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Part I. Technologies and Experiments

Chapter 1

Taylor Smith, “Uncivil Warfare”

Chinese Philosopher and legendary tactician Sun Tzu wrote in his famous work *The Art of War*, “In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.” This statement rang just as true in the 6th century BC as it does today. Modern warfare is nothing if not complete chaos, once plunged into it men can only think of the ways to bring an end to it quicker, and therein lies the opportunity. Nothing spurs ingenuity and production quite like the threat of annihilation by your enemies, and the American Civil War proves this. A war that opened with the Napoleonic tactics of battling in open fields with large armies devolved into trench style warfare based on swift raids and fortifications as both sides struggled to survive. The combination of new advanced weapons and outdated tactics created casualty counts that were often unnecessarily high. The Civil War proved that military doctrine will not change until the true killing power of a new weapon is realized, inevitably at a cost.

In the 1840s, France changed firearms forever. Up until then militaries around the world had been equipped with smoothbore muskets which fired spherical musket balls accurate out to barely 100 yards.¹ But by 1863 an American army carrying Springfield and Enfield muskets firing new projectiles could accurately engage their targets from roughly four times the range of a smoothbore. The new cone shaped bullet was designed by Captain Claude E. Minie of the French military in 1848 to achieve one thing, accurate lethality at range.² Long gone were the

¹ James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 473.

² McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 474.

battles of the Napoleonic era with massive armies lining up fifty yards from one another to unleash volleys of smoothbore musket fire into unmoving walls of men; soldiers could now engage their enemy nearly upon sighting them.

This new ballistic technology had an obvious and profound impact on the battlefield. While these new arms may have resembled their older smoothbore counterparts, their combat performance was far more deadly. At the outbreak of the war neither side had large stockpiles of rifles to issue to their troops, this meant many Northern and Southern soldiers alike were initially issued older smoothbore muskets from years past. An example being the Springfield Armory, which completely cleared out its surplus of almost half a million older .69 caliber smoothbores in order to arm the North by the end of 1861.³ In the decade preceding the war the United States had been slow to equip its soldiers with new rifles. In 1855 then Secretary of War Jefferson Davis had adopted both the American Model 1855 Springfield and the British Pattern 1853 Enfield rifles into American military service⁴, yet six years later at the outbreak of war there were not nearly enough rifles to equip armies on both sides. Therefore as armories across the nation were tooling up to produce rifles or beginning to import them from Europe, soldiers were forced to carry antiquated, inaccurate, short range smoothbore muskets into combat. It wasn't until the latter years of 1862 that the North had either produced or imported enough modern rifles to equip most of its troops⁵. The South however, with their limited production capacity, had

³ Michael Raber, "It would be impossible to estimate the value of these works..." Mass Production at Springfield Armory during the American Civil War, *Arms & Armour* 14, No. 1. (2017), 73.

⁴ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 474.

⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 475.

to rely much more heavily on imported Enfields and rifles recovered on the battlefield, many southern troops did not receive their modern rifles until the end of 1863⁶.

The prevalence of old muskets on early war battlefields serves to reinforce why the war began with more or less a Napoleonic style of warfare, with massed brigades of soldiers lining up on wide open fields in plain view to do battle. Generals had not realized the killing potential of modern weaponry before war even broke out, and when the early battles were being waged with weapons as old as their doctrine they saw little reason to adjust their strategy⁷. It didn't become grimly apparent just how obsolete these tactics were until the battles of later 1862 where at least one side (The Union) was armed entirely with rifled muskets. Battles like The Seven Days where the Confederates lost two men to every one Union casualty began to slowly prove that when facing these new weapons new tactics would be required to avoid staggering losses⁸. In the past attacking forces would stand a mere 50 or 100 yards from enemy lines, a distance which a well-motivated man could easily close with his bayonet before his enemy could reload their muskets. Come 1863 however, rifled muskets ensured that gap between forces had increased dramatically to between 200-300 yards on average. Now the attacking soldier needed to charge nearly a quarter mile through deadly accurate fire just reach their objectives. This gave defending forces in the Civil War a truly massive tactical advantage over their attackers. Sitting in their breastworks a defending force could begin to pick off advancing enemies from three to five hundred yards away, in addition often times these attacks would be ordered in a tightly packed traditional formation, making advancing soldiers easy targets for enemy rifleman and

⁶ Raber, "It would be impossible to estimate the value of these works..." 73.

⁷ Bruce Catton and James McPherson, *The American Heritage New History of The Civil War*, (New York: American Heritage, 1996), 342-342.

⁸ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 475.

artillery⁹. Attacks such as this were decimated time and again leaving thousands dead and generals wondering why their attacks were failing.

Once the commanders of both sides began to realize the futility of the frontal assault the battlefields began to change accordingly.

To achieve this new level of accuracy and lethality gunsmiths began to utilize rifling, or placing spiraling grooves along the inside wall of a gun barrel. These grooves would “catch” the expanding soft lead projectiles and force the bullet to spin along the grooves. This spin combined with conical minie ball allowed rounds to essentially cut straight through the air for much further distances, rather than simply push through it like a spherical musket ball would.



⁹ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 475.

Figure 1
The rifled barrel of an Austrian M75 cannon produced in 1891

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rifling#/media/File:Rifling_of_a_cannon_\(M75;_90mm;_y.1891;_Austro-Hungarian;_exposed_in_Ljubljana,_Slovenia\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rifling#/media/File:Rifling_of_a_cannon_(M75;_90mm;_y.1891;_Austro-Hungarian;_exposed_in_Ljubljana,_Slovenia).jpg)

By late 1863 most soldiers fighting on both sides were equipped with these minie ball firing rifled muskets¹⁰. The two rifles most common rifles during the American Civil War were the Springfield models of 1855 and 1861, and the British Enfield pattern of 1853. These rifles could be found in hefty numbers on any given Civil War battlefield as they were the standard issue infantry rifle for both sides after 1863. Both rifles were incredibly similar weighing roughly ten pounds each, both were just under six feet long with 40 inch muzzle-loaded barrels attached to the stock with three barrel bands. Both weapons fired very similar bullets, the Springfield a .58 caliber minie ball and the Enfield a .577 caliber minie ball¹¹. So similar were the bullets the two rifles fired (only 0.003 calibers) they could actually be used interchangeably in either rifle¹², although it is very likely that a Springfield minie ball (.58 caliber) would wear down the rifled barrels of the slightly smaller .577 caliber Enfield at a significantly higher rate. This likely contributed to a certain stigma surrounding Enfields later in the war with soldiers and commanders alike believing the Enfield to be a sort of “second class” rifle compared to the Springfield, which had always received the correct caliber ammunition¹³. This is probably why many colored units such as the Massachusetts 54th were issued Enfield rifles rather than Springfields.

¹⁰ Carrie Brown, “Guns for Billy Yank: The Armory in Windsor Meets the Challenge of Civil War.” 79, No. 2. (2011), 143.

¹¹ Francis Lord, “The ‘61 Springfield Rifle Musket”, *Civil War Times* 51, No. 2. (2012).

¹² McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 474.

¹³ Peter Smithurst, “The Enfield Rifle In America,” *Arms and Armour* 5, No. 2, (2008), 189.



Figure 2

Enfield Pattern 1853 Rifle Musket

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pattern_1853_Enfield#/media/File:Pattern1853Rifle.jpg



Figure 3

Springfield Model 1861 Rifle Musket

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Springfield_Model_1861#/media/File:Springfield_1861.jpg

These rifles themselves however did not impact actual combat for the individual soldier as much as many historians may argue. Outside of extending the effective killing range of firearms, these rifled muskets were still fairly dated pieces of technology upon their introduction. Both the Enfield and Springfield rifles were muzzle loading black powder firearms that required to be reloaded from the muzzle after every shot. That meant every time a soldier needed to fire or reload they would have to first ram a cardboard wad (to either contain the powder or clean

fouling) down the barrel, then pour in the correct amount of powder, then ram the bullet down on top of both of those. Throughout the war many troops would receive paper cartridges containing both powder and bullet to shorten the reload process, but these were prone to tearing or getting wet and still required a soldier to ram the cartridge from the muzzle down the entire length of the barrel. This tedious process ensured an average infantryman could not fire his rifle more than once every minute and a half or so. This pitiful rate of fire meant that armies still had to adhere to the doctrine of volley fire in large closely packed formations if they wanted to produce an adequate amount of firepower. The reality of the staggering casualties during the war was not due to the overwhelming effectiveness of new rifles, it was the incompetence of commanders¹⁴. Historian James McPherson says this of officers coming out of West Point at the time: “Most officers had learned little of strategic theory. The curriculum of West Point slighted strategic studies in favor of engineering, mathematics, fortification, army administration and a smattering of tactics.”¹⁵ Even at West Point, the most prestigious officers’ institution in the country, commanders were not learning how to properly command large armies on the field of battle. This became tragically apparent during the war as field commanders really struggled managing massive armies spread out over miles of battlefield¹⁶. The wrong regiments would be ordered to attack the wrong locations, cold feet and panic would set in after losses started mounting and confused leaders would all too often order men into their own routing.

While these commanders might not have been the best tacticians and military leaders of their time it certainly was not for lack of trying. Officers regularly led their men from the

¹⁴ Earl Hess, *The Union Soldier In Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat*, (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1997), 56-57.

¹⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 331.

¹⁶ Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle*, 57.

frontline. Often on horseback, officers would lead by example, shouting words of encouragement to their troops while maliciously waving a sabre at the sky. This style of leading commanded respect from their soldiers who saw their captains and generals braving the same hailstorm of lead they were. This fearlessness of field commanders was very effective at say inciting a bayonet charge or maintaining ranks on the field, it was not however, very effective at keeping officers alive. The silhouette of a man towering over their ranks on horseback bearing their sabre and wearing an officer's uniform quickly became targets of opportunity for enemy infantry and especially sharpshooters¹⁷. The sight of a valiant commander galloping across firing lines may have been an inspiring one, but ultimately portrayed just how out of touch these officers and generals were with the reality of modern battle. An unfortunate yet effective example comes in the form of major general John Sedgwick, killed by a Confederate sharpshooter at Spotsylvania. Whilst out inspecting his ranks Sedgwick came across a portion of line that was being harassed by rebel sharpshooters at long range. The men were taking cover and resorting to wildly jumping and dodging about should they need to stand, Sedgwick reacted with nothing short of disgust: “What!? What! Men dodging this way for single bullets. What will you do when they open fire along the whole line? I am ashamed of you. They couldn’t hit an elephant at this distance!”¹⁸. Sedgwick had just fatally misjudged the effective range of the rebels. No sooner after he finished his mildly inspiring tirade, a confederate bullet pierced his skull, killing him before he could fall from his horse¹⁹. Examples very similar to the case of John Sedgwick occurred all across battlefields of the Civil War. These field commanders were failing to realize the accurate killing

¹⁷ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 475.

¹⁸ Fred Ray, “The Killing of Uncle John”, *Civil War Times* 45, No. 4 (2006).

¹⁹ Ray, “The Killing of Uncle John”.

potential of new combat weaponry and were paying the ultimate price for it by placing themselves and their men in areas they believed would be out of range of the enemy without understanding what the range of their enemies' arms actually was. Commanders' failure to grasp the range at which modern warfare could be conducted contributed to the fact that Civil War officers were 15% more likely to be shot and killed than their men. For generals that number was significantly higher still, a general serving during the Civil War was 50% more likely to be killed than an enlisted private²⁰.

Sharpshooters were the ones often responsible for the killing of field commanders. Men who could accurately kill at the better half of 1,000 yards simply did not exist in combat before the Civil War and it caused all sorts of issues for commanders on both sides. Colonel William Fox realized both the danger and opportunity posed by leading in the face of accurate firepower, "This greater loss among officers did not occur because they were so much braver than the men in the ranks, but because the duties of their position while under fire involved greater personal exposure."²¹ It was due to this realization like this that Jackson and other Southern commanders ordered their sharpshooters to specifically target Federal officers on the battlefield²². This tactic worked grimly well on Civil War battlefields, such as in the case of Perryville. At Perryville three different Union officers (James S. Jackson, William R. Terrill and Colonel George Webster) were all killed on the battlefield despite re-assuring their men of the low probability of taking a bullet at long range, breaking their troops' spirit and will to fight²³. Upon realizing this tactic of gunning for the enemy's leadership at long range, commanders began to take

²⁰ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 330.

²¹ Gary Yee, "Sharpshooters", *North & South* 14, No. 2 (2012), 41.

²² Yee, "Sharpshooters", 42.

²³ Yee, "Sharpshooters", 42.

preventative measures. Officers began to stay off horseback during battle and would don the uniforms of privates to hide their rank from enemy sharpshooters²⁴, although you could still rarely keep them off the frontlines.

Artillerymen, however, were the ones who bore the brunt of new sharp shooting tactics. In wars past cannon and howitzers could easily outrange the smoothbore muskets of the infantry. That was no longer the case come the American Civil War. It was Napoleon during his conquests who employed the tactic of “moving the field guns forward with the foot soldiers to blast holes in enemy ranks and soften them up for the final charge.”²⁵, and the United States military used similar tactics to great effect in the Mexican American War. However, both the Mexican war and Napoleon's campaigns were fought with traditional smoothbore muskets, not rifles, which artillery could easily outrange. Now the tables had turned and the infantry service rifle held the range advantage over the field artillery. The smoothbore Napoleon cannons dotting Civil War battlefields while truly lethal up close, could not hope to compete with the 500 yard effective range of Enfields and Springfields, much less with the even further effective range of enemy sharpshooters. This left artillerymen vulnerable to rifle fire for the first time in modern combat²⁶. In battles such as Yorktown and Vicksburg, Union sharpshooters were able to suppress defending enemy batteries, killing their horses to prevent their escape and ensure their capture and rendering defensive artillery positions unsafe for their crews²⁷.

The tactical advantage sharpshooters held over artillery has interestingly been confined to the American Civil War. With the majority of field artillery pieces being smoothbore Napoleons

²⁴ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 475.

²⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 473.

²⁶ Yee, “Sharpshooters”, 42.

²⁷ Yee, “Sharpshooters”, 42.

accurate out to 250 yards or less²⁸, sharpshooters could easily outrange the gun crews from the safety of range. So frustrating was this to the artillery that it was not uncommon for gunners to turn their guns on the supposed direction of fire, distracting them from their primary objective of supporting infantry or repelling an assault²⁹. It was not until breech loading rifled artillery such as the Parrot guns became more prevalent after the war that the advantage again swung towards ranged artillery. A rifled piece could easily outrange a sharpshooters rifle and match it's accuracy at the close range (for the artillery that is) of under 1,000 yards, but the lack of rifled artillery on most battlefields relegated what guns were available to counter-battery fire allowing sharpshooters to continue to hold the distinct advantage over artillery regiments throughout the war.

It was the new weapons and tactics employed by sharpshooters that afforded them advantages such as this. Sharpshooters came to assume the role of "skirmishers", or lighter more elite infantry that were used to hold flanks and choke points as well as plug gaps in the line or assist the vanguard. This meant that sharpshooters rarely advanced with the main force of infantry but were rather used as a sort of special force for more niche roles, like suppressing artillery, assassinating generals or even raiding trenches later in the war³⁰. In order to aid in these specialized assignments, Union sharpshooters were often issued Sharps rifles, a shorter, lighter, breech loading rifle designed to fire using cartridges. The breech loading of cartridges allowed a soldier to load and reload his rifle much quicker, or as 1st Lieutenant Israel Greene of the Marine Corps puts it: "The difference in rapidity in loading and firing was vastly in favor of the Sharps

²⁸ Catton and McPherson, *The American Heritage New History of The Civil War*, 345.

²⁹ Yee, "Sharpshooters", 42.

³⁰ Yee, "Sharpshooters", 41-42.

rifle being as four or five to one.”³¹. In addition, a breech loaded meant that a soldier did not have to lower his rifle to reload, allowing him to keep his eyes on the target, reload and relocate all at the same time³². The state of the art breech-loaders afforded Yankee sharpshooters and cavalry tactical advantages before unheard of. One fairly ridiculous example being the crossing of the Chattahoochee River in Georgia. Union cavalry carrying Sharps and Spencer breech loading carbines were caught fording neck deep water by rebel forces on the banks. The situation looked like the imminent slaughter of dismounted cavalry attempting to ford a river, and slaughtered they would have been if they were armed with traditional muskets. However, the Federal cavalry had state of the art waterproof metallic cartridges and the ability to load their rifles from the breech in any position, including underwater. Taking advantage of this the Northerners would disappear under the water's surface, fumble a cartridge into their rifle before emerging at random from the river to fire at the rebels, then disappear underwater again and repeat the process. So shocked were the rebels at the sight of this unorthodox tactic, they all surrendered to the cavalry trapped in the river³³. This action proved somewhat vital to Sherman’s march on Atlanta, and would certainly have been a Union bloodbath were it not for these new breech-loaders.

³¹ David Sullivan, “The New Model 1859 Sharps Breech-loading Rifle and the Marine Corps: The Field Trial, *Military Collector and Historian* 58, No. 1 (2006), 67.

³² Sullivan, “The New Model 1859 Sharps Breech-Loading rifle and the Marine Corps: The Field Trial”, 67.

³³ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 752.



Figure 4
A Sharps Breech Loading Rifle
(Note the lack of a ramrod beneath the barrel)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharps_rifle#/media/File:Berdan_Sharps_rifle.jpg

Sherman's march on Atlanta taught Federal troops and commanders much more than simply the unorthodox advantages of breech loaders however. The terrain and climate of the region proved to hold far more issues than leaders had anticipated. Heavily wooded areas provide both excellent cover for armies. Easy to see and fire out of yet difficult to infiltrate, assaults on wood lines and groves proved to be especially violent, such as the case with the "hornets nest" at Antietam and the areas surrounding Kennesaw Mountain. In addition to cover, forests also afforded massive formations of troops superb concealment. General Sherman himself noted on his campaign across Georgia that "Habitually the woods served as a screen, and we often did not realize the fact that our enemy had retreated till he was already miles away"³⁴. This level of concealment afforded to entire armies had a great impact on Civil War combat as commanders would have no idea the size or location of an enemy force on the other side of a grove, if they even knew there was an enemy force there. Commanders began to exercise caution when maneuvering armies around wooded areas, of which there were a lot, to avoid ambushes or unexpectedly running into a large enemy formation. Such as the case with Sherman in Georgia

³⁴ Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat*, 60.

this caution would often allow a defeated armies to retreat considerable distances under the cover of foliage, allowing them to erect hasty defenses and fight another bloody battle in the future.

