Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era 2018

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Requirements and Categories for Publication:

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1. **Academic Essays**: We are interested in original research with extensive use of primary and secondary sources. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, military history, social history, race, reconstruction, memory, reconciliation, politics, the home front, etc. **6,000 words or less**.

2. **Book Reviews**: Any non-fiction Civil War-related book published in the last two years. Authors should have knowledge of the relevant literature to review. **700 words or less**.

3. **Historical Non-fiction Essays**: This category is for non-fiction works regarding the Civil War that are not necessarily of an academic nature. Examples of this include essays in public history of the war, study of the re-enactment culture, current issues in the Civil War field such as the sesquicentennial, etc. Creativity is
encouraged in this category as long as it remains a non-fiction piece. **2,000 to 6,000 words.**

Anyone with an interest in the Civil War may submit a piece, including graduate students, as long as the work submitted is undergraduate work written within the past five years. If your submission is selected, your work will be published online and in a print journal, which you will receive a copy of for your own enjoyment.
A Letter from the Editors

It is our pleasure to present the eighth volume of the Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era. This volume contains four academic essays on topics ranging from POWs’ post-war experiences to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad’s role in the Civil War. The journal begins with Kevin Nicholson’s “After Andersonville: Survivors, Memory and the Bloody Shirt.” This well-researched essay explores how Andersonville survivors capitalized on their experiences as war prisoners to gain the same recognition after the war that other soldiers received. Next, Matthew Harris takes a look at Lincoln’s proposal for recolonizing African Americans to solve racial tensions in “Condemning Colonization: Abraham Lincoln’s Rejected Proposal for a Central American Colony.” This is followed by “Rewriting History: A Study of How the History of the Civil War Has Changed in Textbooks from 1876 to 2014” by Skyler Campbell, who looks at the evolving popular interpretations of the war in school books. Finally, Gared Dalton explores the Union’s strategic uses of the railway in “A Dagger Through the Heartland: The Louisville & Nashville Railroad in the Civil War.”

Narrowing submissions down to these four final pieces was difficult, and there was much deliberation by our team over the well-researched pieces we received. The editorial process offered the editors important opportunities to work with authors and explore the field of Civil War history. Our team was able to engage a variety of topics in depth while reading and editing the submissions. We were impressed with each author’s enthusiasm in studying the Civil War Era and their commitment to their work in going the extra mile to submit to the eighth volume of our journal.
It is necessary to acknowledge and thank our dedicated associate editors whose hard work and diligence were vital to the ultimate publication of this journal: Elizabeth Hobbs (’21), Jujuan Johnson (’21), Garret Kost (’21), Savannah Labbe (’19), Brandon Peeters (’20), Benjamin Roy (’21), Nicholas Tarchis (’18), Jonathan Tracey (’19), Laura Waters (’19), and Samuel Weathers (’18). We would also like to thank Dr. Ian Isherwood (’00), our faculty advisor, for his constant guidance and support of student work.

We hope that this journal will offer our readers a unique view into several important issues and events of the Civil War Era. We are incredibly proud of our editorial team as well as this year’s authors, who offer their brilliance in the pages of this volume. We look forward to their future contributions to the Civil War field. Please enjoy this volume of the Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era.

Sincerely,

Anika N. Jensen, Gettysburg College Class of 2018
Jeffrey L. Lauck, Gettysburg College Class of 2018
Olivia J. Ortman, Gettysburg College Class of 2019
Zachary A. Wesley, Gettysburg College Class of 2020
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Skyler A. Campbell is a junior at Albion College. She will graduate in May 2019 with a major in Social Studies and a concentration in Secondary Education.

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On December 7, 1905, three hundred eighty-one former Andersonville prisoners from Pennsylvania gathered at the site of the former prison for the dedication of a monument to the state’s victims. The monument’s message commemorated the “heroism, sacrifices, and patriotism” of those who perished at Andersonville.¹ Col. James D. Walker, president of the Andersonville Memorial Commission, gave a speech to the crowd praising the “heroic martyrs” who, with their experiences in the prison, helped write “a most brilliant page in military history.”² In his report on the event, Commission secretary and Andersonville survivor Ezra H. Ripple summarized the impact of the carnage that had unfolded in the prison. Given the sheer number of deaths, he wrote that the prison “was the greatest battlefield of the war.” Ripple called for the “heroes” who died under “indescribable torment and misery” to be remembered “for unexampled loyalty under unexampled circumstances.”³ The ceremony served as a clear exemplification of the virtues for which survivors of Andersonville wished to be

¹ Pennsylvania at Andersonville, Georgia, Ceremonies at the Dedication of the Memorial Erected by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the National Cemetery at Andersonville, Georgia (N.p.:C.E. Aughinbaugh, 1909), 24.
² Ibid., 27.
³ Ibid., 32.
Nicholson remembered: as heroic men, just as other Northern soldiers who had the “good fortune” to fight and die on the battlefield.

Andersonville held more than 40,000 captured Union soldiers during its operation; nearly 13,000 of these men died inside its walls. The prisoners who survived the ordeal returned home, welcomed by civilians who could not understand the experience of being a prisoner of war. Upon returning home, many Andersonville survivors felt marginalized relative to other veterans: they were not in every case given the celebratory welcome that ordinary soldiers received, and many had greater difficulty securing pensions in later years. Feelings of estrangement encouraged survivors to write of their experiences as exceptional among veterans. In the years following their release, survivors wrote narratives and formed veterans’ associations to ensure that future generations would remember their experiences.

These prisoners had suffered greatly and believed the courage they exhibited in surviving the camp should not be forgotten. They reminded audiences that bravery was not limited to the battlefield. In doing so, the former prisoners also helped play a part in the “waving of the bloody shirt” in postwar politics that called back to Confederate war atrocities to further the Republican political agenda. Prisoners used similar tactics in their stories when issues such as pension reform arose. Historians have often written about the conditions of the camp and its impact on Northern memory, but few have dealt with the connection between survivors’ postwar experiences, struggle for commemoration, and role in the bloody shirt campaign. In
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their stories to the Northern public, Andersonville survivors responded to feelings of postwar marginalization by describing their experiences as exceptional among war veterans, and in doing so, they consequentially played a major role in the postwar bloody shirt campaign.

In May 1865, the last batch of Union soldiers imprisoned at Andersonville was taken to Florida to be exchanged, after which they would be shipped back North to their hometowns. Returning prisoners had different experiences regarding their reception by their communities. Historian James Marten wrote that the length of the trip and their unique situation in returning home helped cause variations in the reception of prisoners of war.⁴ Many of the returning prisoners met a positive reception from soldiers and civilians. John McElroy wrote that the guards who received his group in Wilmington, OH, “lavished unstinted kindness” on them, giving them plenty of food and coffee.⁵ Other prisoners were not as lucky in their receptions. For example, the ⁹th Minnesota returned home from a Confederate prison only to be forced to sleep on the streets and beg for food from a local bakery.⁶ Complicating further the issue of celebrating the return of prisoners of war was the

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⁶ St. Paul Press May 30, 1865, found in Walter N. Trenerry, “When the Boys Came Home,” Minnesota Historical Society 38 no. 6 (June 1963), 289.
poor health of many survivors. Thousands had died of malnutrition and starvation at Andersonville, and many of those who made it back to the North were in critical condition and required extended hospital visits. Some never made it out of the hospital. Photographs show returning prisoners from Andersonville as emaciated, walking skeletons: Phillip Hattle, shown in the accompanying photo (appendix), died after three weeks in the U.S. General Hospital in Annapolis, presumably from a form of malnutrition. In short, while prisoners’ reception upon returning to the North was not universally less positive than the celebrations given to returning soldiers, circumstantial differences meant they were not always met with the “guns and bugles” kind of reception given to other returning veterans.

Having returned home to their communities, survivors attempted to revert back to their normal lives by finding jobs and either reuniting with their families or beginning new ones. Some prisoners were able to make a relatively successful transition to life at home after the war. McElroy, a printing apprentice before the war, returned to work in printing in Chicago and Toledo. He became co-editor of the National Tribune in Washington by 1884 and took leading positions in the Grand Army of the Republic at

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the end of the century. Ira E. Forbes of the 16th Connecticut graduated from Yale University, began a career in journalism for several major Connecticut newspapers, and married during the 1870’s.

However, the transition was not as seamless for all Andersonville survivors. Some survivors still suffered from maladies stemming from their prison days. Boston Corbett, remembered today as John Wilkes Booth’s killer, evidently never made a full physical recovery after his release from Confederate camps. According to hometown friend Thomas Brown, Corbett’s bouts with scurvy, chronic diarrhea, piles, and rheumatism in the prison left him “wholly unfit for manual labor of any kind” between the end of the war and Corbett’s departure for Kansas in 1878. Treatment of these maladies could also introduce complications for adjustment to civilian life. An anonymous prisoner suffering from insomnia while under the care of Union doctors was given an opiate after begging for help. Upon returning home, he began to suffer from stomach pain and headaches, stating in an 1876 autobiography that “nothing seemed to benefit me.” When the conditions did not turn out to be a short-term

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problem, the prisoner implied that the complications were a product of opium dependence.  

Psychological problems played an even more substantial role than physical maladies for many survivors. While it was not a formally recognized medical condition in the postwar era, later analysis has shown that many Civil War veterans exhibited symptoms of what is now known as post-traumatic stress disorder. Prisoners of war were especially susceptible to these symptoms. Historian Eric T. Dean, Jr. wrote that boredom, monotony, and deprivation, combined with factors such as severe weight loss and disease, could lead to “serious psychological problems that lingered and intensified in the years following the end of the war.” Given these factors, it is no surprise that a number of Andersonville prisoners encountered problems with psychological trauma. Dean provides the example of Erastus Holmes of Indiana. During his time in Andersonville, Holmes went from 160 pounds to just 85 pounds, while a doctor referred to him as “racked and broken down.” Upon returning home, Holmes experienced flashbacks and was never able to get over his prison experiences: he went so far as to create a replica of the prison camp in his backyard,

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13 Affidavit of James M. Carvin, M.D., February 14, 1887 [constitution], federal pension file of Erastus Holmes [F 5 Ind. Cav.], National Archives, found in Dean, *Shook Over Hell*, 85.
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showing it to visitors when they came by.\textsuperscript{14} Another notable case of trauma in an Andersonville survivor is that of Boston Corbett. The cumulative effect of his incarceration in prison and the fact that he mistakenly killed Booth took their toll on Corbett. In 1878, he moved to Concordia, Kansas and lived as a hermit for the next ten years, displaying generally unusual behavior. He was given a job as assistant doorkeeper at the state legislature in 1887, but he brandished a pistol and called the lawmakers “blasphemers”; he was subsequently tried and committed to an insane asylum.\textsuperscript{15}

In short, many Andersonville survivors struggled to return to civilian life because of complications from their stay in the prison. Maladies including rheumatism, chronic diarrhea, and post-traumatic stress were fairly prevalent among the veteran population. In terms of pensions awarded by the U.S. government, 11.8 percent were for chronic diarrhea and 8.7 percent were for rheumatism. Those who suffered various “diseases of the brain” received a smaller number of pensions. While men suffering from these conditions were awarded pensions, they were rewarded fewer pensions overall than did gunshot wounds (about 25 percent).\textsuperscript{16} To be awarded a pension for a disease, a veteran

\textsuperscript{14} Affidavit of Maurice J. Barry, March 18, 1887 [son-in-law], federal pension file of Erastus Holmes, found in Dean, \textit{Shook Over Hell}, 86.
\textsuperscript{16} Charles F. Wooley, \textit{The Irritable Heart of Soldiers and the Origins of Anglo-American Cardiology: The U.S. Civil War (1861) to World War I (1918)} (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002), 40-41, found in Marten, \textit{Sing Not War}, 82.
Nicholson

needed confirmation from either an officer or two comrades, but as the years passed after the end of the war, it was increasingly hard for comrades to remember specific symptoms enough to give sufficient testimony.\(^\text{17}\) James Marten wrote that men with “pinned sleeves and wooden legs” who had suffered clear, physical combat injuries were easy targets of admiration to the public. However, the public was less likely to sympathize with veterans who had suffered from chronic illness and psychological trauma because they constituted “misfortunes that could befall anyone.” In general, according to Marten, the public focused on signs of “helpless and dependence” in veterans when it came to recognizing war injuries.\(^\text{18}\) Because the injuries Andersonville survivors suffered were in the “less visible” category of injuries, they were more likely to fly under the radar of the public and thus less likely to be awarded pensions down the road.

