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Letter from the Editors

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A Letter from the Editors

It has been an absolute honor to serve as the editors of the Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era for the spring of 2014. Fielding and reading the scholarship of our peers in the field of the American Civil War never fails to be informative, and the width and breadth of article subjects submitted this year broadened our own interest and awareness of the numerous facets of the historical discipline as it has been applied to this seminal conflict in the development of our nation. Of seventeen total submissions, it was a trying task to select only five for final publication. We would like to extend our profuse gratitude for the tireless dedication of our associate editors, Valerie Merlina (‘14), Heather Clancy (‘15), Brianna Kirk (‘15), Thomas Nank (‘16), Kevin Lavery (‘16), and Steven Semmel (‘16), without whom this effort would have been exponentially more difficult. The guidance of our faculty advisor, Dr. Ian Isherwood, has also proven invaluable, as has his practice of letting us find our own way whenever possible.

The five pieces included herein are an eclectic mix of academic essays, book reviews, and interviews that showcase the diversity of Civil War Era Studies. This issue of the journal opens with “Freedmen with Firearms: White Terrorism and Black Disarmament During Reconstruction,” written by David Schenk of Marquette University, which deals with the oft-overlooked efforts of newly-freed African-Americans to violently resist the white supremacist oppression of the Reconstruction South. Next comes “Île à Vache and Colonization: The
Tragic End of Lincoln’s ‘Suicidal Folly,’” written by Graham Welch of Georgetown University, in which the original plan for the foreign settlement of free blacks during the Civil War is examined in detail. The first of our book reviews, written by Brexton O’Donnel of the University of Mary Washington, analyzes Bruce Levine’s 2013 work *The Fall of the House of Dixie*, while the second, written by Heather Clancy of Gettysburg College, looks at Caroline Janney’s 2013 book *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*. The journal closes with an exclusive interview with D. Scott Hartwig, the recently retired Supervisory Historian of Gettysburg National Military Park, wherein he reflects on his own career and what the future holds.

The entire process of compiling this issue has been filled with trials and tribulations, as is any editing job, and has assisted the both of us in realizing our editorial and academic potential. It is thus with the utmost pleasure that we present Volume 4 of the Gettysburg College Journal of the Civil War Era, and eagerly look forward to the publication of many more.

Sincerely,

Bryan G. Caswell, Gettysburg College Class of 2015
Peter S. D’Arpa, Gettysburg College Class of 2014