Forests also provided soldiers valuable cover on the battlefield. Trees and larger rocks would stop bullets or at least deflect them, making firing through large groups of both virtually impossible. Even artillery fire was not always effective at clearing wood lines. While solid and explosive shot from cannons could certainly fell trees either with direct hits or ensuing explosions, it was very hard to accurately direct fire into wood lines as any solid object such as a tree, a particularly tall rock or even saplings or large collections of branches could deflect these large projectiles with relative ease and regularity. Ricochets such as these not only greatly diminished the impact of artillery fire on wooded redoubts, they also proved deadly for friendly forces fighting in or around the area being shelled. One such example of this comes from a Sergeant from the 113th Illinois during the battle for Vicksburg. During an assault the Sergeant in question was laying on his back staring to the rear in order to avoid a fusillade of cannon fire flying over his head. In this position he saw a Union cannon fire and the projectile snap a “large sapling” clean in half, redirecting the shot into his own regiment pinned to the hill.³⁵

Friendly fire such as this was a major issue for artillery throughout the war. It became a general rule of thumb that artillery should not fire overhead, or anywhere near for that matter, friendly infantry. Shell fuses were all too often defective and liable to go off too early, right above or around friendly infantry.³⁶ Generally Confederate shells proved to be more defective more often, likely due to their lack of effective and efficient heavy industry. Inadequacies in artillery equipment and tactics was nearly always due to the antiquated artillery pieces being

³⁵ Bjorn Skaptason, “The Chicago Light Artillery at Vicksburg”, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 106, No. 34, (2013), 444.

³⁶ Catton and McPherson, *The American Heritage New History of The Civil War*, 347.

utilized during the war. Conversely to small arms technology, artillery technology was lacking at the time of the Civil War, creating the ironic situation of small arms being able to outrange artillery on Civil War Battlefields. The cannon that was most common on the battlefield was an old piece, obsolete even by the outbreak of war. Known as “The Napoleon” due to its inception in France at the time of Napoleon's conquests, the cannon was a smooth bore 12 pounder (12 pounder meaning the solid cannonball it fired weighed 12 pounds) gun-howitzer. The Napoleon was designed in the mid-1850s to replace both field guns and howitzers with a single standard piece, hence the term gun-howitzer.³⁷ Originally, guns were used to fire solid shot at a flat trajectory while howitzers fired explosive shells into the air to blanket larger areas of a battlefield with explosions and shrapnel, the Napoleon could do both.



Figure 5
An American M1857 Gun-Howitzer, or 12 Pounder “Napoleon”

³⁷ Stanley Falk, “How the “Napoleon” Came to America”, *Civil War History* 10, No. 2, (1964), 151-152.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canon_obusier_de_12#/media/File:CW_Arty_M1857_Napoleon_front.jpg

Being a smoothbore cannon these Napoleons were not known for their accuracy. A Napoleon cannon could only accurately hit a target within 250 yards with its solid shot. This was hardly even half the effective range of even standard issue rifles of the time. With the American Civil War being the first large scale major conflict fought using the combined arms of infantry and artillery, it was the first time in military history that artillerymen were just as vulnerable to the infantry's small arms as the infantry was to their cannons.³⁸ Despite this glaring inadequacy however, this obsolete "gun-howitzer" remained the most effective form of artillery throughout the war, making it a rare example of obsolete technology remaining effective on the battlefield.

There were two reasons the Napoleon remained in arsenals and on the battlefield in the years leading up to the Civil War, The Crimean War and canister shot. In April of 1855 Major Mordecai, an ordnance officer, left Washington with two other officers to study European conflict, primarily the Crimean war. Being the ordnance officer of the three men sent by then Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis³⁹, Mordecai was to focus on European artillery. Throughout the Crimean war Mordecai noticed "no "cannon of extraordinary caliber or range", no breech loading piece and only one type of rifled cannon." In addition, Mordecai was surprised by the Siege of Sevastopol, where "scarcely any novelties in artillery were brought into use, or even tried."⁴⁰ The lack of diversity in artillery during battles such as these during the Crimean War influenced Mordecai's view of the pieces that were in use, which were mainly 12 pound

³⁸ Yee, "Sharpshooters", 42.

³⁹ Falk, "How the Napoleon Came To America", 150.

⁴⁰ Falk, "How the Napoleon Came to America", 151.

Napoleons. That's because European armies, fighting in pitched battles, wearing brightly colored uniforms on open fields had no need for any artillery larger or more accurate than their Napoleons. Even during sieges, such as Sevastopol, Europeans did not see any need for large caliber quick firing guns as the Napoleon could do all the damage they needed. However, this was a European war, fought through pitched battles on flat plains. There were no trench lines and fortified defensive positions on the tactical high ground, these European conflicts were not the “modern war” the Civil War would become a decade later, and European equipment reflected this.

With the information he had gathered Mordecai returned to the United States arguing for the adoption of the 12 pounder Napoleon cannon, albeit with some slight modifications to make the mount lighter and more maneuverable.⁴¹ In 1857 the cannon was adopted as the M1857 12 pounder Napoleon, replacing nearly all other field artillery in the United States as it had in Europe, solidifying the Napoleon as the premier artillery piece for Civil War batteries. On the battlefield these smoothbore cannons, however old, were able to hold their own time and again. The success of these batteries of Napoleon's often hinged upon the use of canister shot. Canister was essentially a tin can packed full of individual lead musket balls, when fired the metal balls would spread out over a large area, brutally cutting down infantry charges. Essentially “the cannon became a huge sawed off shotgun”⁴², able to sweep aside any and sometimes all incoming infantry.

⁴¹ Falk, “How the Napoleon Came to America”, 153-154.

⁴² Catton and McPherson, *American Heritage New History of the Civil War*, 345.



Figure 6

Canister shot of an M1857 12-pounder Napoleon

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canister_shot#/media/File:MHS_canister_shot.jpg

Time and again the scene of valiant Napoleon gun crews holding off massive waves of enemy infantry with furious canister shot appeared across battlefields. One particular harrowing example being Battery E of the Chicago Light Artillery at Shiloh. Positioned right at the front of Union camp at the Shiloh Branch, Captain Waterhouse and his battery bore the full force of the Confederate surprise attack along with Sherman's infantry that morning. Battery E remained at the very frontline even while they were being outflanked through the woods. During this flanking Captain Waterhouse was wounded in the thigh, leaving Lieutenant Abbot in charge of the battery, but not before he was able to order retreat. Mid-retreat the Battery was ordered to unlimber in a hardly defensible location and continue fighting. Lieutenant Abbot took a minie

ball in the shoulder during this hasty defense, leaving another Lieutenant, John Fitch, in charge as Union infantry was slowly but steadily pushed to the rear. With infantry support pushed back to the rear Battery E was now surrounded on three sides. With six guns Battery E fired wildly into the enemy masses, northern soldiers were absolutely stunned at the sight of now Lieutenant Fitch's Battery desperately sending canister to their front sides *and rear* until the very last minute possible. Fitch was able to escape the Confederate assault with just three cannons, three horses and amazingly all surviving gun crews. The battered battery then joined Battery B of the Chicago Light in front of the Shiloh Church, where their Napoleons held out for 3 more hours of gruesome combat before finally retreating. With half of battery E being wiped out during their harrowing stands, Fitch and the rest of the battery were sent to Pittsburgh landing, leaving the six guns of the Chicago Light Artillery Battery B as Sherman's only remaining artillery after Shiloh.⁴³

Ironically it was often the obsolete tactics commanders employed that allowed the as well obsolete Napoleon to inflict such heavy losses. The infamous large scale frontal assault over open terrain gave Napoleon gunners incredibly easy targets and the open fields over which the attacks often took place offered no cover to the advancing soldiers. Infantry could have simply sat back at range and picked off artillerymen at ranges the cannons could not effectively and accurately reach, but the antiquated "spirit of the offensive" kept driving infantry straight into the canister shot of the Napoleon over and over again. Scenes such as Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg or the surprise attack at Shiloh the morning of April 2nd saw "thousands of Confederate soldiers, formed in tightly packed lines of battle... sweeping forward through... open fields to destroy the

⁴³ Bjorn Skaptason, "The Chicago Light Artillery at Shiloh", *Journal of The Illinois State Historical Society* 104, No. 12, (2011), 86-88.

Union army.”⁴⁴ It was this method of advancing in “tightly packed lines of battle” over “open fields” that left infantry vulnerable to the fire of cannons, which allowed light artillery batteries such as Battery E at Shiloh to inflict devastating losses even in the face of overwhelming enemy numbers, not dissimilar to the impact the machine gun would have on The First World War.

Artillery in the Civil War was nearly entirely used in either defensive or supportive roles. While the Napoleons of the time were known to be quite maneuverable pieces when limbered to a horse, it was impossible to advance these guns with attacking infantry. Accurate rifle fire and the fear of friendly fire relegated batteries to defensive locations that could cover choke points of suppress enemy artillery in support of infantry during an attack. Even when used as an offensive weapon against redoubts and strong points the light Napoleon cannon proved ineffective. Such as the first assault of Stockade Redan at Vicksburg where two batteries of the Chicago Light Artillery were ordered to forward positions to aid in the attack. Each battery fired over 200 rounds each at the stockade, to little effect as the attack failed to breach the Confederate works, ending in a stalemate.⁴⁵

As stalemate became more common across all fronts more artillery was brought into use to aid in this new style of warfare. New 3 inch iron rifles were brought forward to use against fortifications. With rifled barrels and a 10 pound conical shot similar to an oversized minie ball, these guns fired at a high velocity with a very flat trajectory. While ineffective against most infantry on the field rifles such as these had great penetrating capabilities allowing them to fire clean through wooden bastions and some parapets.⁴⁶ These advanced rifles had little use on the

⁴⁴ Skaptason, “The Chicago Light Artillery at Shiloh”, 86.

⁴⁵ Skaptason, “The Chicago Light Artillery at Vicksburg”, 441-442.

⁴⁶ Catton and McPherson, *The American Heritage New History of The Civil War*, 345

field however, as commanders preferred the increased anti-infantry effectiveness of the Napoleon over the counter-battery effectiveness of rifled cannons. Another reason being no one had figured out any sort of system of indirect fire yet, gunners could only engage what they could see. Rifled pieces had ranges well beyond line of sight and could have effectively been used to harass or bombard enemy positions from the safety of long range, had anyone actually figured out how to do it.



Figure 7

A replica 10 pounder Parrott Rifle

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parrott_rifle#/media/File:American_Civil_War_era_10_lb_parrott_rifle_used_in_the_battle_of_Corydon_reenactment.jpg



Figure 8
A 10 pound rifled shell

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_rifle#/media/File:JamesShell.jpeg

The Civil War exists as the world's first glimpse into modern warfare. The honorable pitched battle was a thing of the past as armies began to dig in to avoid annihilation at the barrels of modern weaponry. Officers would no longer don bright uniforms and valiantly lead infantry charges on horseback, and the battles of tightly packed battle formations and volley fire had become battles for positions. Warfare was not all tactical maneuvering and statistics anymore, as a strong defensive position bristling with rifles and cannon could decimate any attacker. Battlefields such as Petersburg became a grim foreshadowing of the Western Front in World War 1, trading breastworks for trench lines and canister shot for machine guns. The Civil War took place at an interesting point in military history, where small arms outranged the artillery and commanders took their sabers into the trenches. It was clear that warfare had become something different entirely by 1864 and was evolving in ways no one could predict. It wasn't until the end

of 1914 that the rest of the world understood what war had become, at the cost of tens of thousands of lives.

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Chapter 2

Noah Drouin, “Imaging Death: Reactions and Studies of American Civil War Photography”

In 2019, America’s relationship with death is detached. Dead individuals, especially when it comes to gory deaths, are not broadcast or published on major news outlets unless covered with excessive editing. During the Civil War in the United States, the camera had just recently been invented and available for commissions. With censorship laws unlike that of today’s, the camera became a new addition to reporting and once the Civil War broke out, images of the war dead became widely published and distributed. Since then, a historical debate has broken out over how antebellum Americans truly reacted to the photographs that were gracing galleries in their towns. Some scholars “assume that antebellum viewers were shocked, and their view of war transformed, by these photographs”⁴⁷. In today’s world, photographs are seen as perhaps the most telling way to view and experience the Civil War. This is disputed however, as “they [photographs] are, we learn, vulnerable to exactly the same obscurities of other forms of evidence. The simplest documentary questions of who did what, when, where, and why may be impossible to answer.”⁴⁸ Journalistic practices of the 1860’s has negatively impacted photography’s ability to be seen as the most optimal medium to experience the Civil ar.

⁴⁷ Franny Nudelman, *John Brown’s Body: Slavery, Violence and the Culture of War* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

⁴⁸ Alan Trachtenberg, “Albums of War: On Reading Civil War Photographs” *Representations* No. 9, Special Issue: American Culture Between the Civil War and World War I (Winter, 1985), pp. 1-32. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3043765>.

Further, photography of the Civil War era was not a source of shock and horror as some scholars argue, due to Antebellum American's preexisting relationship with death.

The citizens of the United States in the mid-19th century were neither shocked nor horrified by the pictures of the war dead. In the mid 1800's, photography was still a new invention. All of a sudden, humans were able to capture moments and life and preserve them forever. This was a prospect that was likely unthinkable just years before. This was where the common assumption of American feelings about wartime photography being shocking takes hold. However, there exists evidence that this may not have been true. This is due in large part to the culture of Americans in regard to death at the time. Franny Nudelman, professor of English and Literature at Carleton University in Canada stated that "...nineteenth-century viewers by contrast, were not likely shocked by the sight of corpses or to expect unadulterated realism from photographs." Antebellum Americans seemed to be rather familiar with death. Franny Nudelman illustrates this point by providing an image of a mother holding her dead infant in 1855. A main goal of this practice was to preserve the memory of the individual in a time where other methods such as videos and voice recordings were not possible.

Not only did the soldiers experience the war firsthand, there were instances in which civilians themselves were part of the direct casualties of the war. One particular instance occurred during the First Battle of Bull Run in Virginia. There, eighty-five-year-old resident Judith Henry's house was obliterated by artillery fire, and she perished immediately. Many other instances of civilian casualty occurred throughout the conflict, from all over the warring territory, including the famous Sherman's March in 1864. As a result of the constant fighting, "Noncombatants were caught up in almost every military action--collateral damage as they might

be designated today.”⁴⁹ This was not the only way civilians experienced the war damage themselves, either. In an era without modern medical practices for the soldiers, common diseases such as smallpox ravaged not just their camps, but the populations surrounding them. The nature of the war being fought essentially in the backyards of the masses, they became accustomed to the effects of artillery, weapons and disease. This also became the case for those who were in working in the hospital that injured or diseased soldiers would be treated at. Faust uses the example of Cornelia Hancock, a Union nurse who said “one can get used to anything” when speaking about death, and even more morbidly stating that to her a single death did not mean “anything to [her] now”⁵⁰. These firsthand experiences of war are quite different than the way that Americans of more modern wars do, due to both media sanitation and the war being fought



Figure 1.
George Eastman’s “Post-Mortem Portrait, Woman Holding Baby”.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

⁵⁰ Faust, 145

⁵¹ George Eastman, *Post-Mortem Portrait, Woman Holding Baby*. c1855. Photograph.

on foreign grounds rather than domestically. With this being the case, it is even less likely that they were surprised at the photos they were seeing.

It is important to observe the relationship that they had with the death of those close to them, which was very different. As was implied with the example of a mother holding her dead infant, Americans of the time had a very intense bond with family and in this instance the casualties of war certainly did horrify. When it came to the wide-angle shots of bodies littering a battlefield, it was much more focused on public consumption by photographers who will be discussed further. In the case of soldier deaths, their families grieved. In fact, even with such photos available to the public “Civil War letter and diaries writers confronting news of loss repeatedly proclaimed their inability to “realize” a death-using the word with now antiquated precision to mean to render it real in their own minds.”⁵² Even with the existence of photography making the deaths of the war very real, the grief of losing a loved one was so intense that it invoked denial. The importance of photography held tremendous importance for the soldiers as well. One such story depicting this as well as reinforcing America's relationship with death at the time is that of Sergeant Amos Humiston, who for a time was known as the “Unknown Soldier”. Humiston was killed at Gettysburg and his body was found clutching a photograph of his children. The very nature of denial was very pronounced in this era as very little evidence could be provided for a death besides a visual, either physically or through a photograph. Amos’ death is significant in understanding overall closeness with death that Americans had during the war because without the photograph of his children being recovered and presented to his wife Philinda, the confirmation of his death may never have come.

⁵² Nudelman, 144

Americans at this time also had very intense grieving processes that linked them closer to death, furthering that photography of dead soldiers did not shock them. When it came to the deaths of soldiers, some communities would hold observance ceremonies of the dead. According to Faust, “Strangers visiting the cemetery often joined these observances, providing mourners for



Figure 2.
Matthew Brady’s “Pictures of the Dead at Antietam”⁵³

the broader community.”⁵⁴ This brought the citizens and dead soldiers even closer together. Further, American’s grieving processes of the time were much more visible than that of today’s. After the death of a loved one, mourning wares were worn for upwards of a year, starting in full black garb and transitioning to dark tones with color, such as lavender. The concept of entirely

⁵³ Matthew Brady, *Antietam, Maryland. Dead Soldiers on Battlefield*, 1862, 1 negative (2 plates) : glass, stereograph, wet collodion, Library of Congress.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/cwp/item/2018671108/>.

⁵⁴ Faust, 78.

public, open-casket funerals and visible mourning techniques of the era are far different than what exists today, and demonstrates the close relationship antebellum America's had with death.

Specific images of war dead photography can corroborate the point that antebellum Americans were not shocked. The purpose of the aforementioned photography was, as previously stated, to preserve the memory of the individual. An important distinction to be made in regards to photograph practices are the different styles of photographs that were taken. Oftentimes photography after a battle focused on wide images showing the battlefield with the dead laid across the landscape. This style of photograph specifically contributes to a depersonalization between viewer and subject(s). This style of photography was used often in Brady's work, such as a photograph of dead confederate soldiers lying in a long ditch after the Battle of Fredericksburg. This then can be compared to more striking photographs such as Thomas C. Roche's photographs after the Third Battle of Petersburg at "Fort Roche". Nudelman cites these photographs as "vertical" as opposed to the aforementioned wide photographs, and that they have the capability of "create(s) a powerful intimacy between the viewer and the corpse."⁵⁵

Another point of contention is the notion that wartime photographs, especially of the war dead, is the ultimate way of experiencing the war and understanding what it was truly like. However, photographs of the dead are not enough to truly depict what the war was like, and there are two reasons for this. Firstly, Alan Trachtenberg, among other historians dispute this. Trachtenburg disputes this by using evidence of the practice of photographers. The issue of Civil War photography as a profession rests upon the existence of news outlets and monetization of photographs. Wartime photographers such as Matthew Brady had teams of photographers go out

⁵⁵ Nudelman, 130.

and take pictures post-battle. Trachtenberg writes about Brady's practices and what those practices meant in regards to photography consumption, stating that "he [Brady] also bought or otherwise appropriated all the war images that came within his reach to include within his several published series of stereographs, album cards, or large mounted prints."⁵⁶ Therefore, in publishing large albums of photographs and widely monetizing photographs, Brady effectively removed the emotional and personal attachment to them for the viewer. These public viewings actually had the general public in a state of awe more than anything. One article from the New York Times wrote, "you will see hushed, reverend groups standing around these weird copies of carnage, bending down to look in the pale faces of the dead."⁵⁷ One of Brady's main contributors to these galleries, Alexander Gardner is responsible for taking one of the most famous pictures in the Civil War catalog, posing it with the help of his team to do so. Since working under Brady, Gardner had experience in the realm of after-battle photography. In the aftermath the Battle of Gettysburg in June 1863, Gardner came across the "Devil's Den", a sharpshooters nest used during the fight. A student of Brady, Gardner was quick to notice the opportunity that had arisen. The body was then posed and photographed and is recognized as one of the most known photographs of the entire conflict.