The uneven reception of Andersonville survivors, as well as the reduced visibility and acknowledgment of injury, only added to a feeling of marginalization cultivated during their wartime experience in the camp. In the early stages of the war, captured prisoners on each side were detained for only a short period before being exchanged via a cartel to their own side. However, when the Union began deploying African American soldiers in 1863, Confederate soldiers severely mistreated black soldiers when they were


\(^{18}\) Marten, *Sing Not War*, 77.
incarcerated in Southern camps. Testifying before Congress on the treatment of prisoners of war, African American soldier Archibald Bogle reported he was refused medical attention despite entering the camp with a battle injury. Later in his stay, several guards threatened to put him in ball and chains for hesitating on an order.\textsuperscript{19} Southern refusal to exchange captured black soldiers ultimately caused the exchange system to break down and led to the lengthy prison stays in Andersonville that allowed bad conditions to kill such a high number of prisoners. Feeling abandoned to a grim fate, some prisoners blamed the Union government in their prison diaries for their suffering. Amos Stearns complained that “nothing is done about taking us out of this bull pen.” Placing the blame squarely on the government, he pondered whether it “does not care for men who have served it faithfully.”\textsuperscript{20} The fear of being forgotten, then, was a feeling in Andersonville prisoners that existed before release.

Feelings of marginalization continued into the postwar era as many Andersonville survivors felt overlooked in comparison to other veterans. Inconsistency in reception by their home communities and lesser recognition of postwar maladies augmented these sentiments. Consequently, prisoners of war began to voice their opinions on the matter.

\textsuperscript{19} U.S. Congress, House, \textit{Report on the Treatment of Prisoners of War by the Rebel Authorities During the War of the Rebellion}, 40\textsuperscript{th} Congress, 3\textsuperscript{rd} sess., 1869, Report No. 45, Serial 1391, 85, accessed October 2.

of Andersonville and its victims not being given enough attention by the public relative to the larger body of Civil War veterans. In the preface to his prison narrative, McElroy writes that more Union soldiers died in prisons in 1864-65 than did on the front lines of battle. While the public was well-versed with the “heroism and sacrifices” of those who died in battle, “it has heard little of the still greater number who died in the prison pen.”21 Former prisoner Charles M. Smith wrote that when most thought of the war they primarily remembered the major battles. However, prisoners lived in “circumstances more trying and fatal” than did regular soldiers and, as a result, deserved to be remembered for their “valiant service” as well as their “fortitude, courage and heroism.”22 Faced with the prospect of being forgotten, Andersonville survivors began to look for ways to make themselves heard and, in the process, convince the Northern public of the exceptional nature of their war experiences.

After the end of the war, Andersonville’s commander Capt. Henry Wirz was put on trial and eventually sentenced to death for his alleged role in the atrocities that occurred under his watch. Modern analysis of Wirz’s situation has suggested that Wirz should not have been held culpable for Andersonville’s death toll. William Marvel, in his effort to exonerate Wirz, described the trial as a sad farce: the judge,

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General Lew Wallace, “convicted the defendant in his own mind,” before the trial had even begun, while prisoners provided flimsy evidence for Wirz’s wrongdoing.\(^{23}\) However, around the time of Wirz’s trial, the Northern public was already convinced of Wirz’s guilt by word of mouth of former prisoners who provided sensational details of atrocities. A *New York Herald* correspondent reported prisoners telling him that Wirz “would amuse himself by putting down the confined…and then chuckle saying to them, ‘It won’t be long before all you damned Yankees will be in hell.’”\(^{24}\) Historian Benjamin Cloyd explains the Wirz trial as an attempt to give the “angry Northern public” a “demonic figure” on which they could channel their postwar anger over perceived Confederate war atrocities.\(^{25}\) In their interactions with the Northern media during the Wirz trial, Andersonville survivors made their first foray into the “bloody shirt” campaign. Highlighting Wirz’s “atrocities” had substantial political ramifications and helped put the freed prisoners in the national spotlight.

At the same time, the visibility of the Wirz trial gave Andersonville survivors their first chance to memorialize their suffering in print. In the years following the war, dozens of prison narratives entered publication with the intent of conveying survivors’ experiences in the camp to the

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\(^{24}\) “The Horrors of Andersonville,” *Hartford Daily Courant* 29 May 1865.

Northern public. The Wirz trial generated an outpouring of new narratives between 1865 and 1866 that emphasized bringing Rebel leaders to justice for war atrocities. Publication of narratives slowed down over the following fifteen years but picked up again in the 1880s when pension reform became a major political issue. Survivors presented these narratives as representations of what truly happened in the prison pen. In his preface, Robert Kellogg wrote that the narrative was “no place for brilliant fiction and exciting romance.”

Ann Fabian wrote that prisoners were adamant in promising that what they had written was truthful, whether they were appealing for pensions or writing propaganda.

However, while the narratives were effective means of telling prisoners’ stories, they tended to distort facts and sensationalize details. This could be especially true concerning descriptions of Wirz and John H. Winder, commander of the Confederate prison camp system. Marvel wrote that while narratives played a major role in how the public remembered Andersonville, they “range from fairly unreliable to perfectly ridiculous.”

Since the narratives were clustered around key events, such as the Wirz trial and looming pension legislation, and used rhetoric that conflicted with mediums such as prisoners’ diary entries, it is likely that many of these authors exaggerated details for

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political purposes despite promising truthful accounts. Nonetheless, prison narratives were one of the most prevalent means for Andersonville survivors to commemorate their suffering and show that their experiences were truly exceptional.

Survivors attempted to prove their exceptionalism in their narratives by showing prisoners’ ideal virtues. Authors included numerous exultations of themes such as heroism, courage, patriotism, and sacrifice when talking about the large body of prisoners in Andersonville and depicted them as martyrs. Kellogg wrote that households would remember the prisoners for “their attachment to the Union…their bravery and heroism, their courage and constancy.”29 He further added how the soldiers were itching to display such virtues in the field of combat, yearning for “glorious action” where they could actively help the Union cause.30 Augustus C. Hamlin depicts those who perished at Andersonville as “brave defenders” who made “noble sacrifices” for the good of the Union. He urges that their country acknowledge their “heroism” and “martyrdom” in their memory of the prison camp.31 While the prisoners at Andersonville may not have been involved in combat in the final years of the war, they still possessed many important virtues that justifiably earned them a place in Northern memory.

Escape narratives offered survivors another means to showcase their heroism in the face of an unforgiving enemy.

30 Ibid., 76.
Nicholson

Prisoners often wrote of their escape attempts or attempts of somebody they knew to provide a visual example of the courage these men possessed. In putting their lives on the line to escape the dismal conditions in the prison pen, prisoners could display great courage and heroism, even if the escape attempt failed. H.M. Davidson wrote that the prospects of spending “another terrible winter” in a prison camp seemed to make escape a necessity; it became “simply a case of self-preservation” to make a run for the Union lines. 32 Throughout Davidson’s escape account, he noted the presence of Confederates trying to track him down by frequently mentioning the “savage” hounds “with the intention of devouring us on the spot.” 33 Davidson and his comrades ultimately stumbled into the Confederate, rather than Union, line and were sent back to Andersonville but nonetheless exhibited heroism in risking their lives for a chance at freedom. An account of Charles M. Smith, published by the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS), describes a successful escape from Andersonville with similar themes in mind. While “filled with nervous fear and apprehension” at the prospect of recapture, he remarked that “nature never appeared so beautiful” as he reflected on a chance to escape the horrors of prison. 34 Moving through uncharted territory, Smith and his comrades made it to freedom after two weeks of pursuit.

33 Ibid., 260.
that left the men sickly. Even though they felt they had “not the strength” to reach their destination, the men’s perseverance allowed them to succeed.  

Escape narratives also gave survivors the opportunity to distinguish between the Confederate sympathizers trying to recapture them and the Southerners who opposed their cause. Slaves and white Unionists were shown to directly aid runaway prisoners in some stories, helping them by giving directions or providing food and shelter. While both Smith and Davidson did not intentionally seek out such aid, Smith remarked that “the negroes at the south were, by instinct, friendly to the Union soldier” and assisted many prisoners. Davidson’s group stumbled into a group of slaves and, though avoiding contact, were compelled to “remain very quiet in our hiding place” to avoid being noticed by Confederates. These Southerners’ aid to escaped prisoners made them heroes in escape narratives, in contrast to the villainous Confederates.

In addition to these expressions of heroism, survivors highlighted descriptions of suffering through deliberate efforts of Confederate officers. Emphasizing perceived atrocities, or waving a “bloody shirt,” caught the eye of a Northern public appalled by the carnage of the war. Casting blame directly on the Confederacy could strongly influence public responses, particularly in politics. The war undoubtedly had a profound effect on national politics: one

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35 Ibid., 143-144
36 Ibid., 119.
clear example is that, excluding Grover Cleveland, every U.S. President between 1869 and 1901 was a Civil War veteran. Candidates, especially Republican ones, often used their war experiences as evidence for their superior character. Aaron T. Bliss, who spent time in Andersonville and other Southern prisons, earned a position in Congress and was later elected governor of Michigan in 1900. An article in the *Grand Rapids Herald* supporting his candidacy prior to the election highlighted his “indomitable courage, perseverance, and unceasing industry” while noting in boldface that he had spent time in Southern prisons. Speaking about Andersonville, Bliss remarked that the accounts of prisoners’ suffering “had never been exaggerated” and that he likely had only survived due to his high rank. After his death, Bliss’ wartime experiences loomed nearly as large as his political ones. His former lieutenant, Governor Oramel B. Fuller, spoke about Bliss’ patriotism making him “the highest ideal of American citizenship.” Fuller then described how Bliss tore off his shoulder straps and insignia of his rank to avoid being separated from his comrades at Andersonville so he would be subjected to the same conditions as them, demonstrating a clear instance of Bliss’ heroism.

Republican politicians used these bloody shirt tactics to condemn the Confederacy over such atrocities in the war’s

38 “For Governor, Col. Aaron T. Bliss,” *Grand Rapids Herald* 17 August 1900, 3.
39 *Memorial of Aaron Thomas Bliss, Governor of Michigan During the Years 1901-1902 and 1903-1904* (Lansing: 1907), 27-28.
40 Ibid.
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aftermath, and Andersonville served as a major point of emphasis. A Congressional report on the treatment of prisoners of war with testimony from surviving prisoners of war ruled that the widespread deaths at Andersonville were “not accidental or inevitable,” but were “deliberately planned, and were the direct results of human agency, ingenuity, malice, and cruelty.” In an 1870 speech before the G.A.R. in Washington, D.C., Indiana representative J.P.C. Shanks declared that “it is at the door of the confederate government that I lay the charge of wanton and savage cruelty to helpless prisoners of war,” while reminding the audience of the “emaciated, neglected, crazed, and murdered men” who perished under their charge. Putting the blame for the carnage of the war on the Confederacy helped swing votes in the Republicans’ favor, especially since many veterans voted Republican during Reconstruction. In this manner, wartime suffering evolved from a major aspect of postwar memory into a useful political tool.

Survivors’ narratives published immediately after the war used accounts of their suffering to capitalize on the public vitriol against the Confederacy and its leaders to politicize their suffering. The stories made frequent references to dying prisoners with a theme of the helplessness of the victims. McElroy discussed one prisoner

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43 Ibid., 12.
Nicholson

who lay dying, exposed, and infested with worms in the stockade while being denied medical treatment, remarking that it was a shame that “so gallant a soul” should die “in this miserable fashion.”

Given that his trial had generated much attention among the Northern public, Wirz was the most common target of survivors’ blame in the first prison narratives, often earning sensationalized descriptions. Davidson wrote that Wirz had a “tyrannical disposition” and used historical superlatives to attack the camp’s commandant: “He must rank with Nero for cruelty, with Robespierre for wanton butchery, with the Spanish inquisitor for fiendish cunning in the invention of new torments.”

In addition to Wirz, prisoners held the Confederate government to blame for their suffering: according to Kellogg, the Confederate policy was to cut rations “to unfit as many of possible for future service.”

While narratives openly blamed the Confederacy for the prisoners’ suffering, the earliest ones did not hold the Union government responsible as some prisoners’ diaries had. Intended for a Northern audience, the narratives avoided criticizing the now-martyred Abraham Lincoln and directed full responsibility on the reviled Confederate leaders.

