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“BEYOND THE LINES”: A REASSESSEMENT OF CIVIL WAR PRISONS

A Dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Arch Dalrymple II Department of History
The University of Mississippi

by

BETH KRUSE

August 2021

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ABSTRACT

"Beyond the Lines": A Reassessment of Civil War Prisons, challenges the historical interpretations of Civil War military prisons. Specifically, it analyses the political, social, and economic conditions of these systems by not only adding omitted gender, class, and race scholarship but flushing out the power dynamics between these group and military administrations. The re-examination of primary source material by reading against the grain to find overlooked insights reveals these sources not only provide a wealth of information about omitted groups, but that they have been misinterpreted. Additionally, applying the concepts of historical memory establishes how the Lost Cause shaped not only the scholarly prison interpretations but how the historical actors involved with the prisoners influenced the building of a national myth. The results were uncovering that the number of Union black prisoners was far greater than most realize and that they fought for their freedom by writing letters couched in the rhetoric of citizenship rights. On top of that, these captured black soldiers were impressed by the Confederate military for their labor, which was a stage in the transition from chattel slavery to involuntary servitude. Furthermore, it showed that southern-sympathizing women living in the north were active in the war by not only contributing to the mental and physical well-being of Confederate prisoners but that they engaged in treasonous acts. This dissertation contends these women were vital components in the Union prisoner of war supply line thus, challenging the narrative that the Union supply line was a model of efficiency. This dissertation concludes that

the current division found in America is tied to the misinterpretations of military prison studies and that past and present scholarly arguments tend to reinforce the Lost Cause narrative of the Civil War. While many Civil War military prison scholars argue about atrocities and mortality rates of the prisons, this paper reasons that the prisons are better understood by reexamining the role of the captured black soldiers, women, and the remaining prison material culture, looking at how the prisoners survived, which ultimately upends the military prison scholarship.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the memory of Dr. John R. Neff:

A better mentor I could not have had.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ideas found in this dissertation would not have been possible without my mother and stepfather's insistence that family vacations included not only amusement parks but visits to historical homes, parks, and museums. Their continued support in my higher education as an adult learner has been vital. My family provided me with the support and encouragement I needed to complete my dissertation. I must especially, acknowledge my cousin, Dr. Sara Gardner, for not only providing me space for writing, but insights to the world of academia, and someone willing to help me locate and explore Southeast Missouri historical cemeteries.

Museums, libraries, and archives near and far were welcoming and invaluable in my ability to create new insights but living in central Illinois and studying the Civil War made my "work" so much easier. University of Illinois-Springfield, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library have an expansive selection of Civil War era manuscripts and books. The ease at which I was able to read the ex-prisoners' published narratives and other material was integral for my scholarship. The first edition books were invaluable. I must also acknowledge the Illinois State Military Museum for allowing me to help conserve the Illinois Regimental flags and access to the prisoner of war items held in their collection. The material culture was the key to opening my mind to new understandings. The Rock Island Arsenal Museum was also accommodating in providing me with answers as well as a copy of Lafayette Rogan's transcribed diary. Research trips to the Filson Historical Society and

National Archives in D.C. opened my eyes to the value of both large and small archives. Their staff was exceptional, and I look forward to returning to both as my dissertation moves into the book stage.

The completion of my dissertation was complicated by the loss of my advisor, Dr. John R. Neff. I chose the University of Mississippi to work with Dr. Neff as his work and mine ran parallel in so many ways. I was blessed to find that he was an outstanding scholar, who eagerly engaged in Civil War discussions with me and challenged me to see more connections than I already did. The work we began together is still unfinished, but I will strive to live up to the potential he saw in me. I must also thank Kathy Neff for gifting me some of Dr. Neff's books and supporting me as I navigated through the final stages. The conversations he and I never had hampered my scholarly growth, but at least I can read some of what he read and occasional see his thoughts in the page margins. Thanks to her, he will forever be guiding me. Her kindness will not be forgotten.

Lastly, I cannot thank enough the faculty at the University of Mississippi who stepped up to help me after we lost Dr. Neff. Dr. April Holm willingly took on the role of advisor, even though her plate was already full. Dr. Shennette Garrett-Scott signed on as a committee member and was integral in helping me work through my understandings of race. Dr. Jodi Skipper, Dr Garrett-Scott, Dr. Noell Wilson, and Dr. Kathryn McKee encouraged my interest in African American History and Public History by allowing me to work on local public history projects, which helped me better frame my dissertation chapter about the United States Colored Troops.

short, the faculty and staff support, across the board, at the University of Mississippi has been outstanding, and I owe them all a debt of gratitude for I could not have finished this without them.

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INTRODUCTION: LIFE AND STRUGGLES IN CIVIL WAR PRISONS

In the prison cell I sit, thinking mother, dear, of you,
And our bright and happy home so far away,
And the tears they fill my eyes 'spite of all that I can do,
Tho' I try to cheer my comrades and be gay
— George F. Root, "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp"[1]

Elizabeth Varon's *Armies of Deliverance* argues that there was a morally wrong and a morally right side in the United States Civil War.[2] Varon's argument is a response to the recent political upheavals witnessed in American streets and cities that have roots in the Civil War era. These incidents include the Charleston Church Massacre in 2015, the Charlottesville Unite the Right Rally in 2017, and heated discussions and violence regarding the removal of Confederate monuments across the nation. The victims of these violent attacks were murdered by radicalized white men who embraced racist ideology. One of them openly shared on social media his disappointment in the lake of active hate groups as well as images of him posing with Confederate flags and semi-automatic weapons.[3] His belief and allegiance to the Civil War era's Confederate States of America and its ideals were apparent when he shared images of burning the American flag. The popularity of the Confederate battle flag is a result of the success of the

[1] The title of the Introduction "Life and Struggles in Civil War Prisons" was inspired by the narrative of Joseph Ferguson, *Life and Struggles in Rebel Prisons, A Record of Sufferings, Escapes, Adventures, and Starvation of the Union Prisoner. containing an appendix with the Names, Regiments, and Dates of Pennsylvania Soldiers who Died at Andersonville* (self-published, Philadelphia, 1865). Epigraph is from George F. Root's, *Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The Prisoner's Hope* (Root & Cady, Chicago, 1864), Library of Congress Notated Music, accessed July 9, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/ite m/ihas.200001912/.

[2] Elizabeth Varon, *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[3] Frances Robles, "Dylann Roof Photos and a Manifesto Are Posted on Website," *New York Times*, June 20, 2015.

Lost Cause myth. The belief in a mythical narrative of the Civil War and its southern supporters is a major factor in the inability of many Americans to see and understand racist ideology. The Lost Cause contends that Confederate soldiers were the most brave, gallant, and virtuous soldiers of all time. Later post-war reunion propaganda helped the nation believe that the two sides reconciled, in part, as they came to see that both sides were good soldiers fighting for their own cause. In preparation for an 1893 "Blue and Grey Reunion" in Chicago, for example, one promoter declared, "There are hundreds all over the land who wore the blue and the grey, the best men, both North and South, who are offering their service to make this the greatest reunion ever held on American soil."[4] This holds no more truth than Donald Trump declaring there were "very fine people, on both sides" after a white supremacist drove his car into a crowd of Charlottesville protestors, killing a young woman. And then Trump doubled down on his statement by evoking the memory of the "great General Robert E. Lee," which points to the Lost Cause belief that Lee was "the most heroic and saintly of all Confederates."[5] A pervasive divide exists in the American nation that links with the failed emancipationist goals of the Civil War. The mythology of the Lost Cause feeds this pervasive divide and influenced the historical scholarship of the previous centuries. In most areas of Civil War scholarship, historians have revisited and corrected past historical misconceptions, but scholarship on Civil War prison has largely remained rooted in the past.

The Civil War prison narrative has changed little since the 1880s when the first professional historians included Civil War prisons studies in their monographs. Their narratives

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[4] "Blue and Grey at Chicago," *Confederate Veteran*, Vol.1, no. 1 (January 1893), 23.

[5] Jordyn Phelps, "Trump defends 2017 'very fine people' comments, calls Robert E. Lee 'a great general'," April 26, 2019, ABC News, accessed July 6, 2021, https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-defends-2017-fine-people-comments-calls-robert/story?id=62653478. Caroline Janney, "The Lost Cause," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, Virginia Humanities, accessed April 29, 2017 https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/lost-cause-the/.

included that the length of the war and the unforeseen number of prisoners resulted in hastily constructed prisons that proved ill prepared to handle the number of soldiers captured. These historians grouped prisons together largely ignoring the differences between conditions and policies found in the treatment between officers versus common soldiers. They almost entirely omitted the experiences of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) captured. These historians also debated which prison was harsher based entirely on mortality rates. They looked to blame someone or something as the reason for the mortality rates. They discredited any first-hand, published accounts by prisoners who seemed embittered or spoke of prison atrocities. While historians consider prisons part of the military, they have paid little attention to how these sites were situated in communities far removed from battlefields. But this is an imprecise portrayal of Civil War prisons. They were not ad hoc. The Civil War temporary stockades and prisoner policies have origins in the Indian Removal period. In 1838, Major General Winfield Scott oversaw the forced removal of the remaining Cherokees, which included the use of stockades during their journey to the Oklahoma Territory. There was an American precedent for holding and providing for large groups of prisoners and to be clear "prisoners" was a term applied to the resisting Cherokees in Gen. Scott's Order No. 25.[6] During the Civil War, a prisoner's race and class proved integral factors in what prison officials sent them to and their treatment. Mortality rates based on inexact numbers do not by themselves denote how harsh a prison was; race and class certainly must be added into that equation.

[6] Major General Winfield Scott's Order No. 25 Regarding the Removal of Cherokee Indians to the West; 5/17/1838; Letters Sent and Received by Major General Winfield Scott, May 14-22, 1838; Letters Received and Other Papers of Major General Winfield Scott Relating to the Cherokees, 1838 - 1838; Records of U.S. Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393; National Archives Building, Washington, DC. Accessed June 18, 2021, https://www.docsteach.org/documents/document/scott-order-25. Winfield Scott would be the top military leader at the start of the Civil War. The Indian Removal camps included other aspects that relate to Civil War prisons including inadequate supply lines, grafting contractors, rampant disease, and high mortality rates.

When I first began to study history, Civil War prisoners, for reasons still outside my understanding, caught my attention. As a master's student, I decided that I needed to offer some type of numerical accounting of prisoners as historians have already done to count the Civil War dead. For my master's thesis, I wanted to quantify and qualify prisoners of war by placing names and stories to every Civil War prisoner. It did not take me long to understand that was not feasible; documenting over 400,000 prisoners would be an impossible task. I fell back to simply reading what was available on the military prisons. I was exceptionally lucky that both universities where I studied in Illinois have large and accessible collections of material, including narratives written by ex-prisoners. It was reading these narratives against the modern studies that made me challenge conclusions and interpretations of who the prisoners were and what their motives were for writing about their prison memories. During this period, I was also lucky enough to be a volunteer for the Illinois State Military Museum (ISMM), whose collection included artifacts relating to Andersonville prison. Seeing and holding items made by the Union prisoners of war provided me with more valuable insights into the prisoners' day-to-day struggle to survive while held in captivity. I was convinced by the end of my thesis that prisons, prisoners, and guards needed to be rethought in current Civil War studies. My beginning contribution to the field is building upon my previous research and considering underused sources to study groups that are missing in prison studies: African Americans and women.

"Beyond the Lines" uses narratives and artifacts from the ISMM to uncover intersections of class, race, and gender in Civil War prisons.[7] Items made by prisoners along with the stories in their narratives revealed a new world of understanding of prisoners' survival through informal economic markets and the roles of class and gender. Comparisons and contrasts between

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[7] The Dissertation title was inspired by J.J. Greer, *Beyond the Lines, or a Yankee Loose in Dixie* (self-published, Philadelphia, 1865).

prisoners' experiences became easier to discern. For instance, Confederate prisoners behind Union lines benefitted from the attention of organized women living near the prisons, but Union prisoners did not. Captured black soldiers had a prison experience that was vastly different than that of captured white Union soldiers. Thinking about the markets and the differences between the captured black soldiers and the white soldiers made me realize that modern studies barely discuss the experiences of the black prisoners of war. The predominant narrative is simply that Confederates massacred them on the battlefield or sold them into slavery. The reality was the captured black soldiers who survived battles were prisoners and were impressed to labor for the Confederacy. No study to date has thought about the implications of these men and where they fit into the meaning of citizenship and the evolution of slavery in the Civil War Era. This ties to my argument that published narratives of ex-prisoners and the material culture they left behind show how psychology, economics, race, gender, and class shaped the experiences of prisoners of war in the Civil War.

To offer new insights into the Civil War prison scholarship, I have based all my chapters on the words or material culture of the actual prisoners of war. This does not mean I have ignored other primary sources. On the contrary, the narratives supplied me with breadcrumbs, and, by following those leads in official documents, newspapers, letters, and artifacts, I was able to find trends, similarities, and contrasts in the treatment and conditions of prisoners. By choosing to read the post-war published narratives with a discerning eye and applying the methods and tools of a historian, I offer new insights pertaining to Civil War prisons and prisoners. I found the narratives reveal the realities of prisoner of war experiences, which include their agency, explanation for survival, and how they and the prisons were engaged with communities on the homefronts where prisons were located. The homefront connection is

entirely the reason I chose "Beyond the Lines" for my dissertation title. J.J. Greer recognized the importance of the prisons' location far away from the battlefields and my dissertation will flush out the meanings and implications of prisoners held on the homefronts. My research brings new understandings of the experiences of the captured USCT, revelations about southern-sympathizing women living in the north aiding prisoners and uncovers the importance of prison-made folk art for the prisoners and for understanding the prisoners' experiences.

Many historians still argue that prisoner memoirs are too biased and therefore unreliable sources, which cannot be used by serious scholars. The historical arguments include that these sources were written to obtain pensions or make money and are too "flawed" to provide any reliable window into the prison experience.[8] These arguments were offered by early twentieth-century historians who whose work purported to be scientific but relied on prejudiced and inaccurate theories about the war. These interpretations started in 1880 with archeologist Rufus B. Richardson. He was one of the earliest scholars to write about the Civil War military prison issue focusing on Andersonville and whether the mortality rate there was a case of "wholesale murder with no extenuating circumstances" by basing his interpretations on "a more *rational* explanation."[9] He was not as subjective as he professed. Richardson served in Company B of the 6th Massachusetts for nine months and had lost a brother serving in the same regiment. And when discussing the Union Army in his article, he uses "we" and "our" continuously. It seems he believed in the monolithic Union soldier and that his thoughts were representative of all Union veterans. His arguments were the first professional chink in the armor to weaken the righteous moral cause of the Union in undertones of achieving reconciliation. He began his article by

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[8] James M. Gillespie, *Andersonvilles of the North: The Myth and Realities of Northern Treatment of Civil War Confederate Prisoners* (Denton: University of North Texas press, 2008), 3.

[9] Rufus B. Richardson, "Andersonville," *The New Englander*, Vol 39 (1880), 730-731.

undermining the ex-prisoners' narratives or, as he identified them, "the great body of pen-fighters" and their heated debate over atrocities committed in military prisons. His judgement was "in many cases the truth lies at the half-way point between these accounts and those to which we formerly trusted."[10] Certainly, in any dispute, there are two sides of a story, but when one is discussing a civil war over the legality of race-based lifetime enslavement there exists a morally right and a morally wrong side. Richardson weighs in on the reconciliation debate and willing to sacrifice the Union and their emancipationist ideals for a more "rational explanation."[11] His more-disappointing abandonment of the war's emancipationist goals was declaring that the Union was the sole entity to blame for the collapse of the prisoner exchange cartel and the cause of the collapse was not the issue of the Confederacy's failure to exchange captured USCT, but General Ulysses Grant's mythical war of attrition policy.[12] Richardson concluded the Union's demands for equality in the treatment of their soldiers, regardless of race, was only an excuse to halt the exchange and he derided the Union for "putting forward a quarrel as a mere pretext."[13]

What is interesting about Richardson's argument is that he echoed General Benjamin F. Butler's suggestion to Secretary of State Edwin Stanton that the cartel collapse and subsequent suffering of the Union prisoners of war was not because of the refusal to exchange black prisoners of war, but because the agents in charge let their tempers surpass their reason.[14]

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[10] Richardson, "Andersonville," 729.

[11] Richardson, "Andersonville," 731.

[12] The myth that General Grant was the reason that prisoner exchanges stopped so pervades prisoner of war studies that the National Park Service created a page on their Andersonville website to debunk it. See "Myth: Grant Stopped the Prisoner Exchange," National Park Service, last modified November 27, 2017, accessed January 26, 2020, https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/grant-and-the-prisoner-exchange.htm.

[13] Richardson, "Andersonville," 772.

[14] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 533.

Richardson and Butler oversimplified the reasons why the cartel collapsed. Richardson, an ex-Union soldier, fell under the spell of the Lost Cause argument that the south had limited number of men to serve, so any removed from the battlefield provided a strategic advantage for the north. Believing this made it easier to argue that Grant's war of attrition guided prison exchange policies. Thus, began the exclusion of race from scholarly Civil War prison studies. Ultimately, he fell in line with the Lost Cause determination that the lack of southern resources was the reason for the mortality rate at Andersonville.

Another important scholarly examination into the Civil War prison came in 1904. James Ford Rhodes devoted a whole chapter to Civil War prisons in volume five of his comprehensive *History of the United States* series. Like Richardson before him, Rhodes claimed that time, his own disposition, and newly released sources provided an ample opportunity for him to "arriving at the truth about the prisoners of war." His "even mind" would rise above the rancor as "[n]o subject is so difficult of discussion between Southern and Northern men as that suggested by the word Andersonville."[15] Rhodes concurred with Richardson that there was no intentional maltreatment and offered that the conditions were in part the result of an impromptu decisions concerning policies and facilities. Rhodes offered that prison arrangements "were only makeshifts devised with considerable regard for economy in expenditure" and he continued that "bad management at the North and still worse for the South owing to a less efficient organization with meagre resources" were the reasons for the horrible conditions in Civil War prisons. Here Rhodes added the ad hoc argument to the prisons development while simultaneously reinforcing the Lost Cause lack of resources argument focusing on Andersonville. Rhodes also supported Richardson's views on the USCT. Rhodes determined that "there were very few negro captives

[15] James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, Vol. 5 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), 483-484.

and with rare exceptions they were not abused."[16] In a chapter loaded with direct quotes from sources, he provided none to support how or why he made this determination. Later he provided only three options for captured USCT: executed, returned to their owners, or forced into labor on fortifications.[17] He also echoed Richardson's view of the non-issue of the USCT in the collapse of the exchange cartel. Of importance here is that the full publishing of Butler's involvement in prison exchange was not available in the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*. In 1917, Butler published *Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler* in five volumes. These volumes included official military dispatches not previously published. Rhodes echoed Richardson's interpretations by declaring the Union demands for treating the USCT equally was "subterfuges."[18] Richardson and Rhodes interpretations are the scholarly origins of the fallacy that black soldiers were not prisoners of war. This myth was explicitly created to allow contemporaries and later Lost Cause proponents to argue that the cartel only collapsed because of Union policies of attrition and thus, there was no need to include the black soldier in the prison studies.

Rhodes' interpretations and lasting effects require deeper investigation. Historian John Neff argued that the "clearest evidence of a persistent divergence—or lack of reconciliation—is found in the commemoration of the war's soldier dead."[19] I would add that the memory of the Civil War prison dead and the success of the Lost Cause influenced the prison scholarship that still influences the field today. Scholars adjusted the number of Civil War dead almost a decade ago from 620,000 to 750,000, largely based on David J. Hacker's groundbreaking statistical

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[16] Rhodes, *History of the United States*, 498.

[17] Rhodes, *History of the United States*, 510

[18] Rhodes, *History of the United States*, 499.

[19] John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 5.

interpretation of Civil War deaths. His interpretations included considering those who died post-war from physical and mental injuries inflicted during the war and should be applied to ex-prisoners. Hacker argued, "the postwar deaths of soldiers mustered out of service with diseases contracted while in camp, the deaths of men from complications related to unhealed battle wounds, and the postwar suicide of men with post-traumatic stress disorder should be attributed to the war."[20] Hacker's work spurred William Blair to challenge historians to question "how do facts emerge and become accepted by the profession."[21] Both Hacker's methods and Blair's question must be applied when attempting to quantify and qualify military prison mortality.

Considering the origins of the "facts," scholars recognize the contemporary publications of Columbia professor William Dunning heavily influenced Rhodes, an amateur historian. Rhodes claimed that he had a letter from Quartermaster General Fred C. Ainsworth stating that 30,218 Union and 25,976 Confederate prisoners died.[22] Rhodes then used these numbers to imply the Union could not claim moral high ground. Both Lost Cause mythology and his own racist ideology heavily influenced Rhodes' interpretations. He argued that the root of the tribulations for Union prisoners was the Confederacy's lack of resources, and that the cartel collapse was the result of the numbers dispute and not the failure to exchange the captured black soldiers. Rhodes raised the benevolent slaveholder's belief-system when he opinioned, "There were very few negro captives and with rare exceptions they were not abused." Historians will

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[20] David J. Hacker, "A Census-Based Count of the Civil War Dead," Civil War History 57, no. 4 (December 2011), 339.

[21] Hacker, "A Census-Based Count of the Civil War Dead," 309; 311-312. Hacker's "probable range" margin of error is from 650,000 to 850,000. Subsequent historians accept his calculations that approximately 750,000 "men lost their lives."

[22] James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, Vol. V (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), 507.

never know how many USCT were captured, but it was more than a "very few" and they were most certainly "abused." As I detail later, the Confederate authorities attempted to hide the captured black soldiers, provided scant clothing and food for them, and predominantly impressed them for labor on military fortifications. Rhodes' innate racism to not see black men as equals affected his reasoning and interpretations. What he refused to recognize was it did not matter if it was a single black soldier or tens of thousands: The Union cause was the emancipation of the enslaved. Their equal rights were the core reason for the war and to ignore their unequal treatment as prisoners of war would undermine the legitimacy for the war and its unprecedented death and the memory of both.

David Blight provides the best summation of James Ford Rhodes' lasting impact on the field of Civil War era history. Blight claims, "Rhodes removed the blame from the ledgers of the accounts in Civil War memory."[23] Perhaps Rhodes greatest triumph in this arena rests in his ultimate evaluation of Civil War prison mortality. He figured that 15.5 percent of all Union prisoners and 12 percent of all Confederate prisoners died in captivity and this 3.5 percent difference meant that "[a]ll things considered, the statistics show no reason why the North should reproach the South."[24] Rhodes acknowledged the records from southern prisons were entirely missing or fragmentary, but he was less open about recognizing records for northern prisons were also only partial. Rhodes could not responsibly offer total mortality rates from incomplete data sets, yet he did. Even worse, scholars still repeat these errors over 120 years later. Beyond his mathematical fallacies, to quote the former black Mississippi Reconstruction Representative John R. Lynch, Rhodes' interpretations "were partial, partisan, and prejudiced" therefore

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[23] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 357.

[24] Rhodes, *History of the U.S. from the Compromise of 1850*, 508.

Rhodes' "comments, arguments, inferences, and deductions based upon them, can have very little if any value for historical purpose."[25] In chapter four, I will provide more evidence of Rhodes inaccuracy and offer a new calculation for prisoner of war dead.

In 1930, William B. Hesseltine created the seminal Civil War military prison history from his Ohio State University dissertation becoming the first major study solely dedicated to the Civil War prison systems. Unfortunately, modern-day historians reproduce many of the imprecise interpretations in Hesseltine's *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*, including discrediting the ex-prisoner published narratives, misunderstanding pension reform, and supporting claims that officials hastily constructed and were ill prepared to manage the military prison system.

Civil War Prisons is a classic example of the Progressive historical school's method of arguing that their interpretation is objective because it is based on science. Hesseltine's thesis is that the reports of southern prison conditions led to the belief, by northerners, that Confederates intentionally abused Union prisoners, and this "psychosis" resulted in southern prisoners suffering due to retaliation. And although he employs a medical term, he provides no definition or support from science for his use of psychosis. Hesseltine was the first to make valuation judgements on the Civil War primary sources based on his psychosis theory. Hesseltine describes the published narratives as polemic and blames the ex-prisoner's writings as the cause of the controversy concerning Civil War prisons.[26] His bibliography includes evaluations of the published narratives, and he judges them primarily based on how they fit into his imprecise

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[25] John R. Lynch, "Some Historical Errors of James Ford Rhodes," *The Journal of Negro History* II, no. 4 (October 1917), 346.

[26] William B. Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology* (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing, 1958), viii.

psychosis theory. One consequence of his evaluation criteria means that scholars discredit many narratives based on Hesseltine's assessment that they are "bitter" or contain "the usual atrocity stories."[27] It is important to note that he directed his criticisms predominately at the Union narratives. Any hardships prisoners experienced from the lack of food, clothing, medicine, or shelter was solely due to the economic collapse of the Confederate government. Thus, scholars typically discredit any narrative that discusses the prisoners' experiences based on these factors, that is, in a harsh light, because the prisoner did not fully understand the Confederate government's situation: in short, the Lost Cause, lack-of-resources excuse.

Hesseltine's work on Civil War prisons coincided with the creation of the Southern Historical Society. A society created to promote the "interest and research in southern history, the collection and preservation of the South's historical records, and the encouragement of state and local historical societies in that section to vigorous activity."[28] In the 1935 inaugural issue of the *Journal of Southern History*, Hesseltine claimed that the prison atrocity stories represented northern propaganda that connected with abolitionist propaganda. Thus, prison narratives represented abolitionist-leaning beliefs that "slavery produced tyranny, cruelty, and a disregard for human life among the southerners."[29] Hesseltine interpretations are based on his desire to defend the southerners' reputation all while arguing that "[t]he abandonment of exchange was necessary to keep the northern army up to its full fighting strength."[30] Hesseltine also firmly placed Grant and Butler at the forefront of the prisoner exchange. In the chapter "Exchange

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[27] Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*, 262.

[28] "Historical News and Notices," *The Journal of Southern History* Vol. 1, No. 1 (February, 1935), 107.

[29] Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*, 58.

[30] Hesseltine, "The Propaganda Literature of Confederate Prisons," *The Journal of Southern History* Vol. 1, No. 1 (February, 1935), 58-59.

under Butler." The title itself implies Butler was in charge and the chapter further argued that Stanton and Grant were deferring to Butler, but they were following guidelines promoted by Hitchcock. When Grant orders Butler to "decline all further negotiations," this is a response to Hitchcock's arguments based on his complete understanding of the exchange program versus Butler's limited views.[31]

Hesseltine's undermining of the veracity of the published narratives also included another angle: that they were created to obtain pensions. Heather Cox Richardson emphasizes the disdain post-Civil War middle- and upper-class Americans expressed towards those they believed sought government handouts rather than working to provide for themselves and their families.[32] Hesseltine's belief in the undeserving poor, which included Union Civil War veterans, is apparent as he compares the authors of the 1880 narratives as robbers. In "The Propaganda Literature of Confederate Prisons," Hesseltine insists that the captured Union soldiers "began their series of pension raids on the national treasury" and this was no less than mere "charlatanry."[33]

E. Merton Coulter echoed Hesseltine's evaluations in his 1948 work, *Travels in the Confederate States: A Bibliography.* Coulter created a bibliography, which included the published narratives of Civil War prisoners and almost verbatim repeated Hesseltine. Coulter emphasizes that "greatest extremes were reached in narratives by prisoners of war, many of

[31] *OR,* Series II, Vol. VII, 46-50; Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*, 210-232.

[32] Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America After the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

[33] William B. Hesseltine, "The Propaganda Literature of Confederate Prisons." *The Journal of Southern History* Vol. 1, No. 1 (Feb. 1935), 64-65.

whom were psychologically incapable of writing true accounts."[34] He continued by declaring that the accounts were written for "propaganda purposes and are therefore to be sharply discounted" and "to aid the move for bigger and more widely scattered pensions." And if any reader doubts that his views are influenced by Progressive School historians, Coulter insists that the narratives include positive descriptions of encounters between enslaved persons and prisoners to "promote Negro suffrage in Reconstruction times" and "to help elect Republican candidates to office."[35] Coulter fails to understand that this interactions perhaps are testaments to actions enslaved persons undertook in showing their support for the Union cause and undermining the Confederacy.

Hesseltine and Coulter's family history influenced their scholarship. Hesseltine was born and raised in Virginia and his maternal families roots to this state were deep. He was the namesake of his grandfather, Dr. William Janney Best, who enlisted in the 122nd Virginia Militia in October 1861. Coulter was the grandson of two Confederate soldiers one who died in battle and one who was a prisoner of war. Coulter dedicated his book to these two men. Scholars have addressed Coulter's problematic interpretations, but fewer have reevaluated Hesseltine.[36]

The next major publication focusing on prisons was a Civil War centennial book of essays published in 1962 and edited by Hesseltine. He was a respected professor and historian in the Civil War era and dominated the prison studies from 1930 until his death in 1963.[37] The

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[34] E. Merton Coulter, *Travels in the Confederate States; A Bibliography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1948), .

[35] Coulter, *Travels in the Confederate States*, XIII.

[36] Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders During Reconstruction*, New York: Oxford University Press (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), xii. 1860 U.S. Census lists the "physician" William J. Hesseltine in Clarke County, Virginia. The muster roll of the 122nd Virginia Militia from Clarke County includes a card for Pvt. W.J. Best, Co. B, accessed June 23, 2021, https://www.fold3.com/image/13826424.

[37] Hesseltine's students included Frank L. Byrne, Kenneth M. Stampp, Frank Freidel, Richard N. Current, Stephen E. Ambrose, and T. Harry Williams.

edited essay collection featured both historians and those catering to public history. All of the essays, with the exception of Futch's, followed Hesseltine's lead: They discredited the published narratives and attempted to make southern prisons appear not as horrible as Union prisoners described. Hesseltine stood firmly behind his psychosis theory, and the possibility the published narrative authors did experience atrocities. One essayist, Minor McLain, was in fact a former World War II prisoner and does consider, albeit briefly, class elements relating to prison issues. The main point McLain made was that Fort Warren prisoners and guards got along and only twelve prisoners died, thanks to Col. Dimick's "influence and sympathy." Fort Warren although considered a "principal prison" only held hundreds not thousands of prisoners making it a less than suitable model for comparison.[38] In the essay collection, James I. Robertson Jr., stressed that Elmira's twenty-four percent death rate was greater than Andersonville and therefore implying conditions were worse, in the north. Bryne and Armstrong argued the diaries that are the foundations of their articles were more reliable than narratives and downplay any moments when the prisoners' recollections were harsh. Bryne's final thoughts were that at the end of Dow's life "the spirit of sectional reconciliation had dulled the edge of his wrath," but "Yet he left his prison diary, its pages embellished with accusing fingers, to point whence he had come on his personal Road to Reunion." Bryne was peddling Pearl H. Buck's argument that there was a "speedy reconciliation" between sides based on American nationalism.[39] Overall, the essays are

[38] Minor H. McLain, "The Military Prison at Ft. Warren," in *Civil War Prisons*, edited by Wm. B. Hesseltine (Kent: Kent State University, 1962), 47. To avoid confusion note that the essay book has the same beginning title of Hesseltine's 1930 work causing. The highest number of prisoners reported at Fort Warren was 333 in February 1865, but monthly reported averages were usually less than 200. (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 986-1001).

[39] Frank L. Byrne, "A General Behind Bars: Neal Dow in Libby Prison." In *Civil War Prisons*, edited by Wm. B. Hesseltine (Kent: Kent State University, 1962), 79. Pearl H. Buck, *Road to Reunion, 1865-1900* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1937), viii.

more descriptive than interpretative providing basic information about the histories of individual prisons.

In 1968, Ovid Futch's *History of Andersonville* represented a change in the field. The book included three goals: determine what happened at Andersonville; examine conditions causing high death rates; and deduce who was to blame.[40] His work is an inspection of the prison based on questions that have been asked since the end of the war, most notably by the poet Walt Whitman. Futch's history focused on only one prison, refrained from critiquing the first-hand published narratives, and offered a solid breakdown of the organization of the prison and the people who were in charge or held in captivity. Futch used published narratives along with diaries for support of his points but did not disparage his sources. In the end, Futch supported previous arguments that deliberate cruelty was not a cause of the death rates. He agreed that poor organization and leadership were the main causes for the high mortality rates. *History of Andersonville* was the last notable scholarly work on Civil War Prisons until the twenty-first century.

James McPherson noticed, in the 1980s, that books written about Civil War prisons were from a very lopsided field of non-academic authors. He remarked that the "prison and prison exchange question badly need a modern historian."[41] The 1990s continued the trend and witnessed a flourish of writers creating mostly descriptive monographs about Civil War prisons. Gary Gallagher noted, in 1998, that the subject had "generated more emotional debate than sound scholarship."[42] The cultural studies that changed the field of history missed the Civil War

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[40] Ovid Futch, *History of Andersonville* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1968).

[41] McPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 876-877.

[42] Quoted in William Best Hesseltine, *Civil War Prisons: A Study in War Psychology*. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), back dust jacket.

prison studies, in this period, for one main reason. Those who were writing about the prisons were not trained in the historian's craft, so therefore they did not understand or consider tackling the prison studies from either a gender, class, or race lens. In their minds, women, officers versus enlisted, African Americans, and Native Americans held no significance, in the histories, of Civil War prisons.

In 2001, Michael Gray published his scholarly history on the Union's Elmira prison, *The Business of Captivity: Elmira and Its Civil War Prison*.[43] Gray contributed to the field by revealing the increased economic trade Elmira, New York, witnessed due to the building of the prison. Gray also included some information concerning the economic trade between prisoners and guards, but his focus was on the community economics of this prison.

In 2005, historian Charles W. Sanders Jr. brought back to the forefront the nineteenth century arguments that the military on both sides shared guilt for mistreating prisoners. This monograph is a memory study claims that "embellished memoirs" and the memory of Andersonville could not stop American reconciliation. Sanders' *While in the Hands of the Enemy* ultimate determinant was that through "objective memory" and erasing the blame only ensured future generations would not learn from its past mistakes.[44]

Lorien Foote's 2017 book *Yankee Plague* highlighted the worldview of retaliation focusing on escaped Union prisoners.[45] Foote powerfully brings the North Carolina enslaved into her monograph. She argues that the enslaved people helped the Union escapees they encountered while alluding the Confederate Home Guard and their agency in helping the Union soldiers reach

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[43] Michael Gray, *The Business of Captivity: Elmira and Its Civil War Prison* (Kent: Kent State University, 2001).

[44] Charles Sanders, *While in the Hands of the Enemy: Military Prisons of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005).

[45] Lorien Foote, *The Yankee Plague: Escaped Union Prisoners and the Collapse of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

the north emphasized the inefficiency of the Confederate government contributing to its ultimate collapse. Foote's work with escaped prisoners is one of the more innovative recently published works supporting the argument that the enslaved also helped the captured USCT. Captured black soldiers were impressed to labor for the Confederacy, which meant they were often outside stockades and interacted with local enslaved populations. The opportunities working outside of the prison walls allowed black prisoners to forage for items they needed and without any doubt the enslaved who they encountered provided them with extra food.

The published narratives are a key to this dissertation, which challenge both the public memory and the myths around Civil War prisons, prisoners, and guards. Chapter 1 I will offer an overview of Civil War prisons as well as some of the major problems and questions in current Civil War prison studies. Chapter 2, uses published narratives, material culture, official documents, and letters to expose the experiences of black soldiers held in captivity. Research reveals these prisoners of war were active in fighting for their freedom using citizenship rights which questions scholarly conceptions between official Confederate policies and understanding citizenship and Reconstruction Era labor policies. Chapter 3 uncovers a new direction of prison studies with the role of Southern-sympathizing women living in the north aiding the Confederate prisoners of war. The women organized and were politically active, ensuring prisoners received the food, clothing, money, and medicine they needed. In Chapter 4, using the narratives, diaries, letters, official records, and artifacts I will bring to light the prevalence of markets in the military prisons and how these markets helped the prisoners survive recognizing the published narratives were a mode for aiding in their mental health similar to the artifacts they created while held in the hands of the enemy. Jill Lepore recently noted that artifacts actually "contains its own

meaning – art + fact – an artifact is a fact made by art."[46] Modern art therapists are currently researching how art helps the modern soldier cope with PTSD. I argue that Civil War soldiers' mental health as well as their physical health benefitted both from the making of artifacts and the writing of their experiences. Throughout the dissertation I weave in how public memory has influenced past understandings of Civil War prisons and prisoners and present new interpretations to open a new path for future studies. I conclude with an analysis of insights into Civil War prison historiography, which has contributed to the current controversies around Civil War memory, monuments, and public history and argue that these show how the belief of reconciliation was influenced by a myth.

[46] Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2018), 5.

CHAPTER 1 PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF CIVIL WAR PRISONERS

"All prisoners of war are liable to the infliction of retaliatory measures."
— Francis Lieber, General Order, No. 100 [1]

On October 29, 1864, at approximately two o'clock in the afternoon, members of the 10th Kansas Infantry placed six enlisted Confederate prisoners of war in a wagon at Gratiot Prison in St. Louis, Missouri, and transported them about two miles to Fort No. 4 where the Union soldiers pinioned the prisoners to wooden posts erected for their public execution. Several thousand soldiers and citizens were in attendance to witness the event. The last words of Charles Minniken, one of the prisoners, included a "warning" for the Union soldiers that they were just as likely to find themselves in his predicament. He swore that, although he was a Confederate soldier, he was "now to be shot for what other men did, and what I had no hand in, and know nothing about. I never was a guerilla, and I am sorry to be shot for what I had nothing to do with, and what I am not guilty of." According to a *St. Louis Democrat* reporter, shortly after 3 o'clock thirty-six Union soldiers "fired simultaneously, the discharge sounding like a single explosion. The arm of every man was true." But their aim was not that true because after the volley wounded Confederate prisoner Harvey Blackburn cried out, "Kill me quick!"[2]

This Union execution was a retaliatory response for the killing of Major James Wilson and six other enlisted men captured at the Battle of Pilot Knob. Union Major-General

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[1] Francis Lieber, *Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1863), 17.

[2] *Richmond Whig* (Richmond, Va.), 07 Nov. 1864, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress accessed July 5, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024669/1864-11-07/ed-1/seq-2/.

Rosencrans received "testimony which cannot be doubted" that Wilson and his men were handed over to the Missouri guerilla leader Timothy Reeves.[3] Rosecrans ordered that "the provost marshal general of the department [Missouri] will send a major and six enlisted men of the rebel in irons at Alton, Ill., to be kept in solitary confinement until the fate of Major Wilson and his men is known." A month after the battle, the bullet-ridden bodies of the Union soldiers were found by a local southeast Missouri farmer who was out "gathering persimmons." Reeves was believed to have ordered the execution of Wilson and his men, so Rosecrans felt the execution of the six random enlisted men was justified. The *St. Louis Democrat* explained the somewhat Machiavellian war of retaliation as "giving the enemy a lesson in their own tactics." Many believed that "[i]f the Rebels find that for every man they murder in cold blood, one of their own number will suffer death, they will see that they are playing a losing game, and be induced to practice more honorable warfare."[4] The execution at St. Louis is an example of how far retaliatory policies went during the Civil War but a more used example is that regarding retaliatory debates over prisoners' rations.

There were many factors that influenced the substandard conditions at military prisons, including justification of retaliatory actions. The belief in the fairness and effects of retaliation policies was one important component in understanding Civil War military prison policies and prisoners' experiences. Belief in retaliation beliefs on both sides was integral in the development of policies and conditions at the prisons, both in the north and the south, and require more study.

[3] 1860 U.S. Census Johnson Township, Ripley County, Missouri. Timothy Reeves a native of North Carolina was a Ripley County, Missouri, Baptist minister before the war. Reeves returned to his home after the war and died in that county in 1885. At the end of May 1865, 7,454 Confederate and Guerilla soldiers surrendered at Jacksonport and Wittsburg, Arkansas. Reeves was the only one who was not granted parole. It appears he was taken back to St. Louis and be held accountable for the death of Wilson and his men. His return to Ripley County suggests there was not enough evidence to convict him (*OR*, Series I, Vol. XXXXVIII, Pt. 1, 237).

[4] *OR*, Series II, Vol VII, 1060-1061; *Richmond Whig* (Richmond, Va.), 07 Nov. 1864.

The success of the Lost Cause myth also shaped commonly accepted narratives in Civil War prison studies. These studies offer a defense for the mortality rates of Union soldiers due to the Lost Cause lack of resources argument while also placing some blame on the Union authorities for the collapse of the prisoner exchanges over policies of attrition. These historical narratives most often squarely lay the blame at the feet of General Ulysses Grant and Major-General Benjamin Butler, but this is a myth. Scholars must question how much the Lost Cause has influenced the scholarship and what historical myths about the leaders it still perpetuates. This chapter will describe some of these problems.

Origins of Prisoners of War Treatment

Precedents for killing, enslaving, retaliation policies, providing for basic needs, paroles, and exchanges of captured soldiers do date back to the beginning of known civilization. The oldest historical visual representation of prisoners of war is a stele dating to about 2200 BCE depicting a coffle of war captives walking back to Mesopotamia to be sold into slavery.[5] The long history of prisoner of war policies include the Code of Hammurabi, which contained several edicts concerning captured soldiers. One law allowed merchants to buy a captured soldier for labor, but the captured soldier also had the option to buy his freedom from the merchant.[6] Old Testament Biblical references found in Deuteronomy dating to 622 BCE allow the victors of a sieged city to "smite every male with a sword."[7] Murdering, ransoming, and enslaving prisoners of war were accepted practices in the ancient world. The Middle ages witnessed a shift away

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[5] Alexander Gillespie, *A History of the Laws of War: Volume 1: The Customs and Laws of War with Regards to Combatants and Captives* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2011), 104.

[6] "Code of Hammurabi," The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History, and Diplomacy, Yale Law School, accessed July 3, 2021, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp.

[7] Deuteronomy 20:13.

from murdering and enslaving to ransoming the elite leaders and soldiers captured on the field.[8] Murdering a nobleman became a sign of barbarism. Practicalities of war also influenced the change in customs. Leaders needed wealth to wage wars, so ransoming a nobleman was a way for kings to fill their coffers.

Unfortunately, slaughtering enemy soldiers never completely disappeared from prisoner of war experiences and were components of the American wars. For instance, flying the "Black Flag"—literally or figuratively—meant the soldiers on the losing side of the battle either fought and escaped or died; prisoners did not expect to be taken alive. Examples of battles where "Black Flag" conditions resulted in higher-than-normal battlefield casualties include the British refusing to give quarter to the American soldiers at Waxhaw, South Carolina, during the American Revolution; the deaths of the Texans at the Alamo during the Texas Revolution; and the massacre of USCT at Fort Pillow during the Civil War. Enemy combatants offering no quarter resulted in battle cries and policies that encouraged retaliation.[9] Battle cries resulting from these examples included evoking the memory of the bloodshed and for colonial soldiers to not forget the "Bloody Tarleton," for those fighting the Mexican War to "Remember the Alamo," and for Union soldiers in the Civil War to "Remember Fort Pillow." These phrases not only bolstered public support for the wars but were rallying calls for the soldiers. These cries evoked past battlefield massacres and urge the soldiers to not only fight to win but fight to kill.[10]

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[8] Rémy Ambühl, *Prisoners of War in the Hundred Years War: Ransom Culture in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[9] In 1863, the Union codified "No Quarter" orders. General Order No. 100 states "It is against the usage of modern war to resolve, in hatred and revenge, to give no quarter. No body of troops has the right to declare that it will not give, and therefore will not expect, quarter; but a commander is permitted to direct his troops to give no quarter, in great straits, when his own salvation makes it impossible to cumber himself with prisoners" Lieber, *Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1863), 17.

[10] Peter N. Moore, "The Local Origins of Allegiance in Revolutionary South Carolina: The Waxhaws as a Case Study." *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 107, no. 1 (2006), 30-31; Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 201. Whether these battles were entirely examples of officers ordering or condoning no quarter are contested, but

Remembering and retaliating stood in for reasoning and justification not only on the battlefields but for actions and reactions from the bottom to the top in prisoner of war political debates.[11]

Civil War Prisoner Exchange Policies

A brief overview of the Civil War military prison exchange policies starts with the first major battle of the Civil War. On July 21, 1861, the Union and Confederate armies at the First Battle of Bull Run captured the earliest U.S. Civil War prisoners.[12] It was a lopsided affair with 1,312 missing or captured Union troops and only thirty missing or captured Confederate soldiers.[13] During the battle, officers ordered the Union troops to withdraw from the field. The inexperienced soldiers lost their nerve during the retreat and dropped the heavy rifles and accoutrements that retarded their escape. Confederate troops surrounded the Union soldiers, now both panicked and unarmed, and easily captured them. Significantly, soldiers were not the only ones captured. Elite members of Washington, D.C., society picnicked on the hills near the battlefield to witness what they believed would be the total defeat of the Confederate Army and the end of the hostilities. The routing of the Union Army and the unorganized retreat also left the spectators unprotected from the advance of Confederate regiments and resulted in the capture of a New York Congressman Alfred Ely. Congressman Ely was not the only notable high-ranking

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they all resulted in amassing public support for the Colonial, Texans, and Union war efforts as the masses certainly believed they were examples of battlefield massacres.

[11] For deeper understanding of how violence and themes of retribution and honor played a role in American politics from its inception to the Civil War era see Joanne Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New* Republic (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) and *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil* War (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

[12] A second battle, at this location, occurred six months later on August 28 – 30, 1862.

[13] Peter Luebke, "First Battle of Manassas," *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, 6 Dec. 2012. Accessed on March 28, 2019. https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Manassas_First_Battle_of.