⁵⁶ Trachtenburg, 3.

⁵⁷ *New York Times*. 1862. "BRADY'S PHOTOGRAPHS.; Pictures of the Dead at Antietam.," October 30, 1862.

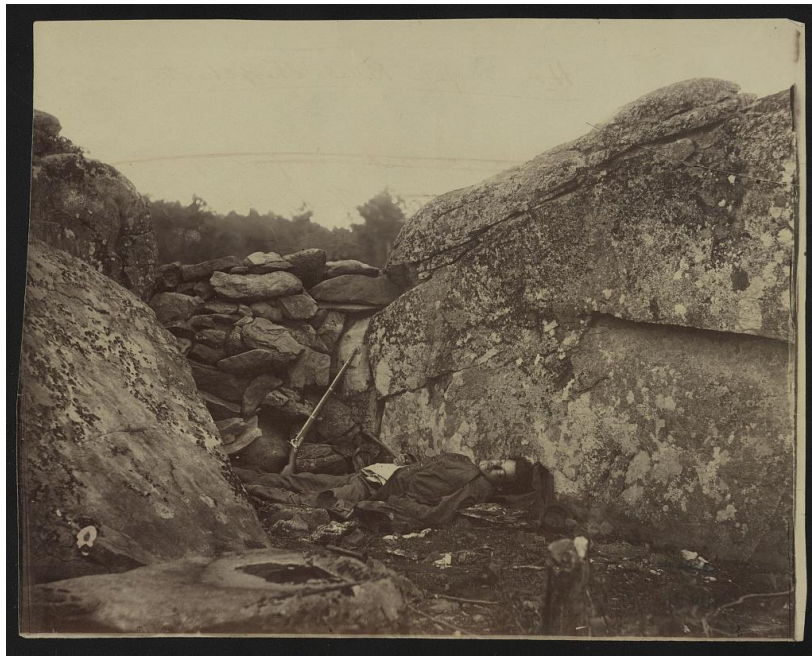


Figure 3. Alexander Gardner’s “Home of a Rebel Sharpshooter”⁵⁸

The very existence of posed photographs serves to help understand that photography is not necessarily factual in its depiction of events. Gardner did not simply take pictures of all that he saw, specifically “of the approximately 60 pictures the men made, three-quarters were of corpses, dead horses and other battle carnage...”⁵⁹ This does not appear to be a coincidence, as “[Gardner] had learned from his experience at Antietam that photographs of the aftermath were in demand by a curious public.”⁶⁰ Gardner likely understood that his works would be published for the masses to see, and wanted to create the most striking images, hence his posing of the devil’s den sniper. Unfortunately, this meant that in galleries, what the public saw was very much up to the person who took the shot.

⁵⁸ Alexander Gardner, *Home of a Rebel sharpshooter*, Photograph, Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/2012647605/.

⁵⁹ Ford Risley, *Civil War Journalism* (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2012).

⁶⁰ Risley, 49.

The implications of war-torn battlefields and bodies being the prevailing images of the conflict, especially in 21st century America comes with consequences. Photographers showed invalidity in the truth of how the war played out, at least in part. Nudelman makes the argument that with the dead soldier being the enduring image of the Civil War, many more aspects of its memory are sacrificed. She writes, “While antebellum sources ruminate over what the photograph cannot reveal, in time these images...have come to represent the reality of war. As the enduring popularity of Civil War photographs indicates, our tendency to accept the corpse as a sign of truth that might, in its felt intensity, encompass the whole of the war.”⁶¹ Because these pictures were so often seen both in 1860’s and today’s America, there is a tendency for viewers

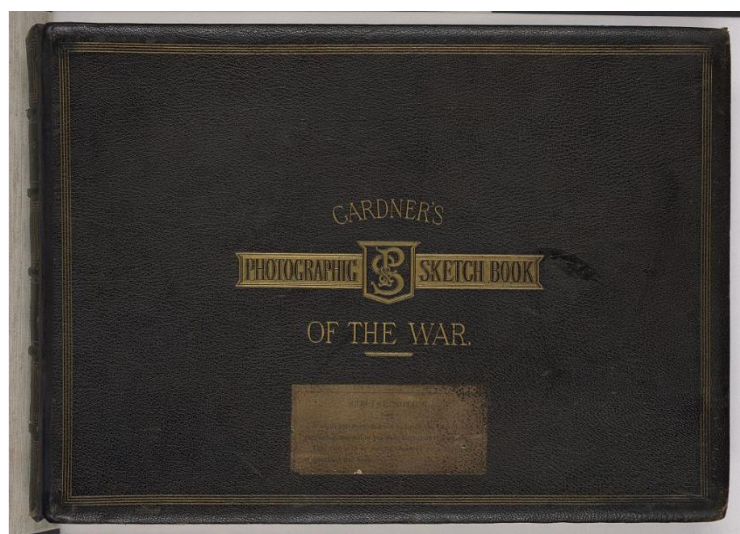


Figure 4. Alexander Gardner’s Photographic Sketchbook of the War⁶²

⁶¹ Nudelman, 133.

⁶² Alexander Gardner and Alfred R Waud, *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the War*. United States Virginia, 1866. (Washington: Philp & Solomons) Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/01021785/>.

to view the Civil War through the gruesome lens and nothing more. Again with Gardner, his own embellishments had shown through in the works that he published, specifically his *Photographic Sketchbook of the War*, published in 1866 after the war had ended. Alan Trachtenberg discovered another issue with Gardner's practice besides the photo itself. In this sketchbook, Gardner accompanied each photographic with a caption; a curious concept considering that many of Gardner's work took place when he arrived after a battle had concluded, and in the majority of cases the photographs were not even taken by Gardner himself. Publications like the sketchbook contributes to the issue of photographs not being completely indicative of the war, "the very presence of a text making metaphoric claims may itself bring forth ambiguity. Gardner's effort to contain the image, to suffuse or saturate its quiddity with ideological import-which is to say, to distance the viewer from the specificity of the image."⁶³ This process of sorting was not simply limited to Gardner either. Viewing these photographs in the era in which they were published, citizens were now subject to the interpretation of the photograph not just through the lens of the photographer, but the words that captioned them. Today, viewers of the photographs similarly are not always able to determine exactly what happened.

Counter arguments exist in favor that Civil War dead photography was not a negative aspect of journalism of the era. The intentions of the more well-known photographers is seen as good according to Bibiana Obler of George Washington University, who wrote "To think of it [war dead photography purely as commercializing (violence) seems wrong because it was a source of information."⁶⁴ Surely, photographers did not have completely malicious intentions in

⁶³ Trachtenburg, 16.

⁶⁴ Jane O'Brien, "Civil War Photos Raised Familiar Questions about War Dead," September 22, 2015. <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34294710>.

mind when photographing, but their practices also surely impact the way the war was viewed by the public and how it is studied now. Returning to Gardner's photograph after Gettysburg, David C. Ward, senior historian emeritus at the Smithsonian analyzed the effect Gardner's lens had on the public. He highlights the objective accuracy of both Gardner's posing of the devil's den subject as well as the caption giving to the photo, writing "He [Gardner] wants to make money and he wants to repeat the sensationalism of the Antietam pictures. And people took it at face value. It was seen as fact and truth when it was anything but. It was a staged, theatrical recreation of something that never existed and that is profoundly troubling."⁶⁵ Only after studying the photograph a century plus later did it become known that the subject of the photo was not even a sharpshooter to begin with, but a infantryman labeled a "rebel", making the caption both made up by Gardner and not factual. This also pushed politically charged undertones to the image as well.

The Civil War is remembered as the first major American conflict to be photographed. With that, thousands of photographs were taken throughout its duration. The issue that exists is that according to those who were taking the pictures, the masses demanded images of death for their own curiosity. The debate among historians regarding public reaction to these photographs at the time leans towards the notion that citizens were not shocked by the photographs, though it is disputed. Instead, these photographs that were on display existed as a means of fascination more than the source of horror. American citizens lamented in the death of their fellows, however this transitioned to pure grief only when loved ones were among the dead. Compared to Americans of today, those who lived in the mid-19th century had much more direct contact with their dead kin. Simply, pre-exposure to death in its physical form was enough to transition the

⁶⁵ O'Brien, 3

public from horror to fascination. Because of that, since their creation into today, the most famous of photographs are shots of bodies lying across a field. As examples of photographic practices of the time will show, the validity of photographs is called into question by historians of today. Right from the moment a photographer decided to pose a dead subject, down to the caption a photo received in a subsequent compilation book, the subjectivity of what the masses were consuming is evident. In an era with no easy access to other sources other than a local newspaper, there was no reason for citizens to take the photographs into question.

When analyzing these two historical debates, parallels were simple to find. Firstly, dispelling the debate about death in the lives of American citizens and their reaction to dead photography had implications on the photographs that became popular. Because of this demand, Gardner and his contemporaries were inclined to pose, embellish and create stories about what they were capturing. This worked in capturing their audience of the day, but this has extended into the present day, as “increasingly homogeneous and widely disseminated new stories received the stamp of objectivity, the victimized body emerged as a material analog for fact.”⁶⁶ This immediately impacts the second debate regarding studies of photographs now. Famous photographs must be called into question on all fronts about the who, what, when, where and why. In an America without journalistic standards, photographs were taken for the sake of the interested public, by any means necessary.

⁶⁶ Nudelman, 127.

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Chapter 3

Cody Gadsby, "The Civil War, Human Devastation, and the Evolution of Medicine"

The Civil War was a bloody war with a medical field that wasn't prepared for all the violence. If the field of medicine stayed the way it was, there would have been significantly more casualties. Out of the catastrophe of war there was something special that happened. The medical corps was evolving the field of medicine in new and better ways while making procedures more efficient. The medical branch was performing more than just amputations; they were figuring out how to treat sickness and preventing infections with clean clothes and bandages. When someone was sick, they weren't bleeding people anymore like before the war, but they were making medications to fight illnesses. This paper will explain how the medical corps evolved throughout the war. Starting with First Bull Run and showing the changes towards the end of the war. Will also combat an argument of Civil War medicine was not advancing due to high mortality rates. Then showing that the Union was leading the way with evolving medicine. Will also go through technologies that progressed medicine which, includes hospital regulations, ambulances, anesthesia and plastic surgery techniques. Medicine did advance through the entirety of the war. Civil war medicine wasn't just amputating limbs, but that it evolved the field in many ways and made medicine more efficient.

At the beginning of the Civil War it was a mad scramble for both sides to get prepared. Moving resources while also starting to build up their armies for the war. There was a collection of resources and products that needed to be manufactured. People were getting new jobs that were created to support the war effort. Men were getting drafted and volunteering for war and needed to be trained through the Army. Only a certain number of people were prepared for the

war to start. It was a chaotic site with soldiers not being totally ready for battle and, society was not ready for what was to come. The one area that was the most prepared was the medical corps stated by historians “Medical officers, as a rule, were better fitted in their branch of service than were most other volunteers.”⁶⁷ With the medical field being of utmost importance to a war effort, it was good that they were prepared. It also helped that the medical corps had a good base to start with so, that they could evolve the field and make it more efficient. This was valuable for the medical corps because it would be easy for them to start making changes in the field for the better. The doctors could easily start implementing their new ideas into the field.

The first change they made to the field was an easy one. The creation and operation of field hospitals. The culture of medicine before the war was that you were taken care of at home by family. At that time everything ran through the family and the mother and other women in the family would be the care givers if someone fell ill. Only if it was very serious would a doctor be called to the house not a hospital. People saw hospitals as a place where you go to die and the home is where you were cared for. The use of a hospital was changing the culture of medicine historians found “When sick in civilian life, men were mostly cared for at home, by the women in their families”⁶⁸. It had some resistance at first but there was an overall change in thinking that it was now the logical thing to do. This was the first step in how medicine progressed, it also shows what the standard was for medicine before the war. It was one way that medical field was changed in a cultural aspect. They were now being treated by doctors and not their mothers and sisters. This was just the first step in medical corps evolving medicine for the better, by providing more qualified care givers.

⁶⁷ S.C. Gordon, “REMINISCENCES OF THE CIVIL WAR FROM A SURGEON’S POINT OF VIEW, Part II.” 2015

⁶⁸ Margaret Humphreys, *Marrow of Tragedy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013) 20.

The First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861 in Virginia showed how the medical field wasn't prepared for war. It was a catastrophic failure for the field. It showed them that they needed to make a drastic change. Doctors were not prepared for all the injuries stated by historians. "Surgeons who joined the volunteer regiments needed a crash course in military medicine"⁶⁹. They had newly trained doctors in the field and they were cracking under pressure. They had never seen that many people injured in a short amount of time. They were getting hundreds of men with all sorts of battle injuries and with the doctors not being prepared there were soldiers that were put to the side and forgotten. The systems they had in place broke down and was not effective. After the battle the medical thinkers looked back on their performance and saw it as a failure according to historians "The ineptitude of the medical officers in the first year of the war was quickly recognized"⁷⁰. The medical corps were being criticized for their actions and lack of success at Bull Run. This was a wake-up call for the medical corps and was the moment when they realized there had to be change.

It was not an instant change to making medicine better, it took a while. Doctors and surgeons were learning on the fly from every battle experience. They were still making huge mistakes on the battle field. At the Battle of Fort Donelson doctors and nurses were negligent of their patients. Soldiers were taken to the field hospital and were placed on the ground around the hospital waiting to be treated. Soldiers were being forgotten by the medical staff according to experts "wounded men lay in the snow because sufficient tents had not been distributed for hospital use"⁷¹. The staff caused some deaths of men due to the elements and conditions that the men were laying in. The staff was not equipped with the proper amount of resources to be

⁶⁹ Humphreys, 30.

⁷⁰ Humphreys 21.

⁷¹ Humphreys 35.

effective. Due to the shortage of supplies and the inexperience of the medical corps they failed to adequately dispense resources to its divisions. Medical thinkers were starting to look at all the mistakes that they were making. Nonmilitary doctors and civilians decided to take on the medical corps problems head on through the creation of U.S. Sanitary Commission, also known as the (USSC). They were going to try to help the medical divisions with the basics of health care of the Union soldiers.

With the war being so bloody a private organization was formed in the North. Its purpose was to support the medical corps with advancing medicine and finding more efficient ways of doing things. It was created in 1961 as a private company outside the federal government. The organization was the Sanitary Commission according to historians “The U. S. Sanitary Commission was a Northern group organized independent of Government authority, to investigate and aid in improvement of health conditions of the soldiers. It was composed of some of the leading physicians of the day”⁷². They were looking at how soldiers were living and seeing if that was affecting their health. It was organized by wealthy citizens that were worried about the individual health of soldiers according to historians “was a civilian organization authorized by the United States government to provide medical and sanitary assistance to the Union volunteer forces during the United States.”⁷³ The USSC was teaching soldiers how to care for themselves according to archives “matters concerning the inspection of recruits, the health and sanitary condition of the volunteer forces, their general comfort and efficiency, the provision of cooks, nurses and hospitals.”⁷⁴ Corps would supply soldiers with supplies to keep up their hygiene and would inspect conditions of soldier’s living areas.. Northern people were

⁷² Marshall 143.

⁷³ United States Sanitary Commission Records.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

starting to understand that they needed organizations like this to help the soldier's everyday health not just when they had been wounded in battle.

The USSC had a few goals in mind coming into this war on how to make medicine more efficient. They wanted to set some base concepts that all the armies could follow so there would be no confusion and to make it easier to treat soldiers that were wounded on the battlefield. Their first goal was to keep the troops on the battlefield by keeping them in healthy situations and historians found evidence the USSC was focused on "maintenance of troops capable of waging war in a sense, improving and streamlining a key productive resource labor power"⁷⁵. This goal also needed manpower not only helping the medical field but it was helping the overall war by keeping the union soldier's strength up so they could fight and could keep their overwhelming numbers on the field. Their second goal was to have a pristine medical staffs whom could effectively treat soldiers on the battlefield according to experts "establishment of medical institutions that would mirror and reinforce the pattern of elite domination"⁷⁶. The two goals alone were big strides in making the medical corps better because the sanitary commission had the funding to actually start trying to build institutions that would create better doctors to go into the field and better programs on how to keep soldiers healthy. On the field these were key concepts in advancing the medical field but also in fighting the war, if you can keep your soldiers healthy you can have your army at full strength when you go into battle which was big in a war of nutrition.

The USSC was handing out common supplies to the soldiers. They were giving out toothbrushes, clean clothes, shoes, rations and bedding according to records "The Sanitary Commission was appalled that so many men lacked toothbrushes, and it instructed the soldiers to

⁷⁵ Bonnie Ellen Blustein, "To Increase the Efficiency of the Medical Department, 23.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

eat their vegetables.”⁷⁷ These common supplies would help keep common sicknesses away from soldiers. This was the first time there was an organization that was created to keep care of the soldiers and worrying about their day to day lives. This shows that they were looking at people's health in a different way, it was the start of preventative medical care. Just a way that they could care for someone's health outside of a hospital. They had figured out that if the soldiers could stay clean than they would not get sick as much. A way to keep the hospitals clear for more urgent patients.

Doctors were starting to figure out that they could give soldiers medicine to help combat some sickness. By giving them packs of medicine to take when they felt sick. Doctors were starting to prescribe drugs to patients for illnesses. They were giving soldiers medicine according to Humphreys “the army even used daily quinine rations as a means of preventing the fevers that could so thoroughly and quickly depress troop strength”⁷⁸ they were trying to limit the amount of fevers in the camp. They were trying to keep soldiers from clogging up the hospital with fevers, so inversely they were giving them medicine to treat them away from a hospital. They were evolving the medicine from treating basics to starting to think about medicines that could prevent an illness that could strike someone. The field of medicine was starting to grow and it is the foundation of today's medicine for doctors both treating and prescribing medicine to patients. Using this they used a new thought process; they began to look at how they could advance their equipment to support it.

Medical officers turned to changing the equipment they were using to make the process more efficient. The medical corps was starting to learn from their mistakes in the war. They started to understand that there were better ways to do things. One was the ambulance that could

⁷⁷ Humphreys, 132.