Political developments of the 1870s and 1880s allowed for a new string of narratives for prisoners to convey their suffering with political goals in mind. The most prominent of these goals was to secure pension reform:

44 McElroy, Andersonville, 357.
45 Davidson, Fourteen Months in Southern Prisons, 137-38.
46 Kellogg, Life and Death in Rebel Prisons, 78.
historian William B. Hesseltine wrote that because it was difficult for prisoners to secure pensions for maladies stemming back to their stay in Andersonville, survivors turned to narratives to convince the public that what had been said about the Confederate role in war atrocities was true. Opponents of pension reform attacked veterans for taking advantage of the pension system. When Grover Cleveland vetoed an 1888 pension bill, the Chicago Tribune ran an article celebrating the defeat of the “demagogues, the dead-beats and...deserters and coffee-coolers and bounty-jumpers.” Samuel Boggs’ 1887 narrative preceded a major Congressional pension bill and attacked the Confederate officials vociferously to convey the misery of the Andersonville experience. Wirz was once again a prime target. Boggs described one episode in July 1864 when the commandant responded to a disturbance among several prisoners by ordering his soldiers to fire the camp’s forty-four cannons loaded with grape-shot at the crowded stockade (the order was not carried out). In another passage, Boggs claimed that Winder had once stated that the camp could hold more prisoners due to the mortality of the camp: “Yes, send them on. We are doing more for the Confederacy here, in getting rid of the Yanks, than twenty of Lee’s best regiments of the front.” Such stories of Confederate war

48 Chicago Tribune, quoted in *Ohio Soldier* 7 October 1888, found in Marten, *Sing Not War*, 202.
50 Ibid., 39.
Nicholson

crimes, whether or not they had actually happened, were clearly written with the intent of convincing the public that former Andersonville prisoners deserved to be awarded pensions for having survived their incarceration. In a final statement supporting pensions for former prisoners, Boggs exclaimed that it was “patriotism” and not “thirteen dollars per month” of pensions that motivated soldiers, and they should be rewarded accordingly.\(^{51}\)

In addition to writing about their stay in prison, survivors came together to form national associations designed to commemorate their experiences. In addition to participating in associations for the general body of Civil War veterans such as the G.A.R. and the M.O.L.L.U.S., former prisoners of war distinguished themselves by forming separate organizations. Many Andersonville survivors joined groups such as the Andersonville Survivors Association and the National Association of Union Ex-Prisoners of War. The constitution of the latter of these two organizations highlighted its role to “perpetuate the name and fame” of prison camp victims while bringing together living prisoners for joint action to “secure justice to the living and honor to the dead.”\(^{52}\) The former of the two organizations was formed immediately after the Wirz trial and, as its name suggests, was exclusively for veterans who had spent time in Andersonville. Patrick Bradly, the A.S.A.’s president, wrote in an 1866 letter to Warren Lee

\(^{51}\) Ibid., 62-63.

\(^{52}\) Constitution and By-Laws of the National Association of Union Ex-Prisoners of War, Organized 1873 (Washington, DC: Bass & Simms, 1887), 1, accessed 5 October 2014.
Goss about the importance of testifying to “kindness, bravery, and faithful friendship in those scenes of horror” in the prison camp; such testimony allowed groups of survivors to commemorate their experiences and put them in perspective.

Meetings of survivors’ associations consisted mainly of reminiscences of the former prisoners’ wartime experiences. Speakers, in the same way as those who wrote prison narratives, emphasized the heroic traits of those who endured the terrible conditions of prison camps. A 1902 meeting of the National Union Ex-POWs Association in Washington featured speeches by John McElroy and Aaron T. Bliss. McElroy remarked that the suffering of prisoners of war, while tragic, brought the survivors of prison camps closer together than any other group of veterans and allowed them to share their collective memories. After describing a near brush with death in his successful escape attempt from Macon prison, Bliss stated that former prisoners “have made this nation what it is today…The officers of the army could have done nothing had it not been for the men behind the guns.” Such meetings touched on themes of heroism, courage, and sacrifice of prisoners of war, and provided a means for survivors to argue the exceptional case of their war experiences.

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In addition to their meetings, survivors’ associations were highly active in national politics with issues concerning the treatment of veterans. The issue of pension reform was again a central focus, and the National Ex-POWs Association publicly lobbied for application of more generous pensions. For instance, one September 1887 gathering in Chicago supported a bill proposing that pensions be awarded to men who had served a certain amount of time in prison regardless of their postwar condition, with a greater pension given to those who had spent more time incarcerated.  

Like narrative writers such as Boggs, the prisoners’ stance on pensions was that incarceration was a substantial wartime affliction that entitled them to payment. Organizations on numerous occasions demanded that the government give survivors their due reward. Speaking at the meeting of the Union Ex-POWs Association in 1902, Bliss acknowledged that there had been progress in aiding former prisoners but stated that the government “can never do too much for those who were in prison…I believe the time is near at hand when the government will do more for the ex-prisoners of war.”

The power of veterans’ suffering played a crucial role in pension legislation, and the bloody shirt remained a powerful weapon for the Republicans trying to pass it. Maine politician James G. Blaine criticized a presidential veto of pension legislation during a Chicago speech in


March 1888. He declared that the “sacrifice” soldiers had made “for country’s unity” entitled soldiers to pensions; in addition, he claimed that reduced pensions would put veterans in almshouses, only adding to their “personal sufferings.”57 Survivors’ organizations recognized the power of their members’ suffering and utilized it to convey their political agenda. At a meeting of the A.S.A. (reformed as the “National Union of the Survivors of Andersonville and Other Southern Camps), survivors debated political ramifications of renaming the organization. The phrase “Southern Camps” was replaced with “Rebel Camps,” while several members objected to a request to drop “Andersonville” from the name as it “was now regarded as the synonym of cruelty and torture all over the country.”58 The first change gives the Confederates the role in prison atrocities while objection over the use of Andersonville in the name shows that survivors wanted the public to better understand the extent of their suffering. In a later meeting of the National Union Ex-POWs Association, John McElroy claimed that the death toll of prison camps and the lingering maladies inflicted on survivors made the experiences of these men “the greatest tragedy of American history, if not in all history.”59 Survivors’ associations, therefore, played into postwar waving of the bloody shirt by highlighting their suffering when trying to pursue political goals.

57 “Mr. Blaine’s War: The Eloquent Words of the Maine Statesman Enthusiastically Received,” Chicago Daily Tribune 21 October 1888, 9.
Survivors erected a monument in 1899 at the site of the former prison to show that they had overcome the horrible memories of the past and should be remembered as Union heroes. Calls for a national cemetery in Andersonville began in late 1865, and by May 1866 the cemetery had been established three hundred yards from the still-standing stockade. In the 1890s and 1900s, individual states began building monuments commemorating the captured Union soldiers who died at Andersonville. New Jersey dedicated the first monument on February 3, 1899 and focused on the suffering of the prisoners for the Union cause in “a place where true character developed itself.” The monuments were typically built through cooperation between veterans’ organizations and memorial commissions and lacked the incendiary politically charged rhetoric of narratives or survivors’ associations in earlier years. Cloyd wrote that by this time the Northern states trended toward reconciliation with the South and instead tried to “recognize permanently the laudable aspects of Andersonville.” However, the monuments still praised the exceptional experiences of Andersonville survivors with depictions of courage, heroism, and sacrifice the way earlier forms of public expression had.

62 Cloyd, Haunted by Atrocity, 85.

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More states dedicated monuments at the site of Andersonville in the following years, some on a larger and more elaborate scale. For Pennsylvania’s dedication, mentioned more specifically earlier, the state provided for the transportation of the three hundred-eighty-one surviving prisoners to attend the ceremony. Maine’s monument, dedicated on November 14, 1904, commemorated the “heroic soldiers…who died that the Republic might live.” This dedication was not nearly as conciliatory as New Jersey’s: S.J. Walton called back to the “barbarity” of Wirz and told a story about a time Winder had allegedly turned away a Southerner who brought a carload of sweet potatoes for the prisoners. 63 103 survivors attended Connecticut’s dedication on October 23, 1907, and several spoke to the crowd at the ceremony. Robert Kellogg spoke of the “heroic sacrifice” of the prisoners who perished and stated that Andersonville would serve as “an object lesson in patriotism” as thousands of Union soldiers stayed loyal until the end. Kellogg also gave a more conciliatory message regarding the Southern role in the atrocities, not wanting to “revive the bitterness of the past,” and instead focused on the heroic qualities of the prisoners. 64 At the 1902 Massachusetts dedication, Charles G. Davis remarked that the prisoners “died to secure a Union victory just as much as they would have done in a charging column” and extolled

64 Dedication of the Monument at Andersonville, Georgia, October 23, 1907 (Hartford: Published by the State, 1908), 36.
their loyalty in the face of extreme suffering.\textsuperscript{65} Fellow survivor Francis C. Curtis spoke of Wirz as “the man who was to make our lives hardly worth living for the next ten months,” and went on to describe the brutal conditions of the camp in detail.\textsuperscript{66}

The dedication of monuments at the Andersonville site represented a permanent way to commemorate the exceptional virtues of the men who spent time in the prison. It also allowed surviving prisoners to come together and state their opinions on how Andersonville should be remembered on a larger scale than ever before. By the time the monuments had been dedicated, some of the bitterness towards the South had diminished. Cloyd wrote that in the wake of the United States’ successful war against Spain, there was a growing “sense of optimism” among the American public that “perhaps the terrible divisions” of the war could be healed.\textsuperscript{67} All of the state monuments and the vast majority of the speakers at the dedication ceremonies conspicuously leave out mention of Confederate atrocities. The monuments represented an attempt at reconciliation between the Northern prisoners who stayed at Andersonville and the Southern site that hosted the dedications.

On the other hand, some speakers still openly pinned the blame for the atrocities on the Confederate leaders. Not all survivors were willing to forgive the Confederacy for their suffering in Andersonville, and whether atrocities


\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 29-30.

\textsuperscript{67} Cloyd, \textit{Haunted By Atrocity}, 83.
should be mentioned in the dedication of monuments became a point of contention. Historian Lesley Gordon looked at this divide in her book *A Broken Regiment: The 16th Connecticut’s Civil War*. She noted that several members of the 16th Connecticut opposed “Southern apologists seeking to tone down the conditions they faced at Andersonville,” believing that their personal experiences in the camp made depictions of the camp’s conditions more credible.\(^{68}\) Ira Forbes, another member of the 16th Connecticut, had moved toward reconciliation: “I can forgive our bitter foes for the cruelties which they have inflicted upon me. I do not desire revenge.”\(^{69}\) His stance met opposition from his old comrades and created tensions that motivated Forbes to publish several inflammatory articles about the regiment’s wartime experiences. Reconciliation with the South had thus at least started by the turn of the century, but it was far from a sure thing to the survivors. Regardless of the extent that the surviving prisoners held the Confederacy responsible, the monuments and dedication ceremonies present some of the most powerful language in praising the prisoners’ courage, loyalty, and sacrifice. Speakers referred to Andersonville as the most important battlefield of the war and instrumental to the Union victory while giving those who were incarcerated heroic status.

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Andersonville survivors were no longer marginal players who sat out the final decisive battles of the war, but rather, they fought bravely in the toughest struggle of the war.

Through the Congressional testimonies, prison narratives, survivors’ associations, and dedication of monuments, Andersonville survivors set out to show that they represented a special case of soldier with their wartime service. While they may not have been as consistently celebrated, and their war wounds were not as visible as those of other veterans, Andersonville survivors banded together, determined not to be forgotten. At every reunion and in every speech, they exhibited their patriotism for the cause of the Union. They wanted to be seen as unique in their extreme patriotism, courage, loyalty, and sacrifice exhibited in enduring the camp’s conditions. Furthermore, survivors used contemporary politics as an opportunity to allow themselves to attract the attention of the Northern public. Depictions of suffering and the Confederate role in the atrocities enabled the survivors to pursue political goals while simultaneously getting the attention from the public they needed to commemorate their experiences. The dedication of monuments gave former prisoners a chance to highlight both the extent of their suffering and the role of Wirz and the Confederacy in worsening it. In addition, it showed that survivors were torn about whether or not to forgive the Confederacy, even as public sentiment moved toward reconciliation. The monuments also served as a permanent way of connecting the Andersonville site to its victims, commemorating the heroic virtues of those who were imprisoned there. In short, Andersonville survivors
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relied on contemporary developments and a strategy of “waving of the bloody shirt” to catch the public’s eye in their stories to Northern audiences. In doing so, the survivors responded to feelings of postwar marginalization relative to other veterans by proving that they were definitively not marginal players in the Civil War: by contrast, they were instrumental in leading the Union to a victory and exceptional in their heroic virtues.