Union official capture at the First Bull Run: the Confederates also captured Colonel Michael Corcoran.[14] Ely and Corcoran are but two elite examples of the hundreds of thousands of soldiers, from both sides, who were captured and held in captivity during the U.S. Civil War.[15] They are also representative of the those who would publish narratives about their capture and captivity, but their length of captivity and experiences were tied to an earlier battle at sea.[16]

At the onset of the Civil War, captured forces followed earlier precedents from the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 and from the start retaliation was a tool used regarding captured men. The accepted policy for captured soldiers were officials paroled them upon their oath to return home and not to raise arms again during the conflict until officials formally exchanged them but the *USS Perry* capture of the *CSS Savannah* and her twenty-man crew in June 1861 challenged the way prisoner paroles and exchange policies would be handled in this war.[17] The result of the Union naval victory was the U.S. Government opted to try the crew, of

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[14] Corcoran was promoted to Brigadier General after his release. Corcoran was exchanged for two Confederate diplomats. He died, in December 1863, as a result of his horse falling on him.

[15] John Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of* 1850 (New York: McMillian, 1904), 507. 409,000 is figured from data reportedly given in a letter from General F. C. Ainsworth to John Ford Rhodes in a letter. The *OR* lists 329,963 Confederate and 152,015 exchanged or paroled soldiers from August 27, 1862 to December 1865 (Series II, Vol. VIII, 832). *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion (1861-65)* lists the number of dead Union prisoners based on Quartermaster Grave reports as 30,716 and lists the number of recorded dead Confederate prisoners at 33,583 (Volume 1, Part 2, 32-36). Caveat both the *OR* and the Surgeon Generals noted this is incomplete data and include only the numbers they can verify.

[16] Alfred Ely and Charles Lanman, *Journal of Alfred Ely: A Prisoner of War in Richmond* (New York: D. Appleton and Co.), 1862. Corcoran, Michael. *The Captivity of General Corcoran: The Only Authentic and Reliable Narrative of the Trials and Sufferings Endured, During His Twelve Month's Imprisonment in Richmond and Other Southern Cities*. Philadelphia: Barclay, 1864.

[17] *OR*, Series II, Vol. 3, 9-10. Parole is a French equivalent to a promise, so warriors would promise not to fight and were released to go home. The 1648 Peace of Westphalia dictated that all prisoners were to be released at the cessation of the war and all ransoms arrangements in process were now void and the nobleman were free to return to their homes. The Peace of Westphalia is the result of philosophical ideas of Hugo Grotius. Grotius, living in France as a political exile, published *The Law of War and Peace*, in 1625. His argument of rights that belong to a person are the foundation for rules of war codes of conduct pertaining to prisoners of war.

the *Savannah*, as privateers rather than confine them as prisoners of war.[18] Declaring the crew privateers instead of captured military seamen allowed the Union to charge the seaman with piracy. If convicted, the Union would execute the seamen. President Lincoln's decision to prosecute these men as privateers was a deliberate move to show the world that the South's actions were not legitimate, and thereby hamper foreign powers from recognizing the south as an independent nation. Confederate President Jefferson Davis's response to the *Savannah* dispute was to issue a statement that he would now "hold the prisoners taken by us in strict confinement" meaning Ely and Corcoran would remain in prison.[19] Davis's statement would be one of the first of the multitude of retaliatory statements coming from politicians, military leaders, soldiers, and civilians during the Civil War. Thirteen of the twenty crew members found themselves standing trial for "robbery on the high seas."[20] The *Savannah* case would take a year to settle with the jury ending in a deadlock. In this instance, the Confederacy's threat forced the Union to rethink their policy. The Union government declined to retry the crew of the *Savannah*, changed their status from privateers to prisoners of war, and eventually allowed the men to be exchanged.[21]

The next major development occurred with the capture of Fort Donelson and Fort Henry on the Tennessee and Kentucky border. On February 16, 1862, Grant reported the "unconditional Surrender this morning of Fort Donelson, with 12,000 to 15,000 prisoners."[22] The decision to not

[18] Letter of President Davis to President Lincoln, *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy including Diplomatic Correspondence 1861-1865,* James Richardson, ed. (New York: Chelsea House –Robert Hector Publishers, 1966), 115.

[19] *OR*, Series II, Vol. III, 6.

[20] *OR*, Series II, Vol. III, 136. See also "Jeff. Davis' Privateers; Captain and Crew of the Savannah United States Circuit Court before Judge Shipman," *New York Times,* July 18, 1861. Accessed on March 18, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com /1861/07/18/news /jeff-davis-privateers-captain-crew-savannah-united-states-circuit-court-before.html. The difference of six men was probably enslaved crew members who were set free.

[21] *OR*, Series II, Vol. III, 611.

[22] *OR*, Series I, Volume 7, 159.

field parole these captured forces resulted in the sudden possession of approximately 15,000 Confederate prisoners captured from both forts. The unexpected number strained the Union military prison system forcing the administration to realize they lacked adequate prison space to hold them. There were two plans put into action to deal with the influx of prisoners. One was authorizing the opening of more prisons and the other was participate in a General Exchange. The Confederates were also in possession of more Union prisoners than they could properly house and feed and were instigating a General Exchange shortly after the capture of Fort Donelson. Grant captured Confederate General Buckner at Fort Donelson. The Confederacy wanted Buckner back, and Union loyalists in Kentucky wanted him held, creating a political quagmire for Lincoln. By July, Lincoln agreed to the exchange. Secretary of War Stanton assigned Gen. Dix to arrange a General Exchange based on the regulations from the War of 1812 and "take immediate measures for that purpose, observing proper caution against any recognition of the rebel government." Dix met with his Confederate counterpart Gen. Hill on July 17, 1862, at Haxall's Landing on the James River, and the following day came to terms on exchange system known as the Dix-Hill Cartel.[23] The adoption of the Dix-Hill Cartel in 1862 provided a table of value for exchanged soldiers carried over from the cartel agreement between Great Britain and the U.S. in 1813 (i.e., a private for a private, a Captain for a Captain, a lieutenant for six privates, etc.) and excess soldiers were sent home to await official exchange by their governments.[24]

Union prison data reflects the importance governments placed on paroling rather than

[23] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 174; 239.

[24] *OR*, Series II, Vol. 1, 166-167; 171. See also John Dix and D.H. Hill, "Dix-Hill Cartel", quoted by Louis A. Brown, *The Salisbury Prison a Case Study of Military Prisons 1861-1865 (*Wendell, NC: Avera Press, 1980), 171. The date of the exchange agreement was November 28, 1812, but not approved until 1813, see footnote for July 14, 1862 (*OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 209).

holding captured prisoners. Reports from July 1862 show there was a minimum 18,347 Confederate prisoners of war held in the north and 11,467 Union prisoners held in the South. Once officials adopted the cartel, they quickly exchanged prisoners, leaving only 1,286 Confederate prisoners on December 31—and likely an equivalent number in the South. Over one-third of those who remained in Union military prisons were considered "citizens," not enemy combatants.[25] These early prisoner of war policies meant that the soldiers spent little time in prisons during the first two years of the war. That all changed, though, in 1863, with the formation of the United States Colored Troops.

Formation of USCT and Collapse of Dix-Hill Cartel

The welfare and the civil rights of the enslaved during the Civil War quickly became a point of contention with military leaders. Lincoln's political concerns included ensuring no more states seceded, especially Kentucky, and that no foreign governments recognized the Confederacy, but his generals challenged him to expand his mission by decreeing laws concerning the enslaved in both southern and border states. In May 1861, General Benjamin Butler declared that three runaway slaves in Virginia who had safely escaped to Union-held Fortress Monroe were "contrabands of war" and as such the Union army would not return them to the plantation owners. Lincoln and Congress supported Butler's order and in August enacted the First Confiscation Act.

Then in September General John C Frémont, without consulting with Lincoln, declared martial law in the state of Missouri. One of the penalties for disloyalty to the Union was seizing

[25] OR, Series II, Vol. 8, 986-988. Monthly Union returns were compiled beginning in June 1862 but are imperfect as they only include the "principal military prisons." Confederate military prison data is sparse and incomplete. July 1862 numbers are from a report made by Brigadier General John Winder where he notes some numbers are "approximations" and he is lacking numbers from the West (*OR*, Series II, Volume IV, 821).

of property. Frémont proclaimed

> The property, real and personal, of all persons, in the State of Missouri, who shall take up arms against the United States, or who shall be directly proven to have taken an active part with their enemies in the field, is declared to be confiscated to the public use, and their Slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared Free men.[26]

Lincoln believed that Frémont's order overstepped his authority and would drive Kentucky citizens to vote for secession. Lincoln responded by overriding Frémont and demoting him. Even though Lincoln quickly reversed Frémont's order, in May 1862, General David Hunter, who had briefly served under Frémont in St. Louis, duplicated Frémont's edict and declared "[s]lavery and martial law in a free country are altogether incompatible; the persons in these three States–Georgia, Florida and South Carolina–heretofore held as slaves, are therefore declared forever free."[27] Lincoln's response was again to overrule the order. But, as the war wore on, Lincoln and Congress realized abolishing slavery was a necessity as both a military strategy and as a cause guaranteeing public support for the war.

In 1862, Congress responded to the conflicting orders regarding slavery in the states that seceded by passing the Second Confiscation Act and the Militia Act, which incorporated Butler, Frémont, and Hunter's General Orders. The Second Confiscation Act allowed the seizing of property, including slaves of those found to be disloyal and most importantly the act deemed "[t]hat the President of the United States is authorized to employ as many persons of African descent as he may deem necessary and proper for the suppression of this rebellion, and for this purpose he may organize and use them in such manner as he may judge best for the public

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[26] "Gen. Fremont's Proclamation.; Head-Quarters of the Western Department," September 2, 1861, *New York Times*. Mentions and responses of "Gen. Fremont's Proclamation," in Frank Moore, *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc.* Vol. III (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1862), 25-26.

[27] *OR*, Series I, Vol. XIV, 341. David Hunter published General Order No. 7 on April 13 declaring the enslaved near Fort Pulaski on Cockspur Island, Georgia were free. He expanded that order with General Order No. 11 about a month later. Lincoln quickly annulled it.

welfare."[28] The latter opened the door for African American men to join the Union Army, albeit initially as laborers only. The Militia Act clearly set the parameters of service for African American men dictating "[t]hat the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to receive into the service of the United States, for the purpose of constructing intrenchments, or performing camp service or any other labor, or any military or naval service for which they may be found competent."[29] Lincoln's response to the issue of slavery was the Emancipation Proclamation, which went one step further than the Militia Act by freeing all of the enslaved found in states in rebellion. It also allowed for the enlistment of black soldiers: "such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service."[30] The free and the enslaved had been petitioning to join the service to fight for their freedom. The Emancipation Proclamation opened that door and by the wars end approximately 185,000 served in the USCT, and 18,000 black men joined the Union Navy.[31]

On September 22, 1862, a few days after the Union forces had stopped the advance of the Confederate Army at Antietam, Maryland, Lincoln released the Preliminary Emancipation.

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[28] U.S., *Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations of the United States of America*, vol. 12 (Boston, 1863), pp. 589–92.

[29] "An Act to amend the Act calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections, and repel Invasion, approved February twenty-eight, seventeen hundred and ninety-five, and the Acts amendatory thereof, and for other Purposes," 37th Congress, 2d sess (July 17, 1862), 599, accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/37th-congress.php.

[30] Emancipation Proclamation January 1, 1863, Record Group 11: General Records of the United States Government, 1778-2006, Series: Presidential Proclamations, 1791-2016, accessed June 22, 2021, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/299998.

[31] "Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War," Educator Resources, NARA, quoted from

Elsie, Freeman, Wynell Burroughs Schamel, and Jean West. "The Fight for Equal Rights: A Recruiting Poster for Black Soldiers in the Civil War." *Social Education* 56, 2 (February 1992): 118-120. [Revised and updated in 1999 by Budge Weidman.] accessed June 22, 2021, https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war/article.html and Joseph P. Reidy, "Black Men in Navy Blue During the Civil War," *Prologue Magazine* (Fall 2001), NARA, accessed June 22, 2021, https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2001/fall/black-sailors-1.html.

Proclamation. Lee's retreat into Virginia provided Lincoln with the victory he needed to announce the newest directive of the Civil War: emancipation. The Confederacy responded immediately to the inclusion of African Americans in the military, as this was an affront to the racial hierarchy that underpinned slavery and played into their long-standing fear of armed slave rebellion. In response seven days after Lincoln's announcement, the Confederate Congress tasked the Judiciary Committee to respond to the "proclamation by the President of the United States for the emancipation of slaves and the exciting of servile war." By October 2, the Confederate Congress began deliberations on Senate Bill 113. It held arguments concerning the bill in "Secret Sessions" on the second and the fourth of October, leaving little written record.[32] But on Christmas Eve of 1862 Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, issued his official response.

Davis's Proclamation ended with four orders. The first two declared that General Benjamin Butler and his officers were not soldiers but "robbers and criminals deserving death." Davis allowed that the white privates were "only the instruments used for the commission of the crimes perpetrated by his orders" and were eligible for exchange. His third point commanded that "all negro slaves captured in arms be at once delivered over to the executive authorities of the respected States" and these men were to be "dealt with according to the laws of the said States." In addition, the last order directed the United States to turn over all commissioned officers for punishment.[33] The penalty for supporting slave rebellion was death. The two big takeaways from Davis's Proclamation are first, that he had no reservations about executing

[32] *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865*, Volume II (Washington: G.P.O., 1904), 375-376; 399; 402; 420.

[33] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 797.

officers who he thought were aiding in servile insurrection, which included Butler's officers currently serving in Louisiana, and second that there was no distinction of USCT between contrabands or free black men. If soldiers captured a black man in arms, he was considered a slave. On March 3, 1863, the Confederate Congress supported Davis by enacting General Order Number 25. Section I declares soldiers must report all military captures of slaves to the commanding officer, who will then send the slaves to the nearest depot for imprisonment. Through this act, the Confederate government eventually established nineteen depots in the eleven states that seceded.[34] The Senators did alter the part concerning the white officers: Military authorities would retain black soldiers and not turn them over to state authorities.

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect on January 1, 1863, allowed for the formation of African American military units who would serve as fighting soldiers and not merely as laborers. It offered the abolition of slavery as the unifying Union cause. Wearied veteran white soldiers joined abolitionists, black and white, in realizing the end of slavery also meant the end of war. The southern population always understood they were fighting for the preservation of their "peculiar institution" and the Emancipation Proclamation enraged them. Not only did Lincoln's proclamation offer freedom to all the Confederacy's enslaved population but it hit the very core of many Southerners' deepest fear: armed servile insurrection. The mere thought of armed black men fighting to end slavery and battling their enslavers on southern soil incensed the population to the degree that it pushed Jefferson Davis to make his 1863 Christmas Eve proclamation.

Davis' Christmas Eve speech, which charged all captured black soldiers and their white officers with servile insurrection, was heartfelt rhetoric, but the punishment of death never

[34] *OR,* Series II, Vol. V, 844.

became policy. The standard was that the black soldiers were placed in southern military prisons then used by the military to labor for the southern defense most notably on the defenses of Charleston, South Carolina; Petersburg, Virginia; Mobile, Alabama; and other locations.[35] The Confederacy's draconian rhetoric of death, however, demanded a Union response. On April 24, 1863, Lincoln approved the *Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field*, which codified the rules of war. Most important, the United States asserted in this code that "the laws of nations knows of no distinction of color, and if any enemy of the United States should enslave and sell any captured persons of their army it would be a case for the severest retaliation."[36]

The Confederacy began a policy of obscuring the number and locations of captured black Union soldiers and refusing to exchange them. For instance, in July 1863, the dispute of recognizing black soldiers as members of the Union military and rights as both citizens and soldiers came to a head. On July 25, a week after the famed assault on Ft. Wagner, the Confederates exchanged 105 captured white Union soldiers but not one of the fifty-one captured black soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts.[37] The military knew that black Union soldiers and sailors were being held and dispatches between exchange agents and Government leaders over the captured USCT whereabouts and conditions were contentious before July. The 54th Massachusetts soldiers excluded from exchange was a tipping point, and Lincoln issued General Order No. 252 declaring that it was "the duty of every government to protection to its citizens, of

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[35] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 844, 867; Vol. VI, 132, 353-354, 1022-1023; Vol. VII, 155, 214-215, 966-971, 986-988, 1010-1012; Vol. VIII, 26, 109, 175-176, 316, 354-355, 361-362, 374, 441-442, 803-804. N. P. Chipman, *Tragedy of Andersonville Prison: The Trial of Captain Henry Wirz* (Sacramento: The Blair Murdock Company, 1911), 265-277; 456.

[36] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 674.

[37] *OR*, Series I, Vol. XXVIII, 376. The 105 number is provided in the Confederate report the 51 captured of the 54th is the result of my compiling of data from military records, South Carolina State documents, and the Adjutant General's published muster rolls. See Appendix for list for those captured during the battles of Fort Wagner.

whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly organized as soldiers in the public service" and for those who would not heed this order "the offence shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession."[38] Lincoln's complete support for the U.S. Colored Troops and his formal recognition that the black soldiers as equal to white Confederate soldiers of the same rank was more than the Confederate leaders could abide. Their refusal to recognize the captured black soldiers and sailors as United States citizens with explicit rights as Union soldiers caused the collapse of the Dix-Hill Prisoner Exchange Cartel. The Union stance was that until the Confederacy exchanged USCT soldiers, no more general exchanges would take place.[39] The exchange collapse meant that more captured soldiers would be held for longer amounts of time and further from enemy lines to ensure they could not be liberated.

The Myth of Butler and Grant's Roles in Prisoner Exchanges

General Benjamin F. Butler suggested to Secretary of State Edwin Stanton that the cartel collapse and subsequent suffering of the Union prisoners of war was not because of the refusal to exchange Black prisoners of war, but because the agents in charge let their tempers surpass their reason. On November 13, 1863, Butler suggested, "that the discussion had grown sufficiently acrimonious to have lost sight of the point of dispute, as we know many discussions do." Butler, in this letter, attempts to ingratiate himself to Stanton and into the role of Commissioner of Exchange. His solution proposed a complete exchange of all prisoners currently in captivity, rank for rank equally, which would leave the Union still holding 10,000 Confederate soldiers.

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[38] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 163.

[39] Special exchanges continued. These were the result of pleas from top administration to exchange a soldier deemed as a special case usually someone who had connections with political leaders, or higher-ranking officers, and near the end of the war the extremely ill.

The Union could retaliate using these 10,000 white prisoners if the Confederacy did not exchange black prisoners and their officers. The implications of Butler's plan effectively meant he considered black soldiers second-class citizens, and the health of the 13,000 other white Union prisoners was paramount. The question that sticks out is why was Butler, who was the Commander of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, interjecting himself into the prisoner exchange cartel. Butler knew he was outside his bounds and anticipated Stanton's questions. Butler writes, "I ought to premise, perhaps, why I interfere where it is not specifically within my command" and answers that he believes "that I could do something for the good of the service." Butler was not really that altruistic. He claimed that he did not "mean to impute blame to any party because he not sufficiently informed," but that is not completely true. He did wish to place blame on Major General Ethan Allen Hitchcock and wanted to replace him.[40] This did not occur, and that is a key point. Grant and Butler's role in the exchange system is over-inflated and used to deflect from the USCT issue. Butler was never in charge; he was a special agent at Fort Monroe for a short period. Hitchcock was *the* Commissioner for Exchange of Prisoners throughout the Civil War.

Understanding Butler's role and motivations is important element in understanding the historiography of Civil War prisons. Butler already had a reputation for going beyond his authority and making proclamations that challenged Union policies and drew the Confederacy's ire. As mentioned earlier, Butler was the first to declare runaway slaves to be contraband of war, a policy adopted by the Union. He had also ordered the execution of a Confederate sympathizing citizen, William Mumford, for pulling down an American flag in New Orleans. Butler's orders

[40] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 532-534.

had incensed those who declared their allegiance to the Confederacy.[41] Jefferson Davis had even declared Butler an outlaw and sanctioned his death. But when Butler drafted his letter to Stanton, he was directing his disdain not at the Confederacy but at another Union officer, General Ethan Allen Hitchcock. Hitchcock's refusal to exchange a prisoner at Butler's request a few weeks earlier provoked Butler to enter military affairs that were outside his purview.

On September 28, 1863, the Confederate guerrilla leader Jeff Thompson sent a letter to Butler stating he was a prisoner and reminding Butler of how he had treated a captured officer and personal acquaintance of Butler's who had been wounded and captured in Louisiana. Butler responded, within a week, with three letters. The first two went back to Johnson's Island where Thompson was held. One was a response to Thompson declaring that "Although I am an *outlaw* by the proclamation of those whom you serve, for acts which no one knows more surely than yourself were untruly reported and unjustly construed, I will endeavor to have your imprisonment lightened or commuted if possible."[42] Butler and Thompson's exchanges are full of the "gentleman" norms of the times each professing to be honorable in their duties. The letter that accompanied Thompson's was to Lieutenant-Colonel W.S. Pierson, prison commander, pointing out Thompson gentlemanly virtues when he "showed great kindness to wounded soldiers and officers that fell into his hands." An implicit suggestion to treat him kindly, perhaps. Then Butler asked if Thomson was "destitute." The third letter that day went directly to Stanton, note not to those in charge of exchange, Butler went to the top expressing that due to the "uniform urbanity and courtesy with which all the operations of General Thompson were

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[41] *OR*, Series II, Vol. III, 645. Eighteen months later Lincoln was forced to counter Butler's execution orders at Fort Monroe and directed him to "suspend execution in any and all sentences of death in your department until further order" (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 683).

[42] Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, during the Period of the Civil War*, Vol III (Norwood, MA: The Plimpton Press, 1917), 127-128.

conducted" he requested leniency in Thompson's case. This letter was sent back down the chain of command to Hitchcock who on October 12, did not recommend Thompson's release as the Confederacy threats against officers of USCT "have made it necessary to detain in prison such officers of the rebel service" in an effort "to secure such treatment to our troops as may fall into rebel hands."[43] Stanton concurred and sent notice to General Hoffman, Commissary General of Prisons. Hitchcock was not confused and was explicit in his point; until the Confederacy treated all captured Union soldiers equally there would be no exchanges.

The very same day as Hitchcock wrote his dispatch, Pierson at Johnson Island responded to Butler regarding Thompson's financial well-being. Pierson claimed that Thompson felt his "wants here were supplied by our Government satisfactorily," but Pierson had "no doubt myself but a small amount of money would be a great favor to him, even though he will not say so." One could argue that Pierson was not going to admit to a higher officer that the prisoners needed food and clothes, so he replied in the manner that he did. This way Pierson looked fair, and Thompson received some aid. Butler did send fifty dollars.[44]

It is important to acknowledge that Jefferson Davis did not recognize Thompson as a Confederate regimental officer. A guerilla fell into a special category of captured soldiers. In Missouri, the Union held these men in the St. Louis prisons, such as Gratiot Prison. Officials did not record the prisoners' military ranking and company affiliation. They listed them as "citizen."[45] This designation made them eligible to be tried as traitors and hung. Thompson was a

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[43] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 350-351.

[44] Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, Vol. III, 131.

[45] Gratiot military prison records example Captain Casper Headrick captured March 1863 at Jeff Thompson's base in Craighead County, Missouri. Union prisoner of war records from Cape Girardeau, Missouri identify him as a Captain, but Gratoit records list him as a citizen. Col. McNeil's report discuss the goal of the action as capturing Thompson and his guerilla bands, as well as Headrick's capture. In two days, McNeil's men captured sixty-four guerillas including four officers: two captains and two lieutenants. *OR*, Series I, Vol. 22, Part I, 239-241.

high ranking and notable guerilla, so officials sent him to Johnson Island, a prison designed to hold captured officers. One could argue that Thompson was not eligible for exchange because of his status as a guerilla. Butler had no qualms about exchanging him and even acknowledging his respect for Thompson. Butler wrote that he was "glad that the enemies of my country are deprived of the services of so effective an officer."[46] Perhaps what Butler should have been thinking about instead of what the Confederacy was missing was that Thompson was out of commission and no longer a danger to the Union Army and the loyal citizens of Missouri and Arkansas. Butler's responses certainly suggest part of his in motivations in communicating with Thompson considered negative public opinions expressed concerning both men by Jefferson Davis. Thompson had his own use for Butler's letters though and sent them back to Missouri where his sister gave them to the local newspaper to print. The New York Herald then picked up the story. Thompson claimed that his sister offended him by publishing their private letters but then adds that he "does not deny that I feel pleased that your flattering opinion of me has been made public."[47]

Butler advocated for a position for himself in the prisoner exchange system a month after Hitchcock refused his request for Thompson's release. Once Stanton decided to make Butler a "special agent for exchange" Hitchcock sent a dispatch to Butler explaining to him what he could and could not do and that he oversaw prisoner exchanges at City Point, Camp Lookout, Fort McHenry, and Fort Norfolk only. He was not the commanding officer over all exchanges the order from Stanton explicitly notes the hierarchy when he ordered Hitchcock to Fort Monroe to "authorize him [Butler], as special agent, commissioner or otherwise." Stanton and Hitchcock

[46] Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence,* Vol. III, 128.

[47] Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, Vol. III, 134.

also stressed the point that the USCT prisoners must be protected. Hitchcock noted in November 1865 that Butler refused to report to Hitchcock because of the difference in rank. Butler engaged in communications with the Confederate agent Ould and attempted to control all exchanges but officials repeatedly instructed Butler to stand down. Hitchcock felt dumbfounded by Butler's insistence to mass exchange prisoners and conferred to Stanton that he was "quite at a loss to understand upon what authority this declaration has been made, unless General Butler assumes to follow the example of Mr. Ould and make *ex parte* declarations" without conferring with the agents in charge. In this instance Butler knew he was operating beyond his authority when he proposed to "declare all prisoners held by the Confederacy and delivered by their agent at City Point" exchanged. He admitted in his announcement of this action that "I should have asked instructions upon the matter had I not supposed that this was simply in the course of official business." Stanton revoked Butler's proposal before Hitchcock's letter even arrived."[48] Butler repeatedly attempted to make large exchanges of prisoners, which countered the directives of Stanton and Hitchcock who directed there only be special exchanges for individuals with extenuating circumstances and for those seriously ill. Stanton and Hitchcock were clear the exchange system would not continue until the Confederacy exchanged USCT, and the numbers question of who had paroled more was a secondary point. Butler's overreach and exclusion of Hitchcock in decision making led to Hitchcock offering his resignation, which Butler declined.[49]

Butler switched tactics in the fall of 1864 writing to General Grant and implying it was Hitchcock who wanted "to have all our prisoners exchanged"; Butler fought for cognition of USCT prisoners. The dispatches show without any doubt that Hitchcock never wavered from his

[48] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 872-874.

[49] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 638-639.

position. It is Grant's response to Butler declaring that he differs from Hitchcock and although "it is hard on our men held in Southern prisons not to exchange them, but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles," which many inaccurately deduce as Grant stopping the exchanges.[50] Grant's rationale is often quoted and argued that Grant stopped the exchanges so he could wage and win a war of attrition. Implicitly, this argument is the Lost Cause dogma that the Confederacy would have won had they not lacked men and resources. The context of Grant's missive needs to fleshing out. Grant's reference to Hitchcock is Butler subverting Hitchcock's stance and Grant taking Butler at his word. Butler was attempting to manipulate Grant as Butler noted he would "again call the subject to the attention of Mr. Ould and obtain an interview with him if possible." Butler failed again. He failed because the longstanding argument was would all prisoners be exchanged, only Butler was attempting to achieve a large prisoner exchange. His motives were most likely related to his desire to garner public approval as newspapers debated the conditions of Union prisoners and enflamed public opinion. Grant's dispatch confirmed the consensus: no mass exchanges. Grant certainly understood the importance of not having released Confederate prisoners join their regiments, but attrition was not the reason the Dix-Hill Cartel collapsed, nor a reason the exchange system remained broken.

Reality of Civil War Prison Conditions: Union and Confederate

The cartel collapse saw the rise of prisoners of war held in both the north and the south. By November 1863, the Confederacy reported they held 18,867 prisoners, and the Union

[50] All quotes from *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 606-607.

26,519.[51] The numbers reported by the Union were a drastic increase from the 1,286 held eleven months earlier. The Union also increased the number of military prisons, in 1863, from thirteen to twenty-three. And 1,286 in December 1862 was a drop in the bucket compared to the over 63,000 Confederate prisoners held in captivity two years later, on January 1, 1865.[52] Accurate numbers for Union prisoners of war are harder to determine due to lack of sources. Officials held approximately 11,650 out of the 18,867 in five prison compounds and one hospital in Richmond, Virginia. The excessive number of prisoners in Richmond weakened an already stressed local economy. The conditions in Richmond required the Confederacy to build a new military prison in southwest Georgia. Camp Sumter, infamously known as Andersonville, opened in February 1864. In fourteen months, over 45,000 enlisted Union men passed through the gates of this open-air stockade.[53] The inhumane conditions and mortality rate of this one prison fueled both the Union rhetoric and policies of retaliation, but there were other factors that contributed to prisoner of war suffering.

The collapse of the cartel strained both the Union and Confederate the military installations and supply systems, resulting in extreme hardships faced by prisoners of war. The biggest privation faced by prisoners of war were lack of adequate food and clothing. The amassing of large armies during the Civil War meant the governments also had to increase their

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[51] Executive Office, *Message of the President of the United States, and Accompanying Documents, to the Two Houses of Congress, at the Commencement of the Thirty-eighth Congress* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863), 161; *OR*, Series II, Vol. 8, 993.

[52] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 988-1000. Number of total prisoners held are the sums from monthly returns ending on December 31 of 1862, 1863, and 1864 and are minimums.

[53] Open stockade means prisoners had no shelter. At Andersonville, there was a wooden stockade enclosing twenty-six acres of land with a deadline: a railing inside the enclosure that lay approximately ten feet from the stockade walls. This space was a defense to discourage prisoners from attempting escape. Therefore, guards shot anyone who crossed the deadline. Deadlines were part of most military prisons. Taking the deadline or railing into consideration, the area available inside the stockade for prisoners was 16.5 acres. In August 1864, Andersonville held 31,693 Union prisoners in this small space.

purchasing of weapons, uniforms, shoes, tents, food, and a myriad of other manufactured goods. In the North, graft increased problems in procuring adequate supplies. Unscrupulous individuals used their political ties to government leaders to win contracts to supply goods to the U.S. government. The contractors' main goal was in obtaining government money and therefore they supplied shoddy goods that were often unusable. The war profiteering came to a head, in 1863, with the passing of the False Claim Act of 1863. If a court found a person guilty of war profiteering, sentenced could go as high as up to five years in jail, and he would incur sizeable fines. Not only would the guilty have to pay a $2,000 fine but they would be responsible for "double the amount of damages which the United States may have sustained by reason of the doing or committing such act."[54] The Union Government's difficulties in providing food and clothing for their soldiers in the field also effected the ability for local Quartermasters to meet the needs of the prisons. The Quartermasters often had to pay higher prices for goods that were not necessarily higher quality. The parsimonious head of the Union military prisons Colonel William Hoffman devised a plan, however, that diverted clothes deemed unfit for the Union soldiers to the prisons. Hoffman was aware of stockpiles of material deemed inadequate for army use and, in an effort to clothe the poorly clad Confederate prisoners, he requested that Quartermaster-General M.C. Meets reserve "15,000 suits of inferior clothing" for Confederate prisoners in the "western stations."[55] Hoffman's concern for the Union Government's spending aided prisoners in this instance, but we will see later, he was less helpful where food rations were concerned.

The Confederate Government's difficulties in procuring resources stem from the

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[54] "An Act to Prevent and Punish Frauds upon the Government of the United States," Chapter 67, 37th Congress, Third Session, March 2, 1863, accessed May 12, 2020, http://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/37th-congress.php#3.

[55] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 468.

successful Union strategy of first offered by General Scott's "Anaconda Plan" and the southern citizen's hording supplies. In 1861, Winfield Scott was the General-in-Chief of the Union Army, and he devised a strategy where the U.S. Navy would blockade the southern ocean ports and control the Mississippi River ports effectively cutting off the Confederacy's ability to import goods.[56] Lincoln authorized the blockading of the coastlines after the fall of Fort Sumter. The ocean blockade was successful and when the last two strategic Confederate held Mississippi River ports, Vicksburg, Mississippi and Helena, Arkansas fell on July 4, 1863, the south was effectively cut-off from the world. Richmond citizens' responses highlight the scarcity of resources. They took to the streets in April 1863 protesting the shortage of bread and the difficulty the Confederate government faced in procuring all of the resources needed to fight a war and an issue included in James Seddon's 1863 Secretary of War report.

The location of Richmond as the Confederate Capitol and the placement of large numbers of prisoners swelled the city from almost 38,000 to an estimated 100,000 people.[57] Richmond's working-class women employed at Tredegar Iron Mill marched *en masse* to the Virginia statehouse to petition the Governor about the food shortage. Their pleas fell on deaf ears and in their walk back the crowd grew and their bitterness over their living conditions and lack of food fed their indignation, resulting in rioting and looting. Lt-Col. Robert Stewart a prisoner of war held in Libby prison reported that he saw from his prison window a bread riot "in which several thousand women took part" and that "they broke open the Government warehouses, entered

[56] *OR*, Series I, Vol. LI, 369-370; *Official Record of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Series 1, Vol. 4, 156-157.

[57] U.S. Census, "Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1860," accessed May 25, 2020, https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab09.txt; J.B. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott & Co., 1866), 277.

private stores, taking bread, clothing, and whatever they desired."[58] The Richmond newspapers downplayed this event and the Staunton, Virginia paper went so far as to suggest the rioting happening, not only in Virginia but other southern states, were "pretended bread riots" stirred up by outsiders and "encouraging the thieves, prostitutes, and vagabonds of our town to this measure by holding the idea that boots, jewelry, hats and general merchandise may be stolen with impunity in the general melee."[59] The Staunton paper's inaccurate reporting, whether intentional or not, aided in cultivating support for the war efforts. Its effectiveness though, is questionable as households were acutely aware of their individual shortages of food and clothing. On the other hand, Seddon's end of the year report plainly laid out the obstacles faced by the war department in acquiring supplies for military use.

The Confederate Government could not provide enough resources for their military or their citizens, which additionally meant they could not adequately feed or clothes the rising number of Union prisoners of war. Seddon address pointed to three reasons for the scarcity of resources: effective blockading, loss of laborers, and hoarding for profit or out of fear.[60] In his

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[58] *Alexandria Gazette (*Alexandria, D.C.), April 8, 1863, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed May 25, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn 85025007/1863-04-08/ed-1/seq-2/. The newspaper also mentioned Stewart "had been sentenced to be hung" the only mention of Stewart in the *OR* was a letter from the U.S. Exchange Agent William Ludlow to his Commanding Officer Gen. E.A. Hitchcock stating he knows nothing about Stewart, but Sgt. Mullen, who they believe has some knowledge about Stewart, is now at Annapolis and Hitchcock can ask Mullen about the "so-called Captain Stewart, sentenced by the Confederates to be hung" (*OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 437.) It is doubtful that officials ever sentenced Stewart to execution. The cases that singled out soldiers for this type of treatment were based on retaliation policies and well publicized. Contentious letters related these instances between the exchange agents, and these cases were well known.

[59] *Staunton Spectator* (Staunton, Va.), April 21, 1863, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress accessed May 25, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn 84024718/1863-04-21/ed-1/seq-2/.

[60] The Lost Cause argument of lack of resources, in reality, is an unintended acknowledgement that the Union had won the war not just through battlefield success but through naval superiority and the behavior of those living on the Confederate homefront. The Union Navy controlled the seas, the enslaved population emancipated themselves and fled north or to Union lines, and the southern citizens' concerns about the ability of the Confederacy to win the war led to hoarding and profiteering.

address, Seddon also revealed that "in nearly all the branches of supply, we are not yet exempt from independence, to a greater or less extent, on foreign importations." He outlined the switch from privateers, who were charging exorbitant prices and bringing cargoes full of luxury items, to the Confederate Government buying their own ships that he believed would result in profits for the Government and an increase in shipping war materials over luxury items. He recognized that the closing of Charleston's port due to the Union's capture of Morris Island "caused apprehensions that the business of evading the blockade would soon become more difficult and precarious."[61] The successful Union blockading combined with the "abstraction of so much male labor" meant lower production of "essential articles." Finally, Seddon argued it was all this scarcity of items that resulted in "hoarding by holders and speculators."[62]

New York newspapers started reporting about lack of food for Union prisoners of war in Richmond, during January 1862. The *New York Herald* reported a recently exchanged soldier claiming they were "obliged to expend money to keep themselves from starving."[63] Citizens became more enraged as newspapers reported more captured men, leading citizens to action on the part of the Union government. The editorial writings reached a point where Commissioner of Exchange Ethan Allen Hitchcock felt compelled to write his own editorial for the *New York Times*. Hitchcock acknowledged that the Richmond prisoners' sufferings "naturally aroused the sympathies of our people." He then he provided a long explanation of why prisoners were not being exchanged, largely because the Confederacy refused to exchange USCT. He ended his

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[61] *Report of the Secretary of War*, Confederate States of America, War Department, Richmond, Nov. 26, 1863, 27-29, accessed May 23, 2020, https://archive.org/details/reportofsecretar15conf/page/n1/mode/2up/search/blockade.

[62] Report of the Secretary of War, Confederate States of America, Nov. 26, 1863, 21-22.

[63] *The New York Herald* (New York, New York), January 10, 1862, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed May 26, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica. loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313 /1862-01-10/ed-1/seq-1/.

editorial noting that the Union's "progress already made in suppressing the rebellion may afford the fullest assurance of final success."[64] In short, the Union leaders knew the prisoners were suffering, but the Union cause was to end slavery. Lincoln and his advisors ultimately decided to treat black prisoners equally; therefore, the prisoners would come home when the Confederate government complied, or the Union won the war.

Government leaders and public perceptions that the privations Union captive soldiers were enduring stemmed from deliberate mistreatment also influenced Union retaliation policies. U.S. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton's retribution policies in addition to U.S. Commissary-General of Prisoners William Hoffman's frugality with government funds compounded the hardships Confederate prisoners of war faced. Political rhetoric that sometimes culminated in violence and malice were part of antebellum debates and officials did not always use rhetoric as political propaganda simply employed to incite an emotional response.[65] They recognized the importance of debates over retribution policies, which were sometimes steeped in Old Testament support for vengeance. The laws found in Exodus were codes of justice with punishments that were appropriate for the crime, but over time the context of the verses from Exodus was lost and an "eye for an eye" became more about vengeance and less about justice.[66] Secretary of War Stanton fully supported retribution as government policies. On November 9, 1863, Stanton informed Commissioner of Exchange Hitchcock to "ascertain the treatment of United States prisoners by the rebels at Richmond and you are directed to take measures for precisely similar treatment toward all the prisoners held by the United States, in respect to food, clothing, medical

[64] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 594-600.

[65] For more on Political Violence see Joanne Freeman, *Fields of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil* War (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2018).

[66] Exodus:12-36.

treatment, and other necessities."[67]

Union political and military leaders' stance on retaliation was not monolithic. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and General William Halleck represent two of the most extreme proponents for retaliation. Surgeon General J.K. Barnes, Commissary General of Prisons William Hoffman, and President Abraham Lincoln represented the middle-moderate position. Hitchcock almost stands alone as a military leader who entirely opposed policies driven by retribution. Lincoln as seen with the *Savannah* case and with the treatment of the USCT prisoners would consider the use of retaliation, but upon contemplation he would, at times, withdrew his orders of retaliation and rein in others who went too far. Lincoln's private secretaries claimed he voiced his thoughts on retaliation with Frederick Douglas. Lincoln pondered, "Once begun I do not know where such a measure would stop" and his final determination was that "he could not kill the innocent for the guilty."[68] In this discussion, Lincoln told Douglas that he would not summarily execute Confederate prisoners in retaliation of massacres of black soldiers. Lincoln knew that retaliation was most likely to result in more problems than answers and, therefore, used it sparingly.

Spring 1864 highlights one example of the varying degrees of belief in retribution policies. Camp Douglas Commissary of Prisoners Major L.C. Skinner of the 8th Veteran Reserve Corps sent the following message to Camp Douglas Commanding Officer Col. B.J. Sweet pronouncing: "[I] n my opinion, the ration issued to prisoners of war is too large." Skinner recommended lowering the rations. Sweet agreed with the proposal and sent it to Hoffman, who

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[67] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 485.

[68] John G. Nicolay And John Hay, "Abraham Lincoln: A History.1: Retaliation. -The Enrollment and The Draft," *Century Illustrated Magazine*, Apr 1889; XXXVII, 6, 919.

passed it up the chain of command to Stanton. Stanton then circulated it to four other high-ranking military leaders for their recommendations. Gen. Halleck was the first to respond. He pushed for more reductions, using retaliation as the rationale. Halleck suggested they "dispense with tea, coffee, and sugar and reduce the ration to that issued by the rebel Government to their own troops." The rules of war accorded prisoners the same rations as their guards, but Halleck was willing to disregard them as a retaliatory measure regardless of considerations as to why Confederate troops and Union prisoner of war rations were cut. The Confederacy cut rations in response to shortages which were a result of successful Union blockading, not as a form of prisoner punishment. Hoffman, always looking for a way to cut costs, responded by approving Halleck's recommendation. Surgeon General Barnes did not entirely approve and proposed "the exception of the ration for the sick and wounded, who would require that proposed by Col. Hoffman or more than the equivalent in medicine and hospital items." Halleck agreed and Stanton approved the reductions the last week of May.[69]

Skinner and Halleck's recommendations likely doubled Camp Douglas's mortality rate the following fall. The number of deaths for June and July were 35 and 49, respectively. For the next three months, the number increased to 98, 123, and 129. Commander Sweet noticed the increase in deaths. In October, he wrote Hoffman and listed various causes for the increased death rates, including the need of a head medical officer; the prisoners' length of captivity, noting "so long a period of restraint doubtless contributes largely to depression and disease"; and "the want of vegetables and antiscorbutics."[70] Sweet suggested allowing the sutler to sell the prisoner's vegetables and antiscorbutics. The prisoners were not being exchanged Sweet's own

[69] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 142; 150-151.

[70] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 954-955.

recognition of the soldiers' need of vegetables, which contributed to scurvy makes it obvious that cutting rations purely on the rationale that the Union should cut rations to match the rations supplied to Union prisoners was not the best humanitarian decision.

Hoffman's responded that the Surgeon-General would decide on the medical officer, and he claimed "[a]uthority cannot be given to the sutler to sell vegetables." Instead, Hoffman suggested "a reasonable quantity may be purchased as antiscorbutics with the prison fund and if this is not sufficient, cannot the meat part of the rations still be further reduced, without making it a part of the prison fund?"[71] At least three glaring issues appear in Hoffman's response. First, he seems justified in his initial decision to reduce rations in May. Second, he suggests the unfathomable notion that reducing the meat ration might be an option when it already obvious the prisoners were suffering from the effects of malnourishment. The other issue is Hoffman's "prison fund."

Hoffman was the only officer who served as Union Commissary General of Prisons during the Civil War. He received his commission for this post in October 1861. On July 2, 1862, he released his first regulations for the prisons. Hoffman decreed that "a general fund for the benefit of the prisoners will be made by withholding from their rations all that can be spared without inconvenience to them and selling this surplus under existing regulations to the commissary." Officials could use money from the general fund to purchase "all such articles as may be necessary for the health and comfort of the prisoners and which would otherwise be purchased by the Government."[72] Hoffman almost entirely driven by the thought of saving the government money, believed that prisoners were not exerting themselves as much as soldiers in

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[71] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 1006.

[72] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 152-153.

the field and therefore the "1 ration per soldier a day" was more than they needed. Hoffman graduated from West Point in 1829. He was never a common soldier and seemed to not comprehend that the rations the soldiers received were insufficient and that they too suffered from maladies brought on by nutritional deficiencies in their diets. The difference was the soldier in the field had opportunities to supplement their diets on occasion. For example, two of the prisoners in my study of the USCT were captured while collecting oysters on a South Carolina beach. In short, Hoffman was selling the prisoners food rations and using the money to buy other supplies the government was already obligated to provide for the prisoners. It is highly ironic that cooking utensils were one of the items purchased from "The Fund," yet the prisoners were short on rations to cook! Hoffman's withholding of rations equated to a surplus of $1,854,125.99 in the commissary fund, which he returned to the U.S. government post-war.[73] How many prisoners needlessly died from Hoffman's frugality is incalculable, but there is no doubt that Hoffman's prison fund is part of the equation when figuring the mortality rate of Confederate prisoners.

A survey of the origins of Civil War prisons and the practices and policies employed within them shows how the treatment of Civil War prisoners changed, or did not change, during the war. It also reveals how nineteenth century views of retaliation shaped these policies. However, myths purporting to be history produced by late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century scholars still plague the field. Earlier centuries European and nineteenth century American similarities included who was a legal combatant with Civil War prisoner of war treatment fixated on contemporary beliefs of a prisoners' status based on their race, class, and gender. During the Civil War, race, in particular, played a central role in determining whether the

[73] *OR,* Series II, Volume VIII, 767-768.

military considered prisoners lawful combatants. Although Union political and military leaders originally barred black men from becoming fighting soldiers, they did concede to the demands of black men as well as black people's right to fight for the cause of freedom. The Confederacy never formally recognized these men as legitimate combatants, however. The treatment of black prisoners of war proved vastly different than that of white soldiers.[74] It is their experiences where I will begin in bringing back the unknown and untold history of Civil War prisons and prisoners.

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[74] The military did not consider women legitimate combatants. My work does not focus on female soldiers, but I will note that soldiers captured women in uniform on battlefields, and women died in Civil War prisons. It proved difficulty to hide gender when confined in close spaces, so women when discovered were quickly removed from prisoner of war camps. When captured or discovered, officials stripped them of their uniforms, provided what they considered appropriate garments for their sex, and sent them back to their homes. For more about women who enlisted during the Civil War, see Larry Eggleston, *Women in the Civil War: Extraordinary Stories of Soldiers, Spies, Nurses, Doctors, Crusaders, and Others* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2003); Bonnie Tsui, *She Went to the Field: Women Soldiers of the Civil War* (Guilford, Conn.: TwoDot, 2003); Anita Silvey, *I'll Pass for Your Comrade: Women Soldiers in the Civil War* (New York: Clarion Books, 2008); Shelby Harriel, *Behind the Rifle: Women Soldiers in Civil War Mississippi* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2019).