⁷⁸ Humphreys, 29.

transport the wounded according to historians “Ambulance wagons, or wagons especially designed for the transport of the sick and wounded”⁷⁹. They figured out that just putting men on a wagon could cause injuries to get worse or unsteady a patient. Before they started to consider ambulances, they relied on stretcher bearers to transfer the wounded. This process was very insufficient due to them not being reliable as reported by Reilly “Early on, stretcher bearers were members of the regimental band, and many fled when the battle started”⁸⁰. With the fact that they needed a more reliable way to transport soldiers they made ambulances official. This war finally forced the army to build ambulances according to experts “There was no military ambulance corps in the Union Army until August of 1862”⁸¹. They additionally figured out they could make these ambulances into mini field hospitals to treat casualties. By putting these two concepts together they were getting state of the art ambulances manufactured.



Figure 1. ⁸²

It would save time for doctors because they could be treated on site and didn't have the risk of injuries getting worse before the doctor could get to them. There's no point in putting

⁷⁹ The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion. Part III, Volume II. (3rd Surgical volume).

⁸⁰ Reilly.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² U.S. Army Surgeon General's Office. 1883. *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*. Part III, Volume II." Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine. 944.

wounded into a wagon that could worsen the soldier's injuries or could even kill them, they deduced that they just needed to make their ambulances better so that they could save lives. This thinking advanced the equipment that the medical corps used and it was one of many items that was changed to be more efficient through the war. It wasn't just equipment that was having huge strides of change in the Civil War but also the way operations were being done.

An inexperienced procedure was starting to become common for soldiers that were wounded with gunshots. Soldiers with facial gunshot wounds were starting to have plastic surgery. In the Civil War they wouldn't use skin grafts but they would use materials that could be sculpted around the face and feel like tissue according to historians, "before the introduction of organic polymers, often referred to an object that could be shaped or sculpted."⁸³ They were making the hole in their face smaller by surgeons to make the wound look smaller. Surgeons would usually try to reconstruct a wound but not always early in the war, they would just stitch



Figure 2. ⁸⁴

the wound together without reconstruction. The field had started to evolve and they would more commonly try to reconstruct it. If your jaw was blown off, they had to make flaps to fix it according to historians, "flaps were constructed and stretched across where his lower jaw would

⁸³ "Mending Broken Faces," National Museum of Civil War Medicine. October 12, 2017.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

have been.”⁸⁵ They would also stretch the cheek to fill a bullet hole if the wound was small enough. There was one leading surgeon in this field named Dr. Gurdon Buck who was the foremost plastic surgeon of the time. He came up with new techniques that was evolving the field that historians discovered “complex techniques of rotation, transposition, and/or advancement flaps, i.e., flap techniques, to reconstruct serious facial defects.”⁸⁶ He was the only doctor that had studied the old ways of advanced techniques which he took and advanced it in the war. These surgeries went beyond saving soldiers’ lives, it helped them to integrate back into society by covering their wounds.

They made huge headway in anesthesia, hemorrhage and amputation procedures as well according to historians “Civil War surgeons and surgical theorists made significant contributions to anesthesia, the management of hemorrhage, and amputation procedure”⁸⁷. They were starting to figure out how to do these things more safely and more efficiently through all the patients that they were treating through the course of the war. Anesthesia is a big part in making procedures easier because they were able to numb the patient and put them in a state where they wouldn't be in pain while they were amputating a limb. The medicine of anesthesia would allow the patient to be more likely to sit still or lie still while the operation was underway. They weren't just cutting off limbs anymore without giving the patient medicine for the pain but they're figuring out the science of how to make the patient more comfortable when an operation had to happen. They figured out new ways on how to stop the bleeding of a patient with their scientific discoveries in hemorrhaging which would come in handy when you had to amputate an arm or leg. They weren't just walking into the operating room and cutting off a limb, instead there was

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Weiss.

thought and science put behind its operation to cut someone's leg off. They had to think of what the right joint to cut at was and how to keep the patient calm and not to bleed out on the table. All these things were put together to be able to make innovations more in the process to make it less deadly because of all the advances in the field around amputations. This would make operations much easier do the fact that they now had medicine to go along with it.

The medical advancements during the war was mainly one-sided with the Union pushing it forward. With a war where the Confederates were outnumbered, they needed every man to have a rifle be able to fight this war. Medicine was not a significant priority in the South because they were fighting a war where they needed the focus on fighting compared to advancing a medical field. It was likewise hard for them to get medical supplies because they didn't have the resources to make their own according to historians "Since medicines and all medical supplies were declared contraband early in 1861, the only means of securing them from outside the limits of the Confederacy were by capture of Federal supplies"⁸⁸. Their doctors were not well trained and or disciplined in the field of medicine. Doctors would neglect their duties in the South historians discovered "Doctors may have been particularly prone to abandon their duties at night, as they were drawn off to evening parties or other entertainments."⁸⁹ At night Confederate doctors would do other things in the camp that conflicted with their duties at the hospitals. This would lead the injured to be unsupervised and was dangerous in some situations if the nurses couldn't find them. These were negligent acts by these doctors. Confederate laws stated that said the injured soldiers needed to be cared for properly in hospitals, so therefore, these doctors were breaking the law. I will be using this in my essay to distinguish the differences between

⁸⁸ Mary Louise Marshall, "Medicine in the Confederacy," *Journal of Civil War Medicine*, 2012, 143.

⁸⁹ Humphreys.

Union and Confederate medicine. The Union was the majority leader in advancing the medical field.

Evidence supports that the medical field wasn't advancing or evolving due to the soaring mortality rates. Some operations had mortality rates that were over 60%, and they didn't get better throughout the war so how can you say medicine was advancing when they couldn't even make a dent in the mortality rate of someone. Gunshot wounds to the chest had a very high mortality rate in both the Union and the Confederacy according to historians "Mortality rate for the determined cases of penetrating gunshot wounds of the chest and Confederate soldiers is therefore 63.8 per cent., or very little more than the mortality of Union soldiers"⁹⁰. It didn't matter which side of the war you were on it was just as fatal. The new bullet and rifle technology made the war even more deadly with bullets that would break limbs and explode bones in the body. It was hard to operate on soldiers with these wounds especially to the chest with all the organs and bone structures the bullet would splinter. Both the Union and the Confederacy could not figure out a way to save soldiers efficiently that were shot in the chest during the course of the battle so, soldiers knew that if they are shot in the chest they were most likely going to die on the field or on the operation table. Therefore, the medical field is wasn't getting more efficient because the numbers weren't backing up the theory that medicine was evolving during the Civil War.

It wasn't the doctor's fault so many soldiers were dying of gunshot wounds. The new technology of the minie ball was devastating to the body when it impacted. The new bullet had been modified to be accurate and had more weight to deliver a bigger blow according to Reimer "Minié ball struck a soldier the top of the cone flattened out, resulting in massive damage to tissue and splintering of bone."⁹¹ Doctors had the odds stacked against them trying operate on

⁹⁰ *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion. Part III, Volume II.*

⁹¹ Reimer.

some soldiers with wounds that were so extreme. Gunshot wounds were the most common wound on the battlefield according to historians “majority of wounds documented during the Civil War were caused by the Minié ball.”⁹² Surgeons would get better at saving lives with practice but, there were places being shot that the doctors had no chance in. One way they could save the soldiers was amputating the leg that’s bone was completely shattered according to researchers “if the bone was badly damaged, Civil War surgeons quickly learned that the best chance of survival was through the use of amputation.”⁹³ Doctors had figured out how to operate on a gunshot wounds it was just a matter of where it was. If it was in a spot where it hit important organs doctors had no shot in saving the soldier. Critics can’t fault Civil War doctors for losing patients to gun wounds since the weapon technology was so far ahead of the medical technology. Even today surgeons can’t save everyone that is shot due to the place of the bullet. They did learn from these wounds and figured out what they could do so they did do some good in a bad situation.

At the beginning of the war doctors knew how to perform amputations and quickly realized that amputations were going to be commonly performed in the field hospitals. Doctors performed a lot of amputations so much the public quickly learned of this practice. The public criticism forced them to change who could perform amputations, according to a historian “Only the most senior and experienced surgeons performed amputations. These changes were put into effect because of the public perception.”⁹⁴ Not all doctors were performing amputations. Only the most experienced doctors on the staff were permitted to do amputations. The medical corps was starting to set up regulations on which doctors could do certain operations to make the

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Reilly.

procedures more efficient and less deadly. Medical thinkers were starting to react to the needs to the field hospitals and making the procedures safer for patients.

Doctors were starting to use different medicines to make operations more comfortable for patients. Also, it helped with the patients from moving and making it harder to operate. At the start of the war doctors didn't use a lot of medicines at the beginning of the war historians discovered "amputation without the merciful use of ether or chloroform was rare"⁹⁵. By the end of the war they were using it more frequently during operations. It made operations more efficient because the person wasn't struggling. This was making operation faster and more efficient. They were taking a closer look at amputations to make them more efficient. Doctors had started to realize that timing was key with amputations according to historians "As the war went on, it was noticed that if amputation was done within 24 hours, mortality was lower than if performed after more than 48 hours"⁹⁶. There was a 26% chance of mortality rate with amputations in the field, but if they did the amputation within 24 hours that rate dropped significantly. Medical corps was making progress with the operation through the war that saved more lives. This is a huge discovery for doctors and most importantly soldiers that needed the operation. This was a huge advancement in the steps of medicine better they are now able to save more men's lives by doing the operations earlier.

Civil War was looked at as just basic medicine, but that it evolved the field in many ways and made medicine more efficient. Medical corps made advancements in medical technology and medicines throughout the war. They discovered that new medicines that made operations better and safer for soldiers. The medical corps invented ambulances that would transfer troops and not make their injuries worse. They were able to design a field hospitals system where they

⁹⁵ Humphreys, 30.

⁹⁶ Reilly.

weren't dysfunctional and able to treat soldiers effectively. They learned more about surgical procedures and were able to decrease the mortality rate throughout the war and how to try to fix wounds so they wouldn't show. The medical field was greatly improved through the war it didn't even resemble what it looked like before the war. After the war the medical field was more organized and had doctors that were specializing in operations due to the regulations that were set during the war. The Civil War caused the field of medicine to evolve and become more efficient which set up medicine's future for the better.

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Chapter 4

Danielle Vallee, “A Different Type of Working Women”

During the Civil War men left home to fight in the war, leaving women home to assume new roles. Women in the Union often took on the industrial jobs that the men left behind, and they worked to support the war cause. Women of the Confederacy experienced more hardship because of unfulfilled support by their government. They lived in a war zone where armies burned crops, obstructed transportation, and stole food for themselves. Women grew desperate to find ways to support themselves, and one way was to engage in prostitution. Historians have largely ignored experiments in legal prostitution during the Civil War. Perhaps, scholars have avoided Civil War prostitution because out of the legacy of conservative Victorian beliefs regarding sex and gender roles. Ultimately, examining the experiment of legal prostitution in Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee casts light into the lives of soldiers and women, public opinion and policy, and medical practice.

Soldiers of the Union army who were stationed in the Confederacy hundreds of miles away from their homes were expected to march and fight in battles, but often soldiers were settled at camps for weeks at a time with nowhere to walk and no one to engage with for battle. Soldiers wrote home to their families, but often because of issues in mail distribution soldiers did not receive letters back, they played games like “checks, chess, and poker”⁹⁷, drank spirits, were exposed to “visual and fictional representations of sex”⁹⁸, and with the new freedom of being away from families and spouses while stationed in the Confederacy often sought out prostitutes

⁹⁷ Gary Gallagher and Joan Waugh, *The American War: A History of the Civil War Era*. (State College, PA: Flip Learning, 2015).

⁹⁸ Judy Giesberg, “Sex and the Civil War: Soldiers, Pornography, and the Making of American Morality”, *Journal of Military History* (2018), 953-955

to help alleviate their boredom and loneliness.⁹⁹ Union men sought out women in all major cities, but in Memphis and Nashville is where the experiment of legal prostitution occurred. The desperate Confederate women in these major cities discussed earlier are the women who used the sale of sex to Union soldiers to financially support themselves.

Historians of the Civil War era often focus on the more conventional ways women supported themselves, like working as “clerks in the Treasury Department, as munitions workers, and vivandiers, as nurses”, and there are even cases of women dressing in disguises of men to join combat.¹⁰⁰ The people historians are often overlooking are “the thousands of lower- class women working as prostitutes.” who congregated in locations where large groups of soldiers were.¹⁰¹ The lack of historical writings and first-hand accounts from Civil War prostitutes comes from how society viewed these women. Judith Giesberg addresses this issue because of her research in 19th century pornography is also limited because “silence and shame surrounding sexual feelings, the body, and sexual acts in the Victorian era conspire to hide evidence of intimacy and expressions of carnal desire.”¹⁰² Because of the silence on Civil War prostitution, the data and legacy of the prostitutes are found through the public opinion on the women, laws that were imposed, and medical practices used in treating and preventing venereal disease.

Legal prostitution in Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee during the Civil War occurred after George Spalding, the provost marshal of Nashville, was ordered to rid the cities of prostitutes by putting them all on a boat and sending them hundreds of miles away. Not surprisingly the forced removal of prostitutes was ineffective, and prostitutes found their way

⁹⁹ Sarah Hadley- Cousins, “Prostitutes!,” National Museum of Civil War Medicine, accessed February 18, 2019, <http://www.civilwarmed.org/prostitutes/>

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Lowery, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell: Sex in the Civil War* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1932).

¹⁰¹ Gallagher and Waugh, *The American War*

¹⁰² Giesberg, *Sex and the Civil War*

back to the cities. Surprisingly, it is quite difficult to find any information on George Spalding which could be because most of his assignments were unsuccessful like the removal of prostitutes. The goal of the forced removal of the women was an attempt to rid the cities of venereal diseases that were causing many soldiers to become ill and unable to fight in the war. It is estimated that about “8.2 percent of Union troops would be infected with one or the other (Syphilis and gonorrhea) before the war’s end” and this percentage does not account “for those who contracted a disease and didn’t know or didn’t mention it”¹⁰³. In numeric value the percentages equal “73,382 cases of syphilis, and 109,397 cases reported among white soldiers” which is “82 cases per 1,000 men”. For black troops in the Union army, there “were 34 cases per 1,000 for syphilis and 44 per 1,000 for gonorrhea”.¹⁰⁴ The issue was not just the diseases themselves that were affecting men's performance on the battlefield, but also the treatments that went with them that “could sideline a man for weeks.”¹⁰⁵ A common phrase that is found while researching the Civil War is “a night with Venus a lifetime with Mercury”, the quote is explaining the repercussions that could come from sleeping with a prostitute. The treatment of syphilis during the Civil War was as we know now the very dangerous chemical of mercury that doctors would infuse into the body to try to kill off the disease. Men were not the only sex affected by venereal disease even though they were the focus of importance. One doctor estimated that “life expectancy was only about four years once they have entered the trade, alcohol and disease being major risks.”¹⁰⁶ The issue of venereal disease was only going to

¹⁰³ Angela Serratore, “The Curious Case of Nashville's Frail Sisterhood,” *Smithsonian*, accessed February 18th, 2019, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-curious-case-of-nashvilles-frail-sisterhood-7766757/>.

¹⁰⁴ James Jones, “A tale of two cities: The hidden battle against venereal disease in Civil War Nashville and Memphis,” *Kent State University Press* 31, no.3 (Sep 1985): 270-276.

¹⁰⁵ Serratore, “Curious Case.”

¹⁰⁶ Doug Coleman, “SEX AND THE CIVIL WAR,” *Journal of Civil War Medicine* 20, no. 2 (Apr-June 2016): 97-98.

continue growing if something effective was not done and the problem was turning into more of a “public health crisis rather than a moral one.”¹⁰⁷

Once it was clear forced removal was not the answer to the issue of venereal disease Spalding and the Union army in complete desperation to keep their men safe institutionalized the first system of legalized prostitution.¹⁰⁸ Within the state of Tennessee, the two cities that legalized prostitution was Nashville, the home of the famous “Smoky Row” which was a major red-light district where men knew they could find prostitutes¹⁰⁹, and Memphis. The experiment began in in June of 1863.¹¹⁰ The experiment required every prostitute in the city to register herself with the Union army, after registration women were required to attend an examination by a doctor to check her for venereal diseases, once it was determined the women were clean from disease they would pay a registration fee and then they were legal to earn their living using their trade. Registration and check-ups were not optional if a woman was found to not be following the law they would be arrested and would be sent to jail for 30 days.¹¹¹ Even though the change of law violated every societal norm in the Victorian-era view of sex the public was “quiet and willing to turn an eye about what they thought of it because however it was being controlled, at least it was controlled” and “as long as its participant stayed away from the respectable public sphere”¹¹². Newspapers did not cover the issue much because both the writers and the readers were effectively ignoring the legalization of the sale of sex. Though the voices of prostitutes were muffled there are reasons to believe prostitutes were in favor of the legalization.

¹⁰⁷ Sarah Handley-Cousins, “Prostitutes!”

¹⁰⁸ Serratore, Curious Case.

¹⁰⁹ Serratore, Curious Case.

¹¹⁰ Jeannine Cole, “‘Upon the Stage of Disorder.’ Legalized Prostitution in Memphis and Nashville.” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 68, no.1 (Spring 2009): 40-63.

¹¹¹ Serratore, Curious Case.

¹¹² Jeannine Cole, “Upon the Stage.”

Prostitutes viewed the change of laws positively, and the number of public women increased in Memphis and Nashville. Prostitutes from around the Union traveled to Tennessee to register because of the increased protection against venereal disease.¹¹³ With the registration of prostitutes and the bills, they had to pay it allowed for the health care and status quo of women to see quite an improvement.

The registration and checkup fees allowed for an all-women's hospital to be opened that took prostitutes in when they were found to have a venereal disease.¹¹⁴ Some say there was no option for the woman whether she wanted to go to the hospital but rather she was forced against her will¹¹⁵, but it is unclear why a woman would choose not to seek treatment that was mostly paid for by registration fees and often saw success cases. With the hospital for women, there was the success that a hundred women were treated for a venereal disease that came with the trade. "In the summer of 1864, one doctor at the hospital remarked on a 'marked improvement' in the license prostitutes' physical and mental health"¹¹⁶, women being able to receive healthcare meant the women were able to rid themselves of venereal disease and improve their mental health because venereal disease no longer meant they were going to die an excruciating work related death. The improvement of mental health that the doctor saw was probably a mix of women receiving better healthcare that allowed for better physical health and a better chance of survival, but also women were almost more respected in society and were often brought together with women who understood each other. The language the doctor used to describe the change in women was "crude language and little care for personal hygiene" to "virtual models of

¹¹³ Judy Giesberg, "Sex and the Civil War."

¹¹⁴ Serratore, Curious Case.

¹¹⁵ Sarah Handley-Cousins, "Prostitutes!"

¹¹⁶ Serratore, Curious Case.

‘cleanliness and propriety,’”¹¹⁷. The effects that came from legalization did not just improve prostitutes’ physical and mental health, but it also allowed women to see improvement in the class structure.