**Historiography**

As arguably the most notorious Confederate prison camp of the Civil War, Andersonville has received a substantial amount of attention from historians. Many have written about the conditions of the camp and the experiences of the Union prisoners. Prisoners’ diaries are critical here as they provide a (slightly) less biased form of analysis by those who stayed in the camp. The issue of exactly how much the Confederates should be held responsible for the death toll in the camp had been a point of contention for years after the war, but modern historians now generally recognize that the conditions of the camp were the primary factor and figures like Wirz and Winder were put in an unenviable position. Discussion on the postwar period has focused on the political impact of Andersonville, the contrast between Northern and Southern memory of the camp, and commemoration by both state and national governments as well as former prisoners. Prison narratives, speeches, and monument dedication ceremonies become important modes of analysis for the postwar period.
William Best Hesseltine took a general look at prison camps in 1930’s *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*. The study was one of the first to look at both Union and Confederate prisons and argued that the assumption that Confederate leaders deliberately killed their prisoners was false. Union prisons had similarly appalling conditions, and it was the breakdown of the prisoner exchange that ultimately caused so many to perish. Hesseltine shows that stories told by Northern prisoners returning from the South caused a “wartime psychosis” in which propaganda was directed at the Confederacy, playing on the “fiercest antagonism” toward the South.\(^{70}\) His final chapter discusses the aftermath of the Civil War, going over key issues such as the Wirz trial and the emergence of prison narratives and organizations for prison survivors. He writes that narratives were made to “proclaim a patriotic purpose,” and while early books were written to bring “the rebel leaders to justice,” later narratives aimed to secure pension legislation.\(^{71}\) Hesseltine’s arguments are a bit general and much of the book reads like a history textbook, but nonetheless provides important background information on prisons and offers a perspective on the Confederate role in the Andersonville deaths. His section on the postwar period gave me significant focus on prison narratives and how they fit into the politics of their time: while he never uses the phrase “bloody shirt,” the attempt of prisoners to pursue an agenda by telling stories of their suffering matches the tactic.


\(^{71}\) Ibid., 248-250.
William Marvel’s 1994 book *Andersonville: The Last Depot* was instrumental for my research in providing me with important background information on the camp’s conditions and the immediate postwar aftermath. Marvel sets out to exonerate Henry Wirz for his alleged role in the atrocities and explained how he was a victim of factors beyond his control as commandant and a vindictive backlash from the North after the war. Marvel argues that the memory of the camp has largely come from the Wirz trial, in which the commandant was “a dead man from the start,” and from “dubious sources,” such as prison narratives and diaries published after the war such as John Ransom’s.  

Prisoners demonstrated in their wartime diaries, Marvel believes, that they felt their own government had abandoned them in discontinuing the exchange of prisoners, and it was postwar “bloody shirt politics” that caused Andersonville to be remembered as a Confederate-led atrocity. I used this argument to help focus on both the Wirz trial and the contrast between prison diaries and prison narratives. The Wirz trial provided sensational descriptions of Confederate wrongdoing by former prisoners, while narratives continued this theme well into the later part of the nineteenth century. The divergence between prisoners’ sentiments during and after the war shows how survivors, trying to best convey their exceptional experiences to the public, tailored their stories to better match the vindictive tales the Northern public wanted to hear.

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73 Ibid., x-xi.
James Marten provided a thorough examination of the postwar lives of Civil War veterans in his 2011 book *Sing Not War*. Veterans, according to Marten, had a difficult time adjusting to civilian life and struggled with unemployment, injuries, and psychological trauma. While the South mostly celebrated the heroism of their veterans, Northern sentiment bordered on hostility. The public, remembering veterans through rhetoric of their own heroic qualities, were often unwilling to allow them to take increasingly large amounts of public welfare as they “seemed to expect more of them than of other men.”\(^{74}\) Marten focuses extensively on pensions and soldier’s homes, arguing that the opposition to each shows that the public was hesitant to allow soldiers to receive public help. As mentioned earlier, he describes how visible injuries such as gunshot wounds were more likely to garner public sympathy than was a physical or mental illness. He devotes a small portion to discuss prisoners of war, describing them as carrying “the most bitter memories of the war” and becoming a “victimized and honored” subset of old soldiers in separating themselves from other veterans.\(^{75}\) I used Marten’s argument to put prison survivors’ postwar experience in contrast with that of other veterans: as the prisoners suffered maladies that were less visible, they were less likely to receive attention and sympathy from the public. In addition, their conditions generally received fewer pensions than did soldiers who suffered combat injuries.

Marten’s book was extremely helpful in helping me see how

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\(^{74}\) Marten, *Sing Not War*, 7.

\(^{75}\) Ibid., 268-69.
Andersonville survivors felt marginalized in the postwar era relative to veterans who primarily saw combat.

Like Marten, Benjamin Cloyd looks at the postwar period but focuses on the evolution of memory of wartime prison camps in *Haunted by Atrocity: Civil War Prisons in American Memory*. Cloyd argues that a divisive memory of prisons existed between the North and South in the years following the war’s end. While many Northern voices blamed the Confederacy for the deaths of their prisoners, Southerners sought to defend their prisons and “keep southern honor intact” through a Lost Cause mentality. Monument dedications in the early twentieth century represented a step in the direction of reconciliation as sites such as Andersonville contained Northern monuments on Southern ground commissioned by both sides. However, prisons continued to be a divisive issue—this could be seen particularly clearly with the construction of a monument to Wirz by the United Daughters of the Confederacy aiming to respect his memory more properly than the Northern monuments had. In more recent years, both sides set out to remember the camp more objectively and considered it a symbol of patriotism. I focused primarily on Cloyd’s discussion of memory from the war’s end to the dedication of monuments at the Andersonville site, as it covers the full range of my inquiry; I also mainly looked at the Northern side of his analysis. Cloyd agrees with Marvel in explaining that the sentiments expressed in prison narratives blaming

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77 Ibid., 101-104.
Confederate leaders were different from those of some prison diaries blaming their own government: prison narratives were therefore tailored to meet the expectations of their Northern audience. His analysis of Northern bitterness toward the South over the issues of prisons helped give me an idea of how survivors were able to perform the task of “waving the bloody shirt” so effectively in their reminiscences.

Eric T. Dean, Jr., takes a different focus in his book *Shook over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*. Dean uses the memory of Vietnam and the effect that war had on its soldiers to put the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder in the Civil War into perspective. Dean spends a section of his book discussing PTSD in prisoners of war: he stated that anywhere from 46 to 90 percent of World War II POWs suffered from PTSD as a result of weight loss and torture and suggests that Civil War prisoners, while the condition had not been recognized, would likely have met the criteria.  

Dean provided several examples of former prisoners, including the previous example of Erastus Holmes, who struggled with psychological trauma. Dean’s overarching theme is that, while postwar celebrations and memory of the Civil war as a “glorious” struggle against slavery, soldiers faced severe psychological problems similar to veterans of the Vietnam struggle often known for “tragic loss and waste for life.” He suggests that “we should not be neither so keen to justify the Civil War as necessary and glorious, nor so quick to justify

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78 Dean, *Shook Over Hell*, 81-82.
the Vietnam War as unnecessary and tragic.”79 I focused mainly on Dean’s assessment of PTSD in Civil War prisoners of war and used it in my analysis of Andersonville survivors’ postwar difficulties. Dean shows just how prevalent PTSD was for those who survived Confederate camps and how it impacted survivors’ ability to return to civilian life.

Ann Fabian’s *The Unvarnished Truth: Personal Narratives in Nineteenth-Century America* examines different forms of narratives from “lower class” members of American society, paying particular attention to how they tried to represent themselves in print. In trying to document their experiences, Fabian argues that these lesser individuals sometimes had to submit to figures, such as editors, who “claimed a right to exercise social and cultural power over them” and blurred the line of truthfulness of narratives.80 In her segment on prisoners of war, Fabian discusses how narratives, while providing sensational depictions of suffering and Confederate crimes, promised their audience that they were telling the truth. Whether writing as “propagandists, as petitioners for relief, or as warriors recalling their days of glory,” prisoners assured readers they were being honest.81 I would argue that Fabian’s idea of lesser individuals submitting to more powerful ones does not completely apply to surviving prisoners of war: regarding the bloody shirt tactics survivors were perhaps opportunistic

79 Ibid., 216-17.
81 Ibid., 123.
in their blurring the lines of truth, and because the rhetoric of prison narratives is similar to that of veterans associations, I cannot fully agree with her. Nonetheless, her examination of the lack of truthfulness of prison narratives matches earlier analyses such as Marvel’s and played an important role in my research.

Lesley J. Gordon’s piece “Ira Forbes’s War” in Stephen William Berry’s *Weirding the War* followed the postwar experiences of Forbes, a Connecticut veteran and Andersonville survivor. After the war, Forbes began a successful career as a newspaper writer, winding up with a long-term job with the *Hartford Daily Times*. He also wrote several biographies of his former comrades, detailing their prison experiences. However, when it came time for Connecticut to dedicate a monument for its Andersonville victims, Forbes was left out. Bitter at the rejection, he published several inflammatory articles that reported Confederate atrocities during the war. His views, by highlighting the brutalities of war and outright blaming the Confederacy, went against the official stance of the Connecticut monument and members of his former regiment, the 16th Connecticut. Fabian argued that Forbes’ clash with some of his former comrades exemplifies the conflict among veterans in remembering the war: some wanted a view “sanitized of the conflict’s jarring brutalities and sufferings,” while others “refused to forget the war’s terrors, failures, and divisions.”

82 I used Gordon’s piece as an example of an Andersonville survivor who had a

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relatively smooth transition to postwar life: until he began to lose his sanity near the end of his life, Forbes had a successful career in the years following the war. His disagreements with former comrades over how much veterans should recognize the atrocities of war also proved relevant, as I noticed some of these differences in separate monument dedications.

Gordon further examines Forbes and his regiment, the 16th Connecticut, in her book *A Broken Regiment: The 16th Connecticut’s Civil War*. The book follows the regiment through their battlefield experiences and stays in Confederate prisons using first-person accounts from the soldiers. I focused on the book’s final chapter about the postwar experiences of the surviving members. Gordon looks at soldiers’ adjustment to life at home and their later efforts to show the world of their valor and heroism despite being held out of combat for an extended period of time. Gordon argues that members of the regiment used stories of imprisonment to “emphasize not merely the horror” of the camp, “but also a new brand of manly bravery.”

As noted previously, along the way the regiment’s survivors became divided over how to interpret their Andersonville experience: Ira Forbes had a falling out with the 16th’s main record-keeper George Q. Whitney over whether to take a conciliatory stance toward the Confederacy. I used Gordon’s chapter as an example of how survivors became divided over the issue of reconciliation with the former

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84 Ibid., 203-205.
Confederacy in the postwar years. While public sentiment may have been moving toward reconciliation leading up to the monument dedications at Andersonville, survivors were not all willing to let go of the horrible suffering they had endured at the camp.

Historians, in short, have studied various aspects of the experiences of Andersonville prisoners both during and after the war. In particular, they have given a great deal of attention to the issue of how survivors understood their prison experiences and tried to convey them to the public. In using sensational and idealized rhetoric in narratives and statements, survivors tried to make it evident that they had suffered remarkably. Part of this involved attacking the Confederate leaders, and historians such as Marvel and Hesseltine have worked to find a more objective view on Andersonville that takes some of the blame off the Confederacy’s shoulders. Very limited attention has been given to the marginalization of survivors of prison camps relative to the larger body of veterans. Marten discusses how Northern veterans in general struggled to be respected in the postwar era but fails to completely distinguish POWs from this body. Survivors themselves stated that they believed the experiences of prisoners of war had been relatively overlooked next to their comrades who fought on the battlefield. Consequently, my work set out to connect the three different issues of postwar marginalization of Andersonville survivors, how they wished to be remembered, and the political connotations of their struggle to gain the public’s attention.
Appendix

Phillip Hattle, 31st PA, taken at U.S. General Hospital, Annapolis, MD in June 1865. Admitted June 6 and died on June 25. (Library of Congress)
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CONDEMNING COLONIZATION: ABRAHAM LINCOLN’S REJECTED PROPOSAL FOR A CENTRAL AMERICAN COLONY

Matthew Harris

By the second year of the Civil War, the issue of racial inequality was not only a critical part of the divided country’s domestic feud but also a key component in the Union’s foreign policy. Events during the mid-1800’s revealed that racial strife and tensions existed not only within the warring states but also across the hemisphere. Several Central American nations’ rejection of suggested Union initiatives showed how intertwined race and politics had become after the first year of conflict.

On August 12, 1862, Abraham Lincoln met with a group of former Washington slaves to discuss the future of African American society. Lincoln’s initial Emancipation Proclamation, which freed every slave in the Confederate States of America, was still over a month away. Here, he was speaking with a select group of freedmen, hoping to figure out the destination of the millions of African Americans, whose new future he was privately constructing with Congress.¹ The problem was that Lincoln did not know what to do once all of those people were free. He knew that very

soon he was going to free millions of slaves from bondage and was desperately concerned about how the country should proceed from there.

Lincoln’s speech to the freedmen was not long, but it held grim tones. He openly admitted that he did not know how to best aid African Americans. Just because their freedom was near did not mean that they would have a happy future. The poor race relations that had, and, he imagined, always would, existed between blacks and whites troubled Lincoln. He believed that neither group could ever get along: “In a word we suffer on each side.” Lincoln was thinking ahead. Most Unionists did not want to give up their land for former slaves, even if they wanted relative equality. One possible solution, therefore, was to send them off to establish their own country.

