantic University: *The New England Governors and the Providence Conference of 1862*

Norman MacLeod, St. John's Church, Waterbury, Connecticut: *Uriah Parmelee's Ordeal: A Connecticut Yankee's Abolitionist Principles and the Reality of the Civil War*

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR'S EFFORT (FIRST SESSION)

Juanita Leisch Jensen, Shenandoah County, Virginia: *"Armed with Needles": New England Women in the Civil War*

Lynne Z. Bassett, Palmer, Massachusetts: *Battle on the Home Front: The Hartford Soldiers' Aid Association*

Saturday afternoon, June 25

Tour by Lynne Manring and Barbara Mathews, staff members at the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, of the Military Room at Memorial Hall Museum, followed by a walk to the Civil War monument on Deerfield Common, one of the earliest in America

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR'S EFFORT (SECOND SESSION)

Patricia L. Richard, Metropolitan State College of Denver: *"To provide for the comfort of those of our race": African American Soldiers' Aid Societies and the New England Civil War Effort*

Elizabeth C. Stevens, Rhode Island Historical Society: *"I should like to feel that I was doing some real good to somebody": The Civil War Sacrifice of Harriet Ward Foote Hawley*

THE MARITIME WORLD

Catherine Lynch Deichmann, Mystic Seaport Museum: *New England's Other War*

Saturday evening, June 25

NEW ENGLAND ARTISTS AND THE CIVIL WAR

Jourdan Moore Houston and Alan Fraser Houston, Durango, Colorado: *Boston Artists and Their Contributions to the Civil War*

Niki Lefebvre, Boston University: *Fighting for Their Freedom: Theodore R. Davis and "Faithful Representations" of Black Soldiers, 1863 to 1865*

Sunday morning, June 26

PERSPECTIVES ON THE WAR'S CONDUCT

Colin Woodward, Smith College: *Hard War and the "Hand of God": Massachusetts Abolitionists and the Burning of Darien, Georgia, in 1863*

John S. Potter, Connecticut Historical Society: *The 16th Connecticut and Its Imprisonment at Andersonville and Florence Stockades, April 1864 to March 1865*

RECONCILIATION AND REMEMBRANCE

Amy Feely Morsman, Middlebury College: *Reporting from Virginia: Caroline Putnam, Race Reform, and Northern Views of Reconstruction*

Jeffrey Kosiorek, Hendrix College: *Bunker Hill and Fort Moultrie: The Revolutionary Centennials and Reconciliation*

Jonathan A. Noyalas, Lord Fairfax Community College: *"They come not with fire and sword": Sheridan's New England Veterans and the Opening Campaign for Remembrance and Reconciliation in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley*

William N. Hosley, Terra Firma Northeast: *Epic Achievement: James Batterson and the Industrialization of the Monument Industry in Post-Civil War New England*

Abstracts of Conference Papers Not Appearing in This Volume

Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai, *Becoming a Leader: New England College Students, Northern Character, and the Coming of the Civil War*

This paper argues that New Englanders also lived in a society dominated by codes of gentlemanly behavior. As opposed to southern honor, which was influenced by public perception and reputation, northern character emphasized traits such as self-discipline, composure, and steadfastness. Ralph Waldo Emerson himself explained that men of character were "the conscience of the society to which they belong," for they stood "united with the Just and the True." Confident in their abilities and not swayed by shifting public opinion, men of character were the most important members of society and a community's natural leaders. Using traditionally untapped sources such as college essays and compositions alongside letters and diaries written by New England undergraduates, this paper explains the traits of good character, as the North's young leaders understood them, and is based on archival research compiled from numerous repositories including the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Houghton Library, and the University Archives at Harvard University and the Archives and Special Collections departments at Amherst, Bowdoin, Dartmouth, Wesleyan, and Williams Colleges.

Stephen Douglas Engle, *The New England Governors and the Providence Conference of 1862*

This talk focuses on New England and the Civil War in 1862 and examines the context for the summer meeting and the significance of the meeting as it related to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in September. It also explores the relationship between Abraham Lincoln and the New England governors during this period. As the events of the

summer of 1862 were the most critical in bringing about a refashioning of Union war aims, it argues that governors played an instrumental role in prodding the Lincoln administration to accept emancipation as a precondition, not necessarily for ending the war sooner, but for convincing the northern public that the emancipation proclamation would shorten the war. By convincing them that a shorter war would prevent a national draft (which appeared to be emerging at the time), it was assumed that such a move would spur volunteering. These were the issues discussed at this conference as well as raising black troops to fight. The Providence Conference sent a delegation to Washington to confer with Lincoln, which, if nothing else, provided him with the New England point of view in demanding an expansion of war aims.

Jourdan Houston and Alan Houston, *Boston Artists and Their Contribution to the Civil War*

When the twenty founding members of the Boston Art Club established that organization in 1855, they likely had no expectation that they would be involved in their country's Civil War. From the beginning, on 12 April 1861, the firing on Fort Sumter, most of them became involved, however, and the club grew in membership. As the war progressed, their activities increased in magnitude, rendering proceeds from artists' sales trivial. By January 1862 the club had 195 members and Edward Clarke Cabot was captain of the First Company. In August the club advertised training in "tactics and rifle practice" for $1.50 a month. In October of that year members left for the Newbern campaign in North Carolina. Portraits of heroes and battle scenes continued to contribute to improved morale and to the public's commitment to the war from 1863 on.