With the legalization of prostitute’s trade, it allowed some of the women to move up in social class because of their new found cleanliness and currency. A few historians call attention to the soldiers that seemed to visit prostitutes the most, Union officers. It was not uncommon to see a legal prostitute “paraded through town arm-in-arm with Union officers”.¹¹⁸ One Infantryman named John Watkins wrote home in disgust after seeing the parades of prostitutes and their improvement in the social hierarchy. Watkins tells his wife, ““It seems though there was nothing else here [but prostitutes]. For they monopolize everything. All the public hack and drives. The front seats of all places of amusement I have 6 & 8 in a carriage driving by drinking and carousing singing and hollering like so many drunken men. They are dressed up in the height of fashion all the time... [and] U.S. officers are the principle maintainers.”¹¹⁹

Watkins letter home hits on a few themes. One is that the number of prostitutes has grown significantly, and women are exposing themselves more in the public sphere. The second point is that the prostitutes are receiving better treatment than soldiers, and that their fashion is nicer than what most of society is wearing in the middle of the bloodiest war in American history. The third, and most interesting point to me is the comparison Watkin makes to the women acting like men, and so he is saying that for the male sex rowdiness is allowed, but for women, it is almost unthinkable and disgusting. In the last sentence, Watkins is drawing attention to who is allowing for prostitutes to break the Victorian-era social norms, and those

¹¹⁷ Serratore, Curious Case

¹¹⁸ Jeannine Cole, “Upon the Stage”

¹¹⁹ Jeannine Cole, “Upon the Stage”

people are his bosses which is probably causing resentment towards them. Infantryman John Watkins was not the only person to view the legalization of prostitution as an issue.

Historians and many Civil War citizens of Memphis agreed on the issue of prostitution. Historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg argues that the independence prostitutes had and the often-hostile environment that they worked in threatened the entire Victorian era patriarchy and theorist Jürgen Habermas claims the introduction of any woman into the public sphere was an attack on the middle class.¹²⁰ The prostitutes were abandoning the stereotypical norms of women staying home and looking after the children and home while the men were out either working, or within the 1860's fighting in the war. The women who chose prostitution as their trade took their finances into their own hands which gave them independence from men because they could support themselves. The citizens and lawmakers of Memphis, Tennessee also believed that legal prostitutes were threatening to the Victorian social realm.

Memphis lawmakers created strict laws to lessen the threat of the women about where prostitutes can go and when. For prostitutes in Memphis, "even if they were not working, the law still forbade prostitutes to ride through town before dark, frequent the respectable theatre, or stroll across the public square. In order to receive legal protection, public women were forced to surrender their right in public."¹²¹ In Nashville, citizens were willing to turn a blind eye to the public women, but Memphis wanted the women to hide themselves from their eyesight even though the women's trade was legalized. Not allowing prostitutes to leave their homes in daylight when the respectable people of the city were out is stepping over the line and making it clear that the women were viewed as ungodly nocturnal creatures, something like rats. Citizens of Memphis took stronger actions to eradicate the problem of prostitution once they realized they

¹²⁰ Jeannine Cole, "Upon the Stage"

¹²¹ Jeannine Cole, "Upon the Stage"

could not simply ignore the women. Memphis citizens “began lobbying the military to shut down ‘homes of ill fame, punishing officers and soldiers for associating with the inmates of those houses’”.¹²² Citizens wanted the brothels to be shut down, but they are also drawing attention to who is keeping legal prostitution around, and again it is the Union Officers and soldiers. The entire reason for legalizing prostitution was not to benefit the citizens of Tennessee but to try to keep soldiers healthy to continue fighting the war and not be crippled by venereal disease. But once the Union army won their war in 1865 legal prostitution became nothing but an annoying memory for Tennessee, because once there were no more soldiers to protect there was no more reason to take care of the prostitutes. The prostitutes of the Civil War and the law itself has faded into rarely discussed history.

The experiment of legal prostitution quickly faded from people's memories, especially for people living outside of Tennessee. When discussing the number of cases of the venereal disease the numbers leave out non-military deaths in the war, and after the war. No one is sure “how many Union and Confederate wives and widows went to their graves, rotted and ravaged by the pox that their men brought home, or how many veterans’ children were blinded by gonorrhea or stunted by syphilis.”¹²³ It is also a mystery how many third-party lives were saved because of the experiment of legal prostitution. Unfortunately, the successful results of the military focusing more on the public health crisis versus the moral dilemma was forgotten about in later American wars. In World War One “most educational programs were antisex rather than antidisease.”¹²⁴ . Anti sex and anti-disease is the opposite method our Victorian-era ancestors used to handle the issue of disease because they knew that they could not stop men and women from having sex.

¹²² Jeannine Cole, “Upon the Stage”

¹²³ Lowery, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell*

¹²⁴ Lowery, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell*

Officers of the American Civil War understood that they could not prevent soldiers from partaking in prostitution, and a medical officer from World War One was noted saying the same thing. A popular anti-sex propaganda poster is said to have read “A German Bullet Is Cleaner Than A Whore”¹²⁵, well it would not have to be that way if the United States military and society took notes on the success that was seen from the American Civil Wars experiment of legalized prostitution with realistic regulations. Over 150 years after the Civil War and over 100 years since World War One sex and prostitution is still a difficult conversation in our society.

As of the 21st century, there has been progress in sexual rights and sexual health, but even in some places of America today the Victorian era ancestors were more radical in their solutions to the still seen issue of venereal disease. There is still shame and guilt brought on by the topic of sex. Prostitution in the United States today is only legal in Nevada, and public clinics like Planned Parenthood are commonly shunned. Researching Civil War prostitution allows for historians to examine the complexity of the 19th century social norms while comparing them to today. The more that can be uncovered about the experiment of legal prostitution the more historians can understand the often-overlooked women of the American Civil War and better understand why the United States has the social norms that it does.

¹²⁵ Lowery, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell*

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Part II. Morale and Motivations

Chapter 5.

Kevin Jones, “How the North Was Pressed into War”

The newly established American Nation entered its infancy among a torrent of potential conflict. Not least of these conflicts was the establishment of newspapers set up under the protections of “freedom of speech”. This freedom gave the newspapers a new level of independence and strength. The Federal and State Governments did little to stop the spreading of biased stories, and the local papers realized quickly that stories of violence and editorial opinions would sell just as quickly as well-researched factual articles. The struggle between powerful news media searching for a way to gain new readership and the Governments' trying to control the flow of information from these organizations is clear. Since newspapers were the prominent source of distributing any message that the Federal Governments wanted, both the Union and Federal Governments tried to steer the papers into printing messages that would not turn the opinions of the populace away from fighting the bloodiest war in American History. This was met with varying levels of success, but the Government of the Union appeared especially effective in crafting a message that rallied the opinions of the Northern States to pursue a war against the Southern secession.

The growing power of editors in America helped shape the bias of their readers toward their own specific views. Historians Ratner and Teeter explain that it is not the domination of the papers like the Associate Press (AP) that were a “danger to public welfare. Rather, the danger came from individual editors’ journalists’ distortion of telegraphic dispatches and from placing

and interpreting the accounts into regional and political contexts.”¹²⁶ These editors were able to take stories or competing editorial articles and shape them into fiery biased accounts that were used to shape public opinion. A favorite of Northern editors was repeating the intense and impassioned opinions of Robert Rhett, a pro separatist and pro slavery editorialist from a rather small Southern paper, the *Mercury*. They would take his editorials and would reprint them in whole or in part to their readership.¹²⁷ His fiery language was taken out of context in many occasions to be used as an example of the Southern opinion at large. The purpose of this was to continue to grow Northern passions against those of the South.

The editors began to tie themselves closer and closer to political parties and began to have political aspirations. The result of this was that editorial articles were not presented in a biased fashion and were instead targeted to a key political opinion in order to have a particular party appear favorable. By the 1840s many of the more prominent newspapers were funded by political parties and those that did not align themselves with one party or the other did not stay in business long.¹²⁸

The papers continued to divide the nations and eventually took the United States into its first civil war. The papers of the North had managed to not only report on the victims of slavery, but had actually caused enough sympathy from the Northern states that for one of the first times in history a people entered a war not for their own security but to defend a group of individuals from suffering under the yoke of slavery.

New York Daily 1856 outlined its opinion of the divide that was growing between the Northern states and the Southern slave holding states “The truth is, that though we are one nation

¹²⁶ Lorman A. Ratner and Dwight L. Teeter Jr., *Fanatics & Fire-Eaters: Newspapers and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 17.

¹²⁷ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 22.

¹²⁸ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 22.

we are two peoples. We are a people of equality, and a people of inequality. We are a people of Freedom and a people of Slavery....These two peoples are united by a bond of political union, but whenever a collision comes which brings out the peculiar characteristics of the two, they seem to be as unlike as almost any two civilized nations on the face of the globe.”¹²⁹ This is a clear example of the “we” and the “them” and this feeling was later reflected in stronger tones by Abraham Lincoln on June 16th 1858 to fellow Republicans as he delivered a speech about a House Divided and spoke of how such a house would collapse without actions to bind this divide.

The elections of 1860 had four political parties vying for the presidential seat. The Republican Party’s nominee for this election was the only advocate who ran with an anti-slavery platform, though winning the office with the majority of the electoral votes. Having won the more populous Northern states Lincoln did not win the majority of votes from the populace. In fact, Lincoln lost the poll by almost one million fewer votes than the other three’s combined vote.¹³⁰ The Democratic Party’s inability to rally behind a single candidate had lost them the presidency and this resulted in the culmination of the breakdown in the two-party system. The countries division based on the issue of slavery could not be clearer. Nonetheless, the newly elected President approached the subject of slavery with vigor that certainly caused the South to be nervous of the upcoming years.

In the decades leading up to Abraham Lincoln’s nomination to President, newspapers had made the change from a relatively small output to a more aggressive and less expensive production output. This is mainly due to the change in the printing press from a hand powered to

¹²⁹ Gary Gallagher and Joan Waugh, *The American War, A History of the Civil War Era*. (State College, PA: Flip Learning, 2015), 6.

¹³⁰ Gallagher and Waugh, *The American War*, 17.

a steam powered press. This allowed newspapers to increase from 1840 with 1404 newspapers serving a population of 17,069,000 to 3,725 newspapers serving 31,443,000 in 1860. This allowed an unprecedented increase in the amount of customers receiving daily newspapers from 186.5 million to 888 million.¹³¹ This massive increase in not only production method but the increase of individuals creating circulations had created an abundance of information and opinions and a far greater audience of those who would receive them. With little to no regulation on what information could be expressed in these circulations and such a divided political spectrum from editors of different circulations the papers were able to stoke the fire of division growing across the nation.

As time moved forward, larger news companies, especially those of the North, were able to decrease the cost of production and distribution. They set up agreements with the Postal Service to allow them to transport their news further and further from their headquarters. Congress had even passed laws to charge newspapers 50% less, and as a result allowed these papers to eventually choke out some of the smaller papers by creating an environment that would allow larger newspapers to sell below the cost of some of the smaller local sources.¹³² The decrease in cost allowed papers like New York's *Weekly Tribune* to increase to a circulation of fifteen thousand subscribers by 1860. Though fifteen thousand appears undaunting many editors of competing or aligning papers would reprint articles from this paper and allowed its message to reach a total distribution of two hundred thousand.¹³³

Due to the weaker infrastructure of the South the influence of newspapers did not grow as fast or as far reaching. The papers of the North were able to distribute their circulations to a

¹³¹ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 9.

¹³² Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 13.

¹³³ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 12.

much wider readership than the papers of the South, in part due to lower literacy rates in the South, and because of the Northern papers ability to gain more political leverage in steering regulations of congress to better suit the papers. "By the 1850's, major dailies- particularly those of New York City- had become modern mass media, swaggering new giants that pursued financial gain and political power and had little evident concern beyond self-serving goals".¹³⁴ The most powerful of these New York City newspapers was by far the Associated Press (AP). The AP controlled the seven largest newspapers in New York and had the most political weight.¹³⁵

The Associated Press became a tool of the Lincoln Administration who realized early on that controlling the flow of information to quickly reach the national constituency would be an effective way to control the public opinion of the war's progression. The AP was given preferential treatment above other news organizations and was allowed preferential access to wire communications under the understanding that the messages from the administration would be relayed un-altered and with no opinions accompanying them.¹³⁶ The cost of wiring messages decreased at night and the AP would receive its correspondence from the administration or the War Department late at night with enough time to wire the message but not enough time for editors on the receiving end of the wire to edit the message or tone of the wire. This often caused the messages from the AP to be printed as transmitted in the next mornings' paper.¹³⁷

The South on the other hand was slow to realize the power of controlling the narrative of the war and though it took some additional time they were eventually able to set up a media source called the Pacific Association (PA). The PA was directed to convey information from the

¹³⁴ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 18.

¹³⁵ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 17.

¹³⁶ Ford Risley, *Civil War Journalism*. (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2012) 7.

¹³⁷ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 7.

battlefield as well as any local news, and directed that the information should be relayed truthfully and quickly. The correspondents from the PA were expected to relay as many stories as they could accurately communicate per day. The instructions flowed down that they were to use short reports without the flowery language. Since the literacy in the South was low, newspapers wrote in this plain text to make sure the readers were able to understand the articles.

The stark differences between the AP and the PA were that the AP was used as a tool of the Lincoln Administration while the PA was used as a tool of the people in the South. The reporters of the AP received preferential treatment from the wire companies due to their ties with Washington. That was not the case with the reporters of the PA. They had no ties to the Davis Administration and carried very little clout. They were encouraged to have a free exchange of information with any paper that they could so as to let the reports make their way to as many readers as possible.¹³⁸ The papers of the North had an infrastructure of fifteen thousand miles of railroads to distribute their papers vs the three thousand of the South by 1860.¹³⁹ Even with these advantages the main difference is support from a friendly Government. Lincoln had stated it best himself when he said, “The press has no better friend than I am- no one is more ready to acknowledge its tremendous power for both good and evil.”

¹³⁸ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 17-18.

¹³⁹ Ratner and Teeter, *Fanatics and Fire-Eaters*, 13-14.



Figure 1. *Rebels Bayoneting Our Wounded on the Battlefield, at Bull Run*

The North, through papers like *Harpers Weekly* was able to keep the morale of its citizens fired up. Through published prints like the one above (Figure 1), the papers were able to use graphic imagery to show what the North had already come to believe. They portrayed Southerners as cruel animals who would slay defenseless wounded Northerners who lay on the field of battle. The image shows evil-looking Southerners bayonetting these helpless soldiers of the North in order to make the viciousness of the South relate more to that community.

Finally, the time had come and the war for Southern independence had commenced. Both sides struggled to find a way to keep their populace in support of the decision to wage this civil war. Once again, they turned to newspapers to help garner support for political policies.

In the First Battle of Bull Run, reporters from both sides had difficulty finding the balance between accurate reporting and personal safety, and with several close calls on either side of the line the reports across the 8 mile long war front were scarcely accurate in some cases. Several Union reporters in order to be the first to wire the main paper of the perceived Northern victory had rushed to get their reports out. When the Confederate forces were reinforced and the

Union Army went into full retreat the War Department blocked the stories of defeat and as a result several papers in New York went on to believe that the North had won the battle and the confusion took several days to correct.

The Northern War Department had let the message of a victory span out across the wires but when the battle turned they had blocked the news of the loss. No doubt the War Department wanted to shape the embarrassing retreat into something a little less shameful in order to keep the morale of the populace.¹⁴⁰ But the delay in reporting this information only further embarrassed the leaders.

Another case of Union suppression of the flow of news was with an order from General John Pope, the newly promoted leader of the Potomac Army. After taking command he quickly disallowed all the reporters from travelling with the Army for fear that the journalist would publish troop counts and movements. This fear allowed another Northern loss to be reported with very little accuracy because the only reports that journalist were likely to receive would be from the leaders of the retreating Union Army as General Pope lost to General Lee and the Confederates.¹⁴¹

Again the Union sought to suppress, through censorship, the loss at Chancellorsville in May of 1863. Though they were able to once again slow the flow of the news it did eventually get out several days later. With the scorn of Northern editors “There has never been during the war such an important series of events, about which the public were so imperfectly informed” a *Boston Journal* editorial described once the news had finally made its way North. “The government transmitted no information what so ever” (Quoted in Andrews, *The North reports the Civil War*, 370).

¹⁴⁰ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 9-10.

¹⁴¹ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 14.

The South was no exception in stifling of reporting by the military. In the case of the Fall of New Orleans the officer in charge of the two forts set to defend New Orleans had reported until the fall of the forts that they could hold the Union ships at bay. Even after the fall the Confederate military refused to relay the information and it was only because the news traveled through unofficial channels to Mobile that the news was then able to hit the wires and make it to Richmond and on. The Confederate Government still refused to publicly acknowledge the fall of New Orleans and many papers though reporting this loss made light of the fall of the largest city in the Confederacy.¹⁴²

During the war the issue of censorship came up numerous times in both the North and the South. Having very little legal precedence on what is considered fair censorship the Governments were able to censor with little regard for the First Amendment. In the case of the Northern states the role of administering censorship was passed from the Treasury Department to the War Department, then to the State Department and finally back to the War Department. This constant shifting of management also resulted in confusion over which regulations were supposed to be followed as the rules set varied from agency to agency. In the case of the South the Confederate Congress gave the power of censorship directly to the President but it took months for him to set the censors to be in place and largely the responsibility was passed to the Generals leading each Army while those roles were filled.¹⁴³

The Union Secretary of State, William Seward, stated that news stories “would only influence public sentiment, and be an obstacle in the path of reconciliation.”¹⁴⁴ This attitude was the prevailing thought by the Governments on both sides and General Winfield Scott issued an

¹⁴² Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 13.

¹⁴³ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 84.

¹⁴⁴ Jeffery A. Smith, *War & Press Freedom: The Problem of Prerogative Power* (New York: Oxford Press, 1999) 99-100

order prohibiting any telegraphs that gave details of Federalist troop movements or any disagreements or mutinies in the Army.¹⁴⁵ The War Department of the North went further in enforcing or threatening to enforce similar rules banning reports on the movements or counts of troops with punishment. If the information was reported before the end of hostilities had taken place then the offender could receive any punishment that was prescribed by the court-martial, including death.¹⁴⁶

Editors of the North eventually were able to pressure the House of Representatives to investigate. The House was able to create rules of censorship as well as define what the extent of that censorship should be. The claim was made by the editors that the Government Censors lacked the qualifications required and were given too much discretion on what should be censored. The Union's Chief Censor believed that though the public has the right to know anything stated in public by the President and the members of the cabinet, the people do not need to know "the private affairs of the Gov't".¹⁴⁷ The House published a statement confirming the belief that the telegraph should be free from Government regulation but that same month they passed a law giving the President control of both the telegraph and the railroads.

In both the North and South the Governments took advantage of biased editors who aspired for political power as well as a lack of laws regulating censorship to help shape the populaces' view of the Civil War. Through control of the media the Governments were able to suppress the spread of negative reports of their individual Armies' losses while still presenting stories and images to show the need for increased support from the masses within their press's distribution. All the while, newspapers were able to use technology to increase the level of

¹⁴⁵ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 85.

