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## Letter from the Editors

Brandon Neely  
*Gettysburg College*

Emily Jumba  
*Gettysburg College*

Danielle S. Russell  
*Gettysburg College*

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It is our pleasure to present the twelfth volume of the Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era. The challenges of student scholarship during the era of COVID make the successful publication of this edition a particularly gratifying one. Changes to the submission, review, and publication processes provided a challenge which our authors and editors met with impressive dedication and remarkable patience. It is a great honor to note that the Journal is healthier than ever before and has a bright future in the years to come.

This volume contains three academic essays which illuminate various aspects of the Civil War Era. The first, Riley Neubauer's "A Stolen Ship: Robert Smalls' Daring Escape to Freedom," is a highly entertaining work of military and race history which details the experiences of one of the Civil War's most fascinating figures. Imminently readable, the essay contextualizes Smalls' work within broader understandings of Black agency within the period.

The following essay, Ian L. Baumer's "Chaos in Congress: Masculinity and Violence in the Congressional Struggle Over Kansas," meanwhile uses effective primary source research to question manifestations of gender ideology in the period. Blending histories of politics, race, and gender, Baumer develops an intriguing interpretation of the social context of the American Civil War.

Finally, Matthew X. Wilson's "History and Implications of the Missouri Test-Oath Case," provides a stunning conclusion to this volume of the Journal. Citing prolifically from court cases, historical works, and legal analyses, Wilson has created a spectacular spotlight on an aspect of the Civil War period which rarely receives the attention merited by its importance.

In addition to our three published authors, we received a collection of high-quality, engaging works of history and analysis which were delightful to read. Selecting only a few out of this larger group was a challenging task and could not have been accomplished without the assistance of our diligent editors, who accepted multiple challenges with smiles and prompt emails. Our special thanks go out to James Duke, Lauren Letizia, Nicholas Ryan, and Stefany Kaminski. Though Lauren has completed her term as an undergraduate, we are confident that the Journal is in the hands of qualified editors who look forward to even more submissions next year. We would also like to thank Dr. Ian Isherwood for his support and advice, and Mary Elmquist for her assistance in updating the Journal's submission and review systems to provide better stability and more effective communication.

We hope this journal not only contributes to the growing body of scholarship on the Civil War Era, but also addresses the historiographical gaps within such scholarship. New interpretations which meaningfully evaluate the history of the period in nuanced, evidence-driven ways help drive our understanding and practice forward. We are proud of the efforts given by each author, and we look forward to seeing their continued historical work for years to come.

Sincerely,

Brandon R. Neely, '23  
Emily R. Jumba, '24  
Danielle S. Russell, '25

Editors-in-Chief  
*Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era*