Lincoln implored his audience to make sacrifices for future generations and set out to establish their own country. Liberia was open as a colony to freed American slaves, but the country lay across the Atlantic, far from what most African Americans considered their home. Most African Americans and abolitionists had abandoned the concept of colonization, suggesting it was a lazy excuse for not simply improving the American social system. Thus, Lincoln suggested that the freedmen look to nearby Central America

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2 Ibid., 371.
3 Ibid.
4 A notable opponent to colonization of Liberia was abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, who initially supported resettling the African coast but realized that this just pushed the problem of racial equality off rather than confronting it head on; see Angela F. Murphy, *Jerry Rescue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 41-42.
as their new home. A location that connected both the Atlantic and Pacific seemed most suitable to Lincoln, and he suggested that it could serve as the hub for transportation between Eastern and Western coasts of the United States. The president seemed to have a particular spot in mind. The meeting closed with Lincoln advising the freedmen to consider the proposition. He then assured them that resources and government support would always be available if they chose to go.5

The President’s suggestion to send large numbers of freed slaves to Central America caused international backlash and showed that other countries were still adapting to mixed-race societies just as much as the warring United States. Two major factors caused Central American countries to react with vehemence to Lincoln’s suggestion. The first factor was a growing regional unity against foreign manipulation, and the second was prevalent racial, social structuring that had begun with Spanish colonization centuries earlier.

Lincoln appointed Kansas Senator Samuel Pomeroy (also Chair of the Committee on Public Lands) to survey and make proposals for land purchases in Central American countries.6 Before Pomeroy could make any direct efforts to acquire land, multiple United States newspapers published

5 Basler, 1861-1862, 373-374.
6 Samuel Pomeroy was a Radical Republican who took part in several pre-war abolitionist movements such as the New England Emigration Aid Company and ‘Bleeding Kansas.’ His viewpoints made him the perfect candidate to enthusiastically acquire land for freed slaves; see Albert, Castel, “Pomeroy, Samuel Clarke (1816-1891).” Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History.
Lincoln’s speech. The news traveled quickly to Central America, where the information was republished and interpreted in quite a different way. The Central American press and public did not view the colonization plan as a mere suggestion and found it offensive. The July 20, 1862 edition of the Honduras Official Gazette reprinted an article from the Boston Daily Advertiser and stated, “They [African Americans] desire to emigrate to Central America… they desire to bring to the United States that great commerce of the Pacific, which ought to increase… the riches and power of their common country.” Central Americans were paranoid that African Americans intended to invade their region with the primary goal to bring more prosperity to the United States rather than help develop their new homes.

Agitation in Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica had already begun with the printing of the Honduran article and was building upon previously-held worries. Concerns grew regarding a large influx of African descendants to the region, along with

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7 Northern newspapers widely published this speech in its entirety or as a summary with an analysis of Lincoln’s ‘Colonization Scheme.’ For example, the Daily Ohio Statesman, which published the speech, and the Juliet Signal included an analysis which suggested that the plan showed that Lincoln disfavored a mixed-race society; see Daily Ohio Statesman (Columbus, Ohio), 22 Aug. 1862, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress; Juliet Signal. (Juliet [i.e., Joliet], Ill.), 26 Aug. 1862, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress.

8 Message of the President of the United States to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Third Session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1862), 892.
worries about their allegiance to the United States. Every country was loathe to have an intrusive United States colony on their borders. The concept for the colony, and Lincoln’s speech, had also been published before Pomeroy or Secretary of State William Seward announced it to the various Central American diplomatic correspondents. The agitated public and politicians assumed this meant that the United States planned to take land without permission. The backlash against the proposal was swift.

The Minister to the United States for Guatemala and Salvador, Antonio J. Yrisarri, issued a frank statement, saying, “Colonization cannot take place, because it does not suit the views of those governments.”\(^9\) Neither government was interested in selling land to another country, and they did not want immigrants unless they were educated. Immigrants would only be accepted if they were “colonists of a different class, who may have had a more liberal education than those that can be acquired in a state of slavery.”\(^10\) The Secretary of Foreign Relations for San Salvador and Nicaragua, Pedro Zeledon, had even harsher words to say. He thought allowing freed slaves into the country would worsen it due to the “degradation of that race.” It also was unacceptable for immigrants to act “under the special protection of another nation.”\(^11\) Not only were former slaves not wanted as immigrants, but the idea of

\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^10\) Ibid., 895.
\(^11\) Ibid., 896.
either of the countries’ governments not having control over immigrants to their nations was insulting.

Honduras was preemptive in their response, despite the fact that no one had even reached out to buy land or suggested the idea. Foreign Minister James R. Partridge communicated the opinion of the Honduran President. Due to the newspapers, the president figured the United States should know Honduras’ opinion on the matter of colonization and immigration. Honduras only wanted “industrious whites” like the “German immigrants… in Costa Rica,” who had created prosperity in that country. Bringing in freed slaves was “not at all desirable” because Honduras already faced problems with their own free African population that supposedly refused to be law-abiding citizens. Just like the representative from San Salvador and Nicaragua, the Honduran president said that his country would gladly accept educated or industrious white immigrants from the United States but wanted no more migrants of African descent.12

Nicaragua was the most vehemently opposed to the colonization of freed slaves in their country. The foreign minister of the United States in Leon de Nicaragua, Andrew B. Dickinson, communicated with the Nicaraguan government and had this to say: “The people of Nicaragua are very generally opposed to such a scheme,” and “they feel indignant at being ranked with the North American negro.” Not only were Nicaraguans against the idea of colonization, but they were also completely offended that anyone even

12 Ibid., 891.
thought that they should live with or around African descendants. The whole of Nicaragua was apparently in a panic for several weeks about Lincoln’s proposal. They considered it the “greatest degradation for the country to be overrun with blacks.” In the public mindset “negroes… are worthless, idle, thieving vagabonds,” and if they were allowed to intermingle with Native Americans they would give birth to “the worst cross-breed that society can be infested with.” A deep fear that the United States meant to upend their society and destroy its fragile racial balance had taken hold in Nicaragua.

The only country that was open to the idea of colonization was Costa Rica. Months earlier, in May, the congress of that country began to consider proposals for a “tract of land for the settlement of free negroes.” This was a seemingly independent move from the growing unity of the Central American coalition it soon joined.

One location, Chiriquí, was perfectly suited for Lincoln’s desire to have a trans-oceanic colony and was considered perfect for the health of African Americans. The problem, however, was that the land was the object of a dispute between Costa Rica and New Granada (modern-day Colombia). United States Ambassador to Costa Rica Charles N. Riotte could not see a peaceful resolution between the two countries resulting in a sale to the United States. He also could not recommend his government spend “one cent” to

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13 Ibid., 893-894.
14 Ibid., 896.
15 Ibid., 887.
set aside land because the United States “government would most surely be swindled” by salesmen and landowners with useless property whose sole desire was to make a quick profit by setting freedmen up for failure.\textsuperscript{16}

In other words, the Costa Rican government was initially open to colonization, but the United States had to both resolve a massive territory dispute and convince the winner to sell the highly disputed land, or wade through a mire of risky real estate transactions themselves. Costa Rica’s consideration of the proposal did not last long, though. At the same time, American businessman Ambrose W. Thompson also suggested that the United States use a large plot of land he owned in the disputed area. This land, somewhere between seventy thousand to one million acres, (later claimed to be around three million) had been sold to Thompson by a French businessman in 1854 and was considered for various mining and colonization purposes ever since.\textsuperscript{17}

A regional effort was assembled to stop the colonization plan in mid-September 1862 when Minister Luis Molina—a legation of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras—composed a letter to Seward. As the three countries’ representative, Molina communicated that no country at the meeting “would consent to the formation in its

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 889.

\textsuperscript{17} The French had also tried to colonize the land in the 1850s but several business and colonization failures led to a buyout by Thompson; see Paul J. Scheips, "Gabriel Lafond and Ambrose W. Thompson: Neglected Isthmian Promoters," \textit{Hispanic American Historical Review} 36 no. 2 (May 1956), 212.
territory of independent colonies, whatever might be their color and place of departure.” None of the countries wanted a United States-controlled colony inside their region, no matter who was settling it. He also stated that the countries did not want an unexpected influx of former slaves, “a plague… the United States desire to rid themselves [of].” Furthermore, the United States had no claim to the Costa Rican land because it had not been sold directly from the government to Thompson. Even if it were legal, the land was in a disputed zone, so their government could not recognize the sale.\footnote{Message of the President, 889-900.}

These five Central American countries had made it clear that they were not going to allow a colony in or near their borders. A few seemed open to the idea of limited African American migration but were still concerned the United States might provide too much aid for them.\footnote{This would have included military aid if there were conflicts or passive assistance such as food and building materials. Any help, however, could have been seen as the United States undermining that government’s authority. The migrants to any of these countries would have been considered citizens of the countries, and the concept of an outside body aiding citizens without permission is interpretable as sedition.} United States support for the proposal also seemed to dwindle. A nationally reprinted article originating from the \textit{New York Sun} compared Lincoln’s attempt to move African Americans to another country to that of a beetle trying to move a cannonball out of a tire rut.\footnote{The \textit{New York Sun} was a Republican-leaning paper. Their comparison for moving the race issues like trying to move a cannonball is similar in philosophy to the rejection of Liberian colonization. The}
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indicated how futile the effort to remove such a massive number of people would be, but also that African Americans did not wish to leave the country.

Due to Pomeroy’s continued public organization of the project, concerns continued through October 1862 in Central America, and Seward had to reaffirm multiple times that the United States was not going to settle in Central America. 21 Even so, the Palace at Managua introduced new passport laws in a paranoid attempt to keep former slaves out and prevent abolitionists from smuggling them in. 22 Why were these countries so ardent in their attempt to keep the United States and African Americans away from their borders?

Just a decade earlier, filibusters (United States citizens who unlawfully invaded other countries with military force, such as William Walker) invaded Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean in attempts to acquire land and power. 23 After failed attempts in Mexico in the race issues of the United States were there to stay and had to be dealt with, not pushed away; see Western Sentinel,(Winston [i.e. Winston-Salem], N.C.), 03 Oct. 1862, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress.

21 Molina had received word that Pomeroy was travelling around the capitol recruiting men for the expedition to found new colony. Landfall was meant to be in October, Molina received word in late September. At this point it appeared that despite a month of backlash Pomeroy was still organizing the colonization plan prolonging the agitation of the Central American legation, Seward had to personally contact the Department of Interior to halt the efforts; see Message of the President, 904.

22 Ibid., 906-907.

23 For a great source regarding the most famous filibustering cases, see Robert E. May, Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in
early 1850’s, Walker set out for an assault on Nicaragua in 1855. Taking advantage of that country’s civil war, he managed to secure himself as president of the country for a short time before a multi-national armed force removed him from power. As president, and during his retreat northward, however, he managed to inflict serious damage to the reputation of the United States. To make matters worse, instead of refuting the actions of the filibuster, President Franklin Pierce supported the new Nicaraguan regime when he acknowledged its legitimacy.24 Besides how he forcefully maintained power, Walker’s actions, such as burning Catholic churches, assaulting clergy, and trying to reestablish slavery, left Central Americans with a horrendous impression of the United States.25

The negative impression of the United States was also exacerbated by the growing slavery tensions in the country and the strain on the republican form of government. Across Latin America during the 1850’s, Central Americans

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24 Pierce almost immediately rescinded his recognition, however. Perhaps the initial recognition seemed to stick with Nicaraguans more than his later refutation. Although the United States government attempted to prevent filibustering, the country seemed divided on the issue and ultimately regional support or opposition dictated what parties were able to embark on filibustering expeditions. Walker continued filibustering until he was executed by yet another Central American defender, Honduras, in 1860; see Kenneth Nivison, "Purposes Just and Pacific: Franklin Pierce and the American Empire," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 21 no. 1 (March 2010), 14-15.

Harris feared that the United States planned to force its idea of democracy southward. Mostly, this fear stemmed from the assumption that should the United States acquire any of their countries, citizens would not meet the voting requirements of a country that seemed to only respect the level of whiteness as a prerequisite to political power.\textsuperscript{26} The majority of Central Americans, many being of mixed race with varying levels of skin fairness, had only truly begun to exercise tentative, democratic rights in the last three decades, and the United States’ ‘Manifest Destiny’ loomed as a threat to their political autonomy.\textsuperscript{27}

The resistance to foreign powers in Central America was another growing trend during the mid-1800’s that seemed to unite the region into a cohesive political entity of its own. Elites who had the most influence and power in the region adopted the label of Latin America beginning in the 1840’s. The adoption of a ‘Latin’ identity was not only a direct reaction to filibustering but also fear of cultural annihilation.\textsuperscript{28} International racial and political differences greatly strained foreign relations as Central America began to view itself as a more liberal, democratic entity than the United States and European powers, both of which were thought to be encroaching on the Latin race.

Clearly critical to Central America’s rejection of colonization or migration was a tremendous amount of

\textsuperscript{26} Michel Gobat, "The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race," \textit{American Historical Review} 118 no. 5 (December 2013), 1353.