CHAPTER 2 "SHALL THEY BE TURNED OVER TO THE STATE?"

When I enlisted in the army,
Then I thought 'twas grand,
Marching through the streets of Boston
Behind a regimental band.
When at Wagner I was captured,
Then my courage failed;
Now I'm lousy, hungry, naked
Here in Charleston Jail.
– Sgt. Robert Johnson Jr., Co. F, 55th Massachusetts, circa 1864[1]

Sometime around the end of May 1863 Robert Johnson Jr. travelled about twelve miles from Boston to Readville, Massachusetts, volunteering his services to become a Massachusetts Union soldier. Johnson, a twenty-nine-year-old clerk, was assigned as a private to Company F, 55th Massachusetts Infantry, the second regiment of African descendent soldiers formed in the state. Three weeks after Johnson mustered into the Union army, the six-foot tall hazel-eyed private and the rest of the 55th set sail on the steamship *Cahawba* heading down the eastern coast for the sea islands of the Carolinas.[2] August and September found the men of the 55th Massachusetts on Morris Island, South Carolina, performing "fatigue duty," which included building entrenchments.[3] Johnson's performance during the preceding months coupled with his

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[1] Sergeant Robert Johnson, Jr. parody of lyrics to *When This Cruel War is Over* as quoted by Willard Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape: Giving a Complete History of Prison Life in the South* (Hartford: H. E. Goodwin, 1868), 154-155.

[2] Note there was also an Alabama military prison by the same name. Images of the Cahawba https://www.loc.gov/item/2004660624/ & https://collections.mcny.org/Collection/New-York-&-New-Orleans-Steamship-Cos.-Mail-Steamers-Black-Warrior,-Cahawba,-De-Soto,-Bienville-2F3XC5N1K9R8.html.

[3] Adjutant General, *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War*, Vol.4 (Norwood, Massachusetts: Norwood press, 1932), 715.

literacy resulted in his promotion to 2nd Sergeant on September 1, 1863.

One month later, Sgt. Johnson was one of 125 men of the 55th Massachusetts assigned to build signal corps towers on Edisto, Otter, and St. Helena Islands south of Charleston. The 125 soldiers were divided among the three islands and set to work. Sgt. Johnson and a Private Edward Logan also of Company F were sent to Botany Bay on Edisto Island. On November 12, Sgt. Johnson took Logan "outside the picket lines" to the beach where they toiled at "procuring oysters."[4] It is probable that rations were running low at Botany Bay and Johnson's pick of Pvt. Logan served a purpose. The twenty-two-year-old Logan, born in Washington D.C., was a waiter in Pittsburg at the time of enlisting. Logan was most assuredly familiar with collecting, preparing, and serving oysters since it was a nineteenth century staple along the eastern seaboard. The stormy days preceding the oyster foraging hampered the work details and Sgt. Johnson probably saw this lull in activity as a chance to provide something beyond hardtack and dried jerky to his company's rations and boost morale.[5] It is unknown how long the two were at their task or how many oysters they had collected, but while they were on the beach members of a Confederate cavalry stumbled upon the two and captured them. To add insult to injury, the cavalry likely confiscated and ate the oysters they had collected, too.

The Confederate military placed the two men of the 55th Massachusetts in Charleston City Jail where they joined at least forty-two black Union men already confined at the jailhouse.[6]

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[4] Robert Johnson Jr. and Edward Logan, Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with the United States Colored Troops: 55th Massachusetts Infantry, Record Group 94 M1801, NARA.

[5] *OR*, Series I, Vol. XXVIII, Part 1, 52.

[6] William Wilson, Orin H. Brown, and William H. Johnson were "wardroom stewards" captured on the *U.S.S. Stono* (*OR*, Series I Vol. XIII, 570). The South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) contains documents naming forty-two men moved from Castle Pinckney in two separate consignments, but officials sent captured black soldiers in the Charleston hospital to the jailhouse as they recovered from their wounds. CSA Lt.-Col. Alfred Roman reported that there were twenty-six captured black soldiers in Charleston Hospital on Aug. 7, 1863. Lt.-Col. Roman mentions Charles Stanton of Co. G in Roman's report as "performing duty as a nurse for the wounded negros" and suggests Stanton be turned over to the State authorities "as was done with the other negro prisoners captured on Morris Island" (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 187). The pension affidavit records of Alfred Green

Three of the forty-two men were Navy seamen captured on January 30, 1863, and the thirty-nine others were from the 54th Massachusetts captured during the assault on Fort Wagner in July. The captured Massachusetts soldiers remained in the city jail for the next thirteen months before being moved to a military prison stockade in Florence, South Carolina. Several weeks later, Sgt. Johnson died in Florence becoming one of the 2,950 Florence prisoners of war unceremoniously buried in one of two trenches on Dr. James Jarrott's plantation, near the stockade.[7] Johnson and Logan set off for the beach on that dreary November day with their good intentions, never sensing how their fateful decision would change their role from laboring soldiers to prisoners of war. By the end of the war, one would be recorded as a dead prisoner of war and the other discharged as a disabled prisoner of war, both overlooked in public memory.[8]

If it were not for Willard Glazier, a white officer, mentioning Johnson in his published memoir and including the lyrics parodying the popular song "When this Cruel War is Over" (also known as "Weeping, Sad and Lonely"), Johnson's experience would have remained unknown. Glazier not only included the full lyrics of the parody "Down in Charleston Jail," but also credited the black Massachusetts prisoner of war for writing them.[9] In 1891, Captain Luis F. Emilio, a white officer of the 54th Massachusetts, published a history of the regiment where he conceded that he and his readers were "indebted to Glazier's account" for providing details about

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and Daniel States contain firsthand accounts of captured black soldiers treated in Charleston hospitals.

[7] The 1866 Secretary of War's report records 2,950 bodies (burial information in National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/national_cemeteries/South_Carolina/Florence_National_Cemtery.html). Officials interred the remains of the smaller of the two trenches into a larger trench, leaving one mass grave containing only 168 known soldiers. Sgt. Robert Johnson Jr. is not among the bodies identified.

[8] Robert Johnson Jr. and Edward Logan, Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with the United States Colored Troops: 55th Massachusetts Infantry, Record Group 94 M1801, NARA.

[9] Irwin Silber, *Songs of the Civil War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 127. Neither Glazier nor later Luis Emilio narratives provided the title of the song, but music historian Silber included the title "Down in Charleston Jail" in his monograph.

the experiences of the captured black Massachusetts soldiers.[10] The information Glazier provided was just enough to reconstruct Johnson's story and use it to understand black prisoner of war experiences. Once Johnson's details were discovered using with the material culture he was credited with creating, his military records, newspapers, South Carolina documents, and official records from the Union and the Confederacy, his brief life fits into the broader narrative of black military experience, including the reluctance of the Union government to enlist black men as soldiers, the eagerness for the black men to fight for their freedom, unfair pay practices, and the proclivity for black soldiers receiving fatigue duty over combat assignments. New insights about captured black Civil War soldiers are formed when Johnson and Logan's prisoner of war experience is brought to light.

Johnson and Logan's overlooked prisoner of war experience is typical for the black soldiers who comprised the USCT both in life and in death during the U.S. Civil War. In their lifetimes, they were not considered "Great Men," so there are no biographical sketches of Johnson or Logan, and no one spent any time piecing together their military experiences after the war. Johnson and Logan though, are examples of how black soldiers' military contributions were written out of history by nineteenth and twentieth century historians. More recently, black soldier histories from the Revolutionary era to modernity are being written, yet black soldier's U.S. Civil War prisoner of war experiences have not been fully told and there are two main reasons why.[11] The first reason is cultural; prisoner of war stories are not considered glorious tales of

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[10] Luis F. Emilio, *History of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863-1865* (Boston: The Boston Book Company, 1894), 417.

[11] Joyce Lee Malcolm, *Peter's War: A New England Slave Boy and the American Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Bruce A. Glasrud, ed., *Brothers to the Buffalo Soldiers: Perspectives on the African American Militia and Volunteers, 1865-1917* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011); Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); William Wells Brown and John David Smith, *The Negro in the American Rebellion: His Heroism and His Fidelity*. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003); A. Yemisi Jimoh and Françoise N. Hamlin, *These Truly are the Brave: An Anthology of African American Writings on War and Citizenship* (Gainesville: University

heroic actions performed by self-sacrificing soldiers, so stories about Civil War captured prisoners regrettably remain largely untold. But the foremost reason that black Civil War prison experiences are virtually unknown is that, although hundreds of white published prisoner of war narratives exist, there are no known memoirs written by black prisoners of war.[12]

The lack of sources contributed to the current narrative regarding surrendered black Union soldiers, which is that they were mostly massacred on the battlefield or sold back into slavery. This is an imprecise picture of black prisoners of war experiences. It implies that these black soldiers were only victims and in doing so, it conceals black prisoners' agency. This way of thinking obstructs the historian's ability to incorporate black captivity into the narratives of their fight for black citizenship rights. The exclusion of the study of black captured soldiers during the Civil War also reveals a gap of understanding the long history of state-imposed forced black convict labor. My research revealed that black Union soldiers were captured and held in civil and military prisons across the South and that they evoked their rights as citizen soldiers to be treated equally and entitled to the same benefits as the white Union prisoners. This fight was crucial as the black captured soldiers were perceived as rebellious slaves not free men. In short,

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Press of Florida, 2015); Elizabeth F. Desnoyers-Colas, *Marching as to War: Personal Narratives of African American Women's Experiences in the Gulf Wars* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc, 2014); Isaac Hampton, *The Black Officer Corps: A History of Black Military Advancement from Integration through Vietnam* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

[12] The source that provides details from a black soldier's perspective as a prisoner of war are the pension records found at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The pension records, including the "widow's pensions," contain affidavits from the soldier and other soldiers who knew the claimant providing details of battles, captivity, and wounds received serving their country. The pension records, including the "widow's pensions," contain affidavits from the soldier and other soldiers who knew the claimant providing details of battles, captivity, and wounds received serving their country "Widow's pensions" is a category that encompasses a wider group. Mothers and children of dead soldiers also qualified, under certain conditions, for pension benefits. Johnson's widow did receive a pension, but the full file is not available online, only an index card. It is possible Logan wrote an affidavit for her about Sgt. Johnson that is included in the file. I was unable to obtain this file due to NARA Covid-19 protocols. It does not appear that Logan applied for a pension. He died in Pittsburg in 1895. Accessed March 19, 2020, https://search.ancestry.com/cgibin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=1555&h=551521&usePUB=true&_phsrc=JjB1&_phstart=successSource&requr=281474977005569&ur=0&lang=en-US.

Johnson and Logan and thousands of other unrecognized black prisoners of war and their experiences are critical to our historical understanding, not only of the Civil War era, but also of American race relations, prison studies, and the fight for civil rights.

For this chapter, I cannot focus on insights left behind in black prisoner of war narratives, so I rely on what reading white ex-prisoners' memoirs reveal about the captured black soldiers' experiences and flush the story out with other archival sources. Reading the narratives with a new lens and looking for corroborating primary sources allows one to not only tell what the black prisoners of war were doing but why they were doing it. This method allows historians to strip away their contemporary “otherness” and bring out their humanity. Humanity in my work means bringing out historical actors free will while being restricted in both their choices and physical environments. A major consideration when determining historical contingency is considering the choices – positive and negative – made by historical actors. In my work, I highlight how prisoners of war were active agents in securing their release or increasing their chances of survival.[13] This chapter focuses on soldiers who are also members of an oppressed racial group allowing me to frame my interpretations through the lens of African American scholarship. Their agency additionally allows for developing some understanding of how these captured soldiers’ actions compelled Union and Confederate authorities to respond with policy changes. The policy changes regarding captured black soldiers were and are a testament to the prisoners’ agency.[14] Sgt. Johnson could not write his memoirs as he did not survive the war, but fortunately, he interacted with Lieutenant Willard Glazier, in the fall of 1864, who told the nation

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[13] Walter Johnson, “On Agency,” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 37, no. 1 (2003): 113-124.

[14] These insights are a combination of Thavolia Glymph and Dierdre Cooper Owens insights on their methodology. Thavolia Glymph, “The Women’s Fight,” Lecture, Gilder Lehrman Book Breaks, March 14, 2021; Deirdre Cooper Owens, “Disabling Chaos: How Black Women’s History Liberates Us All,” Lecture, University of Mississippi, April 10, 2021.

about the black captured soldiers held at Charleston City Jail.

The lack of first-hand accounts of black prisoners of war forces historians to read between the lines of white first-hand accounts to find the experiences and agency of the black prisoners. Sgt. Johnson encountered Glazier in the fall of 1864 at Charleston City Jail. Glazier, Co. C, 2nd New York Cavalry, was captured in October of 1863. He was held in multiple military prisons and local jails. In September 1863, Glazier was moved from Savannah, Georgia to Charleston City Jail.[15] According to Glazier, the local jail was already overcrowded with members of the black Union soldiers, Confederate deserters and soldiers who had committed military infractions, as well as civilians who had broken civil codes, so his group of Union officers were quartered in the jail yard. Glazier survived his captivity and published his prisoner of war memoir, four years after the war, which tied Johnson to a piece of material culture and referenced an important legal trial that involved members of the 54th Massachusetts.

Glazier described the singing of the captured black prisoners and included the verses of what would become known as "Down in Charleston Jail":

> When I enlisted in the army,
> Then I thought 'twas grand,
> Marching through the streets of Boston
> Behind a regimental band.
> When at Wagner I was captured,
> Then my courage failed;
> Now I'm lousy, hungry, naked
> Here in Charleston Jail.

[15] In November 1864, Union General William T. Sherman began his "March to the Sea" campaign. He moved his army up the coast of Georgia heading north into South Carolina. With Union supply lines cut, Sherman's army foraged deep in Confederate territory, with the military goal of demoralizing the Southern citizens by demonstrating the futility of depending on the Confederate trrops for protection. The Confederate government effectively moved Union prisoners whenever Sherman came close, thereby thwarting any attempt to liberate those held in captivity. Glazier's stay at Charleston City Jail was brief, approximately two weeks. Glazier noted that Confederates considered officers of a higher class, and as a rule held in prisons that offered better conditions. They relocated Glazier and the other officers to the more comfortable grounds of the Charleston City Hospital after the prisoners signed a gentleman's oath pledging not to attempt escape.

Chorus:
Weeping, sad and lonely,
Oh, how bad I feel!
Down in Charleston, South Car'lina,
Praying for a good 'square meal.'

If Jeff Davis will release me,
Oh, how glad I'll be;
When I get to Morris Island,
Then I shall be free;
Then I'll tell those conscript soldiers
How they use us here;
Giving us an old corn-dodger, -
They call it prisoners' fare.

We are longing, watching, praying,
But will not repine
Till Jeff. Davis does release us,
And send us 'in our lines.'
Then with words of kind affection,
How they'll greet us there!
Wondering how we could live so long
Upon the 'dodgers fare.'

Then we will laugh long and loudly -
Oh, how glad we'll feel,
When we arrive on Morris Island
And eat a good 'square meal.'[16]

Glazier's book is a primary source for this black prisoner of war song. The Kennedy Center's education program for Civil War music reflected that "Black soldiers brought with them to the war their unique musical traditions, including spirituals, shout songs, and dance music. The music included improvisation and was passed from one person to another through performance, without ever being written down."[17] The lack of written record often results in the loss of a

[16] Glazier, *The Capture, The Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 154-155.

[17] "Music of the Civil War: Explore Music's Important Role in the American Civil War," The Kennedy Center, accessed April 13, 2021, https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/

group's culture. Historian Steven Gareabedian pointed out that collecting African American music only began in the early 1900s. Even as black music was being recorded though, scholarly interpretations fell short. Gareabedian noted interpretations regarding these lost songs reinforced white stereotypical perceptions and that the inclusion of black secular music studies was a step in both "black misrepresentation" and "erasure of black identity."[18] An oft used method of erasing black culture is the appropriation of black music by white musicians who then claim the music as their own. In this case, Glazier's inclusion of this culturally significant music in the 1860s and crediting a black soldier as the composer is historically notable on multiple fronts.

Perhaps more remarkable is Glazier also detailed a conversation with Johnson in the jail yard about how the captured 54th soldiers asserting their civil rights in court. Glazier wrote that Johnson presented an "interesting history of the captivity and trial of the negro prisoners."[19] According to Glazier, Johnson told him that the black soldiers were tried by a civil commission for fleeing their enslavers and joining the army and had they been found guilty they would have been forced to "stretch hemp."[20] And indeed four men of the 54th Massachusetts held at the city jail were tried by the Charleston Provost Marshal Court as slaves and charged with inciting servile insurrection. This trial and the outcome are pivotal in understanding the thoughts and goals of those in leadership positions in the Confederacy concerning the status of African Americans. These encounters with Glazier were the last documented evidence of Johnson alive. Not only does the snippets from Glazier's story offer insights into black Civil War prisoners of

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media-and-interactives/media/music/music-of-the-civil-war/.

[18] Steven Garabedian, *A Sound History: Lawrence Gellert, Black Musical Protest, and White Denial* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020), 53-56. Stephanie Dunson, "Black Misrepresentation in Nineteenth Century Sheet Music Illustration," W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ed., *Beyond Blackface: African Americans and the Creation of American Popular Culture, 189-1930* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2011).

[19] Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 150.

[20] Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 150.

war experiences and agency but, it also opens the door for challenging the current narrative of black soldiers killed on the battlefield or enslaved by incorporating the captured 54th Massachusetts soldiers' story after Fort Wagner as prisoners of war.

The 54th Massachusetts is most famous for their actions on July 18, 1863, at Fort Wagner. This regiment led a failed heroic assault on Battery Wagner resulting in a large number of Union casualties.[21] The 54th Massachusetts soldiers breached the parapet of the Confederate defenses resulting in soldiers bayoneted and fired upon at close range. Understanding the events at Fort Wagner requires recognizing the greatest cause of anxiety among Southern slaveholders was their terror of armed slave rebellions, so when the 54th Massachusetts men penetrated the forts defenses the Carolina men, who were stationed inside, came face to face with their biggest fear. The result was a frenzied confrontation and the Carolinians had but one thought – kill.
The testimony of the degree of the Confederate horror and their ensuing rage caused by the 54th Massachusetts assault was the gruesome beachhead scene after the Union retreat.[22] Two Confederate Generals reviewing the battlefield described the defensive ditch in front of the battery as a scene of "carnage." Both Taliaferro and Beauregard were veterans of the Mexican War and led regiments in a number of Civil War battles before Ft. Wagner. They were seasoned military leaders who were familiar with war and battlefield casualties. Their use of "carnage" must be understood as them witnessing death on a scale previously unseen to them. Gen. William Taliaferro claimed the carnage was "indescribable," but General P.G.T. Beauregard

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[21] Casualties as used here include dead, wounded, captured. Many reports cite missing instead of captured. In the immediate post-battle confusion, data is often erroneously reported. Soldiers remain missing for a short period as battle separates some from their regiments, but they eventually return, the remaining missing soldiers were reported as either killed in action or captured. Records officially recorded many of the 54th as killed or presumed dead, but they were actually prisoners of war. The post-war collection of Union and Confederate records and prisoners returning home clarified the status of those reported as missing.

[22] For more about the Confederate soldiers' fear and rage leading to battlefield massacres see Kevin Levin, *Remembering the Battle of the Crater: War as Murder* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012).

found the words.[23] Beauregard reported, "The ditch and glacis were encumbered with the slain of all ranks and colors, for the enemy had put the poor negroes, whom they had forced into unnatural service, in front" and that the 54th Massachusetts soldiers were "slaughtered indiscriminately." The death of the 54th Massachusetts soldiers at Fort Wagner dominates the narrative and overshadows those who lived and were held as prisoners of war for the next nineteen months.[24]

Beauregard's next line in his report reveals more about the black prisoner of war story. He determined that scene where the soldiers were "draggled in blood and sand, in the ditch," was "a mournful memorial of the waste of industry."[25] Beauregard not only indicated the frenzy of the Carolinians, but also revealed Beauregard's patriarchal remorse for the casualties; thereby, underscoring the skewed worldview of the pro-slavery south attempting to eradicate the agency and resolve of the black men who joined the Union military. The southern worldviews concerning planter paternalism and fear of slave rebellion will be reoccurring themes as these beliefs heavily influenced the Confederacy's white leadership's decision making. On the other side of the story, one must remember that the black soldiers were resolved in their fight for the Union and more particularly for the abolition of slavery and they employed a myriad of methods to achieve their collective goals.[26] These diametrically opposed stances are the heart of the black

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[23] *OR*, Series I, Volume XXVIII, Part I, 419.

[24] In total, official records record sixty-four soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts as prisoners of war when the U.S. Government completed its final compilation of Civil War records. Thirty of those sixty-four prisoners of war died before the end of 1865. The total number is a minimum figure; soldiers captured many alive, but the wounded and others treated at Confederate hospitals did not survive long enough to be transferred. Doctors treated the 54th wounded at Charleston after Fort Wagner and in Lake City, Florida, after the Battle of Ocean Pond. Who and how many died in the hands of the enemy at hospitals will likely never be known. Massachusetts Adjutant General's Office, *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War*, Volume 4 (Norwood, MA: Norwood Press, 1932), 666-714.

[25] *OR*, Series I, Volume XXVIII, Part I, 373.

[26] Recruitment issues resulted in the release from service of some black men and underage males, but black men attempted to join the military forces as early as 1861.

prisoner of war narrative. The black soldiers never wavered from their convictions even from behind the walls of their military prisons and their actions are an indication of their fortitude.

"Down in Charleston Jail" offers the shared themes of captured black soldiers by highlighting starvation, vulnerability, and indefinite captivity and how the prisoners felt about these conditions. Historian Eugene Genovese argued that music was a tool used by enslaved people in resisting their oppression and reclaiming their humanity. Another historian, Lawrence Levin, corroborated Genovese's long-history of black resistance by arguing this phenomenon was not some abrupt result of post-World War II black confidence.[27] "Down in Charleston Jail" not only supports the long-history of black protest in music, but it also employs double meanings in singing for civil rights. For example, the use of 'square meal' is coding for "equality." Black folk songwriters incorporated the use of food for other meanings. The black prisoners want to be treated squarely, in this case it means the same treatment and exchange policies as the white prisoners. Other double meaning lyrics include "How could we live so long." This line was certainly remarking on the centuries' old institution of slavery and "How they use us here" was not confining them to their immediate space in Charleston but the use of black bodies for laboring for the economic benefits of whites across the whole nation.[28] "Down in Charleston Jail" is a black protest song composed in a Civil War prison.

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[27] Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974). See also C.C. Lawrence-McIntyre, "The Double Meanings of the Spirituals," *Journal of Black Studies*, 17 (1987): 379-401; L.W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); W.C. Rucker, *The River Flows On: Black Resistance, Culture, and Identity Formation in Early America.* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1979); Thomas P. Barker, "Spatial Dialectics: Intimations of Freedom in Antebellum Slave Song," *Journal of Black Studies*, 46, no. 46 (2015): 363-383.

[28] Guy Johnson, "Double Meaning in the Popular Negro Blues," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 22, no. 1 (1927): 12-20. Guy Johnson was one of the early sociologists writing about black music. His article focused on the double entendre of sexual innuendos but opened the door to understanding double meanings in black music. See also Steven Garabedian, *A Sound History: Lawrence Gellert, Black Musical Protest, and White Denial* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020).

African American men fought for the abolition of slavery as members of various abolitionist organizations before the Civil War and were just as eager to take up arms and fight as soldiers once the war began, but they were barred from fighting in the war until 1863. Their belief and support for a free American country never wavered and it is reflected in Johnson's lyrics and in "John Brown's Body" another favorite song of the 54th Massachusetts. Emilio mentions the regiment singing this song while marching out of Boston in 1863 and again marching out of Sumterville, South Carolina, two days after Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender of the Army of Virginia.[29] "John Brown's Body," like "When this Cruel War is Over," was also parodied during the Civil War. Julia Ward Howe changed the words and created "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Howe's version is still sung to rouse American patriotism. Patriotic music of the Civil War uplifted the soldier's and the nation. It also comforted prisoners of war. Private John McElroy, another Union ex-prisoner of war memoirist, noticed the black prisoners' steadfastness in their faith of a free nation during his time in captivity at Florence. McElroy mentioned, in his post-war published narrative, that there were but a couple of amusements when held in the hands of the enemy and one of those was "hearing the colored soldiers sing patriotic songs, which they did with great gusto."[30] One of those soldiers McElroy might have heard was Johnson, as both of them, were prisoners in the Florence stockade by December of 1864.

The captured black soldiers singing was a method for telling their unique story and bringing out their hardships in a way that their white captors and fellow white prisoners could

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[29] Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment*, 39, 296.

[30] John McElroy, *Andersonville: A Story of Rebel Military Prisons, Fifteen Months a Guest of the So-Called Confederacy. A Private Soldier's Experience in Richmond, Andersonville, Savannah, Millen, Blackshear, and Florence (*Toledo: D.R. Locke,1879), 553-554.

not avoid hearing, whether they wanted to or not. It was effective, at least for the other Union prisoners, as Willard Glazier remembered. Glazier recounted in his post-war published memoir that "The negroes sang this song with a great deal of zest, as it related to their present sufferings, and was just mournful enough to excite our sympathy."[31] The black prisoners were not only geographically located "down" from their Northern homes, but they were also "down" in spirit and singing was one method for expressing their misery. Yet, even living in deplorable conditions their song was still hopeful, as they looked forward to the day when they would "laugh long and loudly" once they returned to their lines.[32] Their singing moved Glazier's sympathy to the point that he recorded the lyrics of the ballad in its entirety.

Each verse is important in highlighting what aspects of their military service and captivity they found profound, but the first verse is significant for identifying a particular regiment and outlining the prisoners' most troubling issues. The regiment was the 54th Massachusetts and the issues were that they were starving, lacked clothing, and living in unsanitary conditions. The parade, in Boston, and the reference to Fort Wagner allude to notable events in the history of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry. Johnson was a member of the 55th, not the 54th Massachusetts, but since the group of black soldiers held at Charleston City Jail were overwhelmingly 54th soldiers, who were captured on the assault of Fort Wagner, it seems reasonable enough that Johnson adapted the words in honoring these men. Realistically, those who heard the men singing would find the mention of the assault on Fort Wagner a more heroic tale than a lyric about being captured while foraging for oysters. The sobering reality though, even while considering the double meanings found in the song, was that as hungry as Johnson

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[31] Glazier, *The Capture, The Prison Pen, and the Escape,* 153.

[32] Glazier, *The Capture, The Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 155.

was as a soldier his hunger was exacerbated as a prisoner. Held in captivity within the walls of the city jail meant the captured black soldiers were entirely reliant on the local jailor for supplying them with food.

The black prisoners of war faced two problems associated with attaining resources, such as food. The first problem was connected to Confederate system failures and the second issue related to race and punishment. The Confederate Government did not adequately devise plans for feeding the prisoners of war held throughout the South, nor did they appoint an overall military prison commissioner until November of 1864.[33] Charleston City Jail was a civil prison and Gov. Bonham petitioned for their being held in South Carolina, so the local and state authorities were responsible for providing for all the prisoners.[34] Charleston was a tightly blockaded city that was also under siege, so supplies were scarce for citizens let alone those held in captivity. Compounding the military prison disorganization and lack of supplies was the fact that the black prisoners were perceived as slaves, not free men, and charged with servile insurrection. As mentioned earlier, the most terrifying of all crimes, in the south, was that of enslaved armed resistance against those who supported the "peculiar institution."[35] Governor Bonham claimed authority over these men, and he wanted them executed. His stance was likely due to his own

[33] Military officials charged General John Winder, who oversaw the prisons in Georgia and Alabama, with overseeing all the prisons on November 23, 1864. He died of a heart attack on February 7, 1865, while inspecting the Florence stockade.

[34] William Dingle served as the jailer in Charleston in 1863. In August, he charged state of South Carolina a total of $75.90 for keeping twenty-two black soldiers for eight days. Notes in the margins also show the difference in charges from February to December 1863 for black and white prisoners: white prisoners care cost 60 cents, and black prisoners cost 40 cents. The jail charged a 25-cent "Commitment and Release" cost per person, regardless of race. SCDAH, S165249, General Assembly Loose Papers, Penal System August 19, 1863.

[35] John C. Calhoun, "Speech on Reception of Abolition Petitions," February 6, 1837, accessed March 27, 2020, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=loc.ark:/13960/t0ns0tj16&view=1up&seq=5; Alexander Stephens, "Slavery is the Cornerstone of the Confederacy," March 21, 1861, accessed March 28, 2020, https://iowaculture.gov/history/education/educator-resources/primary-source-sets/civil-war/cornerstone-speech-alexander.

fear of slave rebellion and his belief in punishment as a deterrent. The patriarchal bounds that guided southern norms relating to masculinity and behavior in the treatment of the enslaved were broken, in his worldview, so caring for them by providing adequate food, clothing, and sanitation was not a priority. Bonham wanted the maximum punishment for them – death – so denying them adequate food and clothing was a lesser punitive punishment. The black prisoners of war knew release was the only chance they had to improve their conditions.

In addition to singing, the captive soldiers also used letter writing to inform the world of their privations and hoped their efforts would aid in their release. The Boston *Liberator* published a letter from an "officer of the 55th Massachusetts" informing the readers that the prisoners were only receiving "one pint of cornmeal a day."[36] Emilio credits Johnson as the author of the letter since Sgt. Johnson, a non-commissioned officer, and Pvt. Logan were the only members of the 55th Massachusetts in Charleston City Jail.[37] Corroboration for the conditions Johnson's letter described is found in the diary of Corporal Edmund Ryan, Co. A, 17th Illinois Infantry. Ryan, who was also temporarily held in Charleston City Jail, noticed the lack of food for the black prisoners of war. His diary entry for September 14, 1863, Ryan expressed his dismay over the conditions at the jail and noted, "all these poor fellows receive in the shape of eatables is a small piece of corn bread per day for each man." That Ryan thought about the black prisoners' condition is significant when one considers that the white prisoners were also suffering from what Ryan diagnosed as scurvy. The *Charleston Mercury*, a secessionist newspaper paper, reported that the white officers who were arriving about the same time as

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[36] Unknown, letter to the editor, *Boston Liberato*r, October 7, 1864, accessed March 20, 2020, http://theliberatorfiles.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/The-Liberator-1864-10-07-Page-3.png.

[37] Emilio, *History of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts,* 418. Staff Sgt. Jarod Perkioniemi, 20th Public Affairs Detachment, "Army NCO History" Part I; Part II, United States Army, March 11, 2009 accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.army.mil/article/18042/army_nco_history_part_1_american_revolution

Glazier and Ryan were "kept on short rations of hoe cake and water." [38] Ryan's account conveys how much worse the black prisoners' situation was. Johnson's song, Ryan's diary, and the southern newspaper share a common theme: all the prisoners held in Charleston City Jail were starving. But the hidden story was the black prisoners had been held longer; therefore, suffering from the effects of malnutrition longer.

Starvation was not an exclusive condition of Charleston; it was a condition of all military prisoner of war camps, even in the North.[39] The Union applied some effort to documenting the health of white prisoners of war when they arrived at Union hospitals after their exchange. The health records of the northern ex-prisoners allow for some insights regarding the possible condition of the USCT once they were finally released. An agent for the U.S. Sanitary Commission, C.R, Agnew, was sent to North Carolina in March 1865 to help provide material aid, including foodstuffs and medical supplies for the Union Army. Agnew was shocked at the conditions of the prisoners who at this time included the black soldiers from Charleston jail, although he does not mention them specifically. Agnew described the condition of the prisoners writing, "Filth, rags, nakedness, starvation were personified." Agnew also noted that many were suffering from "idiocy" and they hobbled around like "starved idiots." J.C. Dalton, a New York surgeon working with the U.S. Sanitary Commission queried as to why the men were naked and the response was "they had thrown away what remained as soon as they could obtain shelter,

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[38] Civil War diary of First Lieutenant Edmund E. Ryan, Co. A. 17th Illinois Volunteer Infantry USA, 1861-1865, Object 3932, Peoria Historical Society, Peoria Illinois, 19; 24. Prisoners obtaining enough food was an overarching need conveyed in all prisoner diaries, published narratives, and often sensationalized in contemporary newspapers to stir up the national division. Editorial, "News from Port Royal," *The Charleston Mercury*, August 19,1864.

[39] Confederate prisoners write of eating rats in Elmira, New York; Johnson Island, Ohio; and Camp Douglas, Illinois to mention a few. There are more primary source materials available though, from the U.S. records about Union prisoners than there are concerning southern prisoners, so both contemporary actors and historians can more easily interpret Union prisoner of war experiences. Enough records exist though that do highlight shared experiences of prisoners of war not just Union and Confederate but across time and space. Prisoner of war camps and the men they held are most often starving and filthy.

because it was so ragged, filthy and full of vermin."[40] The first verse of "Down in Charleston Jail" mentions they were "lousy," which referred to the black prisoners of war dealing with lice.[41] The men and their clothes were covered in lice and not only were these parasites bothersome, in general, but they transmitted disease such as typhoid. It is also probable that the black prisoners of war also eagerly shed the enslaved clothing they were forced to wear since they had been stripped of their uniforms. The significance of removing their uniforms will be detailed later. These former prisoners were in horrible condition after they were exchanged and for some, like Alfred Whiting and Stewart Woods of the 54th Massachusetts, release was too late, they would die, from typhoid, in Union hospitals after the Union victory was complete.[42]

When the 54th Massachusetts prisoners sang of "wondering how we could live so long upon the dodger fare," they were not overstating their plight and lack of nutrition undoubtedly played a role in their demise.[43] The military records of three 54th Massachusetts prisoners, Nathan Hurley, William Grover, and Enos Smith, reported their deaths at Florence, South Carolina and all three files explicitly noted the men were starved. Hurley and Grover's notation though most tragically sums up their final days. They "died in the hands of the enemy from fever produced by starvation and ill-treatment."[44]

While there are no known photographic images of the 54th Massachusetts prisoners, there are images of white enlisted starving prisoners of war immediately after their release. Private

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[40] Cornelius Rea Agnew, *Preliminary Report of the Operations of the U.S. Sanitary Commission in North Carolina, March 1865, and upon the Physical Condition of Exchanged Prisoners Lately Received at Wilmington, N.C.* (New York: Sanford, Harroun & Co., 1865), 9; 13.

[41] Glazier, *The Capture, The Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 154.

[42] Alfred Whiting died June 6, 1865 at Annapolis and Stewart Woods died March 15, 1865, at a Union hospital in Wilmington, North Carolina. Military records list typhoid as the official cause of death.

[43] Glazier, *The Capture, The Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 155.

[44] NARA Military Records, Index Card 338g, Nathan Hurley, William Grover, and Enos Smith.

Philip Hattle, Co. I, 51st Pennsylvania Infantry, was captured in May of 1864. In June 1865, Hattle and several others returning prisoners' photographs were taken while being treated at a hospital on the grounds of St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland (see Image 2.1).[45] The image of Hattle was created by Union authorities to document the condition of exchanged prisoners of war. Some of these images were published in *Harper's Weekly* to shock viewers and provide "further proofs of Rebel inhumanity." The question put forth by the article were these images the result of starvation or disease. The writer decides the prisoners' condition was "*not from disease*" but a reflection of the "bad and deficient food" and "their stomach gave out."[46] In truth unsanitary conditions also resulted in gastrointestinal diseases causing chronic diarrhea. Hattle's and all the other images represent starvation combined with disease. Hattle died on June 25, 1865, mere weeks after his image was taken.

[45] *St. John's College. U.S. General Hospital Div. No. 2. Annapolis, Md. Private Phillip Hattle, Co. I. 31st Pa. Vol's. admitted from the Flag of Truce Steamer June 6th, died June 25th, caused by ill treatment while a prisoner of war in the hands of the rebels*. United States, 1865. Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2013645644/. The Contemporary notation of Hattle belonging to the 31st PA Infantry is a typographical error. He was a member of the 51st PA Infantry according to military records and Captain Thomas H. Parker's *History of the 51st regiment of P.V. and V.V., from its Organization, at Camp Curtin, Harrisburg, Pa., in 1861, to Its Being Mustered Out of the United States Service at Alexandria, Va., July 27th, 1865* (Philadelphia: King & Baird, Printers, 1869), 679.

[46] "Rebel Cruelty - Our Starved Soldiers," *Harper's Weekly*, Vol VII, No. 390, June 18, 1864, 385-386. accessed April 15, 2020, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015021733780&view=1up&seq=366. More images also published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, No. 455, Vol. XVIII, June 18, 1864, accessed April 15, 2020, https://archive.org/details/franklesliesilluv1718lesl/page/n384/mode/1up.

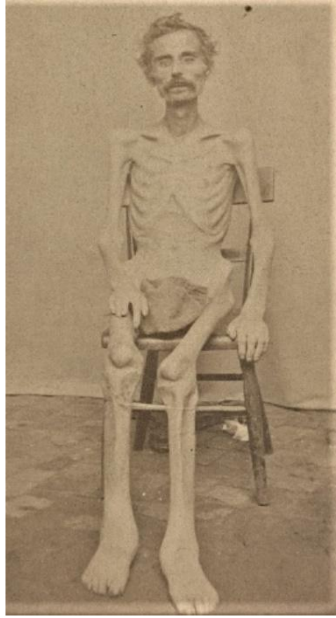

Image 2.1. “Private Hattle undressed and emaciated”

White soldiers were held in captivity for shorter periods of time than the captured black soldiers. The captivity of the captured black soldiers, same as the institution of slavery, would continue until the Union had all but won the war. Hattle was nothing but skin and bones after a year, which gives some indication of how the 54th Massachusetts soldiers might have fared after “nineteen months and twelve days” as prisoners of war.[47] In short, the USCT suffered more privations and were held longer than any other group of prisoners during the Civil War, but few even know of their existence, let alone their experiences and that is one reason why “Down in Charleston Jail” is such a critical piece of material culture.

The resistance and spirit of the 54th soldiers stand out from the very beginning of the song. The first verse begins with the soldiers filled with pride and excitement marching out of

[47] Baltimore Smith, Ward 9 Louverture Hospital Record. This record recommends a discharge for Smith due to a gunshot wound he received at the assault of Fort Wagner. Doctors subsequently amputated his arm while held as a prisoner of war. The Soldier’s Home in Dayton, Ohio, admitted Smith on January 20, 1869, and he died there on August 25, 1873, only 10 years after the assault of Fort Wagner. He was 51 years old.

Boston heading for the war waging in the Southern states. In 1891, Captain Luis F. Emilio recorded his memories concerning the 54th Massachusetts by publishing a book he titled *A Brave Black Regiment*. In this work, he included the Boston parade noting the size of the crowd recalling, "all along the route the sidewalks, windows, and balconies were thronged with spectators."[48] Their parade, significant for them, in 1863, changed over time and formed part of their collective memory post-war. One historian noted black parades during and after the Civil war "demonstrated the organization of black communities and politics, and the particular emphasis on collective self-help and self-determination."[49] The 54th Massachusetts soldiers marched on their way to war and periodically dressed in their uniforms and marched the streets of Boston post-war. The uniform was important to the black men who comprised the USCT.

The nakedness that Johnson refers to in the end of his first verse is the intentional removal of the captured black soldiers' uniform and an example of how the Confederate authorities responded to the black soldiers claiming rights as citizen soldiers. The *Liberator* letter, accepted as written by Johnson, asserts that "most of the men have hardly clothing enough to cover themselves."[50] Depriving the captured soldiers of their uniforms was a deliberate act with psychological, political, and social goals. Captured white Union soldiers also suffered the indignity of clothing and personal items taken from them, most often immediately after capture by soldiers whom they recently fought. Adequate shoes and clothing were desperately needed for the common Confederate soldier and taking from the enemy what their government could not supply was often the actions of desperate men, but the white prisoner was always left with

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48 Luis F. Emilio, *History of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts*, 31. The 1894 edition is the second printing with an added appendix pertaining to the 54th MA prisoners of war.

49 Kathleen Ann Clark, *Defining Moments: African American Commemoration and Political Culture in the South, 1863-1913* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 35.

50 *Boston Liberato*r, October 7, 1864.

enough of his uniform for himself and others who saw him to identify him as a Union soldier. This was not the case for the captured black soldiers.

The Confederate leaders ordered the removal of the USCT uniforms shortly after they were captured, which suggests the symbolic importance of the clothing. Multiple attempts were made in mid-July 1863 to weaken the Confederate defenses around Charleston Harbor. On July 11-12, the Union made their first unsuccessful assault on Fort Wagner. Then on July 16 another skirmish occurred on nearby James Island and this one included the 54th Massachusetts. Finally, on the Eighteenth the more well-known attack on Fort Wagner occurred. The attack on James Island resulted in the first capture of men from the 54th. Five days after the battle of Fort Wagner, Brigadier General Johnson Hagood, commanding the first Military District of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida found his command in possession of thirteen enlisted men from the 54th Massachusetts and unsure of proper disposal of them.[51] Hagood sent a dispatch to Captain William F. Nance, the Principal Assistant Adjunct General in the district, asking, “What shall I do with them?” Nance’s reply was, send them, “under a strong guard and without their uniform” to Charleston.[52] Nance’s order is telling towards the policies and intentions of the Confederate government toward the treatment of captured black soldiers.

The stripping of their uniforms included elements of psychological warfare. The intent of taking the black soldiers’ uniform was to demoralize the black prisoners by demonstrating that the Union could not protect them now. The physical action of taking away their uniforms and

[51] In all, the Charleston City Jail held fifteen men involved in a clash near Charleston harbor. Confederates captured and held Lemuel Blakes, George Counsel, Alfred Green, James Caldwell, John Dickinson, William Harrison, Walter Jeffries, William Kirk, John Leatherman, Joseph Proctor, Enos Smith, Frederick Wallace, Olmstead Williams, Oscar Williams, and Henry Worthington on July 16, 1863. Alfred Green and William Kirk were in the hospital being treated for their wounds, which accounts for the disparity between Hagood’s dispatch declaring thirteen and my total of fifteen.

[52] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 124.

replacing it with the course fabrics designated for the enslaved was mentally damaging also because their military uniform represented their masculine identity as fighting soldiers. The 54th soldiers were predominantly northern born free men who viewed themselves as fighting for a noble cause that would free their race from the shackles of bondage. The accoutrements of a black soldier were an integral part of their new identity therefore no rifle and no uniform were physical reminders of their seizure and tantamount to mentally stripping them of their freedom and manhood. One black soldier declared that enlisting and dressing as a soldier was the most eventful incident in his life, specifically because he was able to claim his masculinity. He professed, “I feel like a man with a uniform on and a gun in my hand.”[53] For many others, joining the Union army was the first step in plotting their own destiny for their own life. One gender historian argues, “slavery demanded that black men forgo the intellectual, emotional, and temperamental traits of manhood. The ideal slave recognized his inability to control his life.”[54] This control of their destiny and subsequently their claim for masculinity was once again lost at the very moment of capture. Removing the garments of the soldier and replacing with the garments of the slave held deep meaning, literally and symbolically. At the same time, dressing the captured black soldiers in slave garments also had political implications for the Confederate citizens and soldiers.

The spectacle of marching the black men from the battlefield to Charleston in slave clothes reinforced the idea to the Southern populace that these men were not free soldiers but slaves. The Confederate authorities also did not want the enslaved to see the 54th Massachusetts

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[53] Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 79.

[54] James Oliver Horton, “Freedom’s Yoke: Gender Conventions among Antebellum Free Blacks,” *Feminist Studies* 12, no.1 (Spring 1986), 53.

in their uniforms as this would have emboldened the enslaved who were engaging in resistance. Remembering that slave rebellion was the enslaver's greatest fear, means black men marching down a populous urban city street even without their guns was not something the white folks wanted their enslaved to witness. Clothes may seem a trivial matter for a captured soldier but in fact for Union soldiers who were often held in open stockades their wool uniforms were vital especially during the winter months. For the captured black prisoner, the loss of their uniform did not simply pertain to their physical comfort but contained a meaning dating back to 1740. In South Carolina, during the 1730s, the colonists noticed that some of the enslaved were wearing finer fabrics, which made their condition less discernible as slaves. The attempt of some enslaved to wear clothes that represented an elevated status in a strict hierarchical system distressed white male elites, so they legislated what fabrics would be allowed for the enslaved.[55] The low-quality clothes reaffirmed the Southern whites' belief of the black slave status and their bottom hierarchical position on the social ladder. The Confederate leaders desired to reaffirm slave status on the captured black soldiers and taking away their uniforms was the first step in attaining a political goal.[56]

The political goal also influenced military policy. Once the Confederacy realized that

[55] The South Carolina Slave Code of 1740 declared, "That no owner or proprietor of any Negro slave, or other slave (except livery men and boys,) shall permit or suffer such Negro or other slave, to have or wear any sort of apparel whatsoever, finer, other, or greater value than Negro cloth." South Carolina Slave Code, 1740, 670 (United Kingdom). "Negro cloth" was further defined as "duffels, kerseys, osnabrigs, blue linen, check linen or coarse garlix, or calicoes, checked cottons, or Scotch plaids."