¹⁴⁶ Andrews, *The North Reports the Civil War*, 151

¹⁴⁷ Risley, *Civil War Journalism*, 87.

distribution and undercut the pricing of smaller papers with the help of the Government passing a regulation to help increase the number of readers that large news organizations were able to reach. Tight control of newspapers likely aided in keeping up troop and civilian morale throughout a long and bloody conflict and may have aided in lengthening, if not starting it.

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Chapter 6.

Jonathan Tshibambi, “Of Songs and Soldiers”

From early settlers constantly feuding with native peoples, to British colonists rebelling against their empire, to African slaves perpetually pursuing their own freedom, music and song have always been at the center of these events, ready to motivate warriors to fight and potentially die for the advancement of their people, way of life, and traditions. During the American Civil War (1861-1865), the advancement of these values meant seceding from your former country and killing your fellow countrymen to preserve it.

Civil wars are often very tragic as all violent confrontations are, but those belligerents who come from the same country make it that much worse. Music is too often overlooked in historical studies of war. This may be a result of the two (music and war), from a broad scope seeming not at all relatable. Nevertheless, as you begin to understand the life of a Civil War soldier, you notice music is everywhere, in his marching, in his war preparation and more. What genre of songs were Americans singing to motivate them enough to march into battle to slaughter one another? Who was writing these songs? These are the nature of questions one must ask to discover how disruptive this war truly was. This research paper aims to interpret the inspirational importance of music in the daily lives of soldiers, and American society as a whole both before and during the Civil War.

The 1989 Edward Zwick film, “Glory”, is centered on the 54th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, one of the Union’s first exclusive African-American units apart from its officers. Commanded by Lt. Col. Robert G. Shaw, there is a scene where on the eve of battle, the soldiers commence in a pre-battle ceremony. During the ritual, Col. Shaw, observes his soldiers

singing, clapping, and dancing in a fashion he does not comprehend. As he had never been exposed to this brand of worship, he asks another nearby soldier what the others are participating in, it is explained that this is their way to mentally, physically, and spiritually prepare for battle and their potential demise.

The Civil War obviously is not the first war where song can be thoroughly examined, however, access to songs and music on a large level are scarce as recording technologies and capabilities were limited. Nevertheless, some musical works have lasted the test of time. Tunes such as “Yankee Doodle” and “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” (also known as “America”) are a select few that have been whistled to us since we were crossing our hearts and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in elementary school. These aforementioned works are more than 200 years old, so we can infer that they were extremely influential in early colonial America. But this paper is tasked with demonstrating how ideas and themes of the antebellum era shaped the music being produced chiefly before and during the war, but also occasionally, the postbellum era. The reason of their importance is also to display how these same anthems varied. “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” as it is most popularly known, is not how the song came to be. Known previously as “God Save the King” (in reference to King George II of Great Britain) the song came to colonial America in the 1740’s and was essentially “Americanized.”

In the essay titled “Yankee Doodle Dandy”¹⁴⁸ by Henry Abelove a noted scholar from numerous academic institutions notes that “In commenting on the song, I am immediately confronted by two peculiar difficulties, and I should take a moment to explain what they are. The first difficulty is how to decide which words, which version of the song, to select for

¹⁴⁸ Henry Abelove, “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” *The Massachusetts Review* 49, No. 1/2 (2008):13

commentary. For there are many different versions of “Yankee Doodle.”¹⁴⁹ As one of the first comments of the essay, Ablove quickly makes reference on numerous variations of this popular tune. In contemporary times, when a song is released, there are numerous legal ties that are attached with the idea of a particular song, leaving it disadvantageous for other songwriters to deviate or replicate published works without crediting the original author.

To understand how music and song could influence society in a way, comprehending the importance of numerous versions to one song is crucial. When those songs first came off English vessels in the mid-eighteenth century, they were ones that told tales about their mother country--an idea colonists could share within a community on a foreign land, but nearly a century after those events, when a single country is torn into two, we can see how this may pose a potential negative state of affairs. “John Brown’s Body” gained immense popularity in Union states because the abolitionist John Brown’s martyrdom towards the slavery cause; conversely in the Confederate states, it can be and was interpreted as a psalm essentially praising a domestic terrorist. This dichotomy in motivational inspiration can be argued as a monumental factor in driving soldiers to fight their American brothers, and in some cases brothers mere miles north or south of their own home (Union and Confederate soldiers from border states). Fueled with the words of pen and melodic tunes, lyricists such as Julia Ward Howe (“Battle Hymn of the Republic”), employing recycled music, were able to create versions of America “the great” that were soldiers were willing fight for.

¹⁴⁹ Ablove, “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” 13.

When Africans were first transported to the Americas, attempting to adapt to the harsh life as slaves and foreigners to an unfamiliar land, considerable alleviation came from canticles and ballads of their distant homeland. More than two centuries later African American slaves still observed those long-standing traditions of singing about the homeland, but through the generational struggle that was slavery, songs of escaping to freedom and other hopes had also emerged that could never be sung blatantly. “Follow the Drinkin’ Gourd”, a popular slave spiritual, held coded messages that could have countless embedded interpretations. To those who understood the meaning behind its words, had the perhaps a minute opportunity of escaping enslavement as it was a euphemism for directions north, utilizing the ‘Big Dipper’ constellation as a compass, on the contrary, those who lacked the insight simply heard a song of a water holding tool.

As African slaves began to have more American descendants, the direct memory of their motherland disappeared with them. However, from that loss, emerged a new distinctly American sound, one that was neither completely African nor completely European. Just as cotton became the leading export to Europe, the southern cities that supplied and distributed it [cotton] (Houston, New Orleans, Charleston) were abundant with African American slaves. Port cities such as New Orleans became epicenters of musical expression, the mixing of Afro-Caribbean, West-African and other cultures created the roots and fundamentals for nineteenth as well as twentieth century popular music (Jazz, Rhythm and Blues). The minstrel variety shows that were popularized in the 1830’s can be directly correlated to African-American musical tradition.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Steven H. Cornelius. *Music of the Civil War Era* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group Inc, 2004) 117.

While the war raged on, black units were eventually included to support both Union and Confederate forces alike. With them, came a more interactive ‘call and response’ styled singing also known as “leader and chorus style.”¹⁵¹ A style that had long been part of black religious praise services. This loose interpretation of singing needed no instruments only hand clapping and harmonies which could be sang and appreciated in any geographic location. Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911), a white officer of the First South Carolina Volunteers--an all black unit, and author of, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (1869), wrote in his experience with the negro spirituals: “It was a strange enjoyment therefore, to be suddenly brought into the midst of a kind-hearted world of unwritten songs, as simple and indigenous as the border minstrelsy. More uniformly plaintive almost always more quaint and as often as essentially as poetry.”¹⁵² This style of singing is apparent still today in what the military commonly refers to as “singing cadence,” this style would also begin to replace the drum and fife for commands from the days of old.

The distinctly American sound did not solely come have African roots. European influences brought with the first settlers reigned for a prolonged period. Also what must not be forgotten is the experience of revolutionists and earlier volunteer armies with foreign nations. These conflicts with the Spaniards, English, and French greatly influenced American musical field etiquette and thus incorporated trumpeted alarms such as “Reveille” French for “wake” as well as battle commands for “Advance” and “Retreat.”¹⁵³ The drum and fife was pivotal to daily campsite activity. Prussian and other European military officers often assisted in the

¹⁵¹ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 117-118.

¹⁵² Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (Riverside Press, 1900) 9.

¹⁵³ Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Westport: University of North Carolina Press, 2012) 112.

organization of regular army units, with their military ideologies and strategies to war being taught in academies throughout the nation.

The structure that first shaped colonial and American music added with the looseness and adaptive nature of African folk songs, needed just one last component to be truly considered American.

The final component to that American voice, belonged to those who were originally here. Indigenous peoples perhaps suffered the worst fate. Most of their people, were purposefully murdered, their land stolen, and forced to relocate. The ‘Rebel Yell’, initially a mock and later a play-on of the battle cry used by Native Americans which British colonials originally heard during numerous skirmishes with the native groups. The yell, however, was ironically used on Union soldiers as an attempt to intimidate as well as a form of last-minute motivation for the Confederate army as it was a call which usually accompanied surprise swarm attacks. The idea to employ this method may be linked to the memory of Union soldiers’ grand, great-grandparents and beyond. Perhaps southern forces believed it could trigger the fear of old stories of when Indians (who were known for guerilla attacks as opposed to line formations that were used by Europeans) clashed with their ancestors. This concept could perhaps be directly correlated. Historian Steven H. Cornelius wrote “Some 20,000 Native American participated in the Civil War, though these people would seem to have had little incentive to help the white man, North or South.”¹⁵⁴ This can be attributed to the fact that there are limited accounts to native musical stories during this period.

¹⁵⁴ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 12.

The Confederacy, the aggressor nation considering they fired the first shots of the war, had an immensely difficult task to accomplish. As they were the ones to secede, they denounced the nationalist songs that the two nations once shared. This meant there was a thorough lack of Confederate music to rally around. Southerners needed music to motivate their fledgling country. Songs such as “The Bonnie Blue Flag,” (1861) written by Irish entertainer Harry McCarthy, and used for marching soldiers, gained immense popularity at the start of the war because it stood for a cause that was solely Confederate. It is said that southern music firms produced as many as “648 new pieces during the war.”¹⁵⁵ This outpouring of new music gave the impression that orders to draft patriotic music came from politicians in order to give a false showing of a weak nation to the Union public. It was once said to “Give the lie to the assertion of our enemy that this revolution is the work of politicians and party leaders alone,”¹⁵⁶ however, in truth, soldiers and civilians were leading this front. With songs such as this one being produced, the Confederacy had no use for the songs of old, and began using them for taunting tactics known to some as “disunion” songs, ballads such as “Hail Columbia” and “The Star Spangled Banner” had become antithetical to what they meant to Union soldiers and northern society. Historian Christian McWhirter noted that for captured northern deserters, “instead of playing the traditional ‘Rogue’s March’ when punishing deserters, several Confederate regiments choose ‘Yankee Doodle’.”¹⁵⁷ This use of musical mockery shows again the importance of how modest tunes could make soldiers lose hope in their country’s effort to win the war, as well as exhibiting the deep psychological effects from being ridiculed for supporting the northern cause.

¹⁵⁵ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 17.

¹⁵⁶ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 64.

¹⁵⁷ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 61.

“Bonnie Blue Flag” (1861)¹⁵⁸

We are a band of brothers And native to the soil, Fighting for the property we
gained by honest toil; And when our rights were threatened, the cry rose near and
far-- "Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star!"

CHORUS:

Hurrah! Hurrah! For Southern rights hurrah! Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag that
bears a single star. As long as the Union was faithful to her trust, like friends and
like brothers both kind were we and just; But now, when Northern treachery
Attempts our rights to mar, we hoist on high the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a
single star.

CHORUS

First gallant South Carolina nobly made the stand, then came Alabama, who took
her by the hand. Next quickly Mississippi, Georgia and Florida all raised on high
the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star.

CHORUS

¹⁵⁸ McCarthy, Harry. “The Bonnie blue flag.” *Library of Congress*. Accessed April 05, 2019. Notated Music. <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200002488/>.

Ye men of valor, gather round the banner of the right; Texas and fair Louisiana
join us in the fight. Davis, our loved president, and Stephens statesmen are; Now
rally round the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star.

CHORUS

And here's to old Virginia--The Old Dominion State--Who with the young
Confederacy at length has linked her fate; Impelled by her example, now other
states prepare to hoist on high the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star.

CHORUS

Then cheer, boys, cheer; Raise the joyous shout, For Arkansas and North Carolina
now have both gone out; And let another rousing cheer For Tennessee be given,
The single star of the Bonnie Blue Flag Has grown to be eleven.

CHORUS

Then here's to our Confederacy, Strong are we and brave; Like patriots of old
we'll fight our heritage to save. And rather than submit to shame, To die we would
prefer; So cheer for the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears a single star.

As southerners scrambled to forge a new sound, the north needed not much of a musical
offensive. With “rebels” separating from the country, this only reaffirmed, for northerners, the
importance of the songs that once tied to the two sections together. Though the Union sound had
already been established, northerners, were nevertheless obligated to construct songs. “These

new patriotic songs served two purposes,”¹⁵⁹ writes McWhirter. On one hand these songs amplified national pride, additionally these pieces sought to bring about an emotional attachment to the northern cause. McWhirter also quotes that with abundant exposure “in some cases...could even reshape attitudes.”¹⁶⁰ The five unofficial anthems of the United States included “Yankee Doodle”: “Hail Columbia”; “The Star-Spangled Banner”; “America”; and “Columbia, Gem of the Ocean.”¹⁶¹ These songs were often methodically selected when coordinators organized public events. Certain songs were played for political events and others rallies and parades, some included bands, others just choirs. Poignant songs such as “The Star-Spangled Banner” were reserved for military functions and flag ceremonies. In short, public perception and support towards the war drove the outpour of the newest patriotic songs. Winning the hearts and minds of northerners was the primary music goal for the Union.

“The Star-Spangled Banner”(1814) Written by Francis Scott Key (fifth stanza added by O.W. Holmes Sr.,1861)¹⁶²

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
 O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
 And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;

¹⁵⁹ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 33.

¹⁶⁰ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 33.

¹⁶¹ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 34.

¹⁶² Holmes, Oliver, Wendell. “Francis Scott Key and the Complex Legacy of Slavery.” *U.S. Capitol Historical Society*. Accessed April 10, 2019.
<https://www.citefast.com/styleguide.php?style=Chicago&sec=Webpage#h1>.

O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?
 When our land is illumined with Liberty's smile,
 If a foe from within strike a blow at her glory,
 Down, down with the traitor that dares to defile
 The flag of her stars and the page of her story!
 By the millions unchained, who our birthright have gained,
 We will keep her bright blazon forever unstained!
 And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave
 While the land of the free is the home of the brave.

John Brown (1800-1859), perhaps the most widely known American name throughout the whole of the Civil War apart from Abraham Lincoln. Brown was an ardent abolitionist most remembered by the attacks of the Pottawatomie massacre, an event that aided the to the conflict known as “Bleeding Kansas.” His failed attempt to raid a federal armory in order to ignite a series of slave riots at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, in October, 1859, however, is what propelled his name to national notoriety. The effort to incite an insurrection was eventually overwhelmed and suppressed by then Col. Robert E. Lee and his Marines. John Brown was often looked upon as a zealot, however, it was Brown’s radical views that would commend the use of violence and force towards hastening the abolition of slavery that would fuel the fire behind, the Union’s new, but temporary national anthem.

The song “John Brown’s Body” is still a mystery to historians as how it came about. There are several historians that reveal the lyrics may have derived from numerous sources. There is, however, a clear consensus as to how this song became an instant anthem. As his

capture, trial, and subsequent execution received immense national press, it was in his final minutes that his legendary status was cemented. On the second day of December, 1859, it is rumored that as he [Brown] walked to his execution site, escorted by soldiers, in a crowd of some two thousand spectators, some there to show respect for his noble cause, others there to ridicule. Brown, spotted an African-American slave woman with an infant in her arms. As he walked past the slave woman, she supposedly held her child out as if requesting a blessing from the condemned man, when he obliged and kissed the infant his popularity surged as this was the cause he so willingly died for. (See figure 1)

Scholar Harold Holzer, noted on the validity of this account that “inaccurate or not, the reports alone were enough in some quarters to transform Brown’s image overnight from manic to martyr, inspiring poets and artists for the next generation.”¹⁶³

“John Brown’s Blessing”(1867)¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Harold Holzer, *The Civil War in 50 Objects* (New York, The Penguin Group, 2013) 32.

¹⁶⁴ Holzer, “*50 Objects*,” 30.



Figure 1
By Thomas Satterwhite Noble

William Steffe, a South Carolinian is generally credited for drafting its first melody. This is supported under the pretext that the melody was “a popular prewar religious song.”¹⁶⁵ However, Cornelius also noted that the original source of this melody also came under contradiction; “A story of African-American girls in Georgia dancing gravely to the melody as it was played in 1864 by one of the bands attached to the army of General William Tecumseh

¹⁶⁵ Cornelius, “Music of the Civil War,” 26.

Sherman (1820-1891). These girls, says Blakelss, had evidently long known the tune as a wedding dance.”¹⁶⁶

“John Brown’s Body,” when studied closely may reveal deep meanings that drove Union soldiers to the hot, humid southern landscape in search of racial equality. Historian Franny Nudelman’s article, *The Blood of Millions: John Brown's Body, Public Violence, and Political Community*, explores the lore behind John Brown’s life but more importantly his death. It is widely accepted that the first singers to chant this psalm were the soldiers of the Second Massachusetts Infantry Battalion stationed at Fort Warren in Boston Harbour, there happened to be an Irish soldier by the name of “John Brown.” As fellow soldiers would tease Brown of his coincidental name. Phrases such as “you can’t be John Brown, his body is a mouldering in the grave,”¹⁶⁷ would began to develop and popularize.

Nudelman’s article explains that phrases such as those, when gaining context, would “offer a secular rendition of Christ's burial and resurrection, ‘John Brown's Body’ puts religion to work in the service of war-time nationalism.” Opening with the graphic, "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave," the song proceeds to describe the transformation of Brown's corpse; he becomes a foot soldier in "the army of the Lord," and finally a martyr. As Brown's body decays, his spirit is reborn and, in turn, donates new life to the army and the nation it serves. Singing this song, soldiers celebrated the power of Brown's body, as it disappeared, to produce a spirited community that found expression in "three rousing cheers for the union." And yet, even as the song translated death into martial enthusiasm, reminding soldiers that they died on behalf of a greater cause, it did not allow them to ignore the difficult reality of violent death.

¹⁶⁶ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 26.

¹⁶⁷ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 42.

Brown's body could not be long forgotten; each time the song was sung his rotting corpse was brought back into view.

When soldiers sang "John Brown's Body," they did not simply celebrate Brown's death or its redemptive aftermath, but rather the very process of transformation through which corpses, in all their gruesome and seemingly intractable materiality, are reinterpreted as group spirit: the song schooled soldiers in the abstraction of bodily suffering that allows for the amplification of the body's social meaning. Keeping the rotting corpse firmly in view, the song speaks to the problem, at once psychological and political, posed by war: how can citizens and soldiers believe that the losses they suffer, individually and collectively, are worthwhile? More dramatically, why do soldiers continue to fight once exposed to the deaths of their comrades and the harrowing experience of combat?

Imaginatively reversing the effects of violence, granting both agency and meaning to the process of decay, the song suggests that progress begins with the body's demise. In this way, Brown's example may have helped soldiers envision their own deaths as a source of collective rejuvenation; the song encouraged soldiers to believe that an individual's death might enable the larger community, the people, or nation to endure."¹⁶⁸

Even in an attempt to maintain soldiers' motivation, variant editions in which additional stanzas were included to reflect on leadership change. In the early months of the war, decorated General Winfield Scott resigned from his twenty-year-long (1841-1861) command of the United States Army, its vacancy was then filled by General George B. McClellan "Brave McClellan is

¹⁶⁸ Franny Nudelman, "The Blood of Millions: John Brown's Body, Public Violence, and Political Community", *American Literary History* 13, No. 4 (2001) 640-641.

our leader now”¹⁶⁹ would replace the chorus of the melody and this manner of altering lyrics would remain consistent depending on the scenario soldiers found themselves in.