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., 1352.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 1367.
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racism and unfounded stereotypes. The countries of Central America had shifted towards liberal democratic governments during the 1840’s and 1850’s, but with much bloodshed. Each country finally established a democratic republic, similar to the United States, as their governing bodies. However, the notion that African descendants and mixed-race peoples would have gained more rights during this time of liberal enlightenment is false. In fact, the mid-1800’s coincided as a time of not only the growth of liberal styles of government but also the growth of racist ideology across Latin America.²⁹

While this was many Central Americans’ first chance to self-govern, they also used it as an opportunity to exclude minorities such as those with large amounts of native or African heritage. Elites were afraid of their own level of whiteness luring the United States to conquer them, but these people used the same racist concept to dictate who had rights in their own societies. Central American elites also applied the new idea of the Latin race to exclude those from power who were not European enough. The rejection of mixed races was a direct counter to global concerns of the Americas’ ‘mongrelization’: the mixture of so many very different racial groups. To combat this, elites attempted to portray themselves as pure descendants of Spain and France rather than a mixed culture of Europeans, Natives, and Africans.³⁰

²⁹ David Cook-Martín and David FitzGerald, "Culling the Masses: A Rejoinder," Ethnic and Racial Studies 38 no. 8 (June 2015), 1323. ³⁰ Gobat, The Invention, 1355.
Elites’ rejection of mixed race society in Central America also became blended with abuse and intolerance of those they perceived as inferior. Black and mixed-race people were seen as having only negative qualities, as the communications with the various foreign ministers had previously suggested. The mistreatment of mixed race individuals was probably a direct mimicry of American and European practices, once again trying to illustrate how Latin American elites were just as white as any other European descendant. The abuse that the lower classes suffered resulted in violent outbursts that often worsened the strain between elite and commoner.

Latin American elites feared these riots and revolts. In many places, former slaves or mixed-race peoples outnumbered elite whites dramatically. The fear of being massacred and overwhelmed by the lower classes was not a groundbreaking idea in the 1860s. Revolutionary general and political leader Simón Bolívar had feared the same in the 1820s following Bolivia’s independence. Even after having large numbers of mixed race people, or, as he referred to them, pardos, serve in his army, he did not want to give them many rights following independence from Spain.31 He ensured that the same class-based system endured through the wars of revolution, at least in his country. His reiteration of old Spanish caste ideas gave the system longevity through the Latin American independence movements of the early

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nineteenth century. These ideas lingered for decades and strengthened once more in the mid-nineteenth century.

Bolívar’s fear was the rise of a *pardocracia*, or a society ruled by the *pardos*, where whites and elites would be exterminated and stripped of all power. For years he attempted to maintain a government where *pardos* were seemingly equal but not equal enough to impact the government or topple the elite system. As one of the most influential revolutionaries and writers in the post-colonial Americas, Bolívar was undoubtedly influential in Central America during the 1860s. If his ideas on race and fear of *pardocracia* were not direct causes of the racist ideology of the region, they at least affirmed that elites’ fears of lower classes and non-whites were well founded. Consistent racial and class conflict post-independence also seemed to lend credence to some of Bolívar’s ideas.

One such example is when poor laborers and former slaves in La Ciénega, Panama, rose up in violent protest and destroyed several U.S. buildings. The protests were a direct reaction to local Panamanians losing their jobs to transport industries on the isthmus such as railroads and steamships after formerly using man and mule power to transport cargo and people. Industrialization took away traditional jobs such as these, and the workers’ reactions to the changes

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32 Ibid.
34 The term Panamanian is used, but at the time the isthmus was still owned by New Granada. Ibid., 89.
explain why elites viewed the mixed races not only as violent, but also lazy. More than likely, white elites confused lack of work and job opportunities, especially for poor laborers, with laziness. In actuality, the beginning of the Industrial Revolution had put more strain on an already heavily-bowed system of social inequality. The racism shown in the communications between the U.S. and Central America resulted from a lack of privileges and the lack of knowledge for modern, industrial jobs slowly replacing traditional ones. The supposedly-liberal governments of Central America actively oppressed instead of liberated. Africans and natives were not violent and lazy but were subjects to a region that refused to modernize a large group of its population with obvious negative outcomes that were viewed as racial inferiority, rather than government incompetence.

Each Central American country stood ardently in their rejection of United States colonization to the region. Fear of the United States encroaching onto their territory made each country extremely hesitant to negotiate land terms after a decade of filibustering and inter-American violence. To Central America, the United States had morphed from a role model into a hovering menace whose government and people could bear down on their countries at any moment.

The racial climate in Central America proved unforgiving of the proposal. The cultures of the area had been built around race and class. The formation of a Latin American identity bolstered the attempts of elites to portray themselves as white and reject mixed race and mixed culture
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society. These elites viewed Black and mixed-race individuals as inferior, despite playing a large part in their unemployment through the introduction of industry without proper education.

Lincoln’s ‘scheme’ to colonize freed slaves into Central America had been a disaster. Seward and his ambassadors worked throughout the fall of 1862 to ensure that good relations were maintained with Central America. The United States, in the midst of its bloodiest conflict, could not afford to break friendships with even the smallest of countries. The ultimate question, what to do with all of the freed African Americans, had to wait. Even this small attempt to answer it had kicked off an international panic and threatened the United States with diplomatic retaliation. International tensions and cultural phenomena in Central America prevented any possible settlement and caused Lincoln’s first colonization plan to fail.
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Textbooks are powerful influencers in the education that students receive. However, this power is often misused to push specific political or social agendas. While serving as the foundation of learning in the classroom, textbooks—especially history textbooks—are riddled with the biases of their authors. The American Civil War is a prime example of the biases of authors and time creeping into the pages of textbooks. Similarities and differences across textbooks can be explained by the values of the society in which they were written. Consistencies, such as the character of Lincoln, highlight long-lasting themes valued by our country. Changes, such as the representation of minority groups, demonstrate a progressive nature to America and a desire to constantly improve the way we tell our history. The messages implanted in history textbooks often mirror the messages conveyed in society.1

One such change occurred in the Civil War’s aftermath. The daughters of Confederate soldiers joined

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1 I selected twelve textbooks from 1876-2014, based off research of which books were popular in certain eras, as well as working with what was readily available to me. That being said, these textbooks represent a small percentage of the total number of textbooks written on United States history. When I reference a specific year, I am speaking in regard to the twelve textbooks that I read.
together to form the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), an organization that pushed for the adaptation of textbooks to preserve the memory of the Old South. The UDC fully believed that Northern accounts of the Civil War were incredibly inaccurate and designed to further embarrass the South as well as disregard the achievements and sacrifices of Confederate families. According to the UDC, the authentic history of the war “vindicated Confederate men, recorded the sacrifices of Confederate women, and exonerated the South.”

One of the UDC’s primary goals was to instill Confederate values and culture on Southern children. The United Daughters of the Confederacy did not shy away from clearly stating their commitment to instilling white supremacist values in their youth. White supremacy was therefore front and center in many UDC-written textbooks. Slavery was also present in these textbooks, contradicting the Northern notion that slavery was cruel and evil by instead stating that slaves were happy and unwilling to leave their masters’ side following the end of the war. Undertones of this “authentic history” can be found in textbooks throughout history.

While the UDC made sure to emphasize their Southern viewpoints in textbooks, the characters of prominent figures, mainly Lincoln and Lee, are consistently described in a way that mirrors how these players in history are talked about in common conversation. The character of

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Abraham Lincoln stayed relatively consistent from 1876 to the present. As early as 1876, Lincoln was portrayed as the model American, the prime example of a self-made man, and he served as proof “that, in the United States, poverty prevents no citizen from rising to the highest position in the gift of the people.” ³ This description stays with him into the modern day. Many textbooks also give Lincoln credit for being the rock upon which the Union could always rely for guidance and stability. A 1997 textbook states, “At moments of frustration and even failure, [Lincoln’s] sense of humor saved him from despair.” ⁴ In 1911, descriptions of Lincoln being a “friend of the South” began to surface. From that point onward, whenever Lincoln’s assassination was mentioned, the idea that the South lost its best friend and the country lost its best leader followed closely. Lincoln remains a popular figure throughout history.

Likewise, John Wilkes Booth is consistently portrayed as a villain throughout time. Early accounts of the assassination were very simple and to the point. In 1911, the same time emotion started to be placed in the descriptions of Lincoln and his assassination, John Wilkes Booth was characterized as a “miserable, half-crazed actor,” a description that lasted throughout the 1970s. ⁵ Booth’s description changed briefly in the 1930s and again in 1954,

⁴ Herman J. Viola, Why We Remember: United States History (N.p.: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 467.
where it states he was driven to insanity over the surrender of the South. The notion of Booth being a Southern sympathizer faded for forty years until it resurfaced in 1991. This idea has remained in the pages of history textbooks since then. Even today, history equates Booth to evil.

Another Civil War character, General Robert E. Lee, remains relatively unscathed throughout history. Even though White House Chief of Staff John Kelly faced controversy in 2017 over his description of Confederate General Robert E. Lee as an “honorable man,” praise for General Lee’s character has been a staple in the Civil War section of United States history books dating back to 1911. An American History by David Saville Muzzey characterized Lee as “a gentleman of spotless purity of character—noble, generous, sincere, brave, and gifted.”

Over and over again, Lee is revered for his incredible military ability and role as one of the United States’ most able officers prior to the Civil War. Countless attempts to defend Lee can be found in textbooks, like the following statement.

Although Lee belonged to an old southern family, he did not believe in slavery and had already freed his slaves. Furthermore, he was against secession and opposed to the war. But when the time came for him to choose the

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side he would support, he could not bring himself to bear arms against his beloved state, Virginia.\textsuperscript{9}

This statement is repeated almost word for word in \textit{America: Its People and Values} (1975). It was not until 2014 that a textbook acknowledged Lee’s brilliant military ability without glorifying his actions in deserting the Union to fight for the Confederacy. Lee is repeatedly acknowledged as a military strategist and honorable man.

Unlike the Civil War characters such as Lincoln, Booth, and Lee, the causes of the Civil War have changed over time when it comes to our nation’s textbooks. Following the foundation set forth by the UDC, the horrors of slavery and its role in the division of our nation were absent from early textbooks. From the very beginning, the UDC promoted a narrative where the South “fought the war not in order to preserve slavery, but rather to preserve the Constitution, specifically the Tenth Amendment, protecting states’ rights.”\textsuperscript{10} Thus, the argument for the war being caused by states’ rights was born. In 1876, the war was attributed to the “long struggles for power in and out of Congress which ended at last in civil war.”\textsuperscript{11} Both sides were fighting for state majority leaning towards their respective stance on slavery. The South became anxious over the presumed Northern victory in the Kansas-Nebraska struggle, which


\textsuperscript{10} Cox, \textit{Dixie's Daughters}, 12.

\textsuperscript{11} Scott, \textit{A School History of the United States}, 318.
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placed the North in the majority for votes in Congress. However, for a brief moment in 1892, William Bryant, the author of *A Popular History of the United States*, very explicitly wrote, “The cause of contention was slavery; the foundation on which the new Confederacy was to be built was slavery.”\(^\text{12}\) Twenty years later, in 1911, slavery was placed as the central and singular cause of the Civil War, contrasting the story of the war defending states’ rights. Muzzey shared that both Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens claimed in their postwar accounts that secession was caused by the denial of Constitutional rights, not slavery. Muzzey countered this by explaining that the only right the South fought for was the right to slavery. According to Muzzey, “it was a conflict in the interpretation of the Constitution; and slavery, and slavery *alone*, was the cause of that conflict.”\(^\text{13}\) Depending on the ideology of the era, the cause of the Civil War was either states’ rights or slavery. Eventually, it was inevitable that those two thoughts would be linked together.

Slavery remained the central cause of the Civil War until 1954, when textbooks began to agree with Davis and Jefferson’s earlier claim that secession and war were caused by states’ rights. Howard Wilder’s *This is America’s Story* (1954) addresses the growing notion of the violation of states’ rights in the South: “Southerners believed they could protect their way of living by insisting that the United States


\(^\text{13}\) Muzzey, *An American History*, 419
government should keep its hands off all matters which it had not been given the definite authority by the Constitution.”

This passage hints at preserving the Southern way of life, which historically involved slavery. It also responds to the argument made in 1911 about the interpretation of the Constitution. Ever since 1954, the argument for states’ rights has been brought up in the pages of textbooks, often in conjunction with slavery.

Along with the differing views over the causes of the Civil War, American history textbooks have changed the way in which they approach the actual war. Early textbooks read very much like military journals, filled with hundreds of pages detailing every battle and naming every general. A lot of focus was given to the strategy used and the maneuvers executed by each individual regiment. It was not until 1911 that discussion of the war began to focus only on the most significant battles such as Bull Run, Shiloh, and Gettysburg. 1911 was also when politics and the economy began to be mentioned throughout the course of the war. Another shift in the way the war was taught came in 1919. Up until this point, the war had been told in chronological order; however, this changed when Our United States: A History (1919) organized the war into regions, focusing on the eastern and western campaigns. This method of organizing the war continues to be seen in textbooks today.