[56] The political goal was to ensure that slavery endured in the Confederate States. On December 24, 1860, South Carolina seceded from the United States of America. The grounds for such drastic action rested on the fact that "fourteen of the States have deliberately refused for years to fulfill their constitutional obligations [to return fugitive slaves]." South Carolina seceded to ensure their right to enslave a race of peoples for labor. Six other Southern States followed South Carolina's lead and on February 4, 1861 they formed a provisional government in Montgomery, Alabama. The Confederacy did not shy away from placing the desire to protect the institution of slavery as their main reason for seceding. On March 21, 1861, the Vice President of the Confederate States, Alexander Stephens, proclaimed in his infamous "Cornerstone Speech" that slavery and subordination was the African American's "natural and normal condition," and they were willing to wage war to protect their institution.

their armies would encounter black soldiers on the battlefield, they devised a system for regulating procedures for captured black soldiers. On March 6, 1863, General Order No. 25 was issued. The objective of this act was to return all captured USCT to bondage, in their minds there were no free black men, therefore they had "respective owners" and the government intended to return them to their enslavers as soon as possible.[57] The order set up depots for temporary housing and methods for identifying, publicizing, and notifying plantation owners about the captured black soldiers, so they could make a claim wherein the depot would deliver the captured soldier to the enslaver. The order also codifies labor as a requirement of their condition stating, "While such slaves are in the depot they may be employed under proper guard on public works."[58] The captured USCT were not free men in the eyes of the Confederacy and the only right they had was to labor. According to Ryan, the "Rebel authorities compel most of our colored troops who fall into their hands, who were once slaves, to work on fortifications, plantations and do other menial service."[59] Ryan seemed to be alluding to the fact that he witnessed these practices at other military prisons, not just Charleston City Jail. Johnson's letter, which would have been inspected by Confederate authorities before posting simply declared they were "volunteering to work," but it more likely they, as Ryan noted, were compelled to labor.[60]

The Confederate Government also reinforced the military order by passing a joint resolution concerning retaliation on May 1, 1863. This resolution declared any white officer who trained or led any black regiments would be charged with inciting servile insurrection and all captured black soldiers are to be turned over to the State they were captured in "to be dealt with

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[57] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 844-845.

[58] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 844.

[59] Ryan, PHS, 21.

[60] *Boston Liberato*r, October 7, 1864.

according to present of future law of such State."[61] The Confederacy never considered treating captured black soldiers as prisoners of war; therefore, they were denied all rights and privileges previously recognized between warring nations. The black prisoners understood their treatment failed to conform to the rules of war and even Ryan noticed it. Ryan was troubled by the treatment of the black soldiers and his journal entry noted that they were "good and loyal men and should be protected by our government." He was alarmed that they were used as laborers and "not treated as prisoners of war."[62] The Confederacy had no intention of exchanging captured black soldiers believing that they were simply slaves and property of the south and their purpose was to labor. Stripping them of their uniform was intended to demoralize them, but it also made it easier to conceal them from the outside world. And the Confederacy did try to conceal the captured black soldiers, but they failed. Their failure was entirely due to black prisoner of war agency.

On June 30, 1863, three black Navy seamen separated from the rest of their exchanged crew snuck out a note from Charleston City Jail addressed to the U.S. Consulate in Nassau informing the official who they were, where they were, explaining their condition and the deprivations inflicted on them, and pleading for someone in the government to act in defending their civil rights as members of the U.S. Navy. These three "wardroom stewards," Orin H. Brown, William Wilson, and William H. Johnson, captured in the surrender of the *USS Isaac Smith,* were perhaps the first black military prisoners of war.[63] The *Isaac Smith* vessel surrendered to the Confederate Navy on January 30, making it the first capture of black men now officially recognized as being armed service members and not civilians providing non-combat

[61] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 940-941.

[62] Ryan, PHS, 19.

[63] *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies,* Series I, Vol. XIII, 570.

support services.[64] Not only were Brown, Wilson, and Johnson the first black prisoners, but they also likely have the distinction of being the longest held, black or white, Civil War prisoners of war.[65] Their prisoner experiences stretched out longer because of their race and the refusal of the Confederacy to recognize them as Union citizens.

Acting Lieutenant F.S. Conover, who was also captured, wrote a report of the battle, after he was exchanged in the first week of May. According to Conover, on the late afternoon of January 30, 1863, the gunboat *Isaac Smith* was engaged in routine reconnoitering up the Stono River in South Carolina to Tom Grimball's Plantation. Shortly after anchoring they were fired upon by the cannons on James Island. Conover immediately went to action, pulling anchor and heading downstream and returning fire. The *Isaac Smith* traveled approximately a mile before the Confederate battery on St. John's island also began firing at them. The *Isaac Smith* took a direct hit to their "steam chimney effectively stopping the engine."[66] Conover surrendered the gun boat since it was disabled, surrounded, and the deck covered with wounded men. Conover's decision not only meant the loss of a Union vessel but included the capture of every crew member on board. The next day Conover created a list of 106 names of the captured Navy seamen for the Confederate authorities and on that list were Brown, Johnson, and Wilson. A fourth black steward, Joseph Mays, was reported as dead, on Conover's report of the battle,

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[64] On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation become policy and part of the new strategy was that black men "will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service." Abraham Lincoln, Proclamation 95, "Emancipation Proclamation," Federal Register 11 (January 1, 1863): 299998, accessed March 29, 2020, https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation.

[65] Brown and Johnson survived the war and were discharged in April 1865. It is a reasonable conclusion that they were three of the five black Navy seamen exchanged at the end of October 1864 (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 1007). Brown's pension application date on his pension index card is February 1865, which indicates he was exchanged. I was able to find Brown and Johnson's service linked to the *Isaac Smith* on post war Rendezvous Reports, Wilson I could not, nor could I find him in the 1890 Veterans Census.

[66] *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, Series I, Vol. XIII, 563-564.

which was written after his exchange.[67] On February 4, the enlisted crew were ordered sent from Charleston to the military prison compounds in Richmond, Virginia, and the officers were transferred to Columbia, South Carolina. These two groups of men were all exchanged in May. The three wardroom stewards were not sent to Richmond with the rest of their shipmates and remained in Charleston jail. According to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, the Confederate response to Union queries about Brown, Wilson, and Johnson after their shipmates' exchange was "they could not be found."[68] The three stewards took it upon themselves to be found and devised a plan to contact the Union government.

Brown, Wilson, and Johnson realized within hours of their capture that the rules applying to the other enlisted men would not apply to them. They too were likely stripped of their clothes before their captors marched them into Charleston. Once they arrived at the city jail, it seems that they were immediately separated from the white enlisted men. And when the *Isaac Smith* enlisted men were removed from Charleston, but the three black stewards remained, and they knew it was up to them to advocate for their exchange. Brown, Wilson, and Johnson devised a plan to sneak out a note that would ultimately reach Union authorities. Their plan included aid from slaves including at least one who was enslaved on a blockade runner heading for Nassau, Bermuda.

It is unknown how the prisoners encountered the enslaved person who carried the note, but all involved demonstrated their cunning intellect and bravery, as anyone caught with this note would likely face death. They succeeded though and as Gideon Wells informed Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, they "found means to convey their communication."[69] The letter

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[67] *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, Series I, Vol. XIII, 571; 564.

[68] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 171.

[69] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 171.

emphasized that they were "locked up all the time in close confinement in a very small cell," which suggests that an enslaved person who was tasked as a menial laborer at the jail smuggled in paper and a writing utensil and then smuggled the letter out.[70] There were local Charleston enslaved persons who were tasked by the jailhouse to serve Union prisoners. Confederate Brigadier-General R. Ripley found this practice "improper" and questioned General Sam Jones about the situation. Ripley inquired, "How far we are bound to supply them with cooks, &c., I do not know."[71] Jones's reply cannot be found, but it is doubtful that Ripley's query altered the enslaved labor system of cooking and laundering services at the jailhouse. The ones who had access to both the jail and the outside community likely knew someone on the blockade ship who he entrusted to deliver the message to the Consulate once the ship docked at Nassau.[72] The intricacies for the success of this mission are staggering.

The story of Brown, Wilson, and Johnson's captivity demonstrate slave neighborhoods had no boundaries; no jail cell or ocean could silence them. Anthony Kaye argues that enslaved peoples formed kinship bonds and slave neighborhoods throughout that were not bound by plantation owners' property lines nor geographical state boundaries. Many of the enslaved had kinship bonds with neighbors near and far, a result of the Second Middle Passage, in addition

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[70] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 171. The ex-prisoner of war narratives mentions enslaved people cooking for the prisoners, bringing in wood for fires, cleaning, and other menial labor. Lt. William Harris names the enslaved cook and laundress, John Wesley Rhoads and Susan respectively, who were assigned to aid the officers. William C. Harris, *Prison Life in the Tobacco Warehouses at Richmond by a Balls Bluff Prisoner* (Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1862), 24; 121. The smallest cell on the third floor was "Holding Cell 3", Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator, Robert Mills, Barbot, and Seyle. Charleston County Jail, 21 Magazine Street, Charleston, Charleston County, SC. South Carolina, 1933, accessed April 18, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/item/sc0902/.

[71] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 415-416.

[72] It is also possible that a free black seaman from a foreign blockader was being held in the jail as required by the Seaman Act and the note left with him when his ship set sail. Determining if the Seaman Act was enforced or abandoned during the Civil War is important. The Confederacy was trying to enlist the help of foreign nations, so it is possible under diplomacy that foreign nations' free black crew members simply remained on ship while the vessel was in the harbor.

they formed new kinship bonds as neighboring plantation owners allowed "jumping the broomstick" marriages between their respective enslaved. The kinship ties combined with their desire to be free from the yokes that bound them led to the formation of networks that allowed messages to be passed over large distances. For example, the first successful slave revolt occurred on the Caribbean Island of Saint-Domingue at the end of the eighteenth century and yet, the enslaved in the U.S. were well-informed about the events as they were occurring. Historians' credit black sailors for spreading the news via word of mouth or smuggling in "books, pamphlets, and newspapers, which were sometimes sewed into the sailors' clothing."[73] Most likely, the note from Brown, Wilson, and Johnson was also sewn in a black sailor's shirt. The methods of communication used to pass along current events, aid runaways, or even plan revolts grew as slavery spread west. Kaye was impressed with how they created a society amongst themselves across multiple plantations and noted, "What is most remarkable about neighborhoods is not how little slaves achieved in struggle on these grounds but how much."[74] How much, indeed! "From the walls of their prison they make themselves heard" declared Welles.

The note composed by the three prisoners on June 30, 1863, six weeks before Fort Wagner, contains the same information Sgt. Johnson later included in his song; the three were dirty, starving, and naked. Brown, Wilson, and Johnson noted that they "do not get anything to eat but a little corn bread and water, and not half enough of that" and they "lost all their clothes." But they also use their note as a plea for their rights as citizens of the U.S. and for the

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[73] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross* (Carlsbad, California: SmileyBooks, 2013), 68.

[74] Anthony Kaye, *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 6.

government to "Do, for God's sake, do something in our behalf."[75] They were clear in declaring they had birthrights as free men born in New York and they also pointed out that the three of them "belong to the U.S. Navy and we ask for aid and protection."[76] They were painfully aware that they were being unfairly imprisoned, and they were pleading for help. Their pleas are heart wrenching still today. Brown, Wilson, and Johnson cried out, "We have done no crime, and, in the name of God, are we to be protected and aided are we left here to die?" Finally, they begged for help in the name of their family noting that they were "very uneasy concerning our families in New York, who are depending on us for support."[77] If they were not present when payroll was handed out, then they did not receive any money; therefore, they could not send any of it back home. Their pay, in most cases, was vital for the survival of loved ones on the homefront. The families at home knew when something was wrong with their soldier because letters and money stopped arriving.

A little over six months after the capture of the *Isaac Smith* near Grimball's Landing on the Stono River another group of black soldiers were captured at the same location. The first group of 54th Massachusetts soldiers captured on the assault of Fort Wagner was the initial attack on James Island on the night of July 16, 1863, near Grimball's Landing. Then two nights later was the full assault on the Fort. On July 25, after the assault was finished and the bodies buried, the Confederate Army exchanged 105 captured Union soldiers for thirty-nine of their own, with "No reference having been made in the agreement to the negro prisoners of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, none of them were included in the exchange."[78] The 54th

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[75] *OR,* Series II, Vol. VI, 171-172.

[76] They enlisted and left New York on the *Isaac Smith* on September 26, 1862.This date is significant as it points to them enlisting within days of President Lincoln announcing the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.

[77] *OR,* Series II, Vol. VI, 171-172.

[78] *OR,* Series I, Vol. XXVIII, 376.

Massachusetts men were not exchanged with the other soldiers at Fort Wagner and the families back in Boston knew this within weeks as the *Boston Recorder* accurately published this news in their August 7, edition.[79] The men who did not return to their ranks were officially listed as missing in action by the end of August 1863. It was not until a steward from the steamer "Cosmopolitan" turned over a smuggled list from Charleston City Jail a whole year later that the records for the captured men of the 54th Massachusetts were changed to prisoners of war.

The military and family members only heard rumors about the men before the names of the captured black soldiers were smuggled out of Charleston. Many of those rumors included reports that the soldiers were dead but the families at home were just as assertive as their men in uniform. Hannah Bosley, the mother of Private George Prosser, visited the office of the Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Black Soldiers in Philadelphia to inquire about her son. Bosley, a literate and respected "Corn Doctor" in Columbia, Pennsylvania was determined to find out what exactly happened to her son.[80] It appears that she had not heard from him, and a rumor reached her that he had died on July 29, 1863. On December 2, she appeared at the recruiting headquarters seeking answers. The very next day a letter was sent to Colonel Hallowell looking for confirmation. In fact, Private Prosser's commanding officers had no idea where he and the rest of the men from his regiment were at this time, and this was likely the message passed along to Prosser's mother.

The military suspected the 54th Massachusetts soldiers were in the hands of the enemy

[79] Report of R.S. Ripley, CSA *OR* Series I, Vol XXVIII, Part I, 376; "General Intelligence. Current Events." *Boston Recorder* (Boston, Massachusetts), August 7, 1863: 127. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. https://infoweb-newsbank-com.umiss.idm.oclc.org/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A109E455E6E63DEA8%40EANX-13E7A6CD1F9BA4F0%402401725-13E797A4F1E39758%402-13EEF973DFD86898%40General%2BIntelligence.%2BCurrent%2BEvents.

[80] George Prosser, Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with the United States Colored Troops: 55th Massachusetts Infantry, Record Group 94 M1801, NARA.

and not being treated as prisoners of war, so on July 31, a week after the exchange of the white prisoners of war from the assault of Fort Wagner, President Lincoln released General Order No. 252. Lincoln made it perfectly clear that the black soldiers were citizens of the United States and recognized members of the military; therefore, he demanded that they be treated accordingly as prescribed by the laws of war. Lincoln vowed that the government would "give the same protection to all its soldiers; and if the enemy shall sell or enslave anyone because of his color, the offense shall be punished by retaliation."[81] Retaliation was a tool used liberally by both sides in the Civil War, so a week after General Order No. 252 was published, U.S. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton ordered Ethan Hitchcock, Commissioner for Exchange of Prisoners, to "select three rebel prisoners of South Carolina" for retaliation, ordering "them kept in close custody as hostages for three colored men, named Orin H. Brown, William H. Johnson, and William Wilson."[82] The Union Government may not have known which 54th Massachusetts soldiers were captured but they did know the three *Isaac Smith* stewards were still prisoners. It is suspected that the retaliatory measure continued until the *Isaac Smith* seamen were exchanged near the end of the war.[83] The *Isaac Smith* sailors' ability to smuggle their message out allowed the Union to use political leverage and later the 54th Massachusetts men followed a similar course of action.

The influx of Union prisoners temporarily held in Charleston City Jail, during the fall of 1864, allowed Union officers and enlisted men to interact with the black prisoners. The condition of the black prisoners affected men like Glazier. Glazier waited until the war was over to act

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[81] *OR*, Series II, Vol.VI, 163.

[82] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 188.

[83] C.J. McDowell Co. A, 2nd South Carolina Cavalry, was one of the three men selected by Hitchcock's office. He was held in Carroll Prison in Washington D.C. He requested, and was granted, permission to contact his government to try to spur them into a special exchange. The *Isaac Smith* sailors were not exchanged until late fall of 1864, so likely McDowell's pleas fell on deaf ears.

upon his sympathies by including Johnson's story in his memoir, but according to an account provided by the *Boston Liberator*, one officer took immediate action. The story is an unknown officer smuggled out a letter from the men who had it published in the newspaper. The letter was short, but succinct:

> Sir – I do, in behalf of my fellow-prisoners, earnestly hope and pray that this may be the means, through you sir, of procuring our release. The privations of the white soldiers are nothing in comparison to ours and in our destitute condition being, as it were, without friends, and in the enemy's hands, with an almost hopelessness of being released, and not having heard from our families or friends since we were captured.[84]

Following their appeal was a list of the forty-six black soldiers still alive and held in captivity.[85] The Union military now knew which men of the 54th Massachusetts were alive and where they were, so too did the black Boston population. Significantly, Mrs. Bosley, and other families of the regiment, knew their loved ones were still alive and in Charleston City Jail. The Confederacy continued to willfully hide black prisoners even after the black prisoners of war proved their ingenuity by getting messages to the outside world. In April 1864, a dispatch from General Braxton Bragg to North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance informed the Governor that

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[84] *New York Daily Tribune*, August 10, 1864, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed March 15, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030213/1864-08-10/ed-1/seq-5/.

[85] While I do not question the veracity of the note, I do question if an officer was the one who snuck out the note or whether one of the local Charleston enslaved, who toiled as a cook or laundress, smuggled it out. The monthly muster rolls for September/October found in the military records of the captured 54th Massachusetts note their location was "attained to be prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy October 31, 1864, from a list taken by the steward of the steamer *Cosmopolitan* August 1864." See Records of James Caldwell, Wm. Harrison, Enos Smith, Walter A. Jeffries, Frederick Wallace, John Leatherman, Wm. Kirk, John Dickinson, James Oscar Williams, Henry Worthington, Joseph T. Procter. These notations point to black agency, as the stewards were predominantly black enlisted men. A white officer would have either turned the note over to a Commanding Officer above his rank on the *Cosmopolitan* or at a military installation once the steamer docked, but he absolutely would not have given it to a lesser ranking enlisted man. It is possible that once the note was given to a *Cosmopolitan* officer by the ship's steward that he then shared it with the *Boston Liberator* and claimed credit for himself, as an anonymous officer. It must be pointed out that the three men from the *Isaac Stewart* were also part of this note undertaking and I have already established they had connections to the outside world, through the local Charleston enslaved. There is no mention of the note from the 54th Massachusetts in the *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, but the notation in the military record identifying a "steward" as the carrier is the most credible source and it supported by previous historical work focusing on black antebellum communication networks.

the black soldiers captured from the Battle of Plymouth be turned over to the State. Bragg ordered Vance to return any to North Carolina enslavers and send Bragg a note regarding likely States where others were enslaved. The last order Bragg gave was the "President respectfully requests Your Excellency to take the necessary steps to keep this out of the newspapers of the State, and in every available way to shun its obtaining any publicity."[86] Their efforts were in vain and where the Union authorities could only suspect the treatment and condition of black prisoners of war, they now had the proof and implemented an exchange policy that was based on the equality of Union soldiers regardless of race. No more prisoners would be exchanged until the release of the black soldiers. That policy resulted in the cessation of the Dix-Hill Cartel, as the south refused to formally acknowledge the black prisoners as members of the Union Army.[87]

Glazier's narrative reveals an interesting turn regarding citizenship rights in Charleston with the men of the 54th Massachusetts. The threats from Confederacy regarding how they intended to treat captured black soldiers and their white officers did not halt the enlistment drives. One Confederate Governor decided to implement the policies most likely to terrorize both the local enslaved and the free in the north, so he chose the captured 54th Massachusetts soldiers to use as an example and set legal precedent. The soldiers captured during the assaults on Fort Wagner, who were not in need of medical attention, were taken to Castle Pinckney and almost immediately South Carolina Governor Milledge Bonham wrote letters gaining state authority over them. On July 22, Bonham sent a letter to General Beauregard, Commanding Officer of Charleston, requesting Beauregard "turn over to me the said commissioned officers and slaves"

[86] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 78.

[87] Special exchanges would be undertaken until the end of the war. The special exchanges focused on hardship, mainly those who were seriously ill in camps who needed to be removed to hospitals. Others who were high ranking or had political pull would at times also be exchanged.

captured in South Carolina during the preceding weeks.[88] Bonham was citing a proclamation made by President Davis on December 22, 1862, answering the question of how the Confederacy was going to handle captured black Union soldiers and their white officers.

Bonham received word that both slaves and free black Union soldiers were recently captured on Morris and James Islands and the Governor wanted the State to be awarded authority over these captured soldiers. Bonham's letter differentiated between "slaves captured in arms" and "free negros." He demanded those believed to be enslaved be released to him immediately and acknowledged that he was waiting for the War Department to decide, regarding the others. Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon acquiesced to the question concerning the slaves, but the status of the free soldiers required direction from President Davis. Seddon formed his own opinion and forwarded it to Davis for approval. Seddon argued that the free black men should not be "regarded as regular prisoners of war but dealt with in some exceptional way to mark our states reprobation of the barbarous employment of such inciters to insurrection." Seddon recommended, "holding them to hard labor during the war."[89] Davis was unwilling to completely side with Seddon or Bonham and chose a middle ground declaring, "each case must depend on its own circumstances, and as the two governments [Confederate State and Federal] will have two different classes to deal with, it is not seen how a definite answer can be given, unless as you intimate, it be not to bring any case to trial."[90] The very crux of the dilemma rests on citizenship rights of the black soldiers, even as the Confederate leaders avoided direct acknowledgement of that fact.

The Confederate leaders' discussion of the black prisoners of war used ambiguous

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[88] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 138-139.

[89] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 194.

[90] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 194.

wording, one phrase was "embarrassments surrounding this question."[91] Their "embarrassment" was that they actually had to debate the citizenship rights of black Union soldiers and weigh any political and military decisions that disenfranchised this group against possible retribution policies the Union would put into place. The Confederate military and political leaders knew the captured black soldiers were not enslaved and indeed possessed rights as citizens, but this was contrary to their slaveholder's worldview. A few leaders including Gov. Bonham would not accept the reality that the black Union prisoners in Charleston City Jail were United States citizens and that Lincoln and his Generals would defend their rights. Bonham wanted to prosecute the 54th Massachusetts prisoners, charging them with servile insurrection. This was a treasonous charge and punishment was death. Bonham held extreme views on this issue, as death, was not considered the best policy by other political and military leaders. The majority wanted the captured black soldiers forced into laboring on military defenses as seen in Seddon's recommendation to Davis and Peronneau's confirmation mentioned earlier regarding the captured black soldiers' agreeing to labor on nearby fortifications.

Bonham views were most likely tied to his personal fear of slave rebellion. In 1859, he defended the institution of slavery, in the chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives, and referenced Harper's Ferry, alluding to John Brown's raid in October.[92] He argued that even non-slaveholding men would defend slavery and squash slave rebellions, since most of the men

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[91] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 673, 703; SCDAH General Assembly Committee Reports, S165005-1863 No 377.

[92] Milledge Luke Bonham was elected to U.S. House of Representatives, in 1857, filling the vacant seat of his deceased cousin and ardent pro-slavery advocate Preston Brooks. Brooks is infamous for the caning of Senator Charles Sumner on May 22, 1856, in the Senate Chamber. M.L. Bonham is also the younger brother of James Bonham, who died defending the Alamo. James Bonham was named after his great uncle Captain James Bonham who died at the "Massacre of Cloud's Creek" during the American Revolution. M.L. Bonham's male relatives demonstrated the resoluteness of their convictions and were likely considered martyrs by their family. Certainly, the actions and the deaths of these men shaped M.L. Bonham's attitudes as he fiercely defended his belief in the institution of slavery.

responding to the Harper's Ferry raid were not slaveholders. Bonham's family were elite South Carolinian planters dating back to the colonial period. He was proud of his status as an enslaver. In his House of Representatives speech, Bonham declared "I own a few slaves" and further emphasized his pro-slavery stance by stating he wished he owned more.[93] Indeed the 1850 and 1860 Slave Schedules confirm that his ownership of enslaved souls almost doubled in those ten years, from thirty-four to sixty and1860 his personal wealth totaled $50,000, almost all of his wealth would be the value of his enslaved. He fervently believed in Calhoun's "positive good" argument and railed that the south would fight to the death to defend the institution of slavery in his House of Representative speech. Bonham, later as Governor of South Carolina, fought to defend the southern hierarchy by implementing judicial rulings that deprived the black Union prisoners of their birthrights and intended to reinforce the status quo by publicly executing the captured soldiers.

Bonham's legal argument to prosecute all the captured black prisoners in Charleston was based in State and Confederate legal codes. The State code was the 1861 South Carolina Statute known as the "Act to Provide More Efficient Police Regulation for the Districts on the Sea-Board." Part II of this Act declared:

> That within the limits of these Districts, respectively, the said Courts shall have full power in regard to slaves and free persons of color, to establish such regulations, and inflict such punishments, as they, in their discretion, may deem that the exigencies of the time require, any law now existing to the contrary notwithstanding; and the action of said Courts, in such cases, shall be final and without appeal; and said courts shall have power to impose penalties, and to issue executions…[94]

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[93] *The Independent Press*, "Speech of Hon. M.L. Bonham," January 20, 1860, accessed April 7, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn93067882/1860-01-20/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1860&index=0&date2=1864&words=Bonham&searchType=basic&sequence=0&sort=date&state=South+Carolina&rows=20&proxtext=Bonham&y=16&x=16&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1.

[94] "Act to Provide More Efficient Police Regulation for the Districts on the Sea-Board," South Carolina Law Statute No. 4570, December 21, 1861, SCDAH S165004.

This Act explicitly empowers the State as the sole power to enact laws and impose judgements, even the death penalty, removing Federal oversight. The subsequent Confederate statutes did not challenge the States' power concerning authority and power of punishments over the enslaved and free black population.

The Confederate mandates concerning the treatment of black soldiers began with the 1862 Christmas Eve proclamation by Jefferson Davis written as a preemptive response to President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which was to go into effect on New Year's Day 1863. Davis decreed, "all negro slaves captured in arms be at once delivered to the executive authorities of the respective States to which they belong to be dealt with according to the laws of said State."[95] The entirety of his proclamation focused on the Union military and what Davis perceived as their "repeated atrocities and outrages" against Confederate citizens, so when he mentioned armed black men, he was imagining the soon to be organized USCT. His edict against black soldiers demonstrates Davis belief that all members of this group would be of the slave class and not free men, but this was not the reality. Davis, who was a West Point graduate, sensibilities were so affronted by the thought of black men in the Union military that his ability to differentiate between two long standing groups – free and slave – was gone and he saw but one class: slave. Furthermore, Davis held firm to his planter paternalism worldview, which would not allow him to believe the enslaved would revolt of their own accord. On January 10, 1861, Jefferson spoke on the U.S. Senate floor and claimed that "history does not chronicle a case of negro insurrection." Davis wholeheartedly believed white men influenced enslaved peoples to rebel, going even as far as to discredit the successful slave rebellion in "San Domingo."[96] His belief system was the reason he included the orders for white officers along

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[95] *OR*, Series II, Volume V, 797.

[96] Jefferson Davis, "Speech of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, Delivered in the United States Senate, on

with the black soldiers. At the end of April 1863, the Confederate Senators adopted Davis's proclamation making one important distinction; whereas Davis was willing to let the white officers who commanded the black units also be turned over to the state authorities, the legislators decreed that the white men, who were seen as a higher class of citizens in the nineteenth-century hierarchical worldview, would remain under military authority.

On August 1, Seddon wrote a letter to Bonham confirming the captured black soldiers were legally under the State's authority and if they had not already been turned over "explicit and more formal orders will be sent for their delivery to you."[97] On August 19, Gen. Ripley ordered Captain Peronneau, Castle Pinckney's Commanding Officer, to deliver the 54th Massachusetts prisoners to Charleston's Sheriff. Peronneau sent twenty-two captured 54th Massachusetts soldiers to Charleston City Jail. The very same day the Sheriff also received a note to "produce them before the Police Court ordered to assemble in the Equity Court Room on Monday next."[98]

Seddon and Davis had conferred on this matter deciding that a trial nor execution was the best course of action. Seddon, on September 1, sent a dispatch to Bonham affirming that "the captured soldiers be not brought to trial" and if a trial does occur and they are found guilty "suspend their execution" due to the fact that the issue is "fraught with present difficulty and future danger." Bonham ignored Seddon's recommendation and went ahead with the trial even though the Confederate military knew, by mid-August, that none of the 54th Massachusetts prisoners were from South Carolina and none of "them were slaves at the commencement of the

the 10th day of January 1861, upon the Message of the President of the United States, on the Condition of Things in South Carolina," (Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1861), 15.

[97] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 169.

[98] SCDAH, S165249.

war."[99] Bonham did change his mind about bringing all the captured soldiers to trial and instead chose four who he believed were born into slavery. A South Carolina newspaper claimed the defendants were "four negro prisoners from Virginia and Missouri."[100] Those four prisoners of war were Henry Kirk, William Harrison, George Counsel, Henry Worthington.[101]

There are no mentions of the trial in the soldier's military records, but historian Howard Westwood offered that the black prisoners of war provided testimony that they were "utterly disillusioned by treatment in the Union army and were ready to return to civilian life."[102] "Down in Charleston Jail" provides contrary evidence and suggests that the men were anxious to return to their regiment when they sang, "Till Jeff Davis does release us, And send us in our lines" demonstrating that was a given understanding of their role if released.[103] The 54th Massachusetts prisoners' words were likely a ploy and the black men were telling the white men exactly what

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[99] *OR,* Series II, Vol. VI, 191.

[100] *Yorkville Enquirer (*Yorkville, S.C.), September 16 1863, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed April 13, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026925/ 1863-09-16/ed-1/seq-2/.

[101] Howard Westwood, "Captive Black Union Soldiers in Charleston – What to do?," *Civil War History*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, 1982, 43. Kirk and Harrison said they were born in Hannibal, Missouri. Kirk lived through the war, Harrison did not. Kirk's discharge record reveals he enlisted in Galesburg, Illinois and was ordered to Quincy, Illinois. The river port of Quincy, one of the largest cities in Illinois at the time, was the location of the military's Camp Wood as well as a major railroad hub. Kirk and Harrison mustered in at Readville on May 13, Harrison's enlistment most likely mirrored Kirk's and they likely left Quincy together on a train heading for Massachusetts. Counsel's file does not include his discharge, but he did survive the war. What is revealed on his enlistment card is that he was born in Norfolk, Virginia, enlisted at an unknown location on February 25, and on March 30, 1863, he was mustered in at Camp Meigs, the 54th Massachusetts camp in Readville. Worthington died a prisoner of war at the Florence, South Carolina, military camp. Little is known about him. His record lists the state of Ohio as his birthplace, but no city. He mustered in at Camp Meigs on May 13, the same time as Kirk and Harrison. It is possible he was born into slavery in Virginia and the reason why no city was given, or insisted on, by the recruiters. Counsel and Kirk survived the war but did not apply for pensions themselves. A "George W. Counsel" appears on the 1890 Essex, Massachusetts veteran's census, but no regiment was provided, and race and age data were not part of the data collected. It is highly probable this is the same man since there is only one "George Counsel" listed on the National Park Service Civil War soldier database and that man belonged to the 54th Massachusetts. Kirk's widow was granted a pension after his death, in 1884.

[102] Howard C. Westwood, "Captive Black Union Soldiers in Charleston – What to Do?," *Civil War History*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (1982), 34.

[103] Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape, 155.*

they wanted to hear to decrease the likelihood and severity of any punishment. Westwood concedes the Confederate interviewers believed what they were being told, but he fails to comment on the fact that black men were well versed in the duality of their identity. Similar to the double meanings inserted in their music they were one person in front of white folks and another when amongst themselves. In the 1890s, sociologist W.E.B. DuBois would coin the duality as "double consciousness" and eloquently explains it as black man "simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face."[104] The pretense of submission and humility did not make the prisoners cowards, which was how Lost Cause proponents use historical evidence from these types of interactions. Rather, it reflects the black prisoners' cunning and pragmatism. They knew their own ability to convince these white southerners that they were victims of Union aggression was exactly what their captors wanted to hear, and their very lives depended on their performances.[105]

Out of twenty-two black Union prisoners, who were subjected to interrogations, only the four were picked for Bonham to use in an intended public spectacle designed to reinforce white power structures and instill fear in the local enslaved population. As far as interpreting the trial's meanings and implications, those must be flushed out by reading between the lines of incomplete bits and pieces found in Glazier's narrative, newspaper accounts, military dispatches, and letters between Bonham and the officials involved in the trial. What every source brings out though, is

[104] W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches (*Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903), 3-4; 202.

[105] For slave agency and the enslaved using planter paternalism beliefs against enslavers see Herbert Apethekar, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South,*(New York, 1979); Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York, 1977); Eugene Genovese *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1979).

that the trial was entirely about citizenship rights. Glazier provided little information about the trial as he was getting second-hand information from Johnson, who did not arrive in the city jail until months after the trial was over, but the information he did include is interesting as it offered insights into how the prisoner reacted and what they thought about their state appointed lawyer.

Glazier's account suggests that the 54th Massachusetts men were wary of the slave owning defense lawyer thinking he was "an imposter, a government agent whose only object was there to learn their history; that is, to ascertain if they had been slaves, to whom they had belonged, and under what circumstances had they left their masters." Glazier's interpretation was that over time the philanthropic lawyer convinced the prisoners of his sincerity by listening to them and bringing them food and that eventually they believed he was sincerely trying to protect their lives. The "nameless" lawyer's "memory will be green" forever in the black prisoners' hearts according to Glazier since the lawyer had recently died.[106] Researching the *Official Records* and newspapers reveals Nelson Mitchell as the nameless defense lawyer and contrary to Glazier's account it was not an act of generosity that led him to be their lawyer, but the Governor's power to assign legal representation.[107]

For the State, Bonham assigned South Carolina Attorney General, W. Hayne. and Speaker of the House of Representatives A.P. Aldrich as prosecutors. Once Bonham put in

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[106] Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape*, 151.

[107] Edward McCrady was Nelson's co-counsel. The commemorative memory reference was legitimate as Mitchell was indeed dead. He died February 22, 1864, possibly from a Union shell hitting his home or fire that started near his home from shelling during the Siege of Charleston. Coincidently, the Yorkville Enquirer news item directly above Mitchell's obituary notice is an announcement that the "staff of Gov. Bonham presented him with a splendid charger, as a token of their esteem and friendship." "Charger" was a charger plate which is a highly decorative silver platter used as a dining room serving plate. The perceived protagonist of Glazier's narrative, Mitchell, died a horrible death and at the same time the antagonist, Bonham, was showered with trappings of high-class material culture. Glazier, *The Capture, the Prison Pen, and the Escape,* 153; *Harper's Weekly*, "A South Carolina Hero," April 8, 1865, 210; *Yorkville Enquirer* (Yorkville, S.C.), 02 March 1864, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress, accessed March 30, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026925 /1864-03-02/ed-1/seq-2/.

motion the proceedings for a trial, he sent a letter, on August 10, 1863, to Secretary of War Seddon acknowledging that the State had no jurisdictional rights over the captured white officers but noted that he wanted the officers' punishment to be equal to the punishment South Carolina will impose on the captured black soldiers. The punishment, in South Carolina, was death. Bonham further notified Seddon that "he will immediately order the trial of the slaves and any free negroes of the Southern States," but Bonham would "delay action for the present with regard to the free negroes from the Northern States."[108] It must be kept in mind that first Missouri did not secede from the Union and was not a "Southern State," but a Union controlled border state and secondly, that the Confederacy recognized, by August 14, 1863 that the captured Massachusetts soldiers military records mark them as free on April 19, 1861.[109] On September 16, the *Yorkville Enquirer* reported that the Provost Marshal's Court in Charleston "decided that it had no jurisdiction and recommitted the negroes to the State authorities."[110] Bonham's zealotry is apparent, at this point, as he petitions the State Senate and House of Representatives to make a ruling instead of dropping the case, even though Seddon and Davis instructed Bonham, on August 14, to not proceed with a trial. The Confederacy was not acknowledging that they were holding captured black soldiers, so Bonham ordering a trial undermined their attempts of secrecy besides opening up a Pandora's Box regarding black citizenship rights.

Bonham was attempting to force the Confederacy to make a ruling declaring that captured USCT had no legal rights, but the Confederate Government was trying not to make any legal ruling as they did not want to set a legal precedent. Westwood suggests that the question

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[108] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 193.

[109] This date is important as it became the cutoff date for black soldiers and equal pay. Those who were free on or before this date received the same pay as white soldiers but those who were enslaved on or after this date received three dollars a month less.

[110] *Yorkville Enquirer*, September 16, 1863.

was if the USCT were "regular prisoners of war or common criminals; or were some the former or some the later?" categorizing the Confederacy's struggle with this issue for months as a "conundrum."[111] The question was if the Confederacy was going to acknowledge the USCT as citizens of the United States or attempt to revert their status to enslaved. Enslaving free blacks was often a penalty for breaking laws in the south. Military and political leaders were quite clear on the issue and this "conundrum" was not new but "an old question – Were black Americans citizens?" In short, the South Carolina incident followed previous antebellum models regarding black citizenship cases of how "lawmakers and jurists fumbled, punted, confused, and otherwise failed to settle the question."[112]

Bonham's letter to the legislators requested that they examine the case and the lower court's ruling, which he believed was in error. Bonham then suggested they "adopt some additional legislation upon this subject."[113] Bonham's tone was incredulous that the court did not rule that the four prisoners were guilty of servile insurrection as he fully expected the State Legislators to correct the Provost Court's decision. The Provost judges chose the moderate course of action making room for decisions from higher authorities. It is likely that the Provost Court judges included members of the military and were more open to understanding codes concerning the treatment of prisoners of war and policies. They also likely realized the military was deeply embroiled in a prisoner of war debate.

The Confederacy's response to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation combined with guerilla warfare in the border states led to the creation of *Instructions for the Government of*

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[111] Westwood, 28.

[112] Martha Jones, *Birthright Citizens: A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 10-11.

[113] SCDAH, Governor's Message No. 2, September 22, 1863, S165009.

Armies of the United States in the Field also known as General Order No. 100. Prussian born jurist, Napoleonic War veteran, and former political prisoner Francis Lieber created a code of conduct for the war that was the basis for today's Geneva Conventions. Lieber's Code were adopted by Lincoln in April 1863. Lieber codified, for the first time, the treatment of black soldiers. Section III contains regulations concerning prisoners of war and number fifty-eight confirms equality of all Union soldiers. Lieber wrote, "The law of nations knows of no distinction, of color" and further warned of "severest retaliation" if the Confederacy would enslave any of the black Union soldiers. Death was identified as the "severest retaliation" since enslavement of Confederate soldiers was not an option.[114] No Confederate soldiers were ever executed in retaliation for the ill-treatment of black prisoners of war. General Order No. 100 enraged Confederate political and military leaders, as they already considered the actions of the Union military upon Southern citizens and towns as barbarous but forming black regiments and declaring they were equal was more than Southern leaders could bear.

A detailed communication between Secretary of State Seddon and Exchange Agent Robert Ould provides a glimpse into the degree of outrage Seddon felt towards Lieber's codes. Seddon considered the codes a "specimen of pedantic impertinence without a parallel." He further declared that there was but one reason the United States was enlisting black men and that was "to subvert by violence the social system and domestic relations" of the South "to add to the calamities of the war of servile insurrection."[115] Seddon's views on the General Order No. 100 and especially concerning the black soldiers affirm that the Confederacy's sole goal of secession and winning the war was to preserve the institution of slavery. The Confederate leaders did not

[114] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 674-675.

[115] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 45.

curb their fury in their rhetoric, but moderation won when creating policy and Bonham was about to be disappointed for the second time. The Committee of the Judiciary, who met in Secret Session, also believed that the underlying theme of citizenship rights inherent in this case was above their jurisprudence. The committee wrote back to Bonham declaring that "they do not feel themselves authorized by the grave issues involved to arrive at a conclusion" and suggested the issue be taken up in the Senate chambers in the "approaching regular session."[116]

The South Carolina Senators considered the issue in the fall of 1863 and arrived at a decision that both frustrated Bonham's goal of having the four 54th Massachusetts prisoners executed and countermanded the Confederacy's policies concerning captured USCT. The Senators unanimously recognized the USCT belonged to the United States and, as such, should be considered prisoners of war and "legitimately entitled to all rights and privileges which attach to such persons."[117] The Federal Senators recognized the civil rights of black Union soldiers in December of 1863. This monumental concession unfortunately failed to change the policies of the Confederate military or the conditions of the prisoners. They remained as captives, impressed for military labor, lacking proper clothes and inadequate food rations. The response to Bonham's argument concerning the captured slaves in arms was the same as the previous rulings, which was no ruling. The Senators were "divided in opinion" and "arrived at no judgement." On December 17, 1863, the Senate chamber approved that the "Bill to define the law in relation to slaves and the free persons of color taken in arms against the State" be sent to the House of Representatives for concurrence.[118] The Confederate Government held most of their sessions in

[116] SCDAH, General Assembly Committee Reports, September 24, 1863, S165005, No.377.

[117] SCDAH, General Assembly Committee Reports, December 1863, S165005, No. 43.

[118] South Carolina Senate, *Journal of the Senate of the State of South Carolina*, *Being the Sessions of 1863* (Columbia: Charles Pelham, State Printer), 120.

secret, so the debates are unknown. Seddon does supply a hint of their leanings towards the rights of captured black soldiers a year later. Bonham's term as Governor expired on December 31, 1864 and even though the Provost Court, South Carolina Legislators, the Secretary of War and the Confederate President blocked Bonham's attempts to have the black soldiers charged with servile execution and executed, he still pressed Seddon to make a definitive judgement so he could "dispose of it" before he left office.[119] Seddon reminded Bonham of the "embarrassments attending this question," informed him that any captured slaves were to be turned over to states with the stipulation that they returned to owners and that the captured USCT's "ultimate disposition will probably be referred to by Congress, and, as far as I can judge from the prevalent opinion which has reached me, it is probable that they will be recognized in some form as prisoners of war."[120] Bonham surrendered his fight on December 8, 1864 the remaining black prisoners of war held in Charleston City Jail are turned over to General Sam Jones and sent to the military stockade in Florence, South Carolina. The result was Sgt. Robert Johnson along with twelve men of the 54th Massachusetts died, in this stockade, over the next several weeks.

Bonham's case failed because the Confederate political and military leaders were not inclined to make any legal ruling that publicly acknowledged that the black Union prisoners of war held any citizenship rights. There was no conundrum as Westwood argued; Confederate leadership was not confused. They knew that they did not want to set precedent on black citizenship rights, so they made no public ruling. The Confederacy kept the black citizenship question in limbo and by doing so they were able to continue to disenfranchise African

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[119] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 673.

[120] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 703-704.

Americans. Not making a public ruling also allowed the military to continue to conceal who was being held where. The captured black soldiers remained laboring at military fortifications; performing labor duties the military desperately needed. The captured USCT were more valuable to the Confederacy alive than executed for political spectacle.

Bonham's intention to execute these men was also not supported by those in higher authority. The South fought in the Civil War to secure the institution of slavery and during the war they needed that labor more than ever, so even though servile insurrection was their greatest fear, and it was legally punishable by death, the Confederate policymakers chose not to summarily execute black prisoners of war. The impressment of captured Union soldiers to work on Confederate military fortifications was a step in the long history of state-imposed forced black convict labor.[121] The 54th Massachusetts men plus Edward Logan of the 55th Regiment were exchanged in the early weeks of March 1865. The war would be over in less than a month. The black prisoners of war exchange was a result of General Order No. 14, which allowed for the impressment of southern enslaved men as soldiers for the Confederacy.[122] Confederate supporters found that arming black men was against all they stood for, so support for the war collapsed. The exchange came too late for many of the captured black prisoners of war and only twenty-six out of the fifty-two known soldiers captured at Fort Wagner would survive their Civil War captivity.[123]

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[121] Modern carceral studies point to Reconstruction as the start of the modern prison policies regarding African Americans. My research suggests the Civil War to be the origins, not Reconstruction. This aspect is ripe for more scholarship.

[122] *OR*, Series IV, Vol. 3; Part 2, 1161-1162.

[123] Official documents from the 54th Massachusetts list 106 enlisted men missing after Fort Wagner, War Department, Adjutant Generals Office, Unbound Records: Casualty Reports, NARA Record Group 94, M1659, Identifier 577134. Three names should be added to the list: William Taylor, Co. A; George Counsel Co. B; and John Leatherman Co. H. These men were wrongly reported as KIA not MIA. This makes the number 109. One soldier from Co. C also needs to be identified as a prisoner of war but which one will be difficult to determine. Confederate Surgeon Robert Kinloch, post-war, supplied the Surgeon Generals with information about an amputation procedure of a captured 54th Massachusetts soldier. Kinloch did not provide a name, only that he was a member of Company

On May 31,1897, thirty-four years after Fort Wagner, the "Shaw Monument" was officially unveiled in Boston.[124] August Saint-Gaudens eleven-foot by fourteen-foot bronze sculpture, fourteen years in the making, included a significant visual message. The one most relevant is the angel, representing death, flying atop the soldiers. Col. Robert G. Shaw, astride his horse, is the focal point of the sculpture, but the awe-inspiring intricately detailed background of the soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts "marching down Beacon Street past the State House on May 28, 1863 is the element that makes this monument stand apart from the rest."[125] African Americans, and white allies, challenged the emerging "Lost Cause" and stereotypical racist myths by offering their own public historical memory, which included commemorating their soldiers' battlefield valor and thus claiming citizenship rights, in this case, through bloodshed in the ditches at Fort Wagner.[126]

Two speakers, William James and Booker T. Washington, addressed the themes of memory and citizenship rights respectively, at the monument's unveiling ceremony. Professor William James, who is acknowledged as the "father of American psychology" called on the audience to remember the brave deeds of the 54th Massachusetts while also promoting national reconciliation. James briefly retold the story of American slavery, the 54th Massachusetts, and

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C and that he died twenty-four hours after the surgery. It is unlikely the exact number of captured 54th soldiers will ever be known but many of the 109 were captured and wounded based on Kinloch's remark that a "hospital was hastily prepared for the reception of wounded, colored prisoners." Between the letter written by the 54th soldiers, the South Carolina Charleston Jail documents, and Kinloch, fifty-two soldiers from the 54th are known captured. Who and how many died at the Confederate hospital will likely never be ascertained. Joseph K. Barnes, Joseph J. Woodward, Charles Smart, George A. Otis, D. L. Huntington, and the United States. Surgeon-General's Office. *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion (1861-65)*, Vol. 2, Part III (Washington: Gov't Print. Off, 1870), 142;144. Referred to as *MSHWR* hereafter.