Niki Lefebvre, *Fighting for Their Freedom: Theordore R. Davis and the "Faithful Representation" of Black Soldiers, 1863 to 1865*

A close reading of an 1863 sketch titled "The Rebels' Last Device," by Boston-born *Harper's Weekly* correspondent Theodore R. Davis, anchors this talk. Best known as the designer of Rutherford B. Hayes's Presidential China in 1880, Davis has been mostly overlooked by scholars in discussions of racial imagery in the nineteenth century. Davis's wartime sketches offer a compelling visual argument for the hopeful role of black soldiers as both men and citizens in the postbellum United States. Using the research of historians and art historians alike—such as Eric Foner, Michael Hatt, Joshua Brown, and Marcus Wood—"Fighting for Their Freedom" analyzes popular visual narratives of black soldiers captured in illustrated weeklies during the Civil War. It marks the beginning of an expanded scholarly dialogue about the history of black soldiers beyond the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth Regiment and the wealth of memorialized imagery their heroism has spawned. Additionally, this project should restore Theodore R. Davis to his rightful position as a significant popular artist and a powerful commentator on the relationship among race, humanity, citizenship, and popular art in American history. This material was published by the author in *So Conceived and So Dedicated: Intellectual Life in the Civil War Era North*, ed. Lorien Foote and Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai, 2015.

Colin Woodward, *Hard War and the "Hand of God": Massachusetts Abolitionists and the Burning of Darien, Georgia, in 1863*

On 11 June 1863, federal troops looted and burned the town of Darien, Georgia. Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, an abolitionist commanding the black Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment, reluctantly took part in the action, which was ordered by his superior officer, Kansas Jayhawker and abolitionist Colonel James Montgomery. Shaw was appalled by what happened to Darien. But there were Massachusetts abolitionists, including those at *The Liberator*, who believed the burning of Darien justified. In a war that had become more severe—the burning of Darien occurred during Lee's raid onto Union soil—antislavery advocates were convinced that increasingly destructive measures were necessary to defeat the Confederacy and eradicate slavery.

John S. Potter, *The 16th Connecticut and Its Imprisonment at Andersonville and Florence Stockades, April 1864–March 1865*

The 16th Connecticut was truly that state's "hard luck" regiment. Recruited in the late summer of 1862, it was a product of Lincoln's call for 300,000 volunteers for three years' service during the summer of that year; but a year and a half later, on 20 April 1864, it was part of the garrison of Plymouth, North Carolina, and was surrounded and captured almost to a man. The men from this regiment left excellent records of the trials they endured. The Connecticut Historical Society's collections contain numerous journals kept by members of the 16th during their imprisonment, and many postwar letters that reminisce about the events of that time. This paper uses these records to provide a narrative of the men of this regiment during their captivity in Confederate prisons. The bulk of these primary sources are unpublished and unedited. The narrative uses diaries such as those by John Cuzner, Samuel Grosvenor, Oliver Gates, and Henry Smith, none of which have been published, over the diary of Robert H. Kellogg, who published a book based on his diary.

Amy Feely Morsman, *Reporting from Virginia: Caroline Putnam, Race Reform, and Northern Views of Reconstruction*

Once emancipation became a war aim of the United States in the American Civil War, numerous aid organizations from New England dispatched young men and women to the South to help resolve an important question: what will happen to the slaves once they become free? Though these northern groups addressed that concern in a variety of ways, the central element of their service in the defeated Confederate was the education of the freed people. When many white women, dubbed "Yankee schoolmarms," relocated to the South for this purpose, they maintained close ties with their sponsoring agencies and with their home communities. Their worthy but trying mission left a lasting impression on them and on those whom they cared to tell about it. This paper—and the larger project from which it stems—uses their correspondence and seeks to measure how the work of Yankee schoolmarms influenced a larger public debate in the North about race, Reconstruction, and the Union's investment in this important social experiment.

William N. Hosley, *Epic Achievement: James Batterson and the Industrialization of the Monument Industry in Post–Civil War New England*

Best known as the founder of The Travelers Insurance Company, James G. Batterson was first and foremost a monument maker and builder who apprenticed to his father as a gravestone maker in Litchfield in the 1830s, relocated to Hartford, Connecticut, at the dawn of the industrial age and transformed the family monument company into an industrial leviathan that redefined the meaning of monuments and public sculpture in America. He was also the quintessential local booster, joiner and political activist, who served as Chairman of the Republican Party in Connecticut during the Civil War. Batterson emerged from the Civil War with the best political connections of anyone in the monument industry. He parlayed this into commissions for many of the most important war memorials and monuments in the country, including the signature monuments at the national cemeteries at Gettysburg and Antietam. The Civil War was a platform that enabled this transformation—not only because of the political connections and patronage gained through his role as a high level political operative during the war, but because so many of his most important postwar commissions were Civil War monuments including a very early and interesting one right on The Street in Deerfield.

Acknowledgments

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