With war and battles come death and disease. However, early history textbooks focused on the battlefield rather than the causation of the death toll. More people died

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14 Wilder et al, This is America's Story, 362.
in the Civil War from disease and infection than combat-related injuries, yet it was not until 1991 that a textbook mentioned the impact of disease: “More men died from wounds and sickness than on the battlefield itself.”\textsuperscript{15} Variations of this sentence can be found again in Why We Remember: United States History (1997) and Discovering Our Past: A History of the United States (2014). Prior to 1991, a lot of focus was given to battlefield deaths and the number of soldiers wounded. In 1892, at the end of each battle’s descriptions, there was a section set aside to talk about the battlefield casualties for each side. Dying on the battlefield has long been recognized as a cost of the war; however, the agonizing fate that so many men faced in the hospital tents and camps has only recently begun to appear in the pages of textbooks.

Just as the shifts in death toll and causation demonstrate how textbooks reinterpret the Civil War, we must also consider the changes in the representation of minority groups such as slaves and women. Recognition for minority groups’ role in the war effort did not show up in textbooks until several decades after the war. True to its name, America: Its People and Values (1975) has several highlights on various people, often from minority groups, that had an impact on the Civil War. These individuals include Luigi Palma di Cesnola, an Italian immigrant who fought for the Union, Fredrick Douglas, and Clara Barton.

This is the first time that a significant number of individuals from minority groups were represented and recognized for their important roles in war efforts. Prior to this, all spotlights were reserved for generals and politicians. The inclusion of important individuals from minority groups demonstrates a growing acceptance of minorities and their impact on history.

One of these groups gaining recognition is women. The first time the role of women was mentioned was in 1931, eleven years after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. This textbook explains that alongside men, “liberty-loving women too joined the movement” towards abolition.16 Following this statement, the author, Harold Rugg, introduces several key women who played a role in the abolitionist movement leading up to the war. The contributions of women were recognized briefly again in 1954, which simply stated that, while the men were at war, the women and slaves were left to do the work at home on the plantation.17 Women then remained absent until 1975, when the role of women evolved to demonstrate the importance of women in the war effort. In 1991, women were recognized as working government office jobs as well as working in the fields and factories while the men were at war. 1991 was also the first time that women’s role as battlefield nurses is recognized. Discovering Our Past: A History of the United States (2014) was the first book to tell

17 Wilder et al, This is America's Story, 393.
the story of the women who disguised themselves as men in order to fight for their country. “Frances Clayton disguised herself as a man to fight in the Civil War. As many as 400 other women did the same.”\(^{18}\) As women started to gain more recognition in society, textbook descriptions followed suit, eventually giving them recognition for their impact on historical events such as the Civil War.

Immigrants, like women, also faced a long road to recognition. The first mention of immigrants having a positive impact on the war was in 1975. Prior to this, immigrants, especially the Irish, were either ignored by textbooks or described with discrimination. An event that showcases the negative opinions towards immigrants, especially Irish immigrants, is the New York Draft Riots in 1863. In *A Popular History of the United States* (1892), “Irish assassins” were the responsible party that murdered the “helpless negroes.”\(^{19}\) Approximately 1.9 million Irish immigrants lived in the United States in the 1890s, and Irish-American relations were tense.\(^{20}\) Americans believed immigrants, especially those from Ireland, were taking jobs and making life harder for American-born citizens. Many textbooks commented on how immigrants flocked to the United States and began to compete for jobs in the factories. However, the reference to the Irish as being “assassins”

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\(^{19}\) Bryant, *A Popular History of the United States*, 560.

highlights the feelings of resentment towards Irish immigrants in the late 1800s. As time goes on, the role of Irish immigrants in the New York Draft Riots gets increasingly downplayed. A couple decades later, the attackers in the draft riots were described as “rioters (that) held New York in a reign of terror.”

This transition to a less accusatory tone showcased the improving Irish-American relations over time.

Perhaps the group that experienced the most change in representation is slaves. The lives of slaves were not widely discussed in textbooks until 1919. Prior to this, there were a few passages that described slaves as contraband in textbooks from 1892 and 1911. *Our United States: A History* (1919) was very blunt about slaves being considered property before the Civil War. The author also looked down upon slave labor as being “ignorant, clumsy, and wasteful,” stating that slaves were too lazy to put in extra effort beyond that which would spare them punishment. However, it was not until 2014 that a significant section of the book was devoted solely to the purpose of describing the lives of enslaved people and the horrors faced in slavery. A major component in this section was the constant fear of being separated from family, a very powerful and personal tactic to use when teaching this subject to students.

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22 Ibid., 406.
Not only were the conditions and fears of slaves misrepresented in early textbooks, but there was a common misconception that the Emancipation Proclamation forever freed all slaves right away. This belief can be found in textbooks ranging from 1876 to 1968, a time period when society was plagued with questions regarding the civil rights of African Americans. *An American History* (1911) was the first textbook to recognize the Emancipation Proclamation as a war measure, which then remained in the description of the proclamation in textbooks for years to come. It was not until 1991 that a textbook began to represent emancipation more accurately by claiming that against popular belief, “no slaves became free immediately.”24 In the aftermath of this statement, textbooks from the last twenty years or so have followed suit, stating that “the proclamation had little immediate effect.”25 However, one effect that took place relatively quickly was the enlistment of black soldiers in the military.

Black soldiers were first mentioned in 1892, followed by a long hiatus until 1968 when they were once again added to textbooks, and it was not until 1975 that their significance to the war was recognized. Furthermore, it took until 1991 for the discrimination that many black soldiers faced to be addressed. One thing remained constant from 1876 to 2014, and that is the focus on the 54th Massachusetts. Early accounts of the 54th focus on the bravery and nobility

of their commander Robert Gould Shaw for taking up command of a black regiment. “The heroism that had braved the deep and bitter prejudice of the North, by taking command of this first colored regiment, and that proved the bravery and devotion of the blacks by their own splendid fighting, was not lost.”  

More recent accounts still have a focus on Shaw but are more inclusive of the bravery of all members. “Though the Union could not capture the fort, the 54th became famous for the courage and sacrifice of its members.”  

Society has a habit of honoring black accomplishments through the white men that helped, like Robert Shaw, thus not giving credit to the African Americans who did just as much, if not more. However, in recent years, an effort has been made to give more credit to African Americans.

Just as black soldiers of the Civil War are gaining traction in modern textbooks, so too has the life of post-war freedpeople. The description of newly freed slaves has undergone a massive evolution. After not being mentioned for almost half a century after the end of the war, early descriptions of newly freed slaves were extremely degrading. In 1911, David Muzzey wrote that “the negroes, who did not ask for political rights, were suddenly thrust into positions of high political office which they had no idea how to fill.”

This statement is not only incredibly demeaning but also highly inaccurate. Muzzey wrote this a generation later.

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after Reconstruction when the effects of the Civil War were still being felt. African Americans became easy scapegoats upon which to place the blame of post-reconstruction failures. However, these undignified descriptions of blacks after the war continue well into the 1930s, where blacks are described as being “like bewildered children.”29 Descriptions of blacks being ignorant and child-like tie in with how the Black Codes were portrayed. During the battle for civil rights in the 1960s, the Black Codes were said to be designed to discourage vagrancy, minimize race tensions, and continue the treatment of blacks as inferior to whites.30 In 1991, the Black Codes were recognized as denying basic rights; however, it was not until 2014 that Black Codes were recognized as placing freed African Americans in a position little better than slavery. Previously, textbooks stated how some individuals feared the Black Codes would restore slavery in all but name, but it was not until 2014 that that fear was recognized as actually happening. Over time, textbooks began to more accurately represent life for newly freed slaves in the aftermath of the war.

White supremacy is a continuous theme throughout the Civil War and continues to affect today’s society. However, very few textbooks are willing to specifically name this issue. There are a few exceptions, notably American: Its People and Values (1975) and The Americans:

A History (1991). Textbooks such as An American History (1911) and Discovering Our Past: A History of the United States (2014) come close to identifying white supremacy but shy away from directly saying its name. As time passed, textbooks became more inclusive of minority groups and began to discuss the reality of slavery; however, racism is an issue that still needs to be addressed. Students need to be educated on the role that race and white supremacy played in the worst war ever fought in the United States.

Over the years, textbooks have taken the liberty of promoting a specific agenda when it comes to the Civil War. Some groups, such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, have purposefully shared the Southern viewpoint of states’ rights and pro-slavery, while more recent textbooks have been willing to include the actual impact slavery had on people as well as society in general. Common characters like President Lincoln are consistently viewed in high regard throughout time, but the contributions of women and slaves have evolved to include a more realistic nature of events. Textbooks have been taking great leaps to become better. However, there is still much room for improvement. The UDC hoped to share an “authentic” Southern history, but hopefully a change in the way students are educated about moments such as the Civil War will cause them to see what is truly authentic and be the propellant for change.
Bibliography


Rewriting History


Historians have long debated whether the Civil War was an old-fashioned or modern war, and with both sides offering convincing evidence, it makes this historiographical issue both arcane and, in some instances, irrelevant. But when the issues include the use of railroads by the Union military, one can only be left with the impression that if the Civil War was not a modern one in all aspects, it certainly was in the aspect of the North’s skillful implementation of railways to overcome their strategic disadvantage of fighting a war by means of exterior lines. One of the best examples of the Union’s innovative use of an existing railroad was its efficient and highly effective control of the Louisville and Nashville (L&N) railroad in Kentucky and Tennessee for most of the war.

The North’s control of the L&N reflected a profound understanding by its military leaders for synchronizing already existing railroads into a matrix for the transportation of troops, supplies, wounded soldiers, and rapid deployment

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in response to the ever-changing battlespace.² In comparison, the South’s railway system was in utter disarray, plagued with railways unlinked with others and incompatible rail gauges, all of which created a logistical nightmare.³ Within this logistical network of rails and spikes, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad served as a vital vein into the heartland of the Confederacy to be exploited by the Union. Thus, it ensured a Northern victory over its Southern aggressor by becoming a dagger that drove straight into the Confederate heartland. This allowed the Union to establish a reliable line of communication as well as transport men and war materials directly toward the heartland front, spanning from western Kentucky to eastern Tennessee, and, later in the war, it played a key role in the Chattanooga and Atlanta campaigns.⁴ Running between the title cities of Louisville, Kentucky, and Nashville, Tennessee, the L&N benefited the Union by providing a logistical route in a geographic area that lacked navigable rivers.⁵ Furthermore, the L&N was easily put into use by the Union because they were the same gauge as the Northern standard.⁶

⁶ Clark, *Railroads in the Civil War*, 150-151.
At the outbreak of the war, the L&N became a contentious vital resource, eyed by both the Union and Confederacy for its military potential. The Commonwealth of Kentucky, however, decided to declare neutrality in the war and remain in the Union. That neutrality ended when the Confederate forces invaded the state, prompting the Union command to send troops into the Northwestern portion of Kentucky. In autumn of 1861, the Confederates established a long and fragile battle line that extended from a left flank of Columbus to a right flank near Mill Springs, supported by a bastion in the center, Bowling Green, which they quickly began to fortify in anticipation of a Union response. For a short time, the L&N was partially in the hands of both sides. Breaking this line, the Union first attacked (and defeated) the Confederates at Mill Springs in January of 1862, obliterating their right flank. Then, a month later, General Grant eradicated the Confederate left flank by attacking Corinth and subsequently securing Forts Henry and Donelson in Northwestern Tennessee. With the successful attacks on the Confederate flanks, the Union forces then positioned themselves to secure the bastion of the Confederate line, Bowling Green.

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9 Woodworth, *This Great Struggle*, 89.
Continuing the Union momentum, General Buell implemented the L&N to maneuver his troops toward Bowling Green in hopes of breaking the crumbling Confederate grip upon Kentucky.\(^\text{10}\) Recognizing the inevitable, Confederate General Johnston retreated from Bowling Green and took up a new position at a rail hub in Corinth, Tennessee. With General Buell subsequently occupying Bowling Green, Kentucky and Gallatin, Tennessee, the Confederate hold on Kentucky was lost. When Nashville fell to Union forces on February 25\(^\text{th}\), every mile of the L&N belonged to the Union military, which meant the North now held a major transportation and industrial center they could use to strike deeper into the Confederacy.\(^\text{11}\)

While occupying Nashville, the army under the command of General Buell also became “wholly dependent” upon the L&N for supplies.\(^\text{12}\) Every bullet, black powder canister, food ration and medicinal instrument for the entire Army of the Ohio could now be expediently transported on the L&N. Even the letters from soldiers, the only connection that could soften the hard life as a soldier, could ride from Nashville to Louisville and find their way to their Northern recipient.\(^\text{13}\) Because of the Union victories in Kentucky and

\(^\text{10}\) Turner, *Victory Rode the Rails*, 116.
\(^\text{11}\) Ibid., 125.
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Tennessee, the L&N was a reliable logistical source for their forces. However, as General Buell would discover, there were risks involved when relying upon one logistical resource.