[124] Boston City Council, *Exercises at the Dedication of the Monument to Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of the Massachusetts Infantry*, May 31, 1897 (Boston: Boston Municipal Printing Office, 1897), 9.

[125] "Partnership to Renew the Shaw 54th Regiment Memorial," *Friends of the Public Garden,* last updated 2019, accessed March 19, 2020, https://friendsofthepublicgarden.org/shaw54th/.

[126] For more about black commemoration see Kathleen Ann Clark, *Defining Moments African American Commemoration and Political Culture in the South, 1863-1913* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2005).

Col. Shaw for the "too forgetful generation," so that they will remember the "moral service" and "physical fortitude" of these men.[127] James formed an image of Shaw and his Regiment as exemplary men sound in their moral righteousness, but in the end, he pleaded for a reconciled nation. James declared, "The warfare is accomplished; the iniquity is pardoned" and now all are "countryman, Southern and Northern, brothers hereafter, masters, slaves and enemies no more."[128] Reconciling is not that easy. Susan Sontag argues that "To make peace is to forget. To reconcile, it is necessary that memory be faulty and limited."[129] The Lost Cause myth certainly relies on elements of selective memory, but neither the antebellum free black nor the formerly enslaved populations were willing to forget the physical or mental injuries forming over 200 years of past injustices. Especially, if their civil rights still eluded them and they found themselves ever increasingly victims of lynch mobs. Founder of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Booker T. Washington, informed the audience that the fight for the Emancipationist rights, the goal of the Civil War, was incomplete. Booker Washington pointed out that "until every man covered by a black skin shall, by patience and natural effort, grow to that height in industry, property, intelligence, and moral responsibility, where no man in all our land will be tempted to degrade himself by withholding from his black brother any opportunity in which he himself would possess" the fight was not over. Washington then eloquently proclaimed, "the monument will stand for effort, not victory complete."[130] The victory is still not complete.

In more modern times, the 54th Massachusetts men were immortalized in 1989 film

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[127] Boston City Council, *Exercises at the Dedication of the Monument*, 50.

[128] Boston City Council, *Exercises at the Dedication of the Monument*, 52-53.

[129] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2004), 115.

[130] Boston City Council, *Exercises at the Dedication of the Monument*, 59.

Glory.[131] A star-studded cast brought to life the trials and tribulations of the Regiment culminating in the death and mass burial of the soldiers, including the Confederates decision to throw the white officer Col. Robert G. Shaw's body in the pit with his black soldiers. This action was a public spectacle and meant to show their contempt for the white officer who in their worldview was inciting black soldiers to fight the southern men. The narrative of the 54th Massachusetts predominantly focuses on Shaw and his death. The producers of *Glory* also chose this narrative. Shaw's character is the center of the story line while the men who made up the Regiment are merely abstract general representations of types of black soldiers. The black members of the 54th Massachusetts, in the movie, were assigned pseudonyms and the actors are charged to portray the anonymous black "common soldier."[132] The producers of the movie chose to ignore the names and records of the actual 54th Massachusetts soldiers even though military records provide their names, occupations, and other details of every single Union soldier. For instance, Sgt. William Carney of the 54th Massachusetts was the first African American soldier awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics at Fort Wagner. Carney grabbed the flag when their color guard was wounded, rallying the men forward, and planting the flag in the sand at the base of the fort. Carney, also seriously wounded, was carried back to safety, but before retreating, he retrieved the flag and was clutching it to his breast when they made it back to the Union defensive lines. There is a heroic flag scene in *Glory*, but it does not reflect the reality of Carney or his actions on that day. The ending of *Glory* suggests that the 54th Massachusetts soldiers died bravely, as the battle was lost, and that their story too ended in the sands and burial pit on Morris Island, but their story does not end there. Forty-two soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts became

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[131] Edward Zwick, *Glory*, TriStar Pictures, 1989.

[132] Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

prisoners of war that day and their epic story and that of hundreds of other black prisoners of war has yet to be told.

The 54th Massachusetts should be remembered and their deaths at Fort Wagner honored but they should also be remembered for their fight and resilience as prisoners of war. The letters and the trial demonstrate another way black soldiers claimed their citizenship rights during the Civil War. Their captivity and ability to communicate their location with the Union Government changed prisoner of war policies. Their captivity hints at the long history of using black prison labor. One song created by a captured black Union soldier and included in one ex-prisoner of war published narrative led to insights of a group that is almost entirely omitted from Civil War studies. My research challenges others to read and use published prisoner of war narratives, pay attention to what has historically been overlooked, and search the archives for underused materials and manuscripts that counters presumptions of what historians think we understand about the black Union prisoner of war experiences. As our goal, as historians, is to provide an accurate "Big Picture" of historical periods and actors, I argue we cannot understand the common soldier if Black prisoners of war experiences are omitted. More importantly though, the short-term consequences regarding the lack of understanding of Black captured soldiers' experiences was that the silence allowed Lost Cause mythmakers to continue spreading their ideologies based on racism and bigotry leading and erasing Black prisoner of war experiences. In the long-term, ignoring their experiences contributes to the current and pervasive racist divide, as Americans fail to understand the cause of the Civil War and the continued African American fight for emancipation.

CHAPTER 3 "THE PRISONER'S FRIENDS"

For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world
— William Ross Wallace "What Rules the World," 1865[1]

On January 21, 1863, Captain Griffin Frost, a captured Confederate prisoner of war held at Gratiot Prison in St. Louis, Missouri, wrote, "Received a present yesterday from Mrs. Meredith, the prisoner's friend, consisting of a pair of drawers, pair of socks, and a shirt; articles of which I stood in great need. God bless the aged Dorcas."[2] Frost's biblical metaphor of the respected charitable woman aptly applies to women's wartime activities during the Civil War and is but another aspect of Civil War prisons and prisoners' experience brought out through reading the ex-prisoner of war published narratives. It was the references of women in their memoirs that challenged me to search for other sources that mentioned women aiding prisoners and what I discovered was a more complex network of women, motivations, and accomplishments than I would have imagined. Studies do exist focusing on northern women's participation during the war and detailing their benevolence as nurses as well as their military

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[1] William Ross Wallace, "What Rules the World," 1865. This poem was originally published in a contemporary journal, but I have been unable to locate which one. In 1965, literary critics simply identify the poem's author and publishing date, Frank N. Magill and Tench F. Tilghman. *Magill's Quotations in Context* (New York: Salem Press, 1965), 335.

[2] The story of Dorcas is found in Acts 9:36-42. Griffin Frost, Camp and Prison Journal, ed. W. Clark Kenyon (Iowa City: Camp Pope Bookshop, 1994), 32. Gratiot prison was one of two military prisons in St. Louis that were property confiscated from men with known southern loyalties. Gratiot is a street named after a French colonial era trader who made a trading post on the banks of the Mississippi River. The building on the property was previously McDowell's Medical College. Joseph N. McDowell left St. Louis, joined the Confederacy at the start of the war and the Union Government seized his property. The other St. Louis military prison was Myrtle Street Prison. It was formerly Lynch's Slave Market. The buildings on these properties were only used as military prisons during the war. Purina headquarters now imposingly occupies the space that served as Gratiot prison.

significance acting as border states spies, but few have researched southern-sympathizing women living in Union states and supporting the Confederacy through aiding the prisoners of war held in the north.[3] The women in these monographs are often merely minor characters in the Civil War prison studies even though their actions directly resulted in increasing the odds of prisoners' survival rate, increasing morale and Confederate war support, relaying messages that put military plans at risk, and helping prisoners escape. By focusing on white southern-sympathizing women living in northern states, I will demonstrate how these women under the guise of charity were active participants in war efforts, exposing how they pushed the limits of nineteenth-century ideals of charity into political actions, which increased the tensions between the local Union military and civilians who held differing views of the war. I will also reveal how their charity in providing food and clothing was needed and not entirely unwelcome by the Union military. In fact, the northern military prison commanders overwhelmingly relied on the Confederate prisoners' "friends" to provide food and clothing to supplement the inadequate Union supplies. And lastly, I will establish that the women's wartime activities promoting a southern version of the Civil War did not cease at the war's end but found a new outlet for promoting southern historical memory when they created northern chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC).

"Women are never just witnesses to war," asserts Stephanie McCurry a historian who works to incorporate women into her war studies.[4] Historians now recognize that women were

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[3] LeeAnn Whites, Alecia P. Long, and E. Susan Barber, *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Elizabeth Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew, a Union Agent in the Heart of the Confederacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005); Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019).

[4] Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War* (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 2019), 2.

active participants in war. Anthropologists also acknowledge worldwide that "there has been a growing awareness that even though women may live in a separate domain, apart from men's public arena, they are able to gain power and use it effectively."[5] William Ross Wallace, in 1865, certainly understood the influence of women when he penned his poem "For the Hand that Rocks the Cradle is the Hand that Rules the World." Wallace commended the women who taught their children and applauded the benefits of their instruction proclaiming it was a world where "Rainbows evermore are hurled."[6]

In the following decades, daughters of Confederate veterans also took their part to heart when one woman referred to Wallace's poem in the second edition of the *Confederate Veteran* reminding the female descendants that "we are satisfied to do our part through this medium" of influencing children.[7] But women truly did do more than just instruct and influence children at home, they were active participants in the world in which they lived. They should be recognized for "what they had done and what they were doing" during the Civil War proclaimed one author. Doctor L.P. Brockett was so impressed by Union women's efforts he collaborated with one of these women and undertook writing a *Woman's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism, and Patience* directly after the war. Brockett confessed the more he learned about women's activities the more it "served to increase his admiration for their zeal, patience, and self-denying effort."[8] His statement certainly reveals his paternalistic worldview but undoubtedly witnessing the women's actions challenged the nineteenth century stereotype of women as

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[5] Marida Hollos and Philip Leis, ""The Hand that Rocks the Cradle Rules the World": Family Interaction and Decision making in a Portuguese Rural Community," *Ethos* 13, no. 4 (Winter, 1985), 341.

[6] Frank N. Magill and Tench F. Tilghman. *Magill's Quotations in Context* (New York: Salem Press, 1965), 335.

[7] Unknown, "To Daughters of Confederate Veterans," *Confederate Veteran*, I, no. 2 (February 1893), 50.

[8] L.P. Brockett and Mary C. Vaughan, *Woman's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism, and Patience* (Philadelphia: Ziegler, McCurdy and Co., 1867), 21.

merely passive and sacrificial. Southern women would earn recognition later for their roles in perpetuating "Lost Cause" ideals in monument making and educating the youth, but southern-sympathizing women living in the north and their activities aiding prisoners of war require more scholarly research.[9] My research supports McCurry's call for deeper studies of women's actions in war by highlighting the actions of southern-sympathizing women helping Confederate prisoners of war and their role in the Union military prison supply chain.

Southern-sympathizing women living in the north aided Confederate prisoners of war by communicating with them through correspondence, providing food and clothing, and even helping them escape. The prisoners benefitted from the women's actions as the writing letters to women and their sending the prisoners food and clothes was in a way a reciprocal "social surrogacy" relationship. Historian Margaret Creighton highlighted surrogate relationships by bringing to light that soldiers away from their families would take time and visit with the women and their children near Gettysburg, allowing the men to have conversations or simple daily interactions with women and children who represented the mothers, sisters, and daughters they left back home.[10] For my study, the "social surrogacy" is found in the letter writing between

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[9] There are notable monographs focusing on women relating to Civil War studies. For Ladies Aid Societies and the United Daughters of the Confederacy see Caroline Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), and Karen Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003). For understanding the participation of women living in border states and the empowerment of southern women, see LeeAnn Whites, *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation, and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009) and *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995). For wives of the Black Union soldiers and Confederate women and their claim to immunity, see Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War* (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019).

[10] Margaret Creighton, "Gettysburg Out of Bounds: Women and Soldiers in the Embattled Borough, 1863," in *Occupied Women*: *Gender Military Occupation and the American Civil War*, edited by LeeAnn Whites and Alecia P. Long (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 72. Creighton argues that the interactions between soldiers and the white women who remained in and near Gettysburg prior to the battle were surrogates for loved ones who were parted due to the war. The men and women created temporary relationships where the soldiers performed choirs around the homeplace, which helped the women and gave a chance for the soldiers to interact with children who reminded them of their own families far away. The women also served as surrogate mother's holding and comforting young soldiers as they died.

prisoners and previously unknown women connected to Ladies Aid Societies. The southern-sympathizing women living in the north became surrogate mothers and sisters when they sent prisoners caring words of support in letters and express packages filled with food and clothes that helped them survive. Their success in supplying aid also emboldened the southern-sympathizing women to participate in wartime activities on the homefront. The women were not satisfied with simply supplying the prisoners with emotional and material needs but also were accomplices in helping them escape and return south. This chapter will charter the various types of aid given: from the most benign, such as letter writing, to the most dangerous, including helping prisoners escape. As I navigate through the types of aid, I will highlight the intended and unintended consequences faced by the Union as the women pushed the bounds of the Union regulations. And finally, I will argue that these southern-sympathizing women played a significant role in the success of the Lost Cause mythology in northern cities where prisons were formerly located. The women's actions were anything but passive and metaphorically show the hand was actively rocking the cradle providing soothing comfort to the troubled Confederate prisoners of war while simultaneously aiding the Confederacy's war efforts in the Union homefront.

Women do not readily come to mind when thinking about Civil War prisons, as the prisons are almost thought of exclusively as male spaces and isolated from the outside world. In reality, Civil War prisons included women both as visitors and as prisoners and those held in captivity were not isolated from the communities where they were located or from women in communities farther away. For this chapter, I will focus exclusively on southern-sympathizing women living in Union states and their interactions with the Confederate male military prisoners of war. The women found ways to communicate and interact with the prisoners even when they

were located hundreds of miles away and held in prisons with geographical barriers, such as islands.[11] The approved and regulated interactions between women and prisoners of war resulted in both intended and unintended consequences. The Union government allowed charity, in the form of food and clothing, to prisoners not simply because prison charity was considered part of a charitable woman's contributions to society but because it reduced the governments financial burden. What the Union military leaders did not foresee was the opening for the women to employ their political motivations to support the Confederacy's goals by passing letters that contained military intelligence and helping prisoners escape.

The southern-sympathizing women living in the north utilized their roles in society and accomplished political and benevolent goals through class and gender norms of the period utilizing "antebellum notions of charity" to provide for the prisoners' physical and emotional health.[12] The women were from affluent families as a certain degree of wealth was required to allow the women to have the resources and time needed to perform charitable work.[13] In my

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[11] Islands were often used as military prisons as military fortifications for defense of the U.S. were already located there. These islands include Forts Delaware, Lafayette, Columbus, Warren, Alcatraz, Governors Island, and others. Rock Island, Illinois was a U.S. owned island with periodic military uses dating back to the colonial era. It was utilized, in 1863, to create a prison. This is the only Illinois military prison out of four that continued as a military fortification after the Civil War. The prison compound was destroyed making way for what became the Rock Island Arsenal. Johnson's Island, in Lake Erie, near Sandusky, Ohio, was leased to hold captured officers, but enlisted men were held there also. The Confederacy used Richmond's Belle Isle on the James River to hold enlisted men and USCT troops were held and used to fortify military forts in the south Carolina bay. Political prisoners were also held in these prisons and had interactions with the women, but I am limiting my work to military prisoners of war.

[12] Sarah Gardner, "When Service is Not Enough: Charity's Purpose in the Immediate Aftermath of the Civil War," *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, Vol 9 no. 1 (March, 2019), 30. Modern POWs still face challenges to their gender and service record as evidenced, in 2015, when Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump declared the highly decorated and former Vietnam POW, then Republican Senator, John McCain was "not a war hero." McCain's POW experience also left him permanently physically handicapped and mentally scarred. Trump further attempted to shame McCain individually and all former POWs, in general, by stating he liked "people who weren't captured," Donald Trump (campaign stop, Family Leadership Summit, Ames, IA, July 18, 2015).

[13] Lori D. Ginzberg, *Woman and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the 19th Century United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, l780-l835* (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1977); Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Organized Womanhood: Archival Sources on Women and Progressive Reform." *The Journal of American History (Bloomington, Ind.)* 75, no. 1 (1988).

study, the southern-sympathizing women were all living in important Union urban cities. Even as some are recognized as "border" cities, they were never located in secessionist states and one of my arguments is that the degree of Confederate support or the community friction between those who identified as northern or southern was never limited to border areas. The women in this chapter fall into categories of wives or daughters of merchants, judges, politicians, and sometimes they were also related to noteworthy Confederate officers. Their ages range from early twenties to their mid-sixties. I can pinpoint the specific religious affiliations and education levels of some, but it is safely assumed they were all Christian women with some formal education. Many of the families now living in Union territory were those who migrated from Virginia and Kentucky pursuing land and economic opportunities and following the pattern of westward migration. In an important distinction, the southern-sympathizing women in the north helping prisoners differed from the women Creighton previously studied at Gettysburg. The Pennsylvania women in a brief time developed a "social surrogacy" with soldiers preparing for battle and, as Creighton argued, the women's acceptance of these temporary "family" relationships was the result of the absence of their own men who were fighting or fled the area to avoid conscription before the battle.[14] Whereas, the southern-sympathizing women helping prisoners were tied to affluent and respected men who remained at home during the war and it was precisely the security of their husbands, fathers, uncles within the community that allowed women to navigate within the male spaces of the prisons. Women married or related to powerful men in a community often meant they accessed local political and military leaders through their social standing in the community; to deny them would be considered an insult by social standards of the period.

[14] Creighton, "Gettysburg Out of Bounds," 71-73.

Their connections to the prisoners were either familial or from women practicing charity through the outreach of the Ladies Aid Societies. These women often interacted with prisoners when they arrived in various communities where the prisons were located or train depots where prisoners were passing through regularly. In one instance, the young unmarried Kentucky socialite Kate Perry claimed that her interactions with Confederate prisoners began after she shouted out to a group of prisoners being marched to the Rock Island military prison. She was looking for her brother, who was not in this group but others from his regiment were and they sent notes to her through a Union sergeant.[15] A more coordinated effort was chosen by one group. According to Reverend E.B. Tuttle, Baltimore women wrote to a Chicago minister seeking "to employ a careful person, learn the wants of such, and supply what they had provided" to the Camp Douglas prisoners.[16] The women were searching and found ways to fulfill their own ambitions whether that was political, a sense of benevolence, or a combination of the two varies and will likely never be pinpointed. Their overall success in their goals of providing the prisoners comfort and aid was directly related to what the prisoners, the military, and society in large expected from nineteenth-century women regarding benevolence and their charitable contributions tied to Christian beliefs and a woman's acceptable role in society based on their gender and how the women used these gendered assumptions in their favor.

Southern-sympathizing women communicating with prisoners through letter writing was a method in helping them emotionally deal with their own humiliation of being captured and what officials were suggesting about soldiers who were captured. The letters from the women

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[15] Kate Perry Mosher, "History of Rock Island, Ill., 1863," *Confederate Veteran*, Vol. XIV, Jan. 1906, 28. Kate Perry was unmarried during the Civil War but later married and published under Kate Perry Mosher.

[16] E.B. Tuttle, *The History of Camp Douglas including the Official Report of Gen. B.J. Sweet; with Anecdotes of the Rebel Prisoners* (Chicago: J.B. Walsh & Co., 1865), 13.

reminded the soldiers that they were not forgotten or unworthy of charity because they were held in captivity. To understand the significance of letter writing and prisoners' emotional health it is important to note that being captured challenged the male belief in being masters of their own world and for those who joined the military seeking the glory and recognition of heroic battlefield actions being captured was exceptionally humiliating.[17]

What must not be lost when considering Civil War prisons is the policies and attitudes of Civil War leaders directly influenced the prisoners mental state as well as their physical state. Captured soldiers found they and others needed to defend their honor as many high-ranking officials including Union Secretary of War Stanton believed soldiers were allowing themselves to be captured, so they could go home as paroled soldiers until their formal exchange returned them to active duty. Stanton clearly conveyed his thoughts in an exchange between himself and Ohio's Governor David Tod. In September 1862, Stanton wrote, "There is a reason to fear that many voluntarily surrender for the sake of getting home," referring to the increased number of soldiers captured in battle. Stanton's punishment for 1,500 battlefield paroled soldiers was to send them to Camp Chase where they were to be "kept in close quarters and drilled diligently every day, with no leave of absence."[18] Two months after Stanton and Tod's communications Major-General William Rosecrans, who was the commanding officer over the Department of the Cumberland, issued General Order No. 15 instructing all captured and paroled soldiers caught

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[17] Amy Greenburg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Manhood, Honor, and Violence in the Union Army* (New York: New York University Press, 2010). Greenberg proposes that the antebellum period contained two categories of manliness: "restrained and martial manliness." Restrained" masculinity traits included responsibility, temperance, religion and dominance of home whereas the "martial" man valued dominance through physical power. These are largely class-based constructs that Lorien Foote recognizes and considers in her own monograph and identifying them as the "Gentleman" and the "Roughs." Regardless of class or category these men saw their masculinity in controlling their worlds whether that be from intellectual or physical power. Nineteenth-century men recognized masculinity in those who controlled their own destiny. Therefore, capture and held in captivity by your enemy was a blow to their masculinity whether the soldier was a "Gentleman" or a "Rough."

[18] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 499.

straggling to be arrested and sent to his command. The reasoning behind General Order No. 15 was because Rosecrans was "pained to learn that many soldiers have sought and allowed themselves to be captured and paroled by the enemy to escape further military duty and to be sent home."[19] Had this behavior been evident in the field, the information would have passed up the chain of command from officers in the field to Rosecrans, but it seems the information was coming from the perceptions of Secretary of War Stanton.

On the other hand, Confederate President Jefferson Davis continued to show his support for captured soldiers being sent home on parole. In December 1862, Davis issued an edict in response to both the Emancipation Proclamation and General Benjamin Butler's execution of a private citizen in New Orleans. Davis incensed at the prospect of black Union soldiers engaged in battles and Butler's actions in New Orleans decreed that Butler and his officers were subject to execution on capture, but that the enlisted white soldiers were to be "sent home on the usual parole."[20] What Jefferson Davis possibly saw more clearly was that sending soldiers home on parole alleviated the financial burden on the governments. If a captured soldier was at home awaiting formal exchange, the soldier was responsible for feeding and clothing himself.

While Union leaders were openly doubting the commitment of their troops and devising punishments, the sentiments of captured soldiers clearly demonstrate their feelings were the opposite of what Stanton and others believed concerning their capture. Seth Crowhurst a 12th Iowa soldier captured at Shiloh wrote home to his father declaring he did not cry as his officers did but nonetheless, he thought it was "disgraceful to be a prisoner of war."[21] Officers openly

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[19] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 713.

[20] Richardson, James D., *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy, Including Diplomatic Correspondence, 1861-1865*, Vol. I (Nashville: U.S. Publishing Company, 1906), 269-274.

[21] Ted Genoways and Hugh Genoways, *A Perfect Picture of Hell: Eyewitness Accounts by Civil War Prisoners from the 12th Iowa* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010), 53.

weeping after capture certainly points to their own feelings of humiliation and disgrace and some recognized the mistreatment of captured soldiers. Governor of Iowa, Samuel Kirkwood, wrote to Stanton a month after Stanton and the Ohio Governor's communications and it likely regarded one of the officers Crowhurst claimed was crying. Kirkwood urged Stanton to have the officers who were paroled at home to be exchanged and given time to regroup their paroled soldiers, which were scattered across Union territory. Kirkwood also wanted to ensure "some evidence be given them that for the future they shall not be overlooked and neglected." The Governor was asking this as he was "very sore on this point as I think these men (than whom none have proved themselves more brave and more worthy) have been badly treated."[22] Stanton was receiving information, in 1862, that countered his worldview concerning the fighting soldiers' resolve, but he was not swayed. Military punishment and slights to one's character and creating a crisis of one's masculinity were not life-threatening conditions, though for the Union soldiers; being confined was.

The creation of Union parole camps, however, intensified the pressure placed on the U.S. Quartermaster to supply prisoner of war camps with rations and other resources, which directly affected what was available for the Confederate prisoners. Confederate prisoners of war who were sent to the Union military prisons suffered for lack of clothing, food, and medicine. In peacetime, the women of the household feed, clothed and tended their sick male relatives. It was in this contemporary notion of what role females played in caring for men that Confederate prisoners of war were comfortable in asking women for relief of their suffering.

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[22] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 638-639.

The type of relief the prisoners were searching for from southern-sympathizing women did come in many forms; sometimes it was simply reaching out for female comfort or connection in letters and southern-sympathizing women in the north made themselves available for correspondence with Confederate prisoners. The women's eagerness in providing emotional comfort was an important step in helping prisoners reclaim their pride and masculinity and their mental state was integral to their overall physical health as well be discussed in the next chapter. Captain William Francis Marberry, a captured Confederate Tennessee soldier being held in Ft. Delaware was in communication with a leading society woman from Baltimore, Adeline Egerton, and their letters provide an example of the emotional comfort the women provided. Marberry wrote to Egerton on March 22, 1863, acknowledging receipt of her last letter and letting her know how grateful he was for her correspondence. Marberry penned, "that it is a great pleasure to me in my deep distress to receive such a kind and sympathetic letter - away from a beloved mother and fond wife." Whatever sympathetic words Egerton shared were of even more comfort as he had received news from his wife the previous day that their daughter had died. Marberry was not requesting anything of Egerton beyond openly communicating his personal grief, but he does thank Egerton for her charity, and he requests she ask several others of the group to "remember me kindly," which suggests they had provided him previously with items to meet his physical needs.[23]

Another woman, Lucy Ann Tucker, in Louisville, Kentucky, was also providing an emotional outlet for a prisoner of war. Colonel William S. Hawkins wrote to Tucker from the Camp Chase prisoner's hospital admitting corresponding with her was helping him "get through

[23] W. F. Marberry to Adeline Egerton, March 22, 1863, Adeline Egerton Letters, 1856–1869 (bulk 1861–1865), Folder 1, Accession 38559, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

the gloom of captivity" and sharing a three paged poem titled "The Captive's Letter."[24] Hawkins was held in captivity three weeks in January 1864 before he was transferred to Camp Chase.[25] His poem is dated March 1864 and it is most likely Tucker aided him while he was in Louisville. It is apparent their correspondence continued as Hawkins was transferred farther away from the enemy lines. Letters back and forth to women they knew or those unknown to them provided the prisoners with a connection to the world outside and the inner peace of believing they were not forgotten are abundant in archives. The correspondence reveals strangers before the war becoming intimate pen pals, with men sharing their physical and emotional discomfort at being kept away from friends and family. Marberry and Hawkins' letters are but two examples of emotional comfort which have significance, but their importance is overshadowed by other actions southern-sympathizing women in the north undertook.

Egerton and Tucker were both members of Ladies Aid Societies consisting of southern-sympathizing women living in the north and aiding Confederate prisoners of war. They were also nineteenth century examples of rising middle-class families. Edgerton's husband was a merchant and Tucker's a banker.[26] Egerton and the Baltimore women she was associated with were aiding thousands of prisoners held in military prisons found along the East coast and in the Midwest. The volume and far-reaching extent of their charitable support of Confederate prisoners of war is

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[24] W. S. Hawkins to Lucy Ann Tucker, March 1864, Tucker Family Documents, Mss. A T895-1, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

[25] William S. Hawkins, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations Raised Directly by the Confederate Government, 109 M258, NARA, 586957. Accessed December 16, 2020, https://www.fold3.com /image/163328341.

[26] 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census Records. In 1850, Adeline was unmarried, and her future husband A.D. Egerton was a "clerk" reporting no wealth and living with his uncle a "Tavernkeeper." Ten years later they valued their personal estate at $10,000 and he identified himself as a "Imp[ort] Merchant." Charles and Lucy Tucker were married in 1850 and reported real estate value as $5,000. His occupation changed from "Broker" to "Banker." In 1860, he appraised his real estate lower at $2,000 but his personal wealth he valued at $30,000. The Egerton's were not recorded on the Slave Schedules in 1850 or 1860. In comparison, the Tucker's reported one sixteen-year-old female, in 1850, and one twenty-five-year-old male and a twenty-two-year-old female, in 1860.

found in the significant amount of correspondence remaining in the Library of Virginia archives. Tucker's existing records, in comparison, were of a smaller scale and demonstrate she was aiding Hawkins, in Ohio, and several prisoners held in Rock Island, Illinois. Her connection with other women is also found in her individual letters. The collections large and small though provide insights into how the charity was performed, the scope of the aid, and how the prisoners felt about the unknown women who were aiding them, and implications of how the sentiments of the actors would carry into the future for them and their children. How Marberry and Egerton became pen pals is unknown.[27] Certainly, Egerton and other women felt the personal pangs of loss during the Civil War, but their aid to help prisoners of war was not a result of individual loss, it was one of the missions endorsed by Ladies Aid Societies and their assisting prisoners of war is an understudied task of these women during the Civil War. Egerton and the other women Janney accurately credited with "crafting a positive memory of the Confederacy" cut their teeth in the Ladies Aid Societies and their aid to prisoners of war was integral in shoring up the male support post-war.[28] The clothes, food, tobacco, solace, and money these women provided prisoners of war was remembered by the multitudes who benefitted from their endeavors, small and large.

More crucially, prisoners looked to the women for aid in alleviating their physical discomfort. Letters show the prisoners specifically requested clothes, food, tobacco, medicine,

[27] Caroline Janney, *Burying the Dead but not the Past*, 122-123. Historian Caroline Janney suggested that Egerton's "focusing especially on the plight of prisoners of war" started after one of her sons had been imprisoned, but her son was not a prisoner of war. According to census records, Egerton was herself only twenty-nine, in 1861, and her son was only eight, but there was likely a cousin of her husband's W.B. Egerton of General Hood's Battalion who brought to light the importance of her group aiding Confederate prisoners over the years. W.B. Egerton was captured at Petersburg in June 1864 and died approximately six weeks later of Typhoid Fever at New York state's Elmira military prison. W.B. Egerton, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Virginia, NARA, 109-10170, M324 accessed December 14, 2020, https://www.fold3.com/image/13475789?terms=egerton.

[28] Janney, *Burying the Dead but not the Past*, 2.

paper, and money. The importance of adequate clothing for Confederate prisoners cannot be overlooked. The enlisted soldiers' uniforms were often threadbare upon their capture and neither the officers or enlisted men were dressed for the extreme winter temperatures of northern Illinois, Ohio, or New York. For instance, Pvt. William Underwood, Co I, 28th Virginia Infantry, was captured at the Battle of Gettysburg and sent to Point Lookout, Maryland.[29] Sixteen months later he wrote a letter pleading for clothes from Mrs. C.S. Bullock, who was also affiliated with the Egerton and her group of Baltimore women. Underwood was desperate when he reached out to this stranger begging for assistance, as he had been unable to receive any from those he knew in the south and had no friends in the north. In his letter, Underwood declared he was "quite destitute of clothing" due to him "having none other than those I had when captured." His condition worried him as he "must surely suffer from the cold blasts of the fast approaching winter."[30] Underwood did have cause for concern as he was being held on a Maryland peninsula with a Union military tent as his only shelter from the winter weather.[31] As a canvas tent was the only means of protection for the prisoners from the icy winds blowing in from the ocean meant that adequate clothes were crucial not simply for comfort but for survival. An officer held in an island prison in Sandusky Bay, Ohio, also realized the danger of frigid winters but instead of reaching out to women he wrote to the Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon. Lieutenant J.R. Breare, 15th Alabama Infantry, was captured at Gettysburg and realized his fellow prisoners would need winter clothing in "preventing a large amount of suffering, sickness, and death," so

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[29] William B. Underwood, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Virginia, NARA, 109-0749, M324 accessed December 14, 2020, https://www.fold3.com/image/11819209.

[30] W. B. Underwood to C.S. Bullock November 14, 1864, Adeline Egerton Letters, 1856–1869 (bulk 1861–1865), Folder 3, Accession 38559, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

[31] The use of tents for shelter at Point Lookout was an exception in Union military prisoner of war camps; the other sites either built wooden shelters or utilized previously built brick forts or prisons.

he pleaded for the Confederate Government to send clothes to Johnson's Island for the men who unlike him had no friends to aid them. He was clear to point out that this request was not for himself as he had "friends and relatives in the United States who cheerfully supply all my needs.[32] No doubt those who he was referring to were predominantly women.

Underwood's sentiments about the inability to receive help as he lacked northern friends and his clothes being inadequate were echoed by many and found in a letter to Louisville's Lucy Tucker. Two brothers, Joshua and William Nelson, who were poor farmers from Pontotoc County, Mississippi with no connections to society women. The brothers reached out to Tucker begging for clothes from the military prison in Rock Island, Illinois. Joshua and William's account certainly suggest they suffered more hardship in Rock Island than some of their other comrades. The brother's letter provides incredible insights into the prison experiences for those without friends living in the north as well as how men used cultural norms of the nineteenth century to request items, for free, from women unknown to them. On February 17, 1865, the brothers wrote to Tucker stating they "have been in prisoner for 14 months and haven't been allowed to get any assistance from anyone." Joshua blames their inability for support on the fact that he is a "Mississippian and have no relations or acquaintances inside the Federal lines." He pleads for pants, jackets a hat, a pair of shoes, sox, drawers, shirts, and tobacco for him and his brother as his "present condition being a horabel one." The tobacco may at first thought seem a luxury item but in fact it was a basic need in Civil War military prisons. Prisoners were not allowed currency inside the prisons, so tobacco became an alternate currency that allowed prisoners to trade for items amongst themselves. In short, the Nelson's were requesting clothes and money. For the Nelson brothers, their imminent need was clothing, Joshua informs Tucker

[32] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 200.

that “I have suferd death almost for the want of clothing.” He begs her for this assistance “in the name of God if you have any harminy feeling to assist us a little and you will do me a favor that will never be forgotten.” Sgt. Cox their Company leader who was handling the sending of letters and receiving the shipments added at the bottom of the letter “Miss Tucker will pleas furnish those boys with clothing or see that it is don by the aid Society if forsaked for they are Sufring for the kneed of them and has suffer a great deal they are good boys and I hope you will assist them.”[33]

Cox and Breare were writing for the benefit of other prisoners. This was duplicated by countless men in Union prisoner of war camps as they were conforming to ideas of masculinity and a soldier’s honor by taking care of their men especially, those who had no northern “friends” to aid them. Breare was an officer and a lawyer by trade, so he wrote to the Secretary of War asking for supplies from the government as the Confederacy was in his mind responsible for caring for their soldiers even in prisoner of war camps. Cox’s letter is more typical of enlisted prisoners relying on the charity of the women. Cox pleaded for benevolence from Tucker evoking the deserving poor trope, which is an ugly element of charity. These prisoners were as Cox believed “good boys” who truly deserved the ladies’ help as they were suffering prisoners.[34] The southern-sympathizing women concurred as these prisoners of war were sacrificing for the sake of the Confederacy.[35]

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[33] Joshua and William Nelson to Lucy Tucker, February 17, 1865, Tucker Family Documents MSS A T895, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

[34] Joshua and William Nelson to Lucy Tucker, February 17, 1865, Tucker Family Documents MSS A T895, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

[35] Gardner, “When Service is Not Enough,” 34. Sarah Gardner points out that during the Civil War charity was in place and given during the war, not out of reform, but out of recognizing the “federal government demanded unprecedented sacrifice and service from its citizens.” Gardner was studying reform and Union charitable aid post-war but the observation about government depends equally applies to the Confederacy.

The Union authorities were aware of the issues caused by lack of proper attire and how the women were part of the Union supply chain for prisoners of war. Eleven days after Frost was praising Mrs. Meredith, in January 1863, the Union Assistant Quartermaster sent the Commissary General of Prisons, Colonel William Hoffman, a note with an estimate of clothing needed for prisoners of war held in Illinois's Camp Douglas.[36] Quartermaster Rutherford noted that "Some of the prisoners are very much in need of clothing as they suffer severely with the cold." He further recommended, "Clothing that is not fit for to issue to our men can be procured."[37] In this instance, Hoffman directed that Captain Potter the Assistant Quartermaster of Chicago release "from the stock of inferior gray clothing on hand at Chicago the 300 pairs of trousers specified by Captain Rutherford."[38] Filling prisoners clothing needs from quartermaster stocks was only done though after taking inventory of what prisoners who were not provided for by others. For instance, in St. Louis, Major General Henry Halleck ordered the Alton commanding officer to order from the quartermaster what was needed but first he was to "examine and decide what articles of clothing are necessary for the health and proper cleanliness of the prisoners were not furnished by their own government or friends" and those friends did come to the aid of the St. Louis and Alton prisoners.[39] Frost's memoir is filled with entries mentioning women bringing clothes for the prisoners and identifying those local women. At the end of November 1863, the temperatures were dropping, and Frost noted that "Mrs. Shoteau and

[36] Camp Douglas was less than a mile from the shores of Lake Michigan just outside of Chicago, Illinois. A Historical Marker for Camp Douglas can be found on the 3200 block of south Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in Bronzeville, IL. The camp was quickly razed after the Civil War. This area became a historically significant black neighborhood shortly after the Civil war and was known as the "Black Metropolis" in the early 20th century. A few blocks from where Camp Douglas stood in 1863, one can find the upper middle-class home of the formerly enslaved early-Civil Rights icon Ida B. Wells-Barnett.

[37] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 265.

[38] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 282.

[39] *OR*, Series II, Vol.3, 237.

Miss Rayburn were allowed to bring in some coats, pants, & c., for distribution among the most needy."[40] Mrs. "Shoteau" was Mrs. Julia Augusta Gratiot Chouteau a direct descendant of three European traders who established the French colonial trading post at St. Louis. The U.S. Census and Slave Schedules reveal the Chouteau's, Laclède's, and Gratiot's were intermarried slave holding families who nearly a hundred years later retained their wealth and influence in St. Louis.[41]

The status and worldviews of the contemporary elite St. Louis French families was noted by another famed French historian, Auguste Laugel. Laugel, likely inspired by Alexis de Tocqueville's earlier treatise on American Democracy, traveled the U.S. composing *The United States during the War*. Laugel believed in the ideals of American democracy based on equality and wrote derisively of the contemporary St. Louis elite. Laugel's emotions about this noted French colonial trading metropolis was that he felt "it is a melancholy spectacle for a Frenchman to see this population rich, amiable, and estimable, but by its own fault absolutely deprived of influence: whilst all around it goes on and progresses." His feelings were tied to his disdain for slavery and the "French population of St. Louis has from the beginning been attached to the institution of slavery." Julia Gratiot's family were some of the French elite Laugel was referring to as he noted St. Louis as the "little post founded by Laclède and Gratoit."[42] Confirmation of Laugel's understanding of the French elite in St. Louis is found in General Orders No. 13 issued by the Headquarters Department of the Missouri on December 4, 1861. The Adjutant General remarked of St. Louis that "there are in this city and in other places within our lines numerous

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[40] Frost, *Camp and Prison Journal*, 87-88.

[41] Todd Barnett, "Historic Missourians: The Chouteau Brothers," *State Historical Society of Missouri*, accessed March 5, 2021, https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/historicmissourians/name/c/chouteau/.

[42] Auguste Laugel, *The United States during the War* (New York, Baillière Brothers, 1866), 164-165.

wealthy secessionists who render aid, assistance and encouragement to those who commit these outrages."

The Adjutant General at this point was most concerned with St. Louis aid to various guerilla bands but as the war progressed and St. Louis and Alton jails filled with prisoners the wealthy embraced aiding their prisoners and were openly proud of their service to the Confederacy.[43] Julia Chouteau was so proud of her Confederate aid that she wrote a letter to family friend General Robert E. Lee, which was hand delivered to him by Mississippi Colonel A.E. Reynolds. Reynolds, a prisoner of war captured at Fort Donelson, was being exchanged and in the process transferred from the St. Louis prison to the East.[44] Chouteau wrote this letter as she was troubled over being rebuffed by a mutual friend who also held Confederate loyalties. Chouteau informed Lee that the friend believed she "had gone over to the enemy, and so, cut me." She wanted to reassure "Uncle Bob" that this was false, and Col. Reynolds would "tell you all about St. Louis, and how we sympathize in the cause for which you are fighting."[45] Hoffman was likely unaware that an officer released from a St. Louis prison was carrying a letter straight to General Lee and one can only guess what information Reynold's verbally conveyed to Lee concerning St. Louis and its citizens.

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[43] *OR*, Series II, Vol. I, 235.

[44] Col. A.E. Reynolds, 26th Mississippi, was captured at Fort Donelson on February 15, 1862 and sent to St. Louis as a prisoner of war. On June 10, 1862, Reynolds wrote Gen. Halleck requesting he be paroled to his home near Corinth, Mississippi as he was ill and so he could arrange an exchange for himself with the Confederate military. Reynolds was paroled before Halleck received this letter. The first week of July Reynold's was sent to the Old Capitol Jail in Washington, D.C. for approximately a month before being officially exchanged at Fort Monroe, Virginia. NARA 109 M269 Roll 0324. Accessed December 31, 2020, https://www.fold3. com/image/83308463.

[45] Julia Chouteau to Robert E. Lee, July 6, 1862, Mary Custis Lee Papers, Mss1 L51444 a 875-883, Section 14, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond Virginia. For more about women passing letters across enemy lines see LeeAnne Whites *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation, and the American Civil War and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009).

Looking again at Laugel one can certainly surmise that the communications and actions of St. Louis southern-sympathizing citizens, beyond Julia Chouteau, had consequences relating to prisoners held there. Laugel alleges a man approached him on the steamboat requesting he sketch the prison at Alton as they passed it. Laugel created a sketch for the man and learned a few days later that "there had been, on the part of the guerilla bands, a plan to surprise Alton, and deliver the prisoners; it was not carried out, however; so my sketch was useless."[46] Plans to free Confederate prisoners were undertaken by a secret order known as the "Order of American Knights" and Edward F. Hoffman was sent to St. Louis to investigate its branch of the fraternal order. He confirmed membership and meeting places, supporting the possibility that Laugel interacted with a conspirator on the steamboat. Edward Hoffman reported from St. Louis that "no place where I see the "Sons of Liberty" freer to converse with, or meet brothers in a more open manner than here."[47] On January 2, 1865, a military tribunal convicted several men of plotting "to release by force the rebel prisoners" held in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, but not prisoners in St. Louis or Alton.[48] Edward Hoffman only focused his attention on the men of St. Louis, but to be sure the wives of these men were also duplicitous and guilty in planning to free local captured Confederate soldiers. There is little room to doubt Chouteau and the other women Frost mentioned in his narrative were deeply involved in political endeavors regarding the war effort.

The less political and more benevolent act of southern-sympathizing women in the north supplying clothing was important though, not simply for the prisoners' physical comfort but also for their physical health. Proper clothing in winter helped stave off frostbite, which could result in amputation and ultimately death from loss of blood or gangrene. A more common cause of

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[46] Laugel, *The United States during the War*, 163-164.

[47] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 739-740.

[48] *OR*, Series II Vol. VIII, 6-11.

disease though was parasites. Lice, fleas, and mosquitos plagued Civil War soldiers, but filthy conditions found in all Civil War prisons increased the likelihood that prisoners would die from diseases contracted by these parasites. The Surgeon General in all listed twenty types of "zymotic diseases" found during the Civil War.[49] While the science to understanding human deaths relating to parasites was incomplete in the nineteenth century, the surgeons were accurate in acknowledging parasites were an underlying cause of disease and mortality rates. A commonly cited statistic is that two-thirds of all Civil War soldiers died of disease, but in northern Civil War prisons over three-fourths of all Confederate soldiers died of disease. This is not a surprising statistic, nor likely dissimilar than the percentage of Union prisoners who died in southern prisons.[50] Diseases, not bullets, were the most imminent source of danger for prisoners of war.[51]

The lack of clothing was directly addressed by doctors belonging to the U.S. Sanitary Commission after tours of Gratiot prison in St. Louis and Chicago's Camp Douglas, in April 1863. Doctors Thomas Hun and Mason Cogswell reported to their superior that they had "never witnessed so painful a spectacle as that presented by their wretched inmates; without a change of clothing, covered with vermin." These doctors were alarmed since they knew the filth and the parasites resulted in pestilence and begged for their superior to inform the leaders in Washington, D.C. for they believed it was not the "intention of our Government to place these prisoners in a

[49] United States Army, *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, *1861–65*, Part I, Vol, I (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1870), 7.

[50] *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion* provides 23,591 out of a total of 30,716 or 76% of Confederate prisoners of war deaths "were deaths due to diseases" (Volume II, 36). These numbers are incomplete as the Union did not start compiling prisoner of war records until June of 1862 and Union deaths are more difficult to ascertain as documents are incomplete.

[51] Prisoners were shot for rule infractions, by accident, and on occasion due to guards over zealousness, and their own prejudice towards those they were charged with confining. For more about psychological influences leading to mistreatment of prisoners see Beth Kruse, *U.S. Civil War Prisoner of War Experiences and Modern Psychology: Lucifer Effect, Obedience to Authority, and PTSD (*master's thesis, University of Illinois-Springfield, 2016).

position, which will secure their extermination."[52] Almost a full year later, on March 29, 1864, William Watson, a U.S. Surgeon, at Rock Island military prison confirmed the hardships still faced by the Rock Island prisoners and the causal relationship between exposure, diseases and parasites. Watson reported that he was not surprised by the number of sick prisoners considering the "patients half clad, covered with filth and vermin, enfeebled by previous exposure and privation."[53] One prisoner, Private Lafayette Rogan, Co. B, 34th Mississippi Infantry apparently reached out to his cousin Sue Markell in Frederick, Maryland soon after his capture looking for help. Markell failed in her attempt to send a care package to Rogan through the Adams Express Company agents in Frederick, so she reached out to a family friend, W.B. Pettit, of Geneseo, Illinois.[54] Pettit arrived, in person, on January 8, and according to Rogan, "relieved my wants." Markell, with Pettit's help, supplied Rogan with "socks, shirts, pens, ink, paper, envelopes, and stamps."[55] Markell was restricted in sending a package via the express company to a military prison, so it seems instead she sent the package to Pettit, who then took it to the prison himself. Rogan was happy to be clean and free of the vermin, which Dr. Watson would note about the

[52] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 588-589.