The tempo and melody combined with the clear and concise wording also made this song ideal for marching. Cadences became a new way of keeping soldiers concentrated while on the move, the steady rhythm of the chant could systematically keep soldiers in close formations for miles as they trekked harsh southern terrain. This would continue on the way to numerous campsites throughout the trails of the war. Best of all these songs needed no musical instrument, though they were at times accompanied by a small band.

“John Brown’s Body” (1859)¹⁷⁰

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave, His soul is marching on.

CHORUS:

Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! His
soul is marching on.

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord, His soul is marching on!

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back,

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back,

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back, His soul is marching on!

¹⁶⁹ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 28.

¹⁷⁰ Nudelman, “Blood of Millions,” 639-640.

His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
 His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
 His pet lambs will meet him on the way, They go marching on! They will hang
 Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree,
 They will hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree,
 They will hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree, As they march along!
 Now, three rousing cheers for the Union, Now, three rousing cheers for the
 Union,
 Now, three rousing cheers for the Union, As we are marching on

As the South withdrew from the Union, along with it went their claims to national anthems. The Confederates understood the necessity for quality melodies that rallied soldiers and civilians alike. In 1861, Richard Dispatch wrote, “the South is not only making her own laws and law-books but her own song and song-books.”¹⁷¹ From this we can assume the urgency and importance the subject played as a role in the Civil War. Also included in the Confederate diagram, were loyal southerners who learned these tunes would teach these songs to children as to ensure these songs would forever be equated with southern identity. One Union soldier while marching southwards in Suffolk, Virginia, noticed “at most every house, the little ones singing disunion songs.”¹⁷² Along with “Bonnie Blue Flag,” “Dixie,” would prove the antidote needed for Confederate absence of national pride that could be vocalized.

“I Wish I Was in Dixie’s Land” also known as “Dixie’s Land” or just simply “Dixie” was one of few songs the Confederacy retained from its time as a part of the United States, described

¹⁷¹ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 64.

¹⁷² McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 64.

by southerners as “belonging to the South by right of seizure, as do the forts, the arsenals, the mints.”¹⁷³ This was the most popular response to the truth that this song was actually written by a northerner by the name of Daniel Decatur Emmett. Emmett can be quoted stating that the song was written for “necessity as opposed to inspiration.”¹⁷⁴ As a man who hailed from the state of Ohio, would later come to perform in the comedy troupe, the Virginia Minstrels.¹⁷⁵ Towards the end of the 1850’s Emmett was approached by an agent representing Bryant’s Minstrels, a company based in New York City as minstrelsy mainly enjoyed success in northern states.

He was challenged to write a performance for an upcoming show, an apathetic Emmett in order to create the most efficient play he could write decided to envelope himself in his writing and would adopt an approach which he would consider “true to the negro.”¹⁷⁶ He would eventually produce the line “I wish I was in Dixie,” as a basis, a reference to African-Americans recognizing that their true home was in fact the South as it pertained to minstrelsy.

The song originally gained immense popularity, however, this popularity stayed local in New York and came from the Emmett’s role as a songwriter for the performance, it had not yet been linked with the Confederate cause.

It was not until was performed in New Orleans for a burlesque showing of *Pocahontas* in 1860.¹⁷⁷ Here southern policymakers and elites would notice the melodies and its motivational potential. Coupled with the election of 1860 resulting in the victory of Abraham Lincoln and the

¹⁷³ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 68.

¹⁷⁴ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 30.

¹⁷⁵ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 65.

¹⁷⁶ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 65.

¹⁷⁷ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 64.

subsequent secession of South Carolina, “Dixie” swept the southern states from west to east, celebrating the region, an idea all southerners could cherish.

When Jefferson Davis (1808-1889) was sworn into office in February of 1862, “Dixie” was performed by famed Prussian bandleader Herman F. Arnold, and with it revolutionized the song’s purpose. This now became a vocal confirmation that being of Dixieland would be the right side of history. McWhirter writes that by choosing this selection and notating the piece into one that could be played by brass band, he “created a version that could be adopted by all military bands and played whenever and wherever Confederate soldiers marched,” the same had been true earlier with Patrick Gilmore and “John Brown’s Body.”¹⁷⁸

“Dixie,” similarly to “John Brown’s Body”, would uncover multiple hidden meanings if examined closely. Southern scholars often argued the song’s line “Old Missus marry

Will-de-weaber, Willium was a gay deceaber; Look away! Look away! Look away!
Dixie Land.”

Allegedly “Will-de weaber” was in fact, Lincoln, who was seducing the American public or the ‘Missus’ into symbolically marrying him.”¹⁷⁹ One source claims that the ultimate goal was for slaves to sing along with southern society which would display the facade that slaves were in fact satisfied with life in Dixie and longed to be there. The song also held dear to soldiers as defending their homeland, against tyrannical northern aggression who would attempt to constrict state’s rights. For every Confederate soldier that perished during the war, this would fuel others to continue the fight thus strengthening the bond of Confederate soldiers.

¹⁷⁸ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 67.

¹⁷⁹ McWhirter, *Power and Popularity*, 70.

“I Wish I Was In Dixieland” (1859)¹⁸⁰

I wish I was in the land of cotton
 Old times daram not forgotten,
 Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land.

In Dixieland whar’ I was born in,
 Early on one frosty mornin’ Look away!
 Look away! Look away! Dixieland.

CHORUS:

Den I wish I was in Dixie, Hoo-ray!
 Hoo-ray! In Dixieland, I’ll take my stand to
 Lib and die in Dixie; Away, away, away
 down south in Dixie, Away, away, away
 Down south in Dixie.

Ole’ Missus marry Wil-de-weaber,
 William was a gay deceaber: Look away!
 Look away! Look away! Dixieland.

But when he put his arms around er’
 He smiled as fierce as a forty-pounder,

¹⁸⁰ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, 31-32.

Look away! Look away! Lookaway! Dixieland.

His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaver,

But dat did not seem to greab er'

Look away! Look away! Look away!

Dixieland.

Ole' Missus acted the foolish part,

And died for a man dat broke her heart

Look away! Look away! Look away!

Dixieland. Nows here's a health to the next old Missus

And all the gals dat want to kiss us;

Look away! Look away! Look away!

Dixieland.

But if you want to drive 'way sorrow,

Come and hear dis song to-morrow

Look away! Look away! Look away!

Dixieland.

Dar's buckwheat cakes an' Injun batter,

To Dixie's land I'm bound to trabble,

Throughout the course of the war, these songs, melodies, tunes, cries and musical celebrations proved a major influence on both sides of the conflict. It is generally accepted that the war was fought over the institution of racial slavery and its westward expansion, and even with this we can see the influences of slaves throughout the musical history of this struggle.

Musical expression whether it be vocal or instrumental has long been a way to express thought and sentiment that large communities could gather behind and rejoice in. It has also been a way to produce negative propaganda purposed to demean opposing ideas. Nevertheless, music and song have a special place in society and often is expected on certain occasions to aid in or lead events. As for General Joshua Chamberlain who was present at the Appomattox Courthouse surrender, he wrote “Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood: men who neither toils and sufferings nor the fact of death, nor disaster, nor hopelessness could bend from their resolve: standing before us now, thin, worn, and famished, but erect, and with eyes looking level into ours, waking memories that bounds us together as no other bond;— was not such manhood to be welcomed back into a Union so tested and assured?...On our part not a sound of trumpet more, nor roll of drum: not a cheer, nor word nor whisper of vain-glorifying, nor motion of man standing again at the order, but an awed stillness rather, and breath-holdings, as if it were the passing of the dead!”¹⁸¹

This should serve to remind of the significance of music, for even in the face of an enormous accomplishment for the Union, its absence provided a context that for General Chamberlain equated with the dead.

¹⁸¹ Cornelius, *Music of the Civil War*, xv.

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Chapter 7.

Chelsey Johnson, “A Battle That Changed History”

The American Civil War is a pivotal moment in America’s historical consciousness. The war was the bloodiest in American history and caused the deaths of more than 620,000 people, with millions more being left injured. This war would depict how America would function in the future and determine if the south would be able to secede from the north to become their own entity. Although there were many important battles during the Civil War there is one that stands out above the rest as a turning point for the war, the Battle of Gettysburg. This short, three-day, battle caused numerous casualties and injuries for both the Confederates and the Union armies. Although much has been said about Gettysburg’s impact on the Civil War outcome, little focus has been set upon the outcome of Gettysburg on individual states. The states banded together to back their country but more importantly showed incredible pride in fighting in honor of their state. In particular, New Hampshire showed a great passion and dedication for their state and country. They frequently lead the charge and didn’t back away from the war no matter how hopeless or daunting the task at hand seemed. The cruel realities of this war brought out a new sense of national pride in the North.

The Battle of Gettysburg was one of the most devastating battles of the Civil War. The battle lasted only three days, beginning on July 1 and ending July 3, 1863. After his win at Chancellorsville, Lee and his Confederate army marched into Pennsylvania. By the end of the three-day battle, the Union army had 23,000 casualties, and the Confederate army had 28,000 men dead, missing, or wounded.¹⁸² Going into Gettysburg, there was a lot of pressure falling on

¹⁸² James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1988), 664.

both the Confederate and the Union armies. The Confederates were coming off a fresh win at Chancellorsville. The Union army was hearing rumors of the Confederates frequently while the Confederate troops were making their way to Gettysburg. According to Franklin Haskell, the First Lieutenant of Company I of the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry who was killed during Cold Harbor but had his account of Gettysburg published posthumously, the Union troops were hearing more and more frequently of small raids made by the Confederate cavalry as they made their way to Gettysburg. They were capturing and stealing Union wagons and horses but really didn't do much in the way of impeding the Union forces by taking these few things. Lee's cavalry additionally had supplied Lee with no information about the Union's position on the Potomac.¹⁸³

At this point, the Union Army had no confidence in Hooker or his abilities. The Union troops had just followed Hooker into the Battle of Chancellorsville and to no avail lost the battle to Lee and his forces. Now, these same men were expected to follow Hooker into Gettysburg to fight that same army that had just so brutally defeated their forces. It is only logical that these Union troops would be anxious, and blame Hooker for the position that they were in. Lee's army had gone an entire day's march without Hooker moving, or before he was aware that Lee had even moved. To say the least, the North's faith in Hooker was nothing short of broken. When Hooker and his troops went into the Battle of Chancellorsville, they were at a numerical advantage, but Hooker was still hesitant to engage, and this cost the Union the win. In June of 1863, Hooker offered his resignation to President Abraham Lincoln. After that, he was replaced with General Meade.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Franklin Haskell, *The Battle of Gettysburg* (Scituate, MA: Digital Scanning Inc, 2002), 1-5.

¹⁸⁴ Haskell, 2.

Nonetheless, at the end of the three-day battle, the Union came out victorious, and changed the future of the country. Had the Confederates won the Battle of Gettysburg, we would be living in a very different country than the one that we live in today. There were obvious effects that Gettysburg had on the United States of America. The Battle of Gettysburg was the bloodiest battle in the history of the United States of America. This important moment sits right in the center of American history. The essential event was regarded by President Abraham Lincoln as “a new birth of freedom”. This quote by President Lincoln deemed so important that it is carved into his memorial in Washington.¹⁸⁵

This great battle took the lives of men and boys, it took time, supplies, and money. Such a battle in a war took a great toll from the people of both the North and the South. Due to the battle taking place in the North, land and property were destroying, and after the battle, thousands lay dead in the fields. The picture below is one from the Library of Congress. The image shows dead bodies lying on the field at Gettysburg. Similar images can be found across the internet.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Joel Achenbach, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/gettysburg-the-battle-and-its-aftermath/2013/04/26/539125d8-ab60-11e2-a8b9-2a63d75b5459_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.711035f18b6d

¹⁸⁶ Alexander Gardner, *Battlefield of Gettysburg. Dead Confederate sharpshooter at foot of Little Round Top*, 1863; Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1863), Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2012647833/>



Figure One

The image shown in figure one is that of a sharpshooter, who was shot, and his gun now lays behind him, he stays exactly where he fell. Although the picture may be blurry, there is a blanket that is partly shown, which allows the viewer to assume that this shooter had chosen this as a permanent position from which he would take shots at the other army.

The picture below shows soldiers in the field post-battle awaiting burial. The brutal reality of all the death around them was imminent. One Confederate soldier leaving the battlefield on July 4th 187⁰⁰⁰188

¹⁸⁸ “What Happened to Gettysburg’s Confederate Dead?”, The Blog of Gettysburg National Military Park, July 07, 2016. <https://npsgnmp.wordpress.com/2012/07/26/what-happened-to-gettysburgs-confederate-dead/>



Figure Two

Although all states had their part in the Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg, one state stands out about the rest. New Hampshire, although small, was one of the mighty Union forces during the Civil War. During the Civil War the state of New Hampshire provided the Union army with eighteen infantry regiments, one light battery regiment, one heavy artillery regiment, and one cavalry regiment.¹⁸⁹ Through the Civil War, Keene, New Hampshire acted as a recruiting station for the men of Cheshire County to volunteer for the war. On the 15th of April 1861, President Lincoln issued his proclamation that would call for the volunteering of 75,000 men to form a militia that would be signed up for three months. In compliance with the demands of the president, Governor Joseph A. Gilmore of New Hampshire, called for a regiment of volunteers on the 16th of April.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ NH in the Civil War, NH Department of Cultural Resources. Accessed April 5, 2019. https://www.nh.gov/nhculture/nh_civilwar.htm.

¹⁹⁰ Griffin, Simon Goodell, Frank H. Whitcomb, and Octavius Applegate. *A History of the Town of Keene from 1732, When the Township Was Granted by Massachusetts, to 1874, When It Became a City*. Keene, NH: Sentinel Print., 1904.

Of the eighteen New Hampshire regiments to serve for the Union during the Civil War, five of them served during the Battle of Gettysburg. In total, over nine-hundred men from New Hampshire fought in the Battle of Gettysburg. Of those nine-hundred men, New Hampshire had three-hundred-sixty-eight casualties.¹⁹¹ To put this into perspective, according to an 1860 United States census, New Hampshire had a population of 362,073. Even though no Civil War battles took place in the state of New Hampshire, the state volunteered at least 35,000 men, or 10% of the population of the state at that time.¹⁹² In comparison to the, Vermont had a population of 350,000 men, and volunteered 34,000 men for the war. Of those 34,000 men, 5,224 died from wounds or sickness. This would be 14% of the population of Vermont.¹⁹³

The New Hampshire units to act in the Battle of Gettysburg were as follows: the Second New Hampshire Infantry, the Fifth New Hampshire Infantry, the Twelfth New Hampshire Infantry, New Hampshire Sharpshooters, and the First New Hampshire Artillery, Battery A.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ "New Hampshire at Gettysburg." The Battle of Gettysburg. Accessed March 20, 2019. <http://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/union-monuments/new-hampshire/>.

¹⁹² "New Hampshire in the Civil War." New Hampshire in the Civil War. January 01, 1970. Accessed January 26, 2019. <http://americancivilwarinstitute.blogspot.com/2013/08/new-hampshire-in-civil-war.html>.

¹⁹³ "Historic Sites State of Vermont." Civil War | Historic Sites. Accessed April 30, 2019. https://historicsites.vermont.gov/vt_history/civil_war.

¹⁹⁴ War, Civil. "New Hampshire in the Civil War." New Hampshire in the Civil War. January 01, 1970. Accessed January 26, 2019. <http://americancivilwarinstitute.blogspot.com/2013/08/new-hampshire-in-civil-war.html>.



Figure Three

Figure three is of a monument for the men of the 2nd New Hampshire Regiment. The monument stands just south of Gettysburg in the Peach Orchard (where battle took place on July 2). The monument stands over thirteen feet high. It was dedicated to the state of New Hampshire on July 2, 1886. Figure four below is of the monument dedicated to the fifth regiment of New Hampshire on July 2, 1886. The boulders of the monument were taken from the battlefield of Gettysburg, and the octagonal stone is one taken from the granite to represent the state of New

Hampshire. The monument is six feet tall, and was built to represent the” hard, enduring, patient, and unmovable” force of the New Hampshire fighting fifth. ¹⁹⁵



Figure Four

According to Asa Bartlett of Epping, New Hampshire, the governments greatest mistake was to not call upon more volunteers. The initial request for 75,000 men in 1861, showed how little Lincoln and the Congress knew of the power of the seceding states. An additional 50,000 volunteers for the Union cause could have potentially avoided three days of carnage and bloodshed. Just as England and France were about to announce their recognition of the Southern Confederacy, Lincoln called for 300,000 more volunteers to be enlisted. It was at this time that the Twelfth Regiment of New Hampshire rose to defend their country. The Governor at the time believed that the only hope that the Union army had was the patriotism of the people, and that

¹⁹⁵ ”New Hampshire at Gettysburg”, <http://gettysburg.stonesentinels.com/union-monuments/new-hampshire/>.

their hope would triumphantly carry them through every obstacle of war until the Union army came out victorious.¹⁹⁶

During a meeting to enlist more volunteers, Col. Whipple is quoted as saying.

“My friends: I want you to appreciate if you can the magnitude of this crisis. We have just been called upon for three hundred thousand men and a thousand millions of treasure, but the end is not yet. It is to be followed by more men and more money, and when the last man and the last dollar has fallen and been expended, that dear and glorious old flag (pointing to the stars and stripes) has been preserved at a cheap price. I should be ashamed to survive this contest. I ask no higher glory than the privilege to add my name to the long list of heroes who shall give their lives for their country in this great struggle for the Union and the Constitution. If I address a man here tonight who would even dodge a bullet that could not find its way against this hell-born rebellion, but through his own heart, he is a coward and does not deserve the protection of the old flag. The hour demands the sacrifice, and who shall be base enough to withhold? As for one, I now offer my life, my property, my all to the support and preservation of our common country.”¹⁹⁷

Throughout all manifests, books, articles, one thing shines clear above the rest; the dedication and love that the people of New Hampshire had for their great country.

¹⁹⁶ Asa Bartlett, *History of the Twelfth Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion* (Concord, New Hampshire: I.C. Evans, 1897), 6.

¹⁹⁷ Bartlett, 6.

Col. Whipple shows that the men of New Hampshire knew what they were fighting for, and even if it meant giving their lives, they wanted to make sure that the country that they fought so hard to get didn't crumble due to the southern indignation. Another young African American Union soldier said, "When we count up the carnage, it must be for something higher." The young man was making the point that in the end, the Union must prevail, because if not all the deaths would have been for nothing. In the end, all these young men have sacrificed their lives to keep their country intact.¹⁹⁸

Although not from New Hampshire, Franklin Haskell showed his knowledge of the importance of the battles and articulated the thoughts of the soldiers when he said.