The Confederacy, however, decided it had surrendered too much ground and chose to counter the Union advances by launching their Heartland Offensive in mid-1862. Doing so would demonstrate how vital the L&N truly was for Union as it had become the sturdy backbone that helped halt the Confederate campaign. As the Union was securing its grip upon the L&N railway, Confederate forces employed Colonel John Hunt Morgan and his raiders to sabotage the Union’s vital supply line. One of the earliest attacks upon the L&N occurred in May of 1862, when Morgan’s raiders attempted to free Confederate prisoners of war aboard a northbound train near Cave City, Kentucky. Not being able to obtain their goal, the raiders sufficed their expedition by capturing a passenger train and successfully burning forty-five freight cars and blowing up the locomotive.¹⁴

Tirelessly, the Confederacy persisted in its attempts to wreak havoc along the L&N, hoping for enough success to render the railroad virtually unusable as a secure resource, but Union authorities were determined to keep trains running along the L&N. In a report to President Lincoln alerting him of Morgan’s entrance into Kentucky, Tennessee’s Military Governor Andrew Johnson concluded that the Louisville-

Nashville railway was the main target of these raids and “should be protected by all means.” For the remainder of 1862, the L&N would serve as both a vital asset to the Union to counter the Confederate Offensive and as a strategic target for the Confederacy.

But this was no simple task for Union generals. Between July 1861 and June 1862, damages caused by Confederate raids resulted in a total of sixteen locomotives lost or damaged, 142 box cars destroyed, and a multitude of flatbeds, coal cars, and passenger cars put out of commission. In 1862, Morgan continued to plague the L&N with attacks along the line. His successful raids served as a template for future raids, but were most effective in this time frame due to the less than adequate defenses of the railroad. In August of 1862, he attacked Gallatin, Tennessee and disrupted communications between Louisville and Nashville by destroying a bridge and a locomotive attached to numerous cars. His raiders also made rail tunnels around Gallatin nearly impassible, hoping to cripple Buell’s supply line for weeks, if not months. Doing so would, they hoped, stall the Union advance through Tennessee and force the Union army to address their supply lines. A few days later, after Union troops repaired the railway, Morgan’s men then cut the telegraph wires, alienating General Buell’s army in

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15 Andrew Johnson to Abraham Lincoln, July 10, 1862, in O.R. 16:188.
17 Ibid., 27.
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Nashville with no means of communicating with other Union armies in the field or with the War Department in Washington.¹⁹

The continual assaults upon the railway showed Morgan’s ingenious tactical technique: by implementing his cavalry in swift raids and striking at various locations without warning, he baffled the Union commanders, leaving them to question how they could defend their strategic railroad. Capture was merely an appealing, yet allusive, idea, and the cavalry that would be required to adequately chase and destroy Morgan’s’ force was unavailable. To deter attacks, General Buell scattered small detachments of troops along the railroad.²⁰ Enough to deter Morgan from striking defended locations, his forces focused instead on weakly held, or undefended, sections of the railroad. But the Union, heavily reliant upon the L&N, would be forced to repair whatever damages Morgan’s forces inflicted. In September 1862, when Confederate General Bragg launched an invasion into Kentucky—coordinated to coincide with General Lee’s invasion into Maryland—Morgan again destroyed sections of the railroad to hinder Buell’s approach to counter Bragg.²¹

Meanwhile, the Confederate Heartland Offensive was straining the Union’s defensive lines. Needing to counter the offensive, or to simply halt its advance, the Union authorities in Kentucky stationed troops along the

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¹⁹ Ibid., 28.
²⁰ Ibid., 133.
entirety of the L&N, forming a battle-line to oppose the Confederates. Doing so was tactically sound because not only did the L&N need to be defended, but it could then be used to aid any Union advance from anywhere its tracks laid. The Union could have easily maneuvered soldiers from any area along the rail to either counter the Confederate offensive or launch a counter attack.

Fearing a decisive attack, Major-General Halleck, General-in-Chief of the Union armies, sent reinforcements from Indiana and Illinois to the battle-line through Louisville, using the L&N to hasten their journey. Analyzing the Union’s defenses of the L&N, prior to the reinforcements, Captain C.C. Gilbert reported his unfavorable opinion to General Buell. In his estimation, the detachments of ten or twelve men were too scarce and too small, and the entirety of defenses inadequate due to the less than satisfactory earthworks. Lastly, he noted that no defenses existed between Munfordville and Louisville at that time. He rightly shared his worries because one intent of the Heartland Campaign was an all-out assault by Confederate forces aimed to repulse the Union forces and secure portions of the L&N.

In September 1862, Confederate General George Williamson, acting under General Polk, ordered an attack on Proctor’s Station and Cave City, Kentucky in order to secure and hold those stations. If successful, the attack would cut

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22 Horatio Wright to Henry W. Halleck, August 29, 1862 in O.R. 16:447.
23 C.C. Gilbert to Buell, August 9, 1862, in O.R. 16:299.
24 Special Orders No. 17, September 12, 1862, in O.R. 16:817.
the Union hold on the L&N and would leave all of the Federal forces south of Cave City alienated from their main supply and communication lines, not to mention vulnerable to being surrounded. The choice of location was a sound tactical move because the stretch of rail from Lebanon Junction to Bowling Green made a salient bowed to the south, with Cave City at the peak, thus making it more susceptible to attack. To support this assault, Confederate Colonel John Pegram ordered cavalry under the command of Colonel John Scott to destroy the L&N to halt Buell’s approach.\textsuperscript{25} Despite their best efforts to hinder either the Union’s use of the L&N or their strategic hold on Kentucky, the Confederate forces did not succeed in either endeavor. Following the battle of Perryville on October 8\textsuperscript{th}, the Confederate leadership decided to cut their losses of their flailing invasion and subsequently retreated. Both the Union and the L&N earned credit for holding the strategic border state of Kentucky. Without the L&N’s backbone support of the Union lines, the North’s ability to defend Kentucky would have been greatly reduced, possibly even rendering them incapable of doing so. Thus, the L&N was a vital part of the Union’s repulsion of the Confederate Heartland Campaign.

In November of 1862, with the Union having secured and repaired the entirety of the L&N’s railway, the blue-clad soldiers of the North stood poised to thrust a dagger into the

\textsuperscript{25} John Pegram to John Scott, September 4, 1862 in O.R. 16:796.
Confederate heartland. But the South, eager to thwart any Union advance southward, launched a surprise attack upon the L&N by dispatching Morgan to attack the trestles at Muldraugh’s Hill, Kentucky. He successfully reached his target on December 28, 1862, by leveraging his cavalry’s speed and agility to move northward all while delaying Union forces with flank skirmishes. After pummeling the garrison with artillery and forcing the Union troops to surrender, his raiders burned the two trestle bridges of the L&N. Immediately after achieving his goal, Morgan’s force retreated, in order to avoid entrapment, to Confederate lines in Tennessee on January 2nd, 1863. Just like before, the Federal troops called upon their engineer corps to make rapid repairs to the railway to mitigate the damage dealt to the L&N, so it could continue to be implemented as a vital logistical tool as they advance southward.

Thus, when 1863 dawned, Union leaders were preparing a dual offensive to capture Chattanooga and Knoxville, hoping to secure Tennessee and push the Union battle lines deeper into the Confederate heartland, to a point where they were virtually knocking on the door of the Deep South. Still hoping to cripple or stall the Union advance, the South was preparing their updated raiding strategy for the upcoming year. But the Union had learned from the raids of 1862 and improved their defenses, including the L&N, by

27 Mackey, The Uncivil War, 143.
28 Ibid., 144.
29 Ibid., 165.
upgrading the blockhouse system already in place with embanked walls around the blockhouses and by positioning artillery near the railroad.\textsuperscript{30} It appeared that the worries in Captain Gilbert’s unfavorable report were no longer a concern.

With the L&N secured, but still under threat of Confederate raids, the Union pushed deeper into Southern territory. The L&N continued to provide vital service to the Union armies in the Western Theatre as a major supply line but also now to the troops of General Rosecrans.\textsuperscript{31} However, beyond serving as a vital vein for supplies and communication, the L&N by autumn of 1862 was routinely used to transport injured soldiers to rear-ward medical facilities in Louisville and Nashville.\textsuperscript{32} The railroad facilitated the transport of thousands of soldiers to larger facilities that were better equipped to serve their needs, improving the chance of survival. If anything, it could have been a needed morale boost to the wounded soldier to disengage from the conflict and be in more constant contact with friends and family. This system impressed General Thomas so much that he actually required the hospital trains to be equipped with the best crews and locomotive engines available.\textsuperscript{33}

In late 1863, the L&N was still a vital tool, as it aided the Union in ousting the Confederates from Kentucky. Later that year, the L&N best displayed its efficiency with the

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 168.
\textsuperscript{31} Turner, \textit{Victory Rode the Rails}, 249.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 302.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 303.
dramatic movement of General Hooker’s Eleventh and Twelfth Corps to aid in the capture of Chattanooga, TN. With Rosecrans’s defeat at Chickamauga, Assistant Secretary of War Charles Dana requested over twenty thousand troops to be hurried to Eastern Tennessee to not only assist Rosecrans, whose army was under siege in Chattanooga, but also to set the stage for upcoming operations into Georgia. In response, Secretary of War Stanton boasted that 30,000 Union troops from the Army of the Potomac in the east could be taxied via rail to Chattanooga in five days. The planned route would ship the soldiers from Washington, D.C on the B&O railroad to Baltimore, where they would pick up the main B&O track to the Ohio River and be ferried across. Once across the river, they subsequently marched from Columbus to Indianapolis and then southward to cross the Ohio River into Louisville, KY. Once in Louisville, they then would ride the L&N to Nashville and be loaded unto the Nashville-Chattanooga railway to complete their journey. After departing on September 26th, and following some delays in Indianapolis, the two corps arrived in Chattanooga fourteen days later. To appreciate the sheer scale of maneuverability the L&N contributed to this scheme, one need only to consider the fact that the railroad moved 25,000 troops, accompanied by ten artillery batteries and one hundred cars of baggage a distance

35 Turner, Victory Rode the Rails, 289.
36 Weber, Northern Railroads, 186.
of approximately 1,200 miles in two weeks.\textsuperscript{37} This logistical feat truly demonstrated not only the Union’s mastery of the rail system, but also how interconnected it was, allowing specific lines like the L&N to become important resources in strategic planning and implementation. Thus, Rosecrans was reinforced and the Union lines held in Tennessee, despite the dire siege that poised to become a Confederate victory.

However, the Confederacy had not forgotten the importance of the L&N to the Union cause. Once more, they sent Morgan, the proven cavalry raider, with orders to attack the three hundred-man garrison holding Louisville.\textsuperscript{38} This summer raid was designed to serve not only as a disruption of Union supply lines and a distraction for Union cavalry but also as a recruitment devise aimed at encouraging sympathetic Kentuckians to join the Confederate cause.\textsuperscript{39} But Morgan, disregarding his orders, set his focus on an assault in Indiana and Ohio rather than attacking the garrison in Louisville.\textsuperscript{40} Morgan and his raiders attacked the L&N at Lebanon Junction, which Morgan’s raiders captured before promptly departing across the Ohio River to continue their raid northward. But this time, success eluded Morgan and his raiders. After being defeated on July 19, the raiders were now fleeing Union territory. Morgan’s “Great Raid,” as it came to be called, concluded when his force was unsurprisingly surrounded by Union forces in Ohio,

\textsuperscript{37} Turner, Victory Rode the Rails, 293.
\textsuperscript{38} Mackey, Uncivil War, 178.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 178.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 177.
surrendering, thus closing his chapter of terror upon the railway.41

The mastery of railways by the Union military during the American Civil War truly contributed to their victory over the Confederacy. Within this network of Union-controlled railways, the Louisville & Nashville played a significant role in aiding the Federal armies’ invasion into the Deep South while still keeping a reliable flow of men and supplies to wherever the North needed them. Without the L&N, Union armies of the Western Theatre would have fought a treacherous campaign without sufficient supplies or means of adequate transportation for their wounded. In these respects, the L&N became a dagger in the hands of the Federal armies who benefited from the railroad’s geographical location, efficient and reliable transportation, and long reach from Louisville to the vital river and rail hub of Nashville. By any measure, the L&N stands as an example of how the Union military fought a modern war in which steel rails meant the difference between victory and defeat.

41 Ibid., 194.
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