[53] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 14.

[54] In 1867, three exchange agents were listed in the *Maryland Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Baltimore: George Hawes Publisher, 1867) for Frederick. Two, Adam Kohlenberg, Jr., and V.S. Bruner, were agents for Harnden's Express Company and George L. Smith was the agent for Adam's Express Company. All three were actually owned and operated by Adam's Express Co. The men that operated these express companies are found in 1860 Frederick census records. Kohlenberg was the post office agent and Bruner a merchant. George Smith likely a merchant but his common name hard to identify census occupation with complete certainty. The Express Companies were not restricted in shipping packages or money to military prisons. The U.S. government, until 1864, allowed prisoners to receive packages, so either these agents banded together in perceived Union loyalty to tell Markell no or she only went to one agent and was refused. Whichever the case, this event is unusual and the only case of such action that I have encountered. Lafayette Rogan's diary was transcribed by his grandson, in 1938, who made copies for Rogan's great-grandchildren. It was never commercially published. Rock Island Arsenal Museum supplied me with a copy of the original transcription. Portions of the diary were published in 1941. Hauberg, John H., and Lafayette Rogan Jones. "A Confederate Prisoner at Rock Island: The Diary of Lafayette Rogan," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)* 34, no. 1 (1941): 26-49.

[55] Rogan Diary, 3. William B. Petitt, according to the June 1863 Henry County, Illinois Draft Registration, was twenty-eight-year-old "Miller" born in Maryland (U.S., Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865, Illinois, 5th Congressional District. Vol 2 of 5), 553.

prisoners' condition four months later. "What a relief to feel clean and imagine that one has no lice on him," proclaimed Rogan.[56] He was not really free of lice and his use of "imagine" reinforces the fact. At any rate, he was provided temporary respite thanks to his cousin Sue and her connection to the former Marylander now residing in Illinois, W.B. Pettit.

The aid received is an example of a familial connection meeting his physical and emotional needs while he was a prisoner of war. Rogan and thirteen others would survive their captivity, but twenty-seven others from his regiment would perish at Rock Island.[57] Markell wrote to him sharing news of family and sending Christian "testaments" for him and others of the 34th Mississippi.[58] Rogan was one of the exceptionally lucky soldiers who had a sympathetic female relative living in the north but also received clothes and food from local women living near the prison where he was held and without a doubt the supplies from these women are part of the reason why he survived. Rogan's experience provides insights though on the difference between familial aid and charitable aid. Familial help was usually limited to an individual prisoner and occasionally something extra for a bunkmate, whereas charitable aid was frequently more large scale with women providing items for multiple soldiers at a time. For instance, the Baltimore ladies associated with Egerton sent a summer package that included but was not limited to twelve pair of shoes, twenty-six pantaloons, fourteen vests, eighteen shirts and undershirts, fifty-one pairs of socks, a bundle of pipes and a package of tobacco to meet the needs of captured members of the 1st Alabama Infantry and the Pointe Coupee Artillery prisoners

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[56] Rogan Diary, 3.

[57] See Appendix B

[58] Rogan Diary, 5; 10 The endearment "cousin" is frequently found in Civil War letters where it is apparent there are no familial ties, but in Rogan's case it appears through Rogan's mentioning Markell writing to him and providing details of Richard Rogan's death suggests that their connection was truly familial. Logan mentions, on March 25, 1864, his three younger brothers having all died: Richard, John, and Leonidas.

held on Johnson's Island.[59] Women working together and pooling their resources meant they could aid more men at one time. Rogan's experiences mentioned in his diary make clear the major difference of familial versus charitable aid and the scope of what one individual could accomplish for a relative over what a group of women could do for a group of unknown men.

Food was an even more pressing need for Civil War prisoners and another way the contributions from southern-sympathizing women living in the north aided both the Confederate prisoners and the Union military prison system. Civil War food rations were notoriously bad and lacking in adequate nutritional value. The Union's policies, as previously mentioned, of cutting food rations for retaliation and the erroneous belief that prisoners did not need rations equal to fighting soldiers was another blow to the Confederate prisoner's mental and physical health. Narratives and diaries of prisoners in the Civil War on both sides are filled with comments about the low quantity and quality of food they are given. The lack of a proper nutritional diet increases the chances of suffering from chronic diseases. During the Civil War, scurvy was one of the diseases that endangered the lives of prisoners of war. Scurvy is listed under "Dietic Diseases" in *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion, 1861–65*, so it was understood at the time as a condition relating to poor diet.[60] Prisoners in the north and south both suffered from the effects of scurvy, but southern-sympathizing women supplying food that supplemented Union military rations helped the Confederate prisoners obtain the calories needed to increase their chances of survival by staving off scurvy. Scurvy itself could be fatal, but for those who were already suffering from other diseases it made the odds of surviving nearly insurmountable.

[59] John Gordon to "Madam," July 20, 1862, Adeline Egerton Letters, 1856–1869 (bulk 1861–1865), Folder 1, Accession 38559, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

[60] *MSHWR*, Part I, Vol, I , 7. The lack of adequate amounts of vitamin C found in fruits and vegetables result in scurvy and can become severe within three months. Symptoms of severe scurvy include swelling and soreness in joints, bleeding of the gums, and loss of teeth.

Although Frost's mention of foodstuffs is not as detailed as the receiving clothes, what he does include highlight the complexities of prisoners receiving food from the local women. He received food from his wife periodically, but he informed a "kind friend, Miss Laura Elder" not to send him food while he is sick in the hospital as "the privilege would not be granted," and he noted that a large box of food arrived for one of his bunkmates who would share with "our mess" while acknowledging the "hard feeling among some" whose packages were being refused.[61]

The inconsistency of policies at St. Louis and Alton regarding food packages is related to what policies were put in place by Hoffman and local officers' interpretations based on their own perceptions and views regarding the retribution policies. Frost alleges General Dodge inspected the St. Louis prison and thought the prisoners were "having too good of a time altogether and has forbidden any more "expresses" being received."[62] The failure or obstruction of officials – Union and Confederate – to allow prisoners to acquire food to meet daily nutritional requirements was perhaps the biggest failure of the Civil War military prison system.

In 1900, a Camp Douglas prisoner wrote an article detailing his hunger, scurvy, and the role women played in supplying food. T. M. Page, 2nd Kentucky Cavalry, alleged that during the summer of 1864 "bowel disorders culminating in flux increased the average to twenty deaths each day, and scurvy became virulent."[63] The official records for deaths in Camp Douglas that summer increased from an average nine a week in June to twenty-four a week in August, which suggest Page, almost four decades later, was either inflating the number for impact, from a faulty memory, or inadvertently wrote "each day" when he meant a week. Page was accurate though, in pointing out that nutritional deficiencies were an issue as this is corroborated by Surgeon C.T.

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[61] Frost, *Camp and Prison Journal*, 35; 116; 178.

[62] Frost, *Camp and Prison Journal*, 223.

[63] T.M. Page, "The Prisoner of War," *Confederate Veteran*, Vol. VIII (February,1900), 62-64.

Alexander, U.S. Acting Medical Inspector of Prisoners. His report in July 1864 included remarking that prisoners' "health would be improved by a greater variety" of rations and "probably an increased supply of vegetables might mitigate" the prevalent diseases in the prison.[64] According to Page, "Mrs. Morris and other ladies of Chicago sent in seed, and prevailed on the commandant to allow the prisoners to cultivate vegetables." Page also despised the fact that the Union guards were the ones who ate the produce crying, "The prisoners, rotting with scurvy, could not even raid and rob their own garden."[65] Another Camp Douglas prisoner, Curtis R. Burke also mentioned the garden, but claims "a small guard of prisoners are often pressed to work in the Yankee Garden."[66] Burke created his journal, in 1914, of his Civil War experiences, reportedly from notes he recorded during the war.[67] Whether the garden was meant to feed the prisoners or the guards is debatable, but if the guards were allowed to grow a garden for themselves it certainly would mentally torture prisoners who were not getting enough food and why both of these prisoners remembered the garden.

Mary Morris, like Julia Chouteau, was proud of her service to the Confederacy and neither woman shied away from flaunting it in their communities. Mary Morris, née Blackburn, was a member of an elite Kentucky plantation family with political ties and the third wife of an important Chicago politician, Buckner Morris.[68] Her political activism in helping Confederate

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[64] *O.R.*, Series II, Vol. VII, 497-498. Camp Douglas Commanding officer verifies the accuracy of June through September deaths in an October 1864 letter to Col. Hoffman. He also contributed to the lack of vegetables as one of three causes of the increasing number of sick and dying (*O.R.*, Series II, Vol. VII, 954).

[65] Page, "The Prisoner of War," 63.

[66] Curtis R. Burke, July 14, 1864, Curtis R. Burke Papers, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, quoted in George Levy, *To Die in Chicago: Confederate Prisoners at Camp Douglas* (Evanston, IL: Evanston Publishing, Inc.,1994), 210.

[67] Pamela J. Bennett and Richard A. Misselhorn, "Curtis R. Burke's Civil War Journal," *Indiana Magazine of History*, 65, no. 4 (December 1969), 283. Bennett omits the July 14, 1864 entry altogether and relegates to paraphrased notes activities about the Chicago women.

[68] Mary Morris's brother Luke Pryor Blackburn was a post-war Governor of Kentucky, and their younger brother Joseph Stiles Clay Blackburn was a U. S. Senator as well as appointed Governor of the Panama Canal Zone by

prisoners escape speaks to the commitment of southern-sympathizing women in the north to do all they could in aiding the southern war effort. Mary Morris was remembered for her disloyalty to the Union after her death. She was "warmly southern in her sentiments during the war" proclaimed her *New York Times* obituary. The *Times* also lauded her by informing their readers that "scarcely had Camp Douglas been converted to a prison before she manifested her devotion in the most practical manner, visiting the prison and carrying creature comforts to the prisoners."[69] Her visits to the prison were not completely innocent and her duplicitous aid to the prisoners became a detriment to her husband's political career. In 1863, their loyalty to the Union was publicly questioned and used to sway the local Unionist voters against him. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* labeled him a "Copperhead" and declared "His house, his heart, his purse are always open to secessionists and rebels."[70] The following day was election day and his opponents paid for eight advertisements on the front page of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* pointing to his southern allegiance and the Chicago Republicans successfully ensured Morris would not be elected mayor.[71] Morris's actions in aiding prisoners would cause them more serious legal problems with the government before the war was over

Kentuckian Lucy Tucker also did not conceal her support of the Confederacy and likely was one of the women John H. King remembered when he recalled the women of Louisville. In 1904, he remarked in his published memoir that they "did not hesitate to express their admiration

President Theodore Roosevelt. The family genealogy includes ties to the Kentucky Breckenridge, Churchill, and Bell families and they are distantly related to Henry Clay. Buckner Morris was the second mayor of Chicago.

[69] "Death of Mrs. Mary B. Morris," *New York Times*, October 20, 1884.

[70] "The Know Nothing Copperhead Ticket," November 2, 1863, *Chicago Tribune*, quoted in Theodore Kramanski and Eileen McMahon, *Civil War Chicago: Eyewitness to History* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014), 149.

[71] *Chicago Daily Tribune (*Chicago, Ill.), 03 Nov. 1863, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed February 18, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84031490/ 1863-11-03/ed-1/seq-1/.

for Confederate soldiers with well filled baskets of provisions and cheering words, their bright smiles of approval gave an especial zest to the feast of good things provided for us by their willing hands."[72] Tucker found a circuitous route to aiding Confederate prisoners of war. Tucker, the wife of a notable and affluent Louisville banker, joined a ladies' benevolent group designed to help the soldiers. At the end of September 1862, Tucker with other like-minded women attended a "meeting for the humane ladies of Louisville for the purpose of learning how to prepare bandages" for wounded Union soldiers. Her group attended that meeting as women who were "loyal to our State, but nevertheless feel a strong sympathy for our southern friends."[73] The Union aligned woman became offended at Tucker and the other ladies' presence and chose to write anonymous notes informing the southern-sympathizing women that they "must decline any more of your assistance – in preparing comfort for the Union party." Tucker's note concludes with the anonymous writer conveying that she had "every respect for you and your husband – but your loyalty at this late date cannot be relied on." The local Union women emphatically believed the local "southern rights" women were spies. Tucker's letter and the anonymous letter both include the underlining of phrases to emphasize the writer's strong feelings. The note for Tucker pointedly states, "we believe you are a spy." Tucker wrote Dr. Joshua Flint the same day notifying him of the afternoon's communications. She included her anonymous note and formally withdrew herself from aiding the wounded soldiers.

Tucker's indignation is palpable and almost forty years later her daughter Linnie's disdain for the Union women is also found on the original Union woman's letter. Linnie, likely

[72] John H. King, *Three Hundred Days in a Yankee Prison, Reminiscences of a War, Life, Captivity, at Camp Chase, Ohio* (Atlanta: Jas. P. Daves,1904), 69.

[73] Lucy Tucker to Dr. Joshua B. Flint, September 20, 1862, Tucker Family Documents MSS A T895, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

going through her mother's belongings after her death, in 1901, found the letters. On the envelope Linnie included, "from our dear Mother to her cowardly enemies" and on the actual letter she vehemently wrote "written by a cowardly sneak, and not fit to lace my mother's shoe."[74] Perhaps Linnie wanted future generations to witness what she perceived as her mother's goodness and the ignoble acts those who southerners identified post-war as Scalawags: southerners who considered traitors to the south and the "Cause." The Union women, not her mother, were the traitorous women. The southern-sympathizing women living in Union territory were remarkably bold in the fact that they did not hide their allegiance or their efforts to help Confederate prisoners and Col. Hoffman certainly did not intend for their efforts to embolden the southern sympathizers living in the north, the prisoners' morale, nor the commitment of the prisoners and the public to their southern cause at the time or post-war.

Hoffman, the officer in charge of the Union prisons, was a military leader who carried the nineteenth century ideal of benevolence to wartime military strategy applying it to prisoner of war regulations on the homefront without truly considering the unintended consequences. Hoffman decreed all "articles contributed by friends for the prisoners in whatever shape they come" – if the articles were not contraband or medicinal – would be distributed to the prisoners.[75] Hoffman's overarching compulsion to decrease the costs incurred by the Union for caring for prisoners blinded him to the possible dangers resulting from southern-sympathizing women interacting with Confederate prisoners. Although, the majority of interactions between the women and the prisoners fell into the category of benevolence, their contact most decidedly included acts that were designed to not merely comfort prisoners of war, but directly increase the

[74] "Ladies" to Lucy Tucker, September 20, 1862, Tucker Family Documents MSS A T895, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

[75] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 153.

likelihood of these men returning to their regiments to win the war. The women helped prisoners escape and return to the front lines where the men were able to reclaim their identity as soldiers. Their involvement was political action. These women were living in Union controlled territory, so not only were their efforts political, but their actions were bothersome to local provost marshals and military leaders and some of the actions crossed the line from being merely bothersome to outright treasonous. Hoffman's policies influenced by his obsession with saving the U.S. Government money and allowing "friends" under the guise of benevolence to interact with enemy prisoners resulted in difficulties for the Union military prison commanders and those effects are easily gleaned out of the published memoirs, military records and other primary sources.

There were two significant unintended consequences of allowing southern-sympathizing women living in the north access to Confederate prisoners of war. The first being that commanding officers and Union military prisons and hospitals became reliant on the food and clothing being provided by those who Hoffman identified as the "friends" in his regulations. The Union Quartermasters were not sending enough food and clothing to meet the needs of the numbers of prisoners held in the last years of the war. The packages, especially the ones sent by express agents or brought to the prison by Ladies Aid Societies to supply many prisoners were not entirely unwelcome by post commanders. Perhaps prisoners receiving packages containing items they needed or wanted led to increased morale and a decreased mortality rate and both of those circumstances were positives when writing reports and during camp inspections.

One of the more notable effects was that the abilities of the women living in the north in providing clothing and food resulted in women becoming a vital part of Union supply lines. The Confederate "friends" supplying the prisoners with clothes and foodstuffs were included in

Hoffman's regulations, so it was intended to help the Union war effort and it was effective. For example, Kentucky women supplied sixty-nine percent of the clothes for seven Kentucky Regiments held in Camp Douglas, in December 1863. The Camp Douglas commander, Colonel Charles De Land acknowledged a month earlier in a separate report regarding prisoners clothing that "a great deal has been supplied to Kentuckians by their friends."[76] The Camp Douglas December regimental breakdowns itemizing clothing received were a response to report created by Dr. Montrose A. Pallen. Pallen was formerly a St. Louis doctor who joined the Confederacy and, in 1863, was sent to Canada to report on the conditions at Johnson Island.[77] From Montreal, Pallen sent a letter to Stanton requesting permission to cross through Union lines and travel to Richmond for a meeting with Confederate authorities to work out a way for them to supply clothes for Confederate prisoners of war. Union authorities were offended that it was implied that they were not adequately taking care of the prisoners and ordered an inquiry. General Hitchcock instructed Hoffman to send a copy of Pallen's letter to the commanding officers of the prisons mentioned and they were then required to "forward as conclusive evidence the facts" back to General Hitchcock.[78] The camp commanders' responses were revealing and support how vital the women were in supplying prisoners. For example, the Kentucky regiments supply rate at Camp Douglas is in stark contrast to members of the 55th Georgia receiving "about 195 suits" for

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[76] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 463.

[77] James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, *Appletons' Cyclopedia of American Biography, 1600-1889*, Vol IV (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1888), 664. Pallen was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi. He earned his medical degree in St. Louis, in 1856, likely at McDowell's Medical College-later Gratiot Prison. Dr. Pallen remained in St. Louis where he set up his medical practice and married Ann E. Benoist. She, like Julia Chouteau, was a descendent of an early French trading family and her father was an influential St. Louis banker. He joined the Confederacy, but his wife remained in St. Louis where she drew the attention of the St. Louis Provost Marshal who declared "she is a most violent rebel." Alexander Cozier to unknown, May 11, 1863, "Union Provost Marshals' File of Paper Relating to Individual Citizens," NARA, 109-M345.

[78] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 718.

five hundred forty-one prisoners. Sergeant-Major J.W. Florence of the 55th Georgia does not identify who supplied these suits whereas the Kentucky regiments clearly identified their "friends" from Kentucky as the suppliers. Georgia's data combined with three other regiments who categorized clothing returns in the equivalent of suits had a supply rate of twenty-eight percent.[79] As Georgia was well behind the enemy lines, it can be inferred that the bulk of the clothing supplied to them was from the U.S. Government and the difference in the supply rates are reflective of the ease of women living in the Union abilities in using the Union express companies to send packages to the prison.

Lieutenant-Colonel William S. Pierson commanding the prison at Johnson's Island included in his reply to Hitchcock's inquiry that the recent loss of the sutler combined with Hoffman's September order to not allow shipments from friends means that "the issue of clothing by the Government will have to be largely increased should these prisoners remain at any great length of time."[80] The majority of the prisoners, who arrived in the winter of 1863, would indeed spend the rest of the war in captivity. Pierson's September reference was a nod to an example of Hoffman responding to the unintended consequences of allowing women to supply prisoners of war. Hoffman reasoned restrictions on women and packages were needed as "The government furnishes them with an abundance to eat, and the delivery of boxes of eatables from their friends is attended with much inconvenience to company commanders, creates dissatisfaction among those who receive nothing" and most importantly "gives opportunity for

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[79] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 778-798. Seven Cavalry Regiments fully answered questions regarding food and clothing supplied to them. The 10th Cavalry response to question no. 6 is either missing or was not answered, so I omitted them in my calculations. The Kentucky numbers totaled 2,226 prisoners and they received 1,272 "suits" which calculates to a rate of supply of 69%. The four other Regiments:15th Tennessee, 1st Confederate Cavalry, 55th Georgia, 64th Virginia. These Regiments included 1,361 Prisoners and 376 "suits" calculating to a rate of supply 27.6%

[80] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 759.

sympathizers to show their interest in rebels."[81] Frost explicitly remarked on the dissatisfaction Hoffman was acknowledging and the stories he, and other memoirists, published post-war certainly provided a wide range of opportunities the sympathizing women chose in turning their interests into actions. It is imperative to recognize those rebels Hoffman was referring to were living in Union held cities and predominantly women. Pierson was not the only Union leader who had misgiving about the restrictions on packages as he was responsible for the well-being of the prisoners of war at Johnson Island. General Benjamin Butler also questioned the reasoning of this policy change and overrode Colonel Hoffman's directives. Butler informed Hoffman that he "shall have the delivery of packages made" and his order would only be countered by the Secretary of War.[82] Hoffman's responded that he recognized "until recently there was little restriction in friends visiting prisoners, and that there was none at all in their receiving contributions from friends" but he continued, "both of these indulgences were so much abused that it had been found necessary to curtail them very much."[83] The Secretary of War sided with Butler and on March 11, 1864 Hoffman informed all the prisons that the delivery of all packages that did not contain any contraband would resume.[84]

In contrast, Rock Island's Col. Johnson wrote an editorial letter to the *Argus* newspaper declaring "the government furnishes more clothing to the destitute prisoners in one day than friends do in two months." He estimated that four-fifths of the prisoners were supplied clothing through the Union and the remaining one-fifth were "supplied by rebels and rebel

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[81] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 954-955.

[82] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 974.

[83] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 639.

[84] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 1036.

sympathizers."[85] Johnson's claims compared against other prison commanders' data and warnings, as well as Lafayette Rogan's account, suggests Johnson's estimations were inflated. Without a doubt, adequate clothing for prisoners was in short supply and the Union never did entirely remedy the situation. Southern-sympathizing women sending clothes and other items to Confederate prisoners helped both the Union Government and the prisoners. Allowing women to send prisoners care packages lessened the cost and the burden on the U.S. Government to supply items, which was exactly why the frugal Hoffman allowed friends to send these articles, but it also allowed women to participate in war from the homefront. The prisoners also benefited from the regulations as it provided a way for them to have some agency in their captivity. Those who had familial or sought charity through letter writing with southern-sympathizing women in the north found opportunities to ask for and receive emotional support and resources that helped them survive. The unintended consequence of the prisoners' interactions with the "friends" and something Hoffman eventually realized was that southern-sympathizing women living in the north could and would abuse his system. The abuses ranged from women far away sewing contraband articles, such as money, into the clothing, to local women aiding and abetting escaped prisoners. The various stretching of indulgences Hoffman referred to and Butler ignored had resulted in incidents and even arrests of some women and quarrels between officers charged with operating the military prisons, as seen in St. Louis.

The second unintended consequence is related to the access granted to local southern-sympathizing women in supplying provisions. Once the women had access to prisons and prisoners, they pushed the limits of their interactions and drove the Union authorities at various locations and degrees to restrict their dealings with the prisoners. They were not just delivering

[85] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 17.

food, clothing, and emotional support; they were relaying military information and plotting escapes.[86] The Union rules created by Hoffman were not universally interpreted or enforced by the prison's commanding officers.[87] Similarly, the community's support for women living in Union states and aiding Confederate prisoners is found somewhere in-between the spectrum from supportive to hostile, so different commanders dealt with issues based on their own perceptions of the war and the community's allegiances. The Union guards seemed to resent the attention the women showed to the Confederate prisoners and the records reveal the soldiers' hostility against the women. Four post-war narratives, in particular, focusing on Baltimore provide compelling insights into the degree of opposition between southern-sympathizing women living in the north who were aiding prisoners and the military stationed there. The memoirs of Beckwith West, Henry Shepard, Anthony Keiley, and William Duff referred to the woman of Baltimore handing out food to prisoners as they arrived at the railroad depots either passing through heading north to prison after being captured on some battlefield or heading back south after being exchanged.

The four narratives all included incidents where women were driven back by Union troops. In 1862, Captain Beckwith West, Co. G, 48th Virginia Infantry, was the first to write of Union troops blocking Baltimore women from passing out food to Confederate prisoners. West's narrative intermittently changed from his personal notations to published government notices and

[86] See more on the homefront women's influence on the war in LeeAnn Whites, *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation, and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Lisa Tendrich Frank and LeeAnn Whites, eds., *Household War: How Americans Lived and Fought the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2020).

[87] On July 2, 1862, Col. Hoffman issued a circular containing the regulations to be followed by facilities holding prisoners of war. These regulations would remain in place for the duration of the war with only the receiving of packages being briefly stopped by Hoffman. The interpretation and the enforcement of rules were overseen by Commanding officers and each prison contains examples of either lax or strict implementation of the regulations.

newspaper articles. One newspaper article he included claimed that when prisoners from the battle of Winchester, Virginia arrived at the train station that the "demand for cakes, apples, refreshments, and everything in the shape of edibles was astonishing." The article also noted that the citizens bought up everything that was available and "distributed them freely among the unfortunate soldiers" until Provost Marshal James L. McPhail and his force arrived. McPhail ordered his men to force back the crowd and then the soldiers flanked the prisoners and marched them to the local jail.[88] West included this news article, but he was not a witness to the actions of the Baltimore women.[89] But West was a first-hand witness to the actions of the Front Royal women and their activities. West noted that the local citizens "manifest the greatest interest in the Confederate prisoners. They carry provisions to us daily at the hospital." West was recovering from Typhoid Fever, and he blamed his weakness from disease on his inability to keep up with the retreating Confederate army and subsequent capture. On June 19, West mentioned that he was visited by "an attached lady friend, Miss E.A., who brought me some necessary articles of clothing" after he was moved to what was known as the "Old Capitol Prison" in Washington, D.C.[90] West's interactions with E.A. and the other's he refers to informs readers that even in the Union capitol, women were freely aiding Confederate prisoners, but West's inclusion of the newspaper article provides insights into how Baltimore soldiers were reacting to the women and other accounts corroborate the journalist's account.

[88] Beckwith West, *Experience of a Confederate States Prisoner, being an Ephemeris Regularly Kept by an Officer of the Confederate States Army* (Richmond: West & Johnston, publishers, 1862), 36. Searching for the original article in a Baltimore paper has been, thus far, unsuccessful.

[89] West was briefly a prisoner of war, in 1862, but it was after Front Royal, Virginia was recaptured, which was two months after this particular news was published.

[90] West, *Experiences of a Confederate States Prisoner*, 17. West's military record does show that he was a prisoner, from May 30 - August 5, 1862 and that he was released from Fort Delaware. He was captured in Front Royal and had been treated for "Rubeola," which is known as the German Measles, not Typhoid Fever. The E.A. could easily have been an error in memory and possibly be A.E. representing Adeline Egerton.

First Lieutenant Henry Shepherd, Co. K, 43rd North Carolina Infantry, and Private Anthony Keiley, Co. B, Archer's 3rd Battalion Virginia Reserves, also shared reminiscence of southern-sympathizing women driven away from prisoners in Baltimore. Shepherd's version of hostile Union soldiers against Baltimore ladies occurred on the hospital grounds, in 1863. Shepherd was shot through the right knee attacking Culp's Hill on the morning of July 3, at the Battle of Gettysburg. He was captured on the field and by the middle of August he was at "West" hospital in Baltimore. According to Shepherd, "The West Building was originally a warehouse intended for the storage of cotton, now transformed into a hospital." Shepard conveyed that he was "almost destitute of clothing, for such as I had worn was nearly reduced to fragments, the surgeons having mutilated it seriously while treating my wounds." He claimed the clothes sent to him by his friends in Baltimore were "appropriated by the authorities in charge and the letter, which accompanied them was taken unread from my hands." He further declared that all help from friends directed at him was "intercepted." But he did not limit the thwarting of aid to just himself. He also recalled that on one "occasion a group of Baltimore ladies who were anxious to contribute to the Confederate prisoners" were "driven from the sidewalk by a volley of decayed eggs hurled at them from the hospital guards."[91] Other sources describe how the Union Army did refuse the aid of southern-sympathizing women at the West Hospital and the implications of what their policies meant to the welfare of the prisoners of war.

One of the women helping Confederate prisoners at the West Building was Mrs. Robert H. Carr who according to U.S. Assistant Adjutant-General E.W. Andrews was "a lady of devoted loyalty, great affluence, and distinguished benevolence." Sarah "Sallie" Carr was the wife of a successful slave-owning farmer turned merchant who was credited with being part of the force

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[91] Henry E. Shepherd, *Narrative of Prison Life at Baltimore and Johnson's Island, Ohio* (Baltimore: Commercial ptg. & sta. co., 1917), 6-7.

that captured John Brown at Harper's Ferry.[92] Andrews was likely familiar with Robert Carr and through him knew of Sarah's wartime activities and was writing a letter to Hoffman so Carr could regain "free access to the hospitals of the army in Baltimore and the vicinity." Andrews alternatively offered that if full access was impossible at least grant her the ability to deliver "such articles as, upon inquiry of her, she should ascertain would contribute to their comfort." Hoffman passed this letter along to Dr. Thomas H. Bache, the Surgeon, U.S. Volunteers, in Charge. Bache was adamant in refusing women access and that there was no need for contributions. He did counter that he would welcome "wholesome foods - not custards, cakes, jellies, and pies - provided the said food is not brought by ladies in carriages, as was formerly done." In short, the surgeon would eagerly receive food with nutritional value sent by the servants, but the society ladies need not present themselves. Bache's reasoning for allowing food was that it was "difficult to conduct a hospital on a 20-cent valuation of the ration."[93] The explicit mentioning of inadequate Union funding and the ability for the acceptability of the women to fill that shortage again points to their importance in the supply chain. Bache's response also corroborates Shepherd's account pointing to U.S. soldiers' disrespect and disdain for the southern-sympathizing women, but Keiley's account recapped a more menacing encounter.

On October 13, 1864, Keiley arrived at the Baltimore Railroad station on his way to City Point, Virginia for exchange. Keiley was captured at the first battle of Petersburg, Virginia in

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[92] 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census and Slave Schedules. 1860 Census notes that a 60-year-old female is a runaway. On March 5, 1902, *The Boston Globe* reported the death of Robert H. Carr of Baltimore and tied him to Harper's Ferry.

[93] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI, 906-907. Bache also mentions that he wants the food "sent by servants," which directly implies the role of those who were either still enslaved or were formerly enslaved. I am focusing on the activities of elite white women, but I am certainly cognizant that much of the labor especially in food preparation fell on the shoulders of those who served in border states urban households and that they likely had direct ties to slavery. The use of the enslaved to labor at prisons or for prisoners of war also needs further scholarly investigation. The published narratives also provide information to begin this type of research.

June and was sent to Elmira, New York. Keiley was one of over 1,200 prisoners exchanged in October by Col. Hoffman. Hoffman ordered that "all the invalid prisoners of war who will not be fit for service within sixty days will be in a few days sent south for delivery to rebel authorities." Ailing prisoners that might perish on the trip were to be excluded and "as many attendants and nurses, taken from the well prisoners, as may be required" were included.[94] Keiley having only been a prisoner for four months was well and by his own admittance served as a nurse. Keiley also falsely credited himself for the attendants accompanying the ailing prisoners. He claimed, "It occurs to me that so many *miserables* will be sent on a voyage south without attendants as nurses, and I am resolved to try the effect of an appeal for permission to accompany the sick in that capacity." There is no doubt that he lobbied for an attendant position once the regulation was announced.[95] Keiley then reported that once they arrived in Baltimore "a few ladies and children were at the depot – those who dare to brave the fines and the dungeons," which implied punishments were previously imposed for those who showed their support for the Confederacy. He also claimed that the "train had hardly stopped, when a gorgeously caparisoned horse and Major dashed into the little crowd of ladies" and the "less noble animal forced them back with a brutal sneer and an intimidation in decided terms."[96] In Keiley's account, brute force was not only used by the male soldiers but by the soldiers' horses to thwart the women's efforts.

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[94] *OR*, Series II, Vol. 7, 891-892; 894.

[95] Keiley's misleading statement would be an example of what historian Adam Domby recognizes as a third method for the creation of the Lost cause public myth making, which he identifies as the "False Cause." Domby notes public memories are created by what is remembered, what is forgotten, but stresses a third element: what is made-up. The made-up parts are what he coins as the "False Cause." According to Domby, the made-up stories were fabricated to support southern masculinity and the Confederate soldier as the most valiant and dedicated men that ever lived. Adam Domby, "The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory," (lecture, Filson Historical Society, August 18, 2020).

[96] Anthony M. Keiley, *Prisoner of War, or Five Months among the Yankees. Being a Narrative of the Crosses, Calamities, and Consolations of a Petersburg Militiaman during an Enforced Summer Residence North* (Richmond: West and Johnson, 1865), 107-108.

And lastly, William Duff, Co. I, 25th Louisiana Infantry, narrative contributes to the understanding of the degree of animosity between the southern-sympathizing women living in the north and the Union military. Duff, on his way back to the south being exchanged from Camp Chase, Ohio, arrived at Baltimore by rail, in February 1865, and was then marched to the wharf to board a ship. At the wharf, he noticed, "a large crowd of ladies and men who heard that we were coming and had brought large baskets of provisions." But as the southern-sympathizing citizens were distributing the articles Duff noted "their kindness was soon stopped for the guards soon drove them away and would not let these good people give us anything or even talk to us."[97] Duff boarded the ship and made no further mention of those on the dock. Likewise, a Maryland newspaper, *The Civilian and Telegraph* reported that a ship carrying Confederate prisoners to two New York Island military prisons was surrounded by "dozens of boats" and "many of them contained ladies." The Captain and his officer's warnings to stay back were unheeded, so "Coxswain Nesbitt of the Harbor Police, came off, and soon kept the boats at a proper distance."[98] The article does not differentiate if these were purely gawkers or women trying to pass along provisions. The fact that they were so close suggests that they were trying to do more than simply sight-see. Baltimore was notorious for their southern-sympathizing activities during the war but their resistance to Union political and military goals was not exclusive, nor were the repercussions on the women from the military.

The women's more serious wartime undertakings resulted in some of the women being arrested and held within the same prisons that they were previously supplying. Mrs. Meredith,

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[97] William H. Duff, *Terrors and Horrors of Prison Life; or, Six months a Prisoner at Camp Chase, Ohio* (Lake Charles: Orphan Helper Print, 1907), 24. William H. Duff, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Louisiana, NARA M320 586957.

[98] *Civilian and Telegraph (*Cumberland, Md.), page 2, September 12, 1861. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Library of Congress accessed September 8, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016179/1861-09-12/ed-1/seq-2/.

the woman Frost referred to as the "aged Dorcas" in St. Louis, was arrested according to Frost for "distributing clothing" to the prisoners. Then, the very next day "Captain Masterson had the officer who arrested Mrs. Meredith, placed under arrest." Mrs. Meredith received a "permanent pass from the Provost to visit the prisoners whenever she saw proper" as Masterson knew her to be a "friend of the needy and suffering."[99] Captain Masterson was according to Major and Inspector General T. I. McKenny a citizen in charge of Gratiot Street Prison and only a "designated captain."[100] Although, Masterson was accused by Union officer Lt. Col. Quinn Morton, commanding officer of the 23rd Missouri Infantry, of being a rebel, it seems Masterson and Frost eagerly wrapped Masterson's support of Mrs. Meredith, in nineteenth century ideals of socially acceptable behavior regarding benevolent women helping the needy. McKenny was in St. Louis investigating a recent escape and laid the blame at Masterson's feet with the recommendation that Masterson and the entire detail be replaced by "good intelligent enlisted men" and "a competent commissioned officer." Missouri Secretary of State Provost Records have no records of Masterson arresting another officer in March of 1863, but they do reveal Masterson was arrested for his "running of Gratiot prison" six months prior to McKenny's report.[101] This incident concerning women was not the only quarrel between the St. Louis Provost Marshal's office and the U.S. Regiments charged with guarding the prisoners.

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[99] Frost, *Camp and Prison Journal*, 35-36.

[100] W.J. Masterson was a citizen and "Keeper of Gratiot Prison" under the jurisdiction of the Provost Marshal.

[101] *OR*, Series II, Vol. V, 564-565; Vol. VI, 105. accessed December 23, 2020, https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives /archivesdb/provost/. Masterson's last report for Gratiot prison was in February 1864, which suggests he was eventually replaced. June 24, 1863 Lt. Col Quinn Morton to Col. J.O. Broadhead Provost Marshal General Department of Missouri reporting a prisoner told one of his men Masterson "was a rebel and they could use him in any way they wished." In October of 1864, Masterson was charged with stealing government supplies meant for prisoners and found guilty. "Union Provost Marshals' File of Papers Pertaining to Individual Citizens," NARA, 109-M345, accessed February 15, 2021, https://www.fold3.com/image/287523270.

The friction between the St. Louis Provost Marshals and the prison commanding officers stemmed from the interpretation and enforcement of regulations at the ground level. A year before the commanding officer of Alton military prison, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, wrote Hoffman complaining about Provost Marshal Thomas Gantt. Colonel J. Hildebrand reported that Provost Marshal Gantt had taken control of the military guard in St. Louis and ordered him to "admit Gantt reminding him Hoffman dictated the rules of the prisons and informed him that "visitors to prisoners are prohibited except under specified circumstances."[102] Myrtle Street Prison another St. Louis prison also had issues with lax visiting regulations leading to an officer being charged that he "grossly and habitually neglect his duties." Captain George D. Brooks' neglect of his duties was seen as a cause of prisoners escaping in the summer of 1864. Brooks was charged with allowing "prisoners as well as other persons unlawful and improper ingress and egress from and into" Myrtle Street Prison. The charge did not reveal the gender or names of any of the "persons" but as Gratiot and Myrtle prisons were mere blocks apart it can be safely assumed the women Frost praised were also helping the prisoners under Brooks' charge.[103]

Commanding Officers grew more aware over time that the southern-sympathizing women's interactions with prisoners were not limited to simply providing clothes and food. Colonel A.J. Johnson, the officer in charge of Rock Island military prison, responded to an investigation started by Democratic Illinois legislator C.M. Harris concerning an article published in the Rock Island *Argus* newspaper. An editorial in the *Argus* claimed prisoners were being poorly treated and not receiving enough food. Johnson responded to his military

[102] *OR*, Series II, Vol. IV, 618-619.

[103] "Union Provost Marshals' File of Papers Pertaining to Individual Citizens," NARA, 109-M345, accessed February 15, 2021 https://www.fold3.com/image/287523274.

commander that this paper was one of the "most untruthful sheets" and that its "circulation was largely among the friends and relations of the prisoners here residing in the border states." Johnson noted that he does not usually respond to the articles published by this paper but made an exception in this instance. He further informed his commander that he desired to "show the spirit animating these disloyal busybodies, whose desires are not to ameliorate the condition of the prisoners so much, but to use it as a hobby for partisan purposes."[104] Johnson's affront at being forced to respond to allegations made by disloyal citizens went deeper than simply him despising the local community members for their editorials attacking his running of the prison in the local newspapers. Colonel Johnson's response to the *Argus* demonstrates his contempt for local "Copperheads" and his own frustration from his own personal code of honor at following the orders dictated by the War Department for treatment of prisoners and local disloyal citizens. Johnson pointedly informs the readers of the *Argus* that if he had his say, the Confederate prisoners would be find themselves "in a pen with no shelter but the heavens" with the same quantity and quality of food the "fiendish rebels give our men" and furthermore "instead of a constant issue of clothing to them, I would let them wear their rags." The lack of shelter, food and clothing are all references to the conditions Union captives were facing in Georgia's Andersonville prison. The treatment of Andersonville prisoners is the benchmark for cruelty set in 1864 and continues today. Johnson's ire was palpable in his response to the editor and reveals he was one of the many who favored retribution when creating policies. He closed his letter by directly addressing the local Confederate sympathizers, those that he knew were directly aiding the prisoners in treasonous manners. Johnson declared that he "would arrest and confine the known sympathizers with the rebellion residing in Rock Island and Davenport, and quite a large

[104] *OR*, series II, Vol. VIII, 15-18.

number would be added to our list of prisoners and those communities would be relieved from a more dangerous element than open rebels in arms." This letter reveals that Johnson was fully aware of who the traitors were in his midst and acknowledges that their activities were a real threat to the Union's political and military goals.[105]

Johnson was keenly aware of the identities of the southern-sympathizing leaders in the nearby local communities, which included Lucy Ann Duke Buford. She served as the head of the female resistance in Rock Island, Illinois, and was the wife of Charles Buford a prominent businessman as well as the aunt to Confederate Brigadier General Basil Duke. The younger Kate Perry assisted Buford. Perry was a Kentucky socialite visiting her cousin living in Rock Island. Buford and Perry are both mentioned in post-war writings of Rock Island prisoners of war. One of those prisoners was the previously mentioned Lafayette Rogan. Rogan's diary is the most in-depth readily available first-person account of this particular prison. Rogan praised both of these women in his diary, acknowledging that clothing was being sent to them by the "good ladies of Ky, Ten, and by kind friends who do not reside far from this place." He identified Buford as being "active in procuring necessaries" and Perry as a "ministering angel." It is probable that Buford used her local influences to organize aid and Perry and other younger women delivered the articles to the prison facilities. Rogan provides support for the influence and leadership of Buford writing, "Quite a number of ladies at Headquarters today Mrs. Buford, Mrs. Judge Grant and others."[106] The ability for these women to visit officers at Rock Island attests to them taking advantage of the power and influence their husbands wielded in the community. The prisoners were grateful for contributions that made their life in captivity more comfortable and

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[105] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 16-18.

[106] Rogan Diary, 21.

remembered the women in the post-war articles they submitted to the *Confederate Veteran* decades later. Rogan closed his entry on the women's visit by evoking God's blessing on them and all women who were aiding the prisoners and praying God will "send more."[107] His sentiments were shared by other ex-prisoners held in other Union prisons who wrote post-war memoirs.

These southern-sympathizing women living in the Union were not merely innocently bringing food and clothes to prisoners though. Some, such as Buford and Perry in Rock Island, were actively forming a network supplying messages to the prisoners. These messages helped prisoners who escaped find Buford and Perry who then supplied them with money and clothes to make their way to the south sometimes via Canada. The aiding and abetting prisoners escape was the most extreme of the abused indulgences that Hoffman was referring to during the debate with Butler regarding the restrictions Hoffman had put into place. The escapes were not limited to any one prison and women, if not directly credit or accused depending on the loyalty of the teller, were undoubtedly a major component of prisoners fleeing from their confinement.

George Kern of Bourbon County, Kentucky was one such prisoner who undeniably received help from southern-sympathizing women living near his Union prison. Accounts vary, but all indicate that Rock Island women assisted him. In1906, Kate Perry Mosher claimed Kern showed up at her cousin's doorstep seeking help.[108] She recounted that he was "small and slender," so they decided "we would dress him as a girl." Kern was only sixteen at the time. Perry "lectured him most severely as to how to act – his manner, etc. – as he was now a girl, and

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[107] Rogan Diary, 9.

[108] Kate Perry Mosher wrote a paper, in 1901, for a United Daughters of the Confederacy meeting and, in 1906, the article was published in the Confederate Veteran magazine. This same article was also published again in 1908 at the end of J.W. Minnich, *Inside of Rock Island Prison, from December, 1863 to June, 1865* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, south, 1908).

taught him how to manage his hoops." Perry claimed that an oncoming storm had people scrambling to get into the train station or get home and the "general confusion he had not attracted notice." Perry also stated that Kern wrote her from Cincinnati and again later letting her know he was back in "Dixie."[109] In 1923, the *Confederate Veteran* published a brief snippet by P.P. Pullen who alleged he was a fellow prisoner and friend of Kern's. Pullen claimed that Kern positioned himself behind a local doctor's buggy that was leaving the prison around dusk. Then, Pullen watched as Kern "crawled underneath on the coupling pole" as the buggy unknowingly carried Kern away. Kern's military record consists of an index card spelling his last name as "Kearns" and does note he escaped September 14, 1864, underneath Surgeon Watson's buggy by "taking advantage of the darkness."[110] Pullen claimed Kern was aided by "Miss Buford" who was "staying in the city for the benefit of prisoners." Kern arrived at the house where she was staying and had him "dress in a citizen's suit, gave him fifty dollars, and told him to catch the nine o'clock train for Louisville, Ky."[111] Pullen wrote that Kern sent him a letter ten days after his escape providing him with details of his escape and safety.

Prisoner of war narratives are often dismissed as unreliable, but this does not mean historians should dismiss them. As John Neff noted "History is fragmentary, incomplete, filled with contending views drawn from contradictory evidence."[112] This is certainly true of prisoner of war narratives. Historians must refrain though, from excluding an archival source due to their

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[109] Kate E. Perry, "History of Rock island, ILL., 1863," *Confederate Veteran*, January 1906, 30-31.

[110] George Kern, 9th Cavalry, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Kentucky, NARA, 109 M319. The 1850 Census Record also lists three-year-old George as "Kern," but as George seemed to change his name to Kern while in the Confederate Army and applied and signed his pension application as George A. Kern, I choose to use his spelling.

[111] P.P. Pullen, "A Kentucky Hero," *Confederate Veteran*, August 1923, 287-288.

[112] John Neff, "Crossroads" (Lecture, University of Mississippi, March 2, 2018).

problematic nature and instead work toward fitting the fragmentary pieces together. Kern's escape story provides that opportunity.