"No, not many days since, at times we were filled with fears and forebodings. The people of the country, I suppose, shared the anxieties of the army, somewhat in common with us, but they could not have felt them as keenly as we did. We were upon the immediate theatre of events, they occurred from day to day, and were of them. We were the army whose province it should be to meet this invasion and repel it; on us was the immediate responsibility for results, most momentous for good or ill, yet in the future. And so, in addition to the solicitude of all good patriots, we felt that our own honor as men and as an army, as well as the safety of the Capitol and the country, were at stake."¹⁹⁹

The impending doom of what would happen to the country should these young men not prevail and come out on top was sitting on their shoulders while they marched to what could be the very end of their existence. Their bravery and courage do not go without substantial notice. The North thought in National terms because they were aware of what the consequences would

¹⁹⁸ Ken Burns, *Civil War*, Ken Burns (1990, Walpole, New Hampshire: Florentine Films, 1990), video.

¹⁹⁹ Haskell, 1-2.

be if the South won. They understood that potentially they could lose some freedom, and that the South would continue to try to spread the institution of slavery.

The men of the war, however, weren't the only ones making strives to hold the country together. Families from the state of New Hampshire pledged \$100 to families of volunteers. To begin with, there were twenty-three volunteers to pledge \$100, but as time went on more people volunteered. Frequent meetings were held, and volunteers kept coming in. Several times throughout different articles the words "excitement" and "enthusiasm" are used to describe the people of New Hampshire during the time of the war. "The **excitement** continued through the summer and fall, and frequent meetings were held, several of them being mass meetings on the Square. The same enthusiasm prevailed throughout the North. Legislatures were called together, and regiments of volunteers were rapidly organized in all the states. Troops from Massachusetts, New York and other states were promptly on the ground to defend the Capitol and other points. The number of troops called for by President Lincoln had volunteered within ten days, and the quotas of the states were more than filled. During that season of 1861, besides a battalion of cavalry, a light battery of six rifled brass pieces- 155 men- and three companies of sharpshooters, New Hampshire organized and put into the field seven regiments of infantry; and the eighth left the state in the winter following- in all nearly 9,000 men."²⁰⁰ The words excitement, and enthusiasm riddle the passage above, as well as the idea that it only took ten days for the Northern states to meet the quotas set by the President, as well as more than fill their individual quotas.

The financial toll that the war took on New Hampshire was almost as significant as the loss of life. With the extraordinary expenditures, there was no money in the treasury to pay for

²⁰⁰ Griffin, Simon Goodell, Frank H. Whitcomb, and Octavius Applegate, 471.

debts, weapons, wages, etc., because of this, Governor Goodwin became solely responsible for the money that was borrowed for emergency. This is yet another time where the state of New Hampshire saw a need and quickly worked to fix it. Two Concord, New Hampshire banks offered a loan of \$50,000, three banks in Keene, New Hampshire offered \$10,000 each, and the citizens of Keene paid for \$25,450 of the loan which was now at \$150,000,000. Later, there was a town hall meeting called to discuss further helping to aid the families of the volunteers. Women of the town of Keene immediately banded together to work in the aid of the soldiers. They worked to gather anything that the men may need on the battlefield or in the hospitals, and \$5,000 was subscribed for the families of the volunteers.²⁰¹

The New Hampshire Fighting Fifth fought under the command of Colonel Edward E. Cross, a veteran of the battles of Fair Oaks (May 31-June 1, 1862), the Battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862), the Battle of Fredericksburg (December 11-15, 1862), and the Battle of Chancellorsville (April 30- May 6, 1863). The men of the NH Fifth often

Although the Civil War, and the Battle of Gettysburg were a gruesome, awful time in the United States history, based on information gathered from several different sources, these battles and wars brought out the best of the Union states, especially New Hampshire. During these crucial times the state of New Hampshire banded together to not only take care of their own people but to help defend their country, and they did so proudly. New Hampshire men quickly stepped forward to lay their lives down for the country, and the women took as big of a step in helping to provide for the families of the volunteers. Although Gettysburg had many awful

²⁰¹ Griffin, Simon Goodell, Frank H. Whitcomb, and Octavius Applegate, 472.

consequences, such as the loss of life and incredulous amounts of debt, the people of New Hampshire arose to the challenge and in the end, the Union came out victorious.

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Chapter 8.

John Fallon, “The Soldiers of Saint Patrick”

Between 1845 and 1855 more than 1.5 million Irish men, women, and children immigrated to the United States to escape famine, poverty and British tyranny. Over 200,000 Irishman would fight for the Union in the American Civil War. It’s also estimated that around 20,000 served in the Confederate army. Despite having more cause to support the Confederacy, the Irish overwhelmingly supported the Union. Among the Union Irish was the famed Irish Brigade known for its gallantry and dependability. The Irish were motivated to serve the Union for multiple reasons including demonstrating their loyalty to their new nation, protecting democracy, making the U.S. safe for future Irish immigration and even gaining military experience to take back to Ireland to fight the British. However, by the end of the war Irish support for the Union would fade due to higher casualty rates among Irish regiments, the Emancipation Proclamation, the federal draft and the Election of 1864. Despite having every reason not to serve the Union, the Irish chose to fight and die for the Union while at the same time they were able to serve and represent Ireland.

As more and more Irish immigrated to the United States in the years prior to the Civil War, tension between the Irish and the nativists would rise. The nativists were those who believed that the United States belonged to the “Natives”, those who had lived in the United States for decades’ prior and were mostly Anglo-Saxon Protestants. The Irish were seen as Catholic invaders who were hated for their religion, ethnicity, culture, poverty and lack of working skills. As James McPherson describes in his Pulitzer Prize winning book *The Battle Cry of Freedom*, “The poverty, religion, and cultural alienation of the Irish made them triple

outsiders”²⁰². In an attempt to show their use and loyalty to the United States many volunteered for the Union army when the war broke out.

In addition to McPherson, Lawrence Fredrick Kohl, former history professor at the University of Alabama echoed a similar take on the Irish persecution, “The know-nothings attacked the Irish for their poverty, their religion, their democratic politics, their intemperance, their criminality, their devotion to the old country, and their attempts to sow discord between the United States and Britain”²⁰³. In the years leading to The Civil War the Irish were treated as foreigners and second class citizens by the nativists in the north, especially in New York City where many Irish lived. Despite 30 years of discrimination and inequality, the Irish would turn out in great numbers during the early years of the war.

Ironically, the Irish had more of a reason to fight for the Confederacy than the Union. The Confederacy were fighting for what they saw as independence from a tyrannical government similar to the Irish Nationalists in Great Britain. They also, for the most part did not believe in abolition because freeing millions of slaves would just create more competition for job opportunities after the war. Nonetheless, during the war the Irish in the Union would often interact with the Confederates more so than the non-Irish. Captain Conyngham of the Irish Brigade writes, “Perhaps the men of the Irish Brigade lived on better terms with the rebels than any others. Oftentimes, when the rebel pickets were bitterly firing on our men, they would cease as as soon as the brigade relieved the others, and a most friendly feeling would soon spring up,

²⁰² James McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom* (Oxford University Press 1988) 32.

²⁰³ Lawrence Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns* (Fordham University Press, 1994.) 3.

and a regular barter of coffee, sugar, whiskey, and tobacco take place!”²⁰⁴. Even though they served the Union, it could still be seen that the Union Irish were sympathetic to the Confederate cause.

In comparison, writer Susannah Ural Bruce explains Irish motivation as a dual-context of service to both the United State and Ireland. She writes, “It is essential to understand that this continued sense of loyalty to Ireland, or awareness of their Irish heritage, does not mean that they were all Fenians or that radical Irish nationalism shaped their decisions.”²⁰⁵. Irish soldiers believed that in serving the Union they could serve both the United States and Ireland. They could preserve the Union while at the same time they could make the United States safe for Irish immigration as well making stronger consolidated United States that would pose a larger threat to Great Britain.

However, she also believes that the Irish did not volunteer to serve in the hope of proving their loyalty to their new country. She writes, “There are problems citing this as the prime motivation, however, because very few Irishmen expressed the hope upon volunteering that their service would disprove nativist prejudice and aid their acceptance in America.”²⁰⁶. I disagree with her analysis that the Irish didn’t believe their service would help “disprove native prejudice and aid their acceptance in America”. She also argues that many probably joined the army for economic purposes and therefore were mercenaries. However, many non-Irish joined the army for economics purposes so this doesn’t exactly explain why so many discriminated Irish choose to fight.

²⁰⁴ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 87.

²⁰⁵ Susannah Bruce, “Remember You Country and Keep up Its Credit: Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865” *The Journey of Military History*. Society for Military History (2005) 335.

²⁰⁶ Susannah Bruce, “Remember You Country and Keep up Its Credit: Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865” 333.

Contrary to Bruce's analysis, Captain David Power Conyngham argued the complete opposite. He was a staff officer in the Irish 96th New York Infantry during the first half of the war which was a part of the Irish Brigade. Starting in 1865 and finishing it 1869, he wrote *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*, a military description of the Irish Brigade as well as why the Irish volunteered. He writes,

“The Irish soldier was, therefore, a patriot, and no mercenary. He had just the same right to fight for America than the native American had. The Irish, the German, the Pole, and all other exiles have a vested right in the maintenance of the American Union. Several Irishman gave up lucrative situations and business to join the army; they had sacrificed their interests to their patriotism. Many a patriotic young Irishman wanted to learn the use of arms and the science of war, with the hope of one day turning them to practical use in his own country”²⁰⁷.

Throughout his book Conyngham talks frequently of his time spent with other officers as well as ordinary soldiers such as privates and sergeants so he has a pretty good idea of what the average Irishman believed in. This goes against the idea that the Irish were motivated economically any more than the non-Irish soldier. However, this does demonstrate the idea that Bruce talked about of the dual-service to the United States and Ireland.

In addition to Captain Conyngham, Brigadier General Thomas Francis Meagher, commander of the Irish Brigade, offered almost the exact same sentiments. He once said during speech in 1861,

²⁰⁷ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 6.

"Duty and patriotism prompt me to support the Union. The Republic, that gave us an asylum and an honorable career, that is the mainstay of human freedom, the world over is threatened with disruption. It is the duty of every liberty-loving citizen to prevent such a calamity at all hazards. Above all is it the duty of us Irish citizens, who aspire to establish a similar form of government in our native land. It is not only our duty to America, but also to Ireland. We could not hope to succeed in our effort to make Ireland a Republic without the moral and material aid of the liberty loving citizens of these United States"²⁰⁸.

Meagher was a well know Irish Nationalist but seemed just as much dedicated to protecting the United States as he was to protecting Ireland, similar to Conyngham. They both showed that while remaining loyal to Ireland they could serve the United States in good form as the Irish Brigades track record shows their efficiency in battle.

The Irish Brigade was formed in September of 1861 and reached full strength of about 3,000 men in the summer of 1862. The Brigade was made up of five infantry regiments, the 63rd, 69th, 88th New York, the 28th Massachusetts and the 116th Pennsylvania and served in the Army of the Potomac. The Irish Brigade was well known for its gallantry, dependability and courageous in battle and participated in every major action in the Eastern Theater of Operations. Lawrence Kohl writes," It distinguished itself most in the Bloody Lane at Antietam, before the stonewall at Fredericksburg, in the Wheatfield at Gettysburg and assaulting the bloody angle at Spotsylvania"²⁰⁹ . Whenever the Irish Brigade was called upon, they came through. Among their

²⁰⁸ Bruce, "Remember You Country and Keep up Its Credit: Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865"; 335.

²⁰⁹ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 2.

biggest supporters was General George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac for a portion of the war.

The relationship between McClellan and the Irish Brigade was key in Irish support for the war. In *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*, Conyngham writes of a speech by General Meagher after the Battle of Fair Oaks, “Officers and men of the Brigade! It is my pleasing duty to announce to you that General McClellan has desired me to express to you the gratification he feels at your steady valor and conduct at the Battle of Fair Oaks, June 1st. He also desired me to say, that when he calls upon you again, which he will do in the hour of need, he has the fullest confidence in you, and feels assured you will emulate the brave efforts of that day”²¹⁰. McClellan was a favorite among just about every soldier in the Union Army but even more so amongst the Irish.

The Irish were huge supporters of McClellan, as Conyngham explains, “General McClellan was very popular with the army: his presence was always hailed with the wildest enthusiasm, by both officers and men. The soldiers felt and knew that he was their friend, and that any shortcomings in the war of their rations or attendance were not wing to him”(Page 166)²¹¹. McClellan was favored by most of the troops in the Union Army, not just the Irish. In addition to the firsthand accounts, even Bruce writes, “Irish American soldiers shared that loyalty to McClellan, a man they saw as protecting their lives by avoiding unnecessary casualties, rather than sacrificing them to the administration's and Northern newspapers' demands of "On to Richmond." Many Irish soldiers expressed a willingness to abandon the war if

²¹⁰ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 166.

²¹¹ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 166.

McClellan was not their leader”²¹². Later that year McClellan was stripped of his command of the Army of the Potomac by Washington. This was the beginning of the end for Irish support for the war.

Under McClellan, the Irish Brigade suffered similar casualty rates to the rest of the Army of the Potomac, but afterwards they rose steeply. The Irish Brigade served in the Union army that sustained the most casualties (Potomac), the corps that suffered the most casualties(II) and the division that suffered the most casualties in the 2nd corps(1st). Lawrence Kohl explains the casualty situation,

“All five of its regiments (63rd, 69th and 88th New York; 28th Massachusetts; and the 116th Pennsylvania) were on Fox’s list of the 300 Union regiments that sustained the heaviest losses in battle. And two of them, the 69th New York and the 28th Massachusetts, ranked among the top ten out of more than 2,000 Northern regiments in the number of combat deaths. During the war, two soldiers died of disease or accident for everyone who died as a consequence of battle. For the Irish brigade, however, the ratio was reversed: two died of battle wounds for every one that died of disease or accident”²¹³.

For this reason, Irish support for the war started to decline. The Irish Brigade, for example went from a force of over 2,000 men before Fredericksburg in December of 1862 to a force of less than 300 after Gettysburg in July of 1863. Despite the losses, President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton did little to none in supporting the Irish Brigade. General Thomas Meagher often asked Lincoln and Stanton for more time to recruit more Irish to join the Brigade

²¹² Bruce, “Remember You Country and Keep up Its Credit: Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865”; 346.

²¹³ Kohl and Conyngham, *The Irish Brigade and Its Campaigns*. 2.

but the two often refused. The Irish Brigade also saw little to no leave from combat and the front lines as they were involved extensively in every major battle between Antietam and Spotsylvania which cause the Brigade to shrink to a the size of a single regiment by June of 1864. Even afterwards they continued to fight at Cold Harbor, Petersburg and Appomattox towards the end of the war but as a smaller unit.

In addition to high casualty rates, the Enrollment Act of 1863 also hindered Irish support for the war. The act was created to provide more manpower for the Union Army through conscription. The Irish heavily opposed this because by this point most of the patriotic Irish were already serving in the Union ranks. Those Irish that were to be drafted did not believe in the war or their Republican government and therefore did not want to fight. Also, by this point the Irish American populace had already saw the carnage the Irish faced in combat at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg.

Surprisingly, Sgt. Peter Welsh of the 28th Massachusetts was in favor of the draft as he wrote in a letter to his wife, "The successful carrying out of this draft will do more to end the war then the winning of a great victory It will show the south that we have the determination and the power to prosecute the war and they have no possible means of raising an adequate force to oppose the army we can raise by conscription thus they they must soon see the hopelessness of their cause"²¹⁴. Most civilian Irish heavily opposed the draft but some Irish already in the army favored the draft because they were in dire need of reinforcements. The enrollment act would eventually lead to the New York Draft Riots in July of 1863, just after Gettysburg.

The draft riots started on July 13th after an anti-draft protest turned violent and evolved into a race riot by the time the riot was put down. The rioters were mostly Irish who were against

²¹⁴ Peter Welsh, *Irish Green and Union Blue: The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh, Color Sergeant, 28th Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteers* New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 110.

both the draft and the war. They initially looted and burned down buildings but after the New York Police attempted to put down the riot the violence increased and the rioters began targeting African Americans. By the time the riot was put down on July 16th over 120 were killed. The riot only stopped when elements of the New York militia and some Federal troops arrived and put it down by force. Sgt. Welsh wrote of his opinion of the rioters, "The originators of those riots should be hung like dogs they are agents of Jefferson Davis and had their plans laid to start those riots simultaneously with Lees raid into Pennsylvania I hope the authorities will use canister freely It will bring the bloody cutthroats to them censes"²¹⁵. One could imagine that while fighting for your country, one would find it disheartening to hear that back home it was being torn apart by your own people.

The Draft and Race riots of New York did not come out of nowhere. The Irish in American were long known for their racism of African Americans. The only people that were below the Irish in the social order of the United States were slaves and freedmen. Therefore, African Americans were the only group that the Irish can look down on. The Irish were heavily opposed to abolition partially for this reason. In one of his letters home Sgt. Welsh wrote, "The feeling against nigras is intensely strong in this army as is plainly to be seen wherever and whenever they meet them They are looked upon as the principal cause of the war and this feeling is especially strong in the Irish regiments"²¹⁶. This is why the Emancipation Proclamation caused further unrest amongst the Irish in the Union ranks and in the populace.

In January of 1863 Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation which freed the slaves in the areas of the country occupied by Confederate forces. The newly freed slaves quickly began running to Union lines and then into the Northern cities. For those that did not

²¹⁵ Peter Welsh 110.

²¹⁶ Peter Welsh, 62.

enlist in the Union army, they began looking for work which caused a problem for the Irish. This was another reason they were opposed to abolition, because freeing thousands of slaves would just lead to less job opportunities for the Irish who were already struggling to find work.

Finally, the nail in the coffin was the Presidential election of 1864. Lincoln was running for reelection against George B. McClellan. As stated before, the Irish were big supporters of McClellan as their general and were equally as supportive of him as a presidential candidate. McClellan was running with the intention to negotiate a peace to end the war and rescind the Emancipation Proclamation, this would be the perfect scenario for the struggling Irish. Estimates show that around 90% of the Irish that voted in the election voted for McClellan. Unfortunately for the Irish, the rest of the count voted for Lincoln and he won the electoral vote 212 to 21 and the popular vote 55% to 45%. After this the Irish in the North were viewed simply as traitors to the Union cause despite their reputation on the battlefields up and down the Eastern Theater of operations.

In conclusion, the Irish had every reason not to fight for the Union during the Civil War but did so anyways. They were more similar to the Confederates than they were to the Federals. They were treated as second class citizens and foreigners by the nativists. They also believed by serving the Union they could show their loyalty to their new country while also serving Ireland. Unfortunately, Irish support for the war would fall apart due to higher Irish casualties, the draft of 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Election of 1864. Despite all of this, the Irish were able to successfully assist in preserving the Union while representing their loyalty to Ireland.

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