Kern was not the only prisoner to escape from Rock Island in late 1864. The August 1904 *Confederate Veteran* included a personal advertisement by S.S. Priest, Co. A, 1st Kentucky Cavalry. Priest was searching for three of the other four men who escaped with him on December 3, 1864 through the sewer. Priest recounts that he made his way to Canada but has not seen the other men since they parted company in Chicago. One of the men Priest was inquiring about was J.W.S. Emerson, Co. K, 8th Texas Infantry, and indeed his military record notes he "escaped by removing an iron grating from the sewer and tunneling through the same."[113] The official record for Rock Island only noted three escapes in December of 1864. One would be hard pressed to doubt Priest's account of the five men escaping as the escape is just a notation and his main goal was to simply reconnect with those who might still be alive. Priest provided no other details, but it is safe to conclude that these five escaped Confederate soldiers did not travel to Chicago from Rock Island without local assistance and most probably that aid was from the networks created and supported by Lucy Buford and other women in Rock Island. Buford and her ring of ladies were likely exceptionally busy helping prisoners escape in the fall of 1864. The most recorded number of escapes for Rock Island were in September and October with ten and nine, respectively.[114] Oddly the camp commander, Colonel A.J. Johnson, does not mention in his reports to his superiors anything about the escaping prisoners.

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[113] S.S. Priest, "Escaped from Rock Island," *Confederate Veteran*, August 1904, 384. J.W.S. Emerson, Eighth Cavalry (Terry's Regiment, First Rangers, Eighth Rangers), Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Texas, 109-M323.

[114] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 998-1000.

Col. Johnson may have refrained from acknowledging women aided prisoners in escaping, but other locations did not hide what groups bore the responsibility for prison escapes. A hospital was created in Lafayette, Indiana, after 15,000 Confederate soldiers were captured at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in February 1862. Lafayette was located approximately sixty miles north of Camp Morton, the Union military training base and prison in Indianapolis. In 1938, Cici C. Miller, a writer for the Works Project Administration (WPA) wrote an eight-page history of Lafayette during the Civil War that included a paragraph about a prisoner escaping from the hospital. Miller's details included that on "April 7 an order was issued barring women from serving in the hospital, after there had been complaints, they were sympathizing too much with the rebel sentiments of the prisoners."[115] One of those prisoners was Private William March, Co. D, 41st Tennessee. He was captured at Fort Donelson and sent to Camp Morton and subsequently to Lafayette for treatment. At some point, Private March was granted parole in Lafayette. Parole meant he was free to find lodgings and food within the city limits and to remain until he was formally exchanged.[116] March chose not to wait for his exchange and on April 29 he headed south. According to Miller, March's escape led to the formation of a grand jury, which "questioned six or eight ladies with reference to the escape but elicited nothing of value." On May 8, R.L. Post sent a dispatch to Louisville, Kentucky, Provost Marshal Henry Dent, informing him that March, "a black haired, black eyed man, considered very good looking by the ladies" had violated his parole and was likely heading home. Post also informed the provost marshal that March was carrying "dispatches given to him by the domestic traitors."[117] The

[115] Cici C. Miller, "Forgotten Chapter in Lafayette's Civil War" Indiana, -39, 1938. Manuscript/Mixed Material. https://www.loc.gov/item/wpalh000580/.

[116] City limit paroles were common before 1863 although, it was usually limited to officers.

[117] William March, 41st Tennessee, 109 NARA M268. Compiled service records of Confederate soldiers from Tennessee units, labeled with each soldier's name, rank, and unit, with links to revealing documents about each

women were never charged, but there is little doubt about their role as accomplices. The Provost Marshal never caught March and he returned to duty the following spring. On September 20, 1863, March was reported "Killed in Action" at the Battle of Chickamauga. The prisoners, like March, who successfully escaped and went back home were more than likely able to return to the battlefield, which means Confederate sympathizing women living in Union territory were actively political in war time and were bolstering both Confederate morale and manpower by providing for prisoners' needs and aiding them in escape.

The Camp Douglas commander also remarked on the issues regarding the southern sympathizers in Chicago and escaping prisoners. Brigadier-General Orme informed Hoffman that "a prisoner of war once beyond the camp lines, finds in this city so many active friends and sympathizers as to render his recapture almost impossible" and one of those friends was Mary Morris.[118] Morris's obituary published in the contemporary papers included the title "Lady whose sentiments caused her so much trouble in Chicago." The trouble stemmed from her helping individual prisoners escape as well as her and her husband larger plan to free all the prisoners in Camp Douglas. In the same manner that Kate Perry Mosher credited herself for aiding and abetting prisoners of war, Morris was recognized by her peers in her death. The death announcement reminded the readers that Morris's "residence in Chicago was the rallying point and hiding place for those who effected their escape." Once the prisoners were safely hidden in her home then she "provided them with suitable clothing and gave them means to turn south." The article also notes that at times orders were given blocking her from visits at the prison but "she continued to importune the commander with such success that the orders were revoked."[119]

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soldier.

[118] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VI. 861.

[119] "Death of Mrs. Mary B. Morris," New York Times, October 20, 1884.

The women whether it be St. Louis, Rock Island, Chicago or other cities managed to use their influence to outmaneuver the Union commanders and the women's tactics were heavily reliant on male assumptions about how harmless nineteenth Century women working in benevolent organizations were.

These southern-sympathizing women living in the north and aiding prisoners of war were far from innocent in their actions. The obituary of Mary Morris was not the first time her ties to aiding escaping prisoners was noted, her wartime activities made her and her husband infamous in northern Illinois during the Civil War. During the war, as was previously stated, The Morris's reputation as "Copperheads" was a tool employed by the local Republicans to dissuade citizens from supporting Buckner in his election bids. In November 1863, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported, "Every secessionist from the south, who visits Chicago for the purpose of aiding rebel prisoners to escape from Camp Douglas regards him as a friend and an ally."[120] Mary and "Buck" Morris were allowed leeway in Chicago for a time, but eventually they crossed a line that could no longer be ignored. It was alleged they conspired with the members of the Order of American Knights to free all the prisoners, and this resulted in both their arrests. In November 1864, they found themselves inside Camp Douglas as political prisoners. Mary was released after taking "full blame for aiding prisoners to escape, and the military court banished her to Kentucky." Buckner, along with three other men, was tried by a military commission for "conspiring, in violation of laws of war, to release the rebel prisoners" at Camp Douglas, in April 1865. Morris and another were acquitted.[121] Mary might have been banished to Kentucky, but

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[120] The Know Nothing Copperhead Ticket," November 2, 1863, *Chicago Tribune*, quoted in Theodore Kramanski and Eileen McMahon, *Civil War Chicago: Eyewitness to History* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014), 149.

[121] George Levy, *To Die in Chicago: Confederate Prisoners at Camp Douglas, 1862-1865* (Evanston, IL: Evanston Publishing, Inc, 1994), 229.

she did not leave until after 1870, as that year's census, reports her and Buckner living very comfortably, in Chicago, with reported assets of $89,000.[122]

In the far northern cities of Rock Island and Chicago, Illinois, the Confederate sympathizers helped prisoners virtually unhampered by the military and the locals. In central Indiana, the locals and one escaped prisoner caused enough debate to have the women removed from caring for the Confederate wounded at the hospital. In Louisville, Kentucky, Lucy Ann Tucker and others in her circle were accused of being Confederate spies and forced to withdraw their aid after local doctors advertised for women to "prepare bandages" for Union wounded soldiers.[123] The attitudes toward southern-sympathizing women at first glance seem to contradict assumptions concerning which communities identified as Unionist's and which as Confederate's. These three examples demonstrate that the women living in northern territories were not monolithic and that there was no inevitable conclusion to the war, but it also supports historian Christopher Phillips' argument that "Confederate and Union allegiances were deeply contested and malleable during and after the war."[124] The interaction between the Union women and Tucker's southern-sympathizing women further demonstrate what he described as the "intertwined strands of the "war within the war"" animosities that later "fueled the hardening of ideological and political positions into a wartime binary that would outlast the conflict." That wartime binary is culturally and politically identifying oneself as either north or south. Kentucky is a prime example of that post-war binary, a Union state that now identifies as southern and

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[122] 1870 U.S. Census Records.

[123] Lucy Tucker to Dr. Joshua B. Flint, September 20, 1862, Tucker Family Documents MSS A T895, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

[124] Christopher Phillips, *The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 7.

Lucy Tucker's daughter Linnie is an example of one who likely identified as a southerner in the twentieth century.[125]

Linnie Tucker's marking on her mother's letters, uplifting her mother's memory as a righteous heroic woman is an example of how family collective memory blending with public memory. Linnie Tucker wrote on her mother's letters to ensure future generations of the Tucker family would think highly of their Civil War era matriarch, which approximately a century later was donated to the Filson Historical Society in Louisville. The existence of this archive stems from ten men, some who were former political and military prisoners of war, who founded the "Filson Club" for the "purpose of collecting and preserving a complete history" of Kentucky. Deidre Cooper Owens has pointed out that historians must remember the creation of many archives was not apolitical. Certain Filson archives exist entirely due to their link to Confederate and Lost Cause supporters. The "Filson Club" was not unique in its founding or goals as it duplicated the efforts of other historical groups in the decades after the Civil War. One of the more influential historical groups collecting papers and artifacts was the southern Historical Society.[126] This group explicitly posited in their 1876 first journal publication that they were "interested in vindicating the truth of Confederate History."[127] The southern Historical Society also devoted the entirety of their third publication, in March, to articles about Confederate prisoners of war. Kentucky too was busy in the decades after the war and Reconstruction

[125] Phillips, *The Rivers Ran Backward* 12. See Also Anne E. Marshall, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[126] *Hopkinsville Kentuckian (*Hopkinsville, Ky.), May 20, 1890, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Library of Congress, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86069395/1890-05-20/ed-1/seq-3/. Deidre Cooper Owens, "Disabling Chaos: How Black Women's History Liberates Us All," (lecture, University of Mississippi, April 10, 2021).

[127] Rev. J Williams Jones, ed., *Southern Historical Society Papers*, *Vol I, January to June 1876* (Richmond: Johns and Goolsby Printers, 1876), 39.

ensuring their history was one remembered as a "Confederate Kentucky" and the men behind the "Filson Club" were certainly part of both trends of telling the Confederate story of a Confederate Kentucky.[128]

Male fraternal societies were not the only ones fighting for a southern collective memory of the war, the UDC led the fight. The southern-sympathizing women in Union states never stopped helping Confederate prisoners of war and the UDC incorporated the prisoners' experiences and their post-war allegiance to the women in their mission of spreading the Lost Cause version of the Civil War era. The UDC were the most successful group at perpetuating a mythical memory of the war in their Lost Cause ideology. They used artifacts, monuments, and education to influence how citizens even those in the north remembered the Civil War and that remembrance included the treatment of prisoners of war and the women who helped them.[129] Kate Perry Mosher, the Kentucky socialite who helped prisoners in Rock Island, self-promoted her own efforts through her connections with the UDC. She wrote down her experiences and presented it for the first time at the Henrietta Hunt Morgan UDC chapter, in 1901. It just so happened Henrietta Morgan Duke, wife of Basil, was the president of this particular chapter, which was named after her own mother. Henrietta Morgan Duke was also mother to the well-

[128] Anne Marshal, *Creating a Confederate Kentucky: The Lost Cause and Civil War Memory in a Border State* (Chapel Hill: University of north Carolina, 2010). Marshal convincingly demonstrates the change over time in Kentuckians identity from Union to Confederate. She points out Kentucky never seceded from the Union but afterwards its citizens adopted the Lost Cause mythology. Her findings are supported by current affairs as a preponderance of Kentucky's citizens erroneously cling to a Confederate identity claiming it and defending their Confederate monuments and the flying of the Confederate battle flag are rights of their heritage.

[129] Historian Caroline Janney told the history of Egerton's, and those who were associated with her, connections to the UDC and the efforts those in the East undertook to move the Confederate dead from northern battlefields and re-inter their bodies in the south (*Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2012). Janney also along with Karen Cox have convincingly written how the women who were first the Ladies Memorial Society and later the United Daughters of the Confederacy became the most successful and earliest groups promoting the Lost Cause mythology (*Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, Gainesville, University of Florida, 2003). As a side note, my interlibrary library loan edition of Karen Cox's book was actually bought for the local library by the United Daughters of the Confederacy chapter in that area.

known Confederate cavalry leader John Hunt Morgan who was captured and infamously - or famously, depending on one's allegiance - escaped from the Ohio State Penitentiary where he was being held. Henrietta Duke was also the UDC President for the Division of Kentucky and "proxy" for eight other Kentucky UDC chapters.[130] Henrietta Duke was without a doubt a powerful woman in Kentucky. Perry likely did not have a hard time convincing President Duke to allow her to speak about Confederate women helping prisoners of war in northern Illinois especially, since the presentation included mentioning Duke's husband's aunt, Lucy Ann Duke Buford. Mosher's article was, as mentioned earlier, published in the 1906 *Confederate Veteran*, and two years later included as a supplement in J. W. Minnich's memoir *Inside of Rock Island Prison, from December, 1863 to June, 1865*.[131] There is no doubt Kate Perry Mosher's account of Rock Island was read and talked about in the early twentieth century. Another example of the partnership between the UDC and ex-prisoners of war is the 1916 publication of a pamphlet containing John R. King's account as a Confederate prisoner of war actually published by a West Virginia chapter of the UDC. King confessed it was his cousin, the President of the UDC Chapter, who "desired me to write something for this chapter." The local women were living up to the UDC education mission by publishing King's brief prison memoirs where he "endeavored to uphold our Southern side" of the story.[132]

The existence of Lucy Tucker's letters in an archive co-founded by the nephew of Lucy Ann Duke Buford reaffirms the connections between southern-sympathizing women in the north

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[130] Katie Currie and Mrs. John Hickman, ed., *Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Held in Richmond, VA November 8-11, 1899 (*Nashville: Press of Foster and Webb, Printers, 1900), 13.

[131] Kate E. Perry Mosher, "History of Rock Island, ILL., 1863," *Confederate Veteran*, Vol XIV (January, 1906), 31. J. W. Minnich, *Inside of Rock Island Prison, from December, 1863 to June, 1865 (*Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, 1908),40-59.

[132] John R. King, *My Experience in the Confederate Army and in Northern Prisons* (Clarksville, WV: Stonewall Jackson Chapter, No. 1333, United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1916), 5-7.

and military prisons and memory.[133] Brigadier General Basil Duke was a former prisoner of war and undoubtedly, he knew of his aunt's activities in Rock Island. Basil Duke likely benefited from southern-sympathizing women in the north aiding him. In fact, he admits in his memoirs that during his time at Camp Chase he was given liberties that "had been obtained for me without any request upon my own part, and indeed, without my knowledge." Women were probably some of those lobbying for him. Later as he was being transferred from Ohio to Ft. Delaware, he recollected a train encounter with a St. Louis woman and those accompanying her to New York. He identified her as a family friend and an "ardent southern sympathizer." Once this woman discovered Duke was on the train, she sent a male member of her party to find him and request his company. Duke claimed, as they were about to head to the ladies car, the male friend attempted to "surreptitiously slip into my hand a roll of bank bills," which he refused.[134] Basil Duke supported southern-sympathizing women during the war and those who belonged to the UDC later. One does not have to look far either, for Basil Duke connections to the UDC beyond his wife's involvement, by 1899, there were two chapters in Kentucky named after him.

All these little connections demonstrate how interconnected the women were during the war and especially later as the created national groups. These women were also connected and, more importantly, remembered by the ex-prisoners for their efforts to help them during the war. As the men post-war were writing their memoirs the women then incorporated the ex-prisoners'

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[133] The Filson Historical Society's founding members included Reuben T. Durrett and Basil W. Duke. Coincidentally both of these men were held captive by the Union during the Civil war. Durrett was a political prisoner of war and Duke was a captured soldier. Duke was married to John Hunt Morgan's sister and served alongside him. They were both captured after a diversionary raid across southern Indiana and Ohio. Morgan famously escaped from the Ohio Penitentiary where they were held but Duke did not. Duke was exchanged almost a year later. Records pertaining to the imprisonment of Morgan and his men also note Morgan's friends living in the north as "nuisances." They also likely aided him once he escaped the penitentiary.

[134] Basil Duke, *Reminiscences of General Basil W. Duke, C.S.A* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1911), 364; 368.

experiences and the women's activities during the war into their propaganda to promote the Lost Cause mythology. The bonds created with the southern-sympathizing women during the war ultimately uplifted the male prisoners' needs and helped them survive, which translated into post-war dedication to commemorating the southern view of the Civil War. Women in the north who supported the Confederacy during the war were able to join national UDC post-war. Chartering UDC chapters provided an outlet for northern women to embrace the UDC mission and promote Lost Cause beliefs in the north during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The southern-sympathizing women in the north who helped the prisoners during the war held to their southern worldviews and allegiances, which allowed them to form chapters of the UDC in the north. Even though the UDC was more prevalent in the south, chapters were formed in the north and those locations can be tied to cities that once held large populations of Confederate prisoners of war. For example, there were three principal military prisons in Illinois during the last year of the war: Chicago, Alton, and Rock Island. By 1917, Alton and Chicago were the locations of the four total Illinois UDC chapters. Chicago had three chapters and Alton had one.[135] In total, by November 10, 1917, there were 172 chapters in thirteen Union states and the District of Columbia.[136] Women had input and led the funding drives that erected monuments in the northern cemeteries where Confederate prisoners of war were buried.

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[135] *Minutes of the 24th Annual Convention of the United Daughters of the Confederacy Held in Chattanooga, Tennessee*, *November 14-17, 1917* (Richmond: Richmond Pres, Inc, Printers, 1918), 139, accessed December 5, 2020, https://archive.org/details/MinutesOf TheAnnualConvention/page/n147/mode/2up.

[136] *Minutes of the 24th Annual Convention of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 131-159. If the Union territories are added into the count, there were 220 UDC chapters in twenty states and the District of Columbia. Tennessee is not included in count as it was one of the eleven states that seceded. The UDC chapters in western territories also support Heather Cox Richardson's arguments about southern men going west to form a new Western identity, one that contained strong undercurrents of southern worldviews. The UDC women played a part in forming that new Western identity. (*West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War*, New Haven: Yale university press, 2007).

The UDC were not only successful in the south, but they were equally influential, and possibly with more dire results for the United States as a whole, in the north and their foothold started with the southern-sympathizing women in the north helping Confederate prisoners of war. The monuments largely funded by UDC fundraising efforts, which remain still influence the community's perceptions regarding these sites. For instance, on April 22, 2018, tensions were high at Oak Woods cemetery in Chicago and witnessed two conflicting memorial services: one for dead Confederate prisoners of war and one for Black lynching activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Many of the Wells-Barnett commemorators did not want her burial location in the same cemetery as the Confederate prisoners, even though the prisoners were buried in Oak Lawn decades before Wells-Barnett's internment. On this spring day though, a small group of supporters of the Sons of the Confederacy with Confederate soldier reenactors laid a wreath at the Confederate dead prisoner of war monument, while at the same time Smash White Supremacy activists counter protested by having a memorial service for Wells-Barnett and advocating for the removal of the monument. They argued that the "presence of the statue itself is an insult" and encouraged racism.[137] The granite monument, erected in 1895, is thirty feet tall with a bronze statue of a soldier on top and was designed and dedicated in promoting a false reconciliation more than true memorialization. The monument promoted the Lost Cause myth of the brave Confederate soldier not the recognition of those who had died and were buried at this site. In 1911, the Commission for Marking the Graves of Confederate Dead added a bronze tablet recognizing the known Camp Douglas dead to the monument.[138] Smash White Supremacy

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[137] Elvia Malagion, "Confederate Group, Activists, Hold Competing Ceremonies at Chicago Cemetery, *Herald and Review*, April 23, 2018, https://herald-review.com/news/state-and-regional/confederate-group-activists-hold-competing-ceremonies-at-chicago-cemetery/article_3f4fa021-4f51-58db-8d01-a8b06ca7bda8.html.

[138] "Our Monument in Chicago," *Confederate Veteran*, Vol. III, No. 6 (June 1895), 176-179; U.S. Congress, House, Report of Commission for Marking Confederate Graves, 62nd Congress, 3rd session, document 1105, 1912, 17;

and other anti-racist groups see this Chicago Confederate monument as a sign of the acceptance of white supremacy and segregation policies of the past and a shrine for those in the north with racist ideology to gather around today. The UDC were fighting a memory war and unlike the Confederate military their tactics were successful in the north.

The conduct of the southern-sympathizing women living in the north was not purely performed out of the standards of nineteenth century benevolence but were political actions recognized by Confederate and Union leaders. The women's actions forced military leaders into recognizing them as it was the women who were supplying the prisoners with clothes, food, and other sundries saving both the Union and the Confederacy costs they would have been forced to incur in supplying prisoners. Important elements brought out by studying their activities during the war include that the southern-sympathizing women on the homefronts were fighting in the war by helping prisoners survive and in some instances helping them escape and that in their efforts to supply the prisoners, the women became an integral part of the Union supply line. The disagreements between local citizens, citizens and the military, the violence, and riots in the communities where prisons were located also challenge the idea of peaceful Civil War northern homefronts as a place far removed and apart from the war. In addition, the research reveals that the women were part of organized networks that not only provided physical and psychological support during the war but continued their organization and political efforts post-war to help create a national Lost Cause memory.

"Confederate Mound at Oak Woods Cemetery Chicago, Illinois" National Park Service, accessed February 22, 2021, https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/national_cemeteries/illinois/Confederate_Mound_Oak_Woods_Cemetery.html.

CHAPTER 4 "MARKET SQUARE"

The "good time" is coming my friends,
May it see none but joyful tears;
Grind bone 'till captivity ends,
And away with your doubts and fears.
S.B.S., "Sonnets on Bones," ca. 1862[1]

On October 19, 1864, Union Private Benjamin F. Booth, Co. I, 22nd Iowa Infantry, was captured in Virginia at the Battle of Cedar Creek and taken to Libby prison in Richmond. On November 4, 1864, Booth was transferred to a military prison in Salisbury, North Carolina. The twenty-six-year-old "harness maker" eventually found himself held captive as a prisoner of war for one hundred and thirty-nine days at the "Chambers' factory property" in Salisbury, North Carolina.[2] Salisbury witnessed an influx of prisoners in the fall of 1864, so when Booth arrived the prison was exceedingly overcrowded. The property was so overpopulated that the town mayor wrote a letter to Secretary of War Sedden requesting "one-half of the prisoners confined in Salisbury be removed to some other prison" as the area lacked the resources for the number

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[1] S.B.S., "Sonnets on Bones," quoted in W.C. Bates, *The Stars and Stripes in Rebeldom: A Series of Papers Written by Federal Prisoners (Privates) in Richmond, Tuscaloosa, New Orleans, and Salisbury, N.C.* (Boston: T.O.H.P. Burnham, 1862), 48.

[2] "Harness Maker" was listed as occupation under B.F. Booth in the 1860 U.S. Census for Mechanicsburg, Sangamon County, Illinois and, in 1920, on the rolls for the U.S. National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938, Danville, Illinois M1749, 282 Rolls, NARA, Records of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15. *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, N.C.), November 20, 1861, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress, accessed May 2, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica. loc.gov/lccn/sn84026561/1861-11-20/ed-1/seq-2/. Tobacco and cotton warehouses were frequently converted to military prisons in the south; Salisbury was one such prison. The Chambers cotton factory, which became Salisbury prison was originally reported to house 600 prisoners and later renovated to accommodate 1,500 to 2,000. The "daily average" number of prisoners from October 1864 to December 1864 was 8,200 prisoners with a "daily average" of twenty-two deaths per day (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 1222).

who were currently held there. Conditions were less than ideal when Christmastime arrived. Those who find themselves away from home during holidays often pause for reflection and Booth was no exception. On December 23, he was reflecting on previous Christmas preparations and celebrations, but this year he was also thinking about the "many who are alive this morning, who will not be living when Christmas morning dawns." One of the more obvious reasons why he was contemplating death was that he was himself ill and likely suffering from scurvy. Booth was in excruciating pain. His feet were swollen, and his knees and ankles were so weak that he was nearly unable to walk. He knew the danger he was in and credited the fact that he was still alive to his industry in captivity. The day after Christmas he wrote:

> If it were not for my good fortune in the ring trade I must certainly starve. Fortunately anything made by a Yank is considered by the citizens of this region to be a great prize, invaluable to them as mementoes, and for which they are willing to trade food of such kind as they have, when they would not sell it for rebel script."[3]

The entry, reported to be from his Civil War diary and included in his memoir, specifically informed his readers what activities Booth undertook while a prisoner of war in supplementing his food rations. Staving off starvation was his self-professed motivation, but his entry also provides a glimpse at the contemporary North Carolinians' assessment of Confederate currency and how their perceptions regarding currency affected the Union prisoners and the informal Salisbury prison market. The local newspaper corroborates Booth's interpretation of why the citizens were trading with food for "mementoes" instead of buying with currency. A few weeks prior to Booth's notation, the *Western Sentinel* led with an editorial berating the citizens for their lack of trust in Confederate money. The editorial claimed southerners were voicing their

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[3] Benjamin F. Booth, *Dark Days of The Rebellion, or, Life in Southern Military Prisons: Giving a Correct and Thrilling History of Unparalleled Suffering, Narrow Escapes, Heroic Encounters, Bold Achievements, Cold Blooded Murders, Severe Tests of Loyalty, and Patriotism. Written from a Diary Kept While in Libby and Salisbury Prisons in 1864-5, and Now in Possession of the Author* (Indianola, Iowa: Booth Publishing Company, 1897), 208-211.

discontent and crying out, "Poor Confederate money! Miserable trash! Worthless paper! A cartload wouldn't buy a splinter from a fence rail! Not worth a ----dogon! Fit only for the fire!"[4] Coinciding with the local cynicism towards Confederate script was the fact that western North Carolina did not witness large scale troop movements or battles, so the food supplies were not as stretched in areas where military skirmishes and troop foraging depleted the farmers' grain stores and herds of livestock. It appears, near Salisbury that the abundance of foodstuffs combined with the locals' skepticism regarding Confederate currency made exchanging food for prison relics an acceptable trade agreement and one that greatly benefitted the Union prisoners of war.

Booth's post-war narrative is significant not only for revealing details about a prison few ex-prisoners wrote about, but it also contributes to understanding how prisoners survived. The prisoners learned early on in their captivity that to obtain extra food or other necessary objects, they needed to be resourceful.[5] Their resourcefulness is readily apparent in Booth's, and nearly every other, post-war narrative's inclusion of making, selling, or trading prison-made relics to guards, citizens, and other prisoners for items they needed. This chapter is focused on the material culture produced in military prisons. In keeping with the theme of prisoner of war

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[4] *Western Sentinel* (Winston, N.C.), December 8, 1864, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed May 4, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026526/1864-12-08/ed-1/seq-1/.

[5] Union money was confiscated by prison commanders and exchanged for Confederate currency. The currency was recorded in a ledger where prisoners could charge sundry item purchases from camp sutlers. Cash was considered contraband in Union and Confederate prisons and not allowed although some prisoners were successful in hiding currency, so it was found inside every Civil War prison. The regulation was intended as a barrier to prisoners bribing guards and contrary to the fuss made by prisoners in their narratives it was a reasonable regulation. While there seemed to be enough food in the Salisbury community for citizens to trade, I am not saying that the war had not affected their food resources. Confederate impressment of grain, livestock, and other goods occurred in North Carolina too. North Carolina was expected to provide for the Army of Virginia (*OR*, Series II, Vol. 8, 11). When Prisoners kept arriving the citizens did protest by writing a letter to Sec. of War Sedden, in November, asking them to do something as there would not be enough food and water for all of the 10,000 (*OR,* Series II Vol. 7 1128-1130). Prisoners put an extra strain on an already strained system and when a large number of prisoners, including Booth, were exchanged starting in February 1865 the Charlotte newspaper noted it was good that they were being sent north as it "will relieve us of the heavy burden of guarding and feeding thousands of prisoners" (*The Western Democrat*, Charlotte, NC, March 7, 1865, image 3, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Library of Congress accessed May 10, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020712/1865-03-07/ed-1/seq-3/).

agency, I am employing the methods of material culture scholarship by "using objects to approach human thought and action." Just as the ex-prisoner narratives must be reinserted into the Civil War prison historian's toolbelt, the prison-made artifacts must be added to the tool chest. Folklorist Henry Glassie argues that if historians limit themselves to textual documents, "we miss the wordless experiences of all people, rich or poor, near or far."[6] Researching what prisoners made and why tells a story which provides more details than the words left in the abundant Civil War letters, diaries, and memoirs.

Understanding the Civil War prison market system and its limitations and opportunities based on class, race, and gender is vital to understanding each class of prisoners' options for their individual agency. For instance, studying the material culture of Civil War military prisons revealed a clear racial difference from my previous chapter regarding the captive USCT. The captured black soldiers were unable to participate in these markets as they did not have the time, nor could they freely mingle with guards and citizens as the white prisoners did. The black prisoners of war were predominantly forced to labor on military fortifications, so they could not spend their days creating items to sell. Their songs were their folk-art, and their singing was free for those who chose to listen.[7] Recognizing the black prisoners' exclusion from the "market square" increases the importance of the captured soldiers held at Charleston Jail arguing for their freedom through citizenship rights as their only path of relief was to be exchanged.

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[6] Henry Glassie, *Material Culture* (Indianapolis, Indiana State University, 1999), 41; 44.

[7] The captured black soldiers did have access to other enslaved people leased to the military and also laboring on fortifications and likely benefited from their aid. There is a need for scholarly research pertaining to how local enslaved helped captured black soldiers. I argued that the locals helped the captured black soldiers at Charleston Jail by smuggling out letters. The narratives of escaped white Union prisoners of war fully acknowledge the help they received from local enslaved in hiding, guiding, and feeding the escaped soldiers. Lorien Foote also incorporated enslaved helping escaped white Union prisoners of war into her scholarly monograph (*The Yankee Plague: Escaped Union Prisoners and the Collapse of the Confederacy*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016). There is little doubt the local enslaved, who were laboring with the malnourished USCT, also helped them by sharing food and medicine.

Gender played a significant role as Southern-sympathizing women living in the north were integral to Confederate prisoners participating in the "Market Square." The women often personally delivered or shipped via the express systems the raw materials needed, such as gutta percha (early form of rubber), for prisoners to make the relics they sold.[8] Griffin Frost even mentioned two women, by name, in his narrative doing such for the St. Louis prisoners.[9] Some prisoners also sent, via express, bulk artifacts they made to be sold by the sympathizing women who were aiding them, and an instance of this will be covered in this chapter. An important distinction between Union and Confederate prisoners of war was that the white Union prisoners of war did not have access to large, organized networks of sympathizing women living near the Confederate prisons, so their markets were limited to what they could sell and barter with their guards, local citizens, and each other. The obvious importance of these markets is that participating in them increased the chances of survival by providing them with food and other items, but the less obvious benefit of the markets was that those who created jewelry and other folk-art were aiding their mental health, which also increased the chances of survival, and to be sure the prisoners' mental health was an essential element to surviving captivity.

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[8] I use relics to describe the assortment of prison made material culture as the prisoners themselves used the term. They realized these items would garner historical interest in the future. Relics is also useful as it covers the assortment of items made as jewelry, fans, knick-knacks, gaming (i.e. chess pieces, dominoes, dice), personal hygiene (i.e. combs, toothpicks), and more. Gutta Percha was an early form of latex rubber. It is made from the gum extracted from the leaves of the *Palaquium oblongifolia*. Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 248; 250; 274. Booth refers to the area of trading in Salisbury as "Market Square" and all prisons had an area where prisoners set up shop and advertised their trade (i.e. barber, tailor, tinsmith, launderer, etc.). For instance, trading happened on "Broadway" in Andersonville (Warren L. Goss, *The Soldier's Story of His Captivity at Andersonville, Belle Isle, and Other Rebel Prisons*, Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1867, 107). "Broadway" was the lane opening through the north gate. Robert Sneden, a captured Union mapmaker, created some of the best sketches of Andersonville prison. These sketches include noting "Broadway" on his "Plan of Andersonville" and a sketch of "A Barber's Shop" (Charles Bryant, Jr. and et al, ed., *Images from the Storm: Private Robert Knox Sneden*, New York: The Free Press, 2001, 216; 206). Jacob Omenhauser a Confederate prisoner of war at Point Lookout sketched a caricature of a barber shaving another prisoner with a sign for prices: "shaving 8 crackers, shaving 3 crackers, shampooing 3 crackers" along with other images of prisoners trading with each other and Union officers (John Jacob Omenhauser Civil War sketchbook, Maryland manuscripts, Item 5213, University of Maryland, accessed May 4, 2021, https://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/4939).

[9] Frost, *Camp and Prison Journal*, 220.

This chapter will demonstrate that resilient Civil War prisoners worked by themselves or with their comrades and used their individual skills to create folk-art for barter or sale in prison informal markets with the main goal of acquiring extra provisions for their individual physical needs. I will use the ex-prisoner narratives for framework but focus on prisoner of war artifacts found in museums to flush out how their individual folk-art increased their chances for survival. I will introduce three makers of prison relics, providing details of the lives of two white Union privates and one Confederate officer.[10] I argue that their efforts in creating relics not only aided in obtaining food, clothing, or medicine, but the efforts also helped keep their minds active, ensuring their mental as well as their physical health.

The items prisoners of war created, whether it be jewelry, drawings, poems, or other relics, were the result of skills and talents the prisoners already possessed, and many of these items were crafted specifically to sell. Booth is an example of a nineteenth century craft maker since his pre-war occupation was as a traveling harness maker. He was familiar with the pre-Industrial Revolution "old forms of craft, in which artisans supplied necessities for everyone." A considerable number of Civil War prisoners were familiar with "old ways of manual production" and living in the Victorian Era where the world witnessed the beginning of the Arts and Crafts Movement. This movement was "a concerted effort to put pleasure back into work and to wrest *making* from the grip of the machine and reinvest it with humanity."[11]

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[10] Officers and enlisted soldiers also experienced vastly different conditions in their captivity. The government administrations, on both sides, considered officers as virtuous citizens who deserved to be treated humanely and with dignity. The common soldier's rights as citizens or their dignity did not concern the administrations, as much. Conditions in camps that held only enlisted men were much more deplorable, especially in housing and sanitary conditions. Regardless of the camp conditions, both officers and enlisted soldiers relied on the prison economic markets to acquire resources to help them survive.

[11] Janet Koplos, *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010), 1-2.

The contemporary appreciation of handmade prison folk-art as well as the fact that the relics were historically significant relics likely influenced northern and southern locals' impulse to barter with and buy from the prisoners. John T. Davidson, a guard assigned to Elmira, recollected at an 1892 ex-prisoner of war encampment that "old men and women, young men and maids, throughout Elmira and vicinity, were decorated largely with these thousand and one devices made by these Confederate prisoners." Davidson attributed the purchases as a result of the "charitable and kindly feeling of the Northern people to their enemy," but without a doubt there were more complex reasons behind the citizens' willingness to buy the artifacts.[12] One of those complexities was certainly that New York citizens, similarly to other northern locations, included those who supported the Confederacy and who willingly helped the prisoners of war at Elmira. For instance, *The Alleghanian* newspaper shared a news story claiming that at Oswego, New York "eight to ten - sympathizers with treason in that place" were accidentally locked in a train car of prisoners heading to Elmira. The citizens found themselves in this peculiar situation after they "managed to communicate with the prisoners, and distribute among them little presents of tobacco, &c., to prove to them they were not without friends in the North." The Oswego stop was brief, and apparently the "friends" who boarded the train car did not have time to jump off the boxcar, so they arrived at the Elmira depot with the prisoners.[13] Regardless of whether this

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[12] John T. Davidson, "How Rebel Prisoners Fared in Elmira," (lecture, Scranton, Pennsylvania, January 28, 1892), quoted in Clay W. Holmes, *The Elmira Prison Camp; a History of the Military Prison at Elmira, N.Y.* (New York: Putnam and Sons Publishing, 1912), 296. Davidson's presentation was a response to reports of horrible conditions at Elmira. His evaluations of conditions do not stand up as accurate, but rather were perceptions influenced by his personal belief systems. Elmira's mortality numbers were consistently higher than the other northern principal prisons which points to some failure in adequately caring for prisoners of war. Jewelry and other relics made from gutta percha and bone were donated to local museums post-war which demonstrates there was an intrinsic value for those who bought or sold them during the Civil War. Finding sources of those who bought the artifacts that discuss their personal motivations is ongoing.

[13] *The Alleghanian* (Ebensburg, Pa.), 15 Sept. 1864, image 4, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed May 18, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85054845/ 1864-09-15/ed-1/seq-4/. Note the contemporary newspaper spelling as "Alleghanian," not Alleghenian, is accurate.

event occurred, the mere printing of this news item demonstrates there was support in New York for the prisoners. Undoubtedly, the Confederate prisoners also had "friends" living near Elmira prison who eagerly bought the items they made.

Civil War prisoners created prison folk-art. This must be recognized, and future scholarship should include artistic as well as historical interpretations. The artifacts meet the criteria of folk-art as their characteristics included elements of both utility and decoration, they were handmade from recycled components, produced to sell, and revealed signs of empowerment, and lastly, they were inclusive of class - officers and enlisted men made relics for the same reasons.[14] Although prisoners were making items to increase their chances for survival, there still existed an added benefit of personal satisfaction with the items they created which coincided with the ultimate functionalities and benefits of their designs. For instance, an intricately designed cane made from a tree branch by an Andersonville prisoner who was suffering from scurvy needed to be strong enough to support him while walking, but the prisoner did not necessarily need to spend hours decoratively carving it. Ultimately though, the hours spent carving his cane were as beneficial as simply possessing the walking stick. Creating relics for the prison markets was not a result of prisoners thinking it was merely an "attractive path to pursue because no education or experience was required."[15] Prison folk-art was not some arbitrary act. Many of the prisoners were craftsmen and artists before the war took them away from home. In short, Booth, and others, possessed what we recognize today as transferable skills,

[14] "What is Folk Art," Museum of International Folk Art, accessed May 10, 2021, http://internationalfolkart .org/learn/what-is-folk-art.html.

[15] Michael Grey, *The Business of Captivity: Elmira and Its Civil War Prison* (Kent: Kent State University, 2001), 79. Michael Grey's in-depth exploration of how the community of Elmira, New York, profited off its Civil War prison was groundbreaking. When he converted his dissertation about Elmira's prisoners and their markets into a monograph, he did not fully understand the intricacies of how the prisoner informal markets worked across Civil War prisons nor the importance of these markets for prisoners' mental health.

and they applied their talents for their own benefit, intentionally to participate in prison economic informal markets. The informal market was not hidden or regulated by prison authorities.

There were five avenues for prisoners to obtain food, clothing, and sundries: Government provisions, relief agencies, friends and family sending packages, camp sutlers, and bartering.[16] These avenues of procurement were the result of both formal and informal markets which related to prisoners' resources. Government provisions, relief agencies, and packages were controlled by the authorities; they dictated what could be allotted to prisoners. Cash allowed prisoners to buy food, clothing, and medicine off the markets, but prisoners' cash on hand was regulated.[17] Prisoners lacked control over what items administration provided and limited power in their transaction with the camp sutler.[18] Sutlers were men who were allowed to sell approved sundries inside the stockade directly to the prisoners. The Union and Confederate governments' sanctioned supply chain constituted the formal market of trade in Civil War prisons.

The informal market was where prisoners demonstrated their power through the act of bartering and settling transactions on their own terms. Prisoners also revealed their resourcefulness in the ways they reappropriated materials within the stockades to fashion items

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[16] The two major relief agencies were the U.S. Sanitary Commission and the U.S. Christian Committee. These groups were the result of local Union Ladies Aid efforts to provide food and resources for the Union soldiers. Northern men created national organizations originating from the women's efforts. This type of formal national organization did not occur in the Confederacy. See Judith Giesburg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000); Jeanie Attie, *Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[17] Cash was held by prison authorities, but their money was credited to a personal account allowing prisoners to purchase items from sutlers.

[18] Ellen Sheffield Wilds, *Far from Home: The Diary of Lt. William Peel, 1863-1865* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2009), 134. Men, often through patronage, were awarded contracts to sell approved sundries inside the stockade directly to the prisoners. The exchanges were recorded, and funds deducted from prisoner accounts. The position of camp sutler was a lucrative business.

to sell or trade in the informal markets found in the military prisons. Some of the more common materials claimed and transformed were rubber and brass uniform buttons, wood, and bones. One prisoner affirmed that he recycled a meat bone to create a carved snake relic. In other words, prisoners' agency was found in the methods they procured their resources, the objects they created, and the price for which they were willing to sell their items. These objects were most notably sold to their prison guards, local citizens, and the sutlers. The guards were not simply buyers, as sometimes they also acted as middlemen in the selling of relics to local citizens. Those types of transactions removed some of the prisoners' agency because ultimately the guards peddled the relics at whatever price they deemed appropriate and kept whatever proceeds of the sale they wanted. Historian Michael Gray mentions one such profiteer. Captain John H. Kidder, who within two days of his brief duty as a guard at Elmira prison, inserted himself into the informal market. Kidder also wrote his wife telling her to inform one of his friends to come to Elmira to work at "selling rings" as he could make "a pile of money." Gray's research determined Kidder made an eye-opening $500 in a few months from his buying and selling Confederate prison made folk-art.[19]

Historians' interpretations of Civil War prison economies most often only mention black market activities. Black markets develop under formal markets when players buy and sell merchandise outside the bounds of regulations. These activities included liquor and gambling. They were, and perhaps still are, perceived as more scandalous and point to what was thought of as the more unsavory side of nineteenth century culture, both for the authors and their audience. Prisoners were not allowed to have cash on their persons per Article XIV of the Office of

[19] Gray, *The Business of Captivity*, 80-82.

Commissary-General of Prisoners.[20] Cash was confiscated upon admittance to the prisons and declared contraband. This regulation reduced the likelihood of prisoners bribing guards for favors or aid in escape plans. Therefore, the selling for cash of prison-made relics between guards and prisoners was black market activity, and Booth details an example of one such occurrence when he sold a ring to a guard for cash. The informal market transactions between citizens and guards were not recorded, omitting from the historical record any trace of producers and consumers. It is only through letters, diaries, and published narratives that historians may interpret the important role of the informal prison markets and the relic-making business.

Civil War prison folk-art can be understood in terms of its "artistic, social, and economic implications," and the ex-prisoner narratives are a good starting point for accomplishing this.[21] Booth's narrative provides details about how he made his items, which prisoners he was competing with, and not only who were the buyers but what their motivations were for participating in the prison market. Booth within a month of his capture used his pre-war craftsman skills and "commenced the manufacture of rubber rings" while held in Salisbury prison. Booth's first step in making gutta percha "finger rings" was acquiring the tools and raw material he needed, so he purchased a "pair of small pincers, or plyers" and melted down the "center portions of a fine-tooth comb" (see Image 4.1). His transferable skills stand out when he explained the melting process made the rubber "pliable like leather." Then he used a stick to wrap the hot rubber around, making a circular mold. Removing the ring required making a cut in the hardened rubber, which meant he had to create a clasp. Booth explained his final step as securing the set by using "rivets being put through it and clinched on the inside of the ring."

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[20] *OR*, Series II, Volume VII, 74.

[21] Robert Bishop, Barbara Cate, and Lee Kogan contributors, *Museum of American Folk Art Encyclopedia of Twentieth Century American Folk Art and Artists* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1990) 11.

Riveting is also a method used in leatherwork. The rings would then sell for somewhere between "$5.00 to $10.00 in rebel script." Booth admits though that the prisoners would rather trade for "eatables as we can get more for them in that way."[22] Booth's efforts in creating rings provide insights into the prison economy and culture. In addition, his details enable modern folk artists to duplicate his process and establish he was an experienced craftsman.

Image 4.1 Civil War gutta percha rings[23]

Prisoners made an assortment of artifacts and competed against each other for buyers. Lewis Auringer and W.B. Hill were singled out by Booth as his "rivals in the relic making business." Auringer carved "Bibles, finger-rings, cuff-buttons," as well as other items out of discarded meat bones. Hill created wooden spoons from their available wood source to make spoons for prisoners to use when eating. Booth noted that Hill's "wares are in good demand, but those who need his goods the most are the prisoners, and they have not the money with which to buy." This statement again points to the fact that currency was in short supply for prisoners. Auringer and Booth's competition did not keep them from exchanging "trinkets" though. The night before Auringer escaped Salisbury prison he gave Booth a "beautiful little bone Bible" and

[22] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 140-142.

[23] "Finger Ring," *Accession No.:* 1948.26.1, North Carolina Museum of History, accessed May 21, 2021, http://collections.ncdcr.gov/RediscoveryProficioPublicSearch/ShowItem.aspx?18926+.

Booth gave Auringer a rubber ring to aid in remembering each other.[24] The fact that Auringer was carving Bibles, and this was his choice of trinkets to give to Booth, demonstrated the maker's religiosity. Bone and wooden Bibles were commonly carved relics and are now easily found in museum archives. Bibles and other sacred themed prison folk-art speak to the prisoners seeking strength and comfort and reaffirming their belief that their cause was the just side in the enemies shared Christian God's eyes (see Image 4.2).[25] Both men claimed, in 1897, that they still had their relics. Booth wrote that the bone Bible was sitting next to him on the desk as he wrote his

Image 4.2 Bone Bible

memoir. He also lamented Auringer's death, as Booth had heard Auringer was killed in the escape attempt. But Auringer's testimonial for the book after its release revealed not only that he was alive, but that he still had the ring, and it was his "most cherished relic of Salisbury."[26]

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[24] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 144; 186-187.

[25] "Figure of a Bible carved by Alexander A. Lomax, 12th Mississippi Infantry," Accession Number: 1967.1.1, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, accessed May 10, 2021, https://www.mdah.ms.gov/senseofplace/tag/museum-of-mississippi-history/. The sacred artifacts created by prisoners of war could be added to the understandings of the role religion played in Civil War soldiers' belief systems. See Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson, *Religion and the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Steven E. Woodworth, *While God is Marching on: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001); George C. Rable, *God's almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[26] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 278-279; 364-365.

Excerpts about prison informal markets in the published memoirs often provide few details; sometimes they are just a passing mention, and other times they provide great details. Booth makes clear from the start that his rings were to "add to his scanty store of tobacco, food, etc." As explained in previous chapters, tobacco was not merely a pleasurable habit, but was also used as an alternate currency, and the "etc." would include clothing, writing utensils, and other sundry items. He explains that he traded with other prisoners for the rubber buttons and combs needed to make his rings, and on one particular day he swapped "two brass buttons for the back of a rubber comb." Brass buttons as mentioned earlier were sought-after items. The brass buttons in turn were likely traded to the enlisted Confederate guards – they used them to dress up their uniforms – for food or something else the unknown Union prisoner needed. This exchange suggests that the Union soldier Booth traded with lacked skills needed to create marketable items but instead used his ability to barter raw material resources that he could find for items he could then trade with the guards. Booth ultimately melted the comb, then traded his rings with either the local citizens or the camp sutler for food.

Unlike southern-sympathizing women in the north, Unionist women in the south did not organize or have free access to Union prisoners, which meant Union prisoners were forced to find other ways to interact with local citizens who would aid them. Salisbury was somewhat unique in that it had no water source within the camp, so prisoners interacted with the locals when retrieving water. Booth informed his readers that twenty "water carriers" were assigned to carry barrels to a stream about "200 yards southeast of the stockade" to procure water for the prison. On these work details, the prisoners would encounter "numbers of citizens who are eager to trade a sweet potato or corn dodger for a Yankee relic." The guards usually allowed the prisoners to deal with the locals, although Booth does note one occasion where the "young tar-

heels (South Carolina Reserves) who were mean and devilish enough to prevent us from trading with the citizens." Trading with the locals impacted the sutler business also, according to Booth. Booth claimed that both the "great scarcity of money among the patrons [prisoners] that would be his buyers" as well as the predilection for the North Carolinians to prefer trading food with prisoners over cash transactions limited the sutler's profitability. In short, the prisoners were trading their folk-art for food, which meant the prisoners were not shopping for food from the camp sutler.

The water assignments also varied, so Booth and the others established another market with the sutler and guards.[27] In February 1865, Booth was at the sutler stand when an officer inquired about buying a prison-made ring. The sutler did not have any at the time, so Booth offered to make the officer one. The deal was Booth would create a ring where the "ornaments on it were to be two hearts" for ten Confederate dollars. Booth then took the money to the sutler and bought "three small sweet potatoes and about one-half ration of bread." As mentioned earlier guards were restricted from cash transactions with prisoners, but undoubtedly these types of deals occurred within the walls of every Civil War military prison. This transaction reveals that the sutler found the rings made him enough profit, likely through transactions with the guards and the local citizens, that he also participated in the prison relic informal market by trading his wares with prisoners for their relics.

Civil War prison relics are found in collections across the nation. Unfortunately, many archives fail to completely understand the context or importance of the prisoner of war folk-art found in their collections. For example, when Private Robert R. Roberts, an ex-prisoner of war at

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[27] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 140; 134; 186.

Andersonville, donated his bone carving of a snake to the Illinois State Military Museum (ISMM), he declared that he had "ate the meat from this bone" (Image 4.3). The meaning of that phrase and the purpose of his miniature snake carving were lost over time. The ISMM record provided no answers outside the limited description contained on their original Memorial Hall Card Catalogue. The card simply categorized the bone carved in the likeness of a snake as a "souvenir" from Andersonville.[28]

Image 4.3 Roberts' Bone Relic

Pvt. Roberts of Co. I, 73rd Illinois Infantry, was captured at Chickamauga on September 20, 1863, and remained a prisoner until the war's end. Roberts' Union service involved, according to him, "a wound in the right arm." That injury was a gunshot wound he received during the Battle of Chickamauga. Roberts spent approximately eighteen months of his three-year enlistment in five different Confederate military prisons, including Andersonville where his

[28] Date unknown. Picture taken by Alex Dixon; all rights reserved. In the recent update of ISMM records in PastPerfect, the museum dated the item from 1861-1865, the length of the entire war. The catalogue does not date the artifact, nor the date Roberts donated it. Roberts was captured in the fall of 1863 and lists the prisons and length of time at each one in his pension application. From his pension information it can be determined he was at Andersonville from March to October 1864 which dates the relic to these months.

curio was made. The combination of his battle wound and the effects of scurvy, a result of being a prisoner of war, plagued him for the remainder of his life.[29]

Roberts was first imprisoned at Belle Island in the James River near Richmond, Virginia, and most likely this was where he received his introduction to prison markets and bone carving. W.B. Lawrence, one of the officers of the 73rd Illinois who was also captured at Chickamauga, provided details and an idea of the numbers of soldiers who engaged in carving bones in the Richmond prisons:

> From the beef issued to us we got a large amount of bone. The whitest and hardest portions of it were worked into various ornaments and trinkets. This became quite an industry, and many of the men showed much artistic skill in their work. The case-knives furnished us to eat with were made into saws to divide the bone into proper dimensions. Some of the kindly disposed guards were induced to get us a few small files, and with these tools the bone was fashioned into many curious shapes.[30]

Curio making clearly provided Roberts some agency in providing for himself as months later, in Andersonville, he created his snake. Like Booth, Roberts had pre-war craftsman skills. In 1848, he moved from Ohio to Peoria, Illinois, "where he learned the marble cutters trade."[31] Roberts survived his prison experience, but, by 1869, he found his weakened body made it difficult for him to work, so he applied for his Civil War pension. Eight years later Roberts was seeking an increase in his pension disability, claiming the "destruction of his digestive organs" and

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[29]*Kansas Enrollment of Civil War Veterans, 1889* Roberts was held in Richmond and Danville, VA; Andersonville, GA; Charleston and Florence, SC. Roberts eventually settled in Elk County, Kansas and was buried in Elk Falls Cemetery.

[30] W.H. Newlin, D.F. Lawler, and J.W. Sherrick, *A History of the Seventy-third Regiment of Illinois Infantry Volunteers: Its Services and Experiences in Camp, on the March, on the Picket and Skirmish Lines, and in Many Battles of the War, 1861-65* (Illinois: Published by authority of the Regimental Reunion Association of Survivors of the 73d Illinois Infantry Volunteers, 1890), 569. Richmond converted several warehouses to hold prisoners of war: Libby, Castle Thunder, Castle Lightening, and Pemberton. Belle Isle though was an open stockade on an island reserved for enlisted men.

[31] "R.R. Roberts Dead," *The Longton Gleaner*, Longton, Kansas, October 24, 1902, 2. In the 1850 U.S. Census, Roberts is found living in Ottawa, Illinois, in the home of John Finley who was also a marble cutter. Several other men who claimed their occupation as "marble cutters" were also boarding in Finley's home. By 1860, Roberts had married, moved to Sangamon County, Illinois and was a farmer.

“weakness of his limbs and body.”[32] By 1899, if not sooner, he considered himself “disabled all over more or less.”[33] On October 17, 1902, he died in Kansas, leaving behind, in Illinois, his Civil War prison artifact.

Roberts’ and other prison artifacts help us to understand the Civil War prison experience in three ways. For one, they expose under-recognized economic markets in the prisons. Second, they shed light on prison conditions and how prisoners navigated them. And finally, they reveal prisoners' coping mechanisms to emotionally and physically survive as a war captive. Historian Harold Holzer has noted that although many of these items have not been considered “important” by historians, he realized the artifacts could tell the story of the Civil War with “palpable emotion, drama, significance, and power.”[34] Roberts’ snake carving is just such an artifact. It is an important piece of Civil War material culture that provides insights into a soldier’s agency while held as a prisoner of war. It is an artifact that offers testimony to the resourcefulness of this soldier while also representing an untold multitude of others who used their ingenuity in acquiring resources needed to survive their captivity.

Discovering the symbolic meaning and implications of Roberts’ snake was difficult because scholars have not adequately researched the prisoners’ experience and how it fits into the overall Civil War narrative. And even when scholarly books are written about the prisons, the ingenuity of the prisoners in devising ways to provide for their physical and mental well-being is lost in the historiographical debate over who was to blame for the atrocious living conditions found in the camps and how those conditions resulted in prison mortality rates. But

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[32] Robert R. Roberts, “Affidavit of R.R. Roberts,” May 17, 1877, Pension Application 101654, NARA.

[33] “Robert Roberts,” *Kansas Enrollment of Civil War Veterans, 1889.* No page number alphabetical listing by name.

[34] Harold Holzer and the New York Historical Society, *The Civil War in 50 Objects* (New York: Viking, 2013), xxi-xxiii.

understanding how prisoners survived these military camps sheds light on prisoners' agency, resistance, and ingenuity in the hands of the enemy.[35]

Archive collections reveal soldiers on both sides, regardless of rank, were making jewelry out of bone. Attempting to interpret Roberts' snake required examining other museum collections for clues relating to its purpose and meaning. Richmond, Virginia's American Civil War Museum collection holds an assortment of watch-fobs and chains made from bone, including a relic similar to Pvt. Roberts', albeit more detailed (see Image 4.4). This artifact belonged to

Image 4.4 Witten's Bone Relic

Second Lt. William Witten, Co. D, 23rd Battalion VA Infantry, and the description included "Hook made of bone and carved in the shape of a hand holding a snake."[36] Now that the purpose of the Roberts' curio was clear, the major questions left were what did the snake symbolize and why was it found in both a Union and a Confederate prisoner's folk-art.

The connection for Georgia and the Confederate States of America's identity was firmly rooted in their political culture and memory of the American Revolutionary War. Historian James McPherson pointed out that "abstract symbols or concepts such as country, flag,

[35] Prisoners also found other ways to navigate the military prisons including acquiring positions to work as clerks and laborers outside the stockade walls, but this paper solely focuses on prisoners' agency by making relics.

[36]The American Civil War Museum, "Hook," Catalog No. 0985.13.01346f, accessed July 12, 2017 at http://moconfederacy.pastperfectonline.com/webobject/66D28AC8-6EBF-48CB-A4CE-574769473348.

Constitution, liberty, and legacy of the Revolution figured prominently in their explanations of why they enlisted."[37] These abstract representations disseminated through letters and speeches explicitly influenced contemporary cultural norms and identity whereas the artifacts implicitly reinforced the ideas about who was a "Rebel" or "Yankee" and what those terms meant. Those meanings influenced the Confederate belief that they were fighting "for liberty and independence from a tyrannical government," never considering that their convictions in preserving the institution of slavery were the epitome of cruel and unreasonable authority. The Union soldiers, on the other hand, believed "they fought to preserve the nation conceived in liberty," which tied them to Revolutionary era ideals.[38]

Exactly who was living up to the memory of the Revolutionary heroes was contested. The Confederacy chose to embrace the labels of "Rebels" and "Traitors," comparing themselves to the Revolutionary patriots. Frederick Douglas was one who was not impressed by the Confederacy's appropriation of Revolutionary iconography. In January 1862, Frederick Douglas exhorted in a public address that "*Rebel* and *Traitor* are epithets too good for such common monsters of perfidy and ingratitude." He was offended that Confederate leaders were comparing their actions to the American Revolution heroes and declared:

> Washington, Jefferson, John Jay, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and many other brave and good men, have worn those appellations, and I hate to see them now worn by wretches who, instead of being rebels against slavery, are actually rebelling against the principles of human liberty and progress, for the hell-black purpose of establishing slavery in its most odious form.[39]

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[37] James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 21.

[38] McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 104.

[39] Frederick Douglass, "The Reasons for Our Troubles," (lecture, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 14, 1862), accessed May 18, 2021, https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/4381.

Some, especially those most deeply associated with the institution of slavery, understood the convoluted words and propaganda of the Confederacy, and thought of them as heresy to the memory of the nation's founding. Perhaps Reverend James Freeman Clarke also understood this oxymoron, and it influenced his request of Julia Ward Howe in developing some contemporary material culture. Clarke desired the famed poet to "write some good words for that stirring tune." That stirring tune was the abolitionist's version of "John Brown's Body." This song was sung by the 54th Massachusetts as well as many other Union regiments marching off to war. Howe's lyrics resulted in one of the nation's most enduring patriotic songs, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."[40]

The abstract contemporary ideologies, including the image of a snake, influenced by both groups' collective national as well as individual familial Revolutionary era memory, were recreated in prisoner of war folk-art.[41] Roberts claimed that his snake was carved in Andersonville. Georgia men were predominantly the guards at this camp, so it was important to understand Georgia's material culture to figure out the significance of the snake in relation with Roberts' time at Andersonville. The Soldier Boy Museum in the historic village of Andersonville, Georgia, provided a clue. Inside this tiny museum is a treasure trove of Civil War Era artifacts and uniforms. One of the displays is a Confederate soldier uniform with a waist belt buckle in the shape of a snake.[42] Further research into military accoutrements uncovered the

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[40] Jon Meacham and Tim McGraw, *Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music that Made a Nation* (New York: Random House, 2019), 74-76; Luis Emilio, *History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863-1865* (Boston: Boston Book company, 1894), 32: 39; 296.

[41] Many leaders as well as common soldiers were direct descendants of Revolutionary soldiers and leaders which added to any national collective memory. For example, Civil War Commissioner for Exchange of Prisoners, Ethan Allen Hitchcock, was grandson to the Revolutionary War soldier, prisoner of war, and politician Ethan Allen. Undoubtedly E.A. Hitchcock's ideas concerning the importance of humane treatment of all prisoners of war and equal treatment regarding captured black soldiers was influenced by his grandfather's Revolutionary era experiences and treatises as well as the nations and his family's collective memory of the Revolutionary War hero.

[42] John F. Graf, *Warman's Civil War Collectibles* (Iola, WI: Krause Publishing, 2003), 98. Graf adds the caveat that these plates were available and worn by both sides plus soldiers in the United Kingdom. This author has yet to see

snake and the “Don’t Tread on Me” slogan on the regimental buttons of Georgia’s Chatham Artillery (see Image 4.5).[43] In fact, Georgians quickly appropriated Revolutionary War ideology

Image 4.5 Georgia Artillery Button

and iconography attempting to portray themselves and their cause as the righteous one. For example, within days of President Lincoln’s election, a mob in downtown Savannah hung a flag on the monument of Revolutionary hero Nathanael Greene. The flag included a representation of the Gadsden flag with “Our Motto: Southern Rights, Equality of the States” across the top, and “Don’t Tread on Me” at the bottom.[44] The words “Join or Die” were omitted, but implicitly connect the flags meaning and origin to Revolutionary political legend Benjamin Franklin.[45] Georgia’s paper currency also incorporated Revolutionary symbols. For instance, the city of Milledgeville, which was the seat of Georgia’s Government during the Civil War, issued a $50 paper note that included a rattlesnake wrapped around the Roman numeral “L” located top center. The snake and its ties to the Revolutionary War were an iconic symbol for Georgians

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the snake with a Union uniform.

[43] Harry Ridgeway, “Civil War Buttons,” *Ridgeway Civil War Center*, accessed August 15, 2017, http://www.relicman.com/buttons/Button9901-Backmark-TrebleGilt100.html. His button is also mentioned in John F. Graf’s, *Warman’s Civil War Collectibles* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2003), 133.

[44] R. H. Howell, Lithographer, and Henry Cleenewerck. *The First Flag of Independence Raised in the South, by the Citizens of Savannah, Ga. November 8th, 1860 / drawn by Henry Cleenewerck, Savannah, Ga.; lithographed by R.H. Howell, Savannah, Ga*. Georgia Savannah United States, 1860. [Savannah, Ga.: s.n] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2004665374/. (Accessed August 27, 2017.)

[45] Benjamin Franklin, Join or Die. United States, 1754. [May 9] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, accessed September 10, 2017, https://www.loc.gov/item/2002695523/.

who believed their rebellion was equivalent to the earlier colonial fight for independence from England. These cultural ties to the American Revolution likely influenced Roberts' design choice.

There is little doubt that Roberts created his watch-fob holder intentionally to trade or sell to one of his Georgia Confederate guards who had embraced the propaganda regarding the Revolutionary War. He later donated it to the museum, remarking that he "ate the meat from it," which suggests he wanted it to be displayed as a reminder of what he individually endured as a prisoner of war. While it is impossible to know for certain why Roberts failed to sell his curio, there are several possibilities, including lack of opportunity. He was at Andersonville for six months from spring to fall of 1864, according to his pension affidavit. This included the period where Andersonville was most overcrowded, and during this period few Confederate guards entered the camp (see Image 4.6). Wagons would be brought in to distribute food and then remove

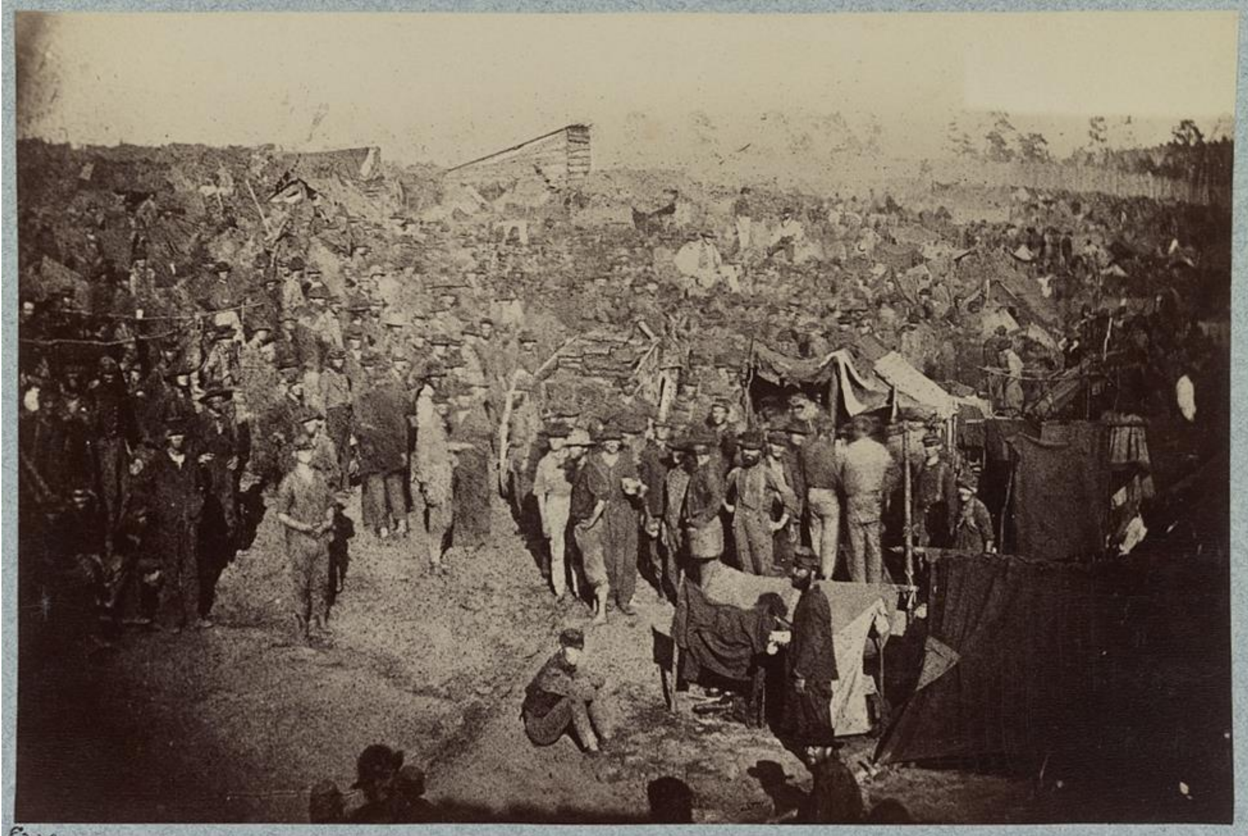

Image 4.6 Andersonville "Issuing Rations"

the dead bodies piled at the gate once a day.[46] The prisoners who were well enough and received work assignments outside the stockade had the most access to guards. The gunshot wound to Roberts' upper right arm and inadequate medical treatment left him limited use of his arm post-war, so it is unlikely he served on any work details at Andersonville, which meant he had fewer encounters with the guards yet somehow, he managed to survive.

Understanding that death was the release for many held in captivity makes Roberts' statement that he "ate the meat from this bone" much more meaningful and poignant. The conditions prisoners of war faced were inadequate, and spoiled food rations combined with unsanitary water resulted in prisoners suffering from three diseases: diarrhea, dysentery, and

[46] A.J. Riddle, photographer. Andersonville Prison, Georgia, Issuing rations, view from main gate, United States Andersonville Georgia, [Photographed 1864, printed between 1880 and 1889], Library of Congress, accessed June 9, 2021, https://www.loc.gov/item/2013645526/. Over 30,000 prisoners in 16.5 acres.

scurvy. These ailments often led to death.[47] The Surgeon Generals determined that the unsanitary conditions at prisoner of war camps were "more unfavorable" than the camps of "active forces" and that the "intestinal fluxes would be both more common and more fatal." Their conclusion from applying data from a sample of nine Union prisons was that in five of those prisons, there were 5,605 deaths attributed to diarrhea and dysentery, which was "more than one-half of all the deaths from disease" and "the mortality rate ranged between 38.11 and 52.77 per 1,000 of mean strength annually" from intestinal diseases. Andersonville is the only prison where Union prisoner mortality data can be tabulated from a southern prison source.[48] There were 16,772 cases of diarrhea and dysentery resulting in 4,529 deaths. The Surgeon Generals determined that "these diseases caused more than one-half, or more exactly 58.7% of all the deaths."[49] Both Confederate and Union datasets include cases of scurvy. The hard truth was that Civil War prisoners, held in the north and in the south, died from intestinal diseases from nutritional deficiencies exacerbated by unsanitary conditions and exposure to the weather.

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[47] *MSHWR*, Volume 1, Part 2., 32-39. Disease was responsible for 77% of Confederate POWs deaths, with diarrhea and dysentery causing 24% of the total Confederate mortality. Numbers are incomplete for Union prisoners, but 88% died from disease at Andersonville with 86% dying from diarrhea, dysentery, scurvy, and anasarca, but this number would be possibly higher than the average mortality rate of all Southern prisons as Andersonville experienced a larger number of prisoners confined in a small area. The overcrowding and one small, slow-moving creek contaminated by not only the fouling of the water from prisoners but the guards camp upstream from the stockade quickly resulted in an unsanitary water source. Note scurvy and anasarca were not included in Northern diseases but were for Andersonville.

[48] Dorence Atwater, *A List of the Union Soldiers Buried at Andersonville. Copied from the Original Record in the Surgeon's Office at Andersonville* (New York: the Tribune Association, 1866). Andersonville death records are complete due to Atwater prison assignment to record the deaths in a ledger. He secretly copied the ledger information and smuggled it out with him on his release. The Union Army confiscated his papers, but he was able to retrieve it when he was helping reinter and identify the dead at Andersonville post-war. He refused to return his papers to the Union Army and commercially published it. He was dishonorably discharged, which meant he would be unable to apply for pension benefits. He was also charged with "conduct prejudicial to good military discipline and larceny," found guilty and imprisoned for two months at Auburn State Penitentiary before receiving a pardon from President Andrew Johnson.

[49] *MSHWR*, Vol. I, Part II, 31-33.

Historian John Neff argues that the "unimaginable scope of soldier death, and its effects on American society and culture, remains one of the most powerful legacies of the Civil War." It was drawn on to influence the immediate memory of the war, pitting the Cause Victorious versus the Lost Cost, and later it was manipulated in the "struggle to establish an inclusive, nonsectional nationalism." In answer to Neff's noticing that death's "significance has rarely been explored" and yet "forms a crucial chapter in the history of the war and its aftermath," I will highlight the scope and meaning of the prisoner of war deaths to the nation.[50]

Poet Walt Whitman was a citizen who witnessed firsthand soldiers and prisoners of war dying, and later he engaged in the fight for the memory of the Civil War. He shared his thoughts on death with the world by lamenting the total dead, but he never parted with the blame he placed on the southern prison keepers for the death of the Union prisoners of war. Whitman's heartache for all the lives lost, though, can be found in his prose "The Million Dead, too summed up - The Unknown," where he grieved for the dead:

> in special Cemeteries in almost all the States—the Infinite Dead—(the land entire is saturated, perfumed their impalpable ashes' exhalation in Nature's chemistry distill'd, and shall be so forever, and every grain of wheat and ear of corn, and every flower that grows, and every breath we draw,)—not only Northern dead leavening Southern soil—thousands, aye many tens of thousands, of Southerners, crumble to-day in Northern earth.

Whitman was intimately aware of the number of men dying on battlefields and in hospitals. He was also acutely aware of deaths in the prison pens, and his writing undoubtedly influenced the perceptions of the general public. Whitman did not hide his vitriol for southern prisons and concluded that they were worse than "Dante's pictured Hell and all its woes, its degradations, filthy torments." Whitman's feelings regarding southern military prisons were

[50] Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead*, 19; 239-241.

unarguably a result of his memories of nursing the exchanged prisoners of war in the Washington, D.C. area hospitals. The soldiers he nursed included his brother George, who nearly died in the officer's prison at Danville, Virginia. Whitman is an example of someone who undoubtedly shared memories of the war with other nurses and those he tended but his "perceptions of the past remain divisive and distinct."[51] Ten years after the war, Whitman believed that death made "the true memoranda of the war" and used statistics of the Salisbury prison dead to drive his points home, but unbeknownst to him the numbers he published were inaccurate.[52]

Whitman was not alone in unintentionally misrepresenting Civil War death and what started in the nineteenth century carries over to the twenty-first century. Today, the "common knowledge" data readily accepted by historians and government agencies underestimates the numbers of prisoner of war deaths. The statistical data that is used is rounded to 30,000 Union

[51] Neff, *Honoring the Dead*, 239.

[52] Walt Whitman, Peter Coviello, ed., *Memoranda during the War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 103. Whitman claims there were "only 85 known, while the unknown are 12,027, and 11,700 of these are buried in trenches at Salisbury" This is an amalgamation of two different sources that were both inaccurate. When the 1868 *Roll of Honor*, Vol. XIV was published, it stated there were about 5,000 stockade and hospital burials plus about 100 bodies reinterred from the depot and the countryside around Salisbury. The report also listed 3,504 names (United States, War Department, *Roll of Honor (XIV). Names of Soldiers Who in Defense of the American Union, Suffered Martyrdom in the Prison Pens throughout the South*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868, 134-235). In 1869, The Quartermaster General published 12,112 as the number of dead for Salisbury in their data for the *Report on the Treatment of Prisoners of War by the Rebel Authorities during the War of the Rebellion* (40th Cong., 3rd sess., Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1869, 776). The 12,112 appears to be a transcription error coming from Major J.J. Dana's introduction of the 1868 *Roll of Honor* report which reported 12,000 Union prisoners of war names were added to the 13,000 "known" from Andersonville. Andersonville and Salisbury will be forever linked as more than 10,000 Andersonville prisoners were transferred to Salisbury and approximately half of them already weakened from the conditions at Andersonville died at Salisbury. The 12,000 Dana refers to were from multiple prisons, but it appears the clerk, in 1869, misunderstood and assigned the 12,000 to Salisbury alone and added the about 100 found nearby to that report. The 11,700, on the other hand, is purely an unreliable guesstimate based on dimensions of trenches originating, in 1871, from Colonel Oscar A. Mack, the "inspector of cemeteries" and shared by Martin Burke, the Superintendent of Salisbury National Cemetery as late as 1894. (National Cemetery Administration, Salisbury, "Historical Information," *Department of Veterans Affairs, https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/salisbury.asp*; Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 351-353). The *OR* includes the Confederate reports from Salisbury before the Andersonville prisoners arrived and for its final months in operation, which although incomplete support the 1868 *Roll of Honor* number of 5,100 as the best approximation of graves (*OR*, Series II Vol. VII, 401-402; Vol. VIII, 245-255).

and 26,000 Confederate dead.[53] These numbers which are repeatedly printed - usually without citation - originate from James Ford Rhodes' multi-volume *History of the United States since the Compromise of 1850* and must be reconsidered.

Rhodes is not entirely to blame for his skewed mathematical computations - he did supposedly go straight to the source for the data - but the contemporary Quartermaster General records included typographical and transposition errors and lacked important subsets of data that were never corrected. Rhodes believed that "the records of Union prisons are nearly complete;" the problem here is that the Quartermaster General reports included an important disclaimer that Rhodes chose to ignore. The Quartermaster General Office realized that their records could "afford only a partial exhibit of the numbers of prisoners" as prisoner record returns only started after July 7, 1862 and even these records omitted Confederate prisoners "held in the custody of

[53] "POWs in American History," Andersonville, National Park Service, last updated January 13, 2021 accessed May 23, 2021, https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/pow_synopsis.htm; U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Federal Stewardship of Confederate Dead* (Washington, D.C., 2016), 10. The Veterans Affairs book cites William B. Hesseltine's introduction for their numbers from his edited volume *Civil War Prisons* (Kent: Kent State University, 1972). Hesseltine does cite James Ford Rhodes, but Hesseltine also made a mathematical or typographical error in his calculations. Hesseltine gave "193,743" as the number of Union prisoners and the Veterans Affairs writers also printed that inaccurate number. The correct mathematical tabulation from Rhodes' numbers is 194,743 (211,411-16,668=194,743). Hesseltine asserted these numbers "seem reasonable" which point to him admitting he had not seen the original letter which is imperative for the context for the calculations. It also points to Hesseltine's own impartiality and bias in evaluating sources. The 16,668 is purported to be the number of Union prisoners exchanged versus 247,769 Confederates exchanged on battlefields; the difference is not reasonable and needs clarification. The *OR* included the "consolidated report of exchanged and paroled prisoners" generated by the Commissary General of Prisons which reported the "Total Aggregate" of prisoners of exchanged and paroled from August 27, 1862 to December 6, 1865 as 329,963 Confederate and 152,015 Union. Excluding Grant's battlefield parole of Vicksburg prisoners in July 1863, battlefield paroles were the norm up until Grant captured Forts Henry and Donelson in February 1862. The 16,668 suggests the quantity represents 1861 alone, but without the letter it is unclear. The following point cannot be stressed enough: there are no Union total aggregate prisoner of war tabulations for the first fourteen months of the war (*OR*, Series II, Vol. VIII, 820-832; 986-1004). I have not found the original Ainsworth letter yet, but it is possible there is a copy at NARA. If so, it must be found and made digitally accessible. If the letter is lost, then historians must refrain from using this data without citing Rhodes and adding context. I do know the letter is not part of the James Ford Rhodes Papers, Carton 1, Massachusetts State Historical Society which holds two letters from Ainsworth dated May 8, 1903 and July 21, 1903 and pertains to the Confederate Congress and the *writ of habeas corpus* (copies in my possession).

provost-marshals, incarcerated in civil prisons, or treated in hospitals."[54] I would add to this list those who died in transit aboard trains and ships to and from the prisons. The same applies to Confederate records, in addition, the majority of the captured black soldiers were also not represented in the data.[55] The Quartermaster General's Office did attempt to rectify the numbers, in 1869, when they published lists of localities where Union and Confederate prisoners of war were buried. Unfortunately, the errors for Union prisoners included, but are not limited to, omitting almost 1,000 at Millen, Georgia and overcounting by 7,000 at Salisbury as well as undercounting the Confederate dead.[56]

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[54] For example, the ledger for Gratiot and Myrtle prisons, in St. Louis, which was run by the Provost Marshal, was filled with "citizens," which implies political prisoners, but a good number of those held in captivity were actually captured guerillas and Confederate deserters. Those "citizens" who have notes where they were transferred to City Point, Virginia for exchange or other military prisons point to them being armed soldiers, not citizens. More understanding of border prisons and the Department of Provost Marshal is also needed in Civil War prison studies.

[55] While it seems the Union authorities kept better track of those who died being moved to and from prisons than Confederates, there are certainly prisoner of war deaths that are unaccounted for or not included in data. One glaring case of prisoner of war transit death not included is the Union prisoners who died on the *Sultana* April 27, 1865. This case applies to Hacker's argument regarding those dying post-war but not included in war calculations. Somewhere between 1,450 and 1,900 Union ex-prisoners of war died when an overloaded steamboat exploded on the Mississippi River. The war was over, they were ex-prisoners, but had they not been prisoners they would have never been on the steamboat. These men should be included in the mortality numbers for prisoners of war as some of their deaths were due to their weakened condition from being imprisoned and unable to swim. The last pages of the *Roll of Honor* volume XIV list five transport ships where Union prisoners died onboard; the *Sultana* is not one of those ships. The USCT are also underrepresented in the prisoner death accounts. In the *Roll of Honor* volume XIV, only two out twenty-six 54th Massachusetts prisoners who were captured at Ft. Wagner and died were listed. Those two, James Allen and Henry Worthington, were also duplicated showing their deaths at Florence and Salisbury. They died in Florence. It is possible that the 54th Massachusetts prisoners are some of the "unknowns" and actually counted, but undoubtedly many captured USCT died laboring on military fortifications and were buried as unknown and uncounted as prisoners of war.

[56] The Roll of Honor Reports Vol. XIV published, in 1868, list two graveyards at Millen one with 960 graves and the other with 682, but the 1869 report only lists 685. The 1868 Salisbury summary estimated 5,100 not the 12,112 as reported in 1869. The 5,100 approximation is verified using reports published in the OR Series II, Volume VII, page 401-402 and Volume VIII pages 245-255. Salisbury deaths were less than 100 until the fall of 1864 when the Andersonville prisoners were transferred to North Carolina. The deaths in the Salisbury hospital were painstakingly kept by the surgeon, but the deaths in the stockade were not documented as well. Salisbury is the one prison where bodies found in the area and interned at Salisbury later were most likely to be escaped prisoners. There were no battles in this area except April 12, 1865 when Union General George Stoneman's advance resulted in burning the prison warehouses and freeing the 300 plus prisoners who were still in captivity. These men were likely too ill to be move and why they were still at Salisbury. It is unknown how many of the 300 survived and any of their immediate deaths would not have been catalogued as prisoner of war death as they were now back in Union hands.

"Report of Commission for Marking the Confederate Dead," 62nd Cong. 3rd Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office,1912), 27.

There is a better, yet still imperfect, number for Confederate prisoners of war dead due to the 1906 "Commission for Marking Graves for the Confederate Dead." The disrepair of many Confederate prisoner of war graves led some former soldiers, Union and Confederate, to advocate for the government to place specially marked Confederate headstones in northern prison and hospital graveyards. When the commission finished a decade later, they had marked 25,560 graves across the fifteen northern states.[57] These numbers are the most reliable concerning Confederate soldiers buried in the non-seceding states, but they are also incomplete as some bodies were previously claimed by family and moved, and some records and locations could not be found. If the numbers from the 1869 Quartermaster Report are added with the Arlington cemetery dead and the states that seceded, the figure for Confederate prisoners of war dead is a minimum of 28,347.[58] In short, the numbers Rhodes provided were low not just for Confederate, but also, Union death and taking into consideration Hacker's arguments, I would suggest the number of total prisoners of war deaths is closer to 70,000. Further, there is not enough data for computing total aggregate mortality. Some individual prisons may be compared, but focusing on data to support arguments based on which prisons was the "worst" means the debate or understandings of Civil War military prisons never move beyond post-war memory and reconciliation rhetoric of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

[57] "Report of Commission for Marking the Confederate Dead," 27.

[58] Confederate prisoners buried in places not included in commission: Arlington, 414; Alabama, 13; Arkansas, 220; Florida, 3; Georgia, 93; Louisiana, 235; Mississippi, 35; North Carolina, 24, South Carolina, 24; Tennessee, 763; Virginia, 963 based on the 1869 Quartermaster General Report. These numbers are possibly also undercounted. There are no definitive datasets, so total aggregate Union versus Confederate prison mortality rates cannot be determined. In a way, I agree with Mark Neely, Jr. historians need to practice more restraint in writing monographs which engage in the "cult of death" ("Was the Civil War a Total War?" Civil War History 50 no. 4 (2004); *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). The exact numbers are not necessary to understand how the Civil War changed the culture of the United States. And those who are writing about Civil War prisons and using mortality rates to support claims of which prison was the "worst" are missing the forest for the trees.

Civil War historians redirecting their focus on prisoners' agency provides insights on how and why some prisoners survived in military prison systems that failed to adequately provide food, clothing, and shelter. The only way for prisoners to combat the lack of rations was to apply their skills and engage in the prison markets, and this was not a solitary endeavor. The men worked together with other prisoners to improve their chances of survival. Booth remarked on these types of occurrences, remarking that "men who have been associated together under better and more favorable conditions, if misfortune chances to overtake them, are able to encourage each other, enliven the surroundings, and thus make their fate, however distressing it may be, more bearable." Booth's "hut-family" included Oliver Crocker and David W. Connely, both of Co. I, 22nd Iowa. Booth acknowledged Crocker was working with him to make rings and Connely sold one of Booth's rings when scurvy left Booth too debilitated to be included on the "water squad."[59]

Pvt. Roberts' skills in carving, in all probability, ensured his status as an ex-prisoner of war versus his name carved on a marble slab and included in the field of stones at Andersonville cemetery. The story of his capture and captivity with five other members of his company supports this conclusion. Roberts, Gilbert Colburn, John W. Fisher, James M. Joy, and Andrew J. Parrish were members of Co. I, 73rd Illinois Infantry. They were all captured at Chickamauga in September 1863. At the time of their capture, Colburn and Parish were twenty-two years old, Fisher and Jay were twenty-three years old, and Roberts was the oldest of the group at thirty-one. Four of the five were also all from the same tiny village of Loami in central Illinois. In all likelihood, they knew each other before the war. Of those five soldiers from Co. I, only Pvt.

[59] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 56; 149; 184: 211; 223. Booth also includes a sketch of Connely identifying him as "My Chum."

Colburn died. Colburn also happens to be one of three brothers buried at Andersonville.[60] Men captured at the same time from the same units usually stayed together inside the prison pens. The Colburn brothers, as a group, could have either thrown in their lot with the men from the 73rd Illinois, or Gilbert could have separated from his company and joined his brothers. Since the three brothers died within eight weeks of each other, it is probable the family grouped together and failed to have adequate community, resources, or skills needed to survive, but Roberts and the others likely stayed together and lived.[61]

Crafting relics was an important part of any prisoners' life because not only did it create a way for them in their powerlessness to derive some agency in how they spent their time, but it also provided them the opportunity to establish their agency in circumnavigating the prison administration by supplying themselves with items they needed. Although we have no testimony from Roberts about his endeavors to sell his relics, there is a wealth of information from other prisons confirming the meaning and selling of relics. It was a business - the business of survival.

Evidence of the business of survival is found in the remaining material culture created by the prisoners of war. One type of prison material culture remaining is mock prison newspapers

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[60] Records show Macca, the mother of Thomas and William, applying for pensions from their deaths. Gilbert was a half-brother from their father's first wife. William and Thomas Colburn from Co. G, 16th IL Cavalry, arrived at Andersonville a few months after Gilbert. All three died of what the Surgeon General referred to as "intestinal fluxes." Gilbert and Thomas died of diarrhea and William died from scurvy. Their father, Adna Colburn, lost three of his sons and his own father, in 1864. Adna found this "too much to bear and he committed suicide by shooting himself through the head," in 1867 (Affidavit of A. M. Browning, Surgeon 22nd Missouri Volunteers found in the "Widows Pensions" Maca Colburn, Application #239483, Certificate #242834, NARA). According to Loami village history, two Colburn brothers, William and Ebenezer were early settlers of Loami and in 1836 built a steam saw and grist mill. After the third mill burnt down one of them supposedly stated "well low am I" and Loami became the village name. Accessed August 20, 2017 at http://www.loami.org/links/#. Dorence Atwater and Clara Barton, *A List of Union Soldiers Buried at Andersonville. Copied from the Official Record in the Surgeon's Office* (New York: The Tribune Association, 1868), 4. Andersonville Grave Numbers: Thomas #2244, Gilbert #2753, William #5597.

[61] Thomas died June 20,1864. Gilbert died July 1, 1864. William died August 14, 1864. Illinois Secretary of State Civil War Muster and Descriptive Rolls Database. The Colburn case demonstrates how Civil War death affected families on the homefront and how difficult it was for women to receive pension aid for their dead sons and husbands.

that were often full of sarcasm and wit. The Fort Delaware "Prison Times" was one of those. This paper was four pages and handwritten by four Confederate officers. They formatted their paper after the contemporary ones and included an advertising section. The editors claimed that "They intended to make the times a good advertising medium. We ask the support of a liberal community" and swore that "Our terms are moderate. Manufacturers will find it to their interest to give it a trial." B.F. Curtright and Co. apparently took them up on their offer and "bought" advertisement space. The Curtright Company informed the readers that they were "manufacturers of plain and Gutta-percha rings, chains, breastpins, etc."[62] What this newspaper represents is the captured officers using their combined knowledge and literary skills to create reading material for the other prisoners. They encouraged "liberal support," from which it can be inferred that they expected prisoners to pay to read it. Writing was their marketable skill, and just as craftsmen made relics, artists made sketches, and barbers set-up shaving stands in prison to sell or trade, the officers created a paper to trade or sell to help them survive. But the paper and the advertisements also demonstrate prisoners with folk-art skills worked together to make and trade items in the informal market. The "manufacturer" Curtright's craftsmanship was likely in ironwork as he was running a blacksmith shop in LaGrange, Georgia with his thirteen-year-old namesake as his apprentice, in 1870. It is unknown who made up the "company" of B.F. Curtright and Company, but it suggests that, like the newspapermen, he was not working alone.

The Fort Delaware "Prison Times" was not the only prison-made newspaper written to help entertain both the writers and the readers. Union Private W.C. Bates published "The Stars

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[62] Harold Holzer and the New York Historical Society, *The Civil War in 50 Objects* (New York: Viking, 2013), 304. William H. Bennett, Aborn Harris, John W. Hibbs, George S. Thomas, "Prison Times," April 1865. Collection IDAHMC, Item ID ah00001-01.tif, New York Historical Society, accessed May 30, 2021, https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16694coll47/id/205.

and Stripes" while held in New Orleans Parish prison; his price was "Attention." After his release, Bates published a book where he added works found from other papers made in Richmond, Tuscaloosa, and Salisbury prisons. In the third edition of "The Stars and Stripes," he included "Sonnet on Bones" which in eighty-four lines explained quite explicitly how to make relics out of bones, but also declared "rings buy bread." The poet was also mindful that his and the others who were keeping busy provided them the "exercise we need to keep disease away." Another edition includes a tongue in cheek report on the ring market. The "Commercial Report of Peleg and Bros" describes the ring market's profitability, declaring "this branch of trade has been unusually good, owing partly to the scarcity of bone, as well as the sudden influx of strangers to our city, who bought up poor bands at fabulous prices."[63] Creating items to sell for food was a survival tool in the north and south, and Roberts certainly was not unique in his bone making endeavors, but it is safe to reason that Roberts' bone carvings supplied extra food rations for him and his comrades, helping them to survive their prison ordeal.

A type of market must exist for there to be the chance to buy or sell relics, and Civil War prisons provided economic conditions which allowed markets to form. Those held in captivity required items that were either not supplied in sufficient quantity (i.e. food, clothes, sanitary), luxury items (i.e. pencils, paper, craft materials), or items used in escapes (i.e. compasses, shoveling instruments). Prisoners' ability to obtain items relied on their talents in creating, gambling, or trading. Prisoners would also use money, either smuggled into the "pen" or money kept track of on an account, in purchasing items from authorized camp sutlers, each other,

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[63] William C. Bates, *The Stars and Stripes in Rebeldom: A Series of Papers Written by Federal Prisoners (Privates) in Richmond, Tuscaloosa, New Orleans, and Salisbury, N.C.; with an Appendix* (Boston: T.O.H.P. Burnham, 1862). 45-48; 56-57. Bates published his book in 1862 and noted other prisoners and prisons. In his dedication, he mentions "the fourteen hundred soldiers released by the rebels in May last." This is an example of prisoners held within the first year of the war when the record keeping was very lax.

guards, or civilians. Often the prices were inflated due to the level of rating as contraband or the scarcity of availability. What was considered contraband and what items camp sutlers were allowed to bring into the prisons and sell depended on the rules set by the camp commander, but some items were restricted from the Commissary-General in all prisons including money, alcohol, military clothing and accoutrements, weapons, and excess clothing.[64] Some prison commanders, for example, allowed prisoners to have a common jack knife and considered it as a basic male accessory, while others considered it a possible weapon and therefore, contraband. Attempts to "smuggle in money and contraband articles" became so troublesome at Johnson's Island that, in the fall of 1864, the Superintendent of the prison suggested to the Assistant Adjutant-General to stop all packages and only allow money to be sent to the commanding officer. This suggestion was offered because contraband items were slipping into the prison even with thorough examination of packages.[65] The prison markets were an important element of the prison environment and, next to escaping, the most obvious method for prisoners to resist the restrictions placed upon them by Union military administration.

Soldiers went to great lengths to hide their contraband, tools, and their completed relics from the prison guards. Examples of prisoners' attempts to be covert are the wooden boxes made by Lt. Witten and Pvt. James T.C. Hundley of Co. K, 34th Virginia Infantry to look like books (see Image 4.7). Witten's even included a note stating his was a "decoy Jewel case."[66] Since the making of relics allowed men to partake in the market, which in turn allowed them to purchase

[64] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 74-75.

[65] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 1025-1026. For more details about Union prisoners and their resistance through escaping see Lorien Foote, *The Yankee Plague: Escaped Union Prisoners and the Collapse of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2016).

[66] The American Civil War Museum, "Box," Catalogue No. 0985.08.00043, accessed July 12, 2017, http://moconfederacy.pastperfectonline.com/webobject/93521132-7856-4BE3-B309-355621113259. Witten's box further declares that it was "to safely carry through the Federal lines his large assortment of trinkets." No doubt, though, this box was made well before his release and was used to conceal his "trinkets" while held at Fort

Image 4.7 Hundley Decoy Box

or trade for food or clothing, it was imperative to hide their tools and their valuables. A loss of either could very well mean the loss of their life. Much about Civil War prisoners' lives and their individual reasons as to how and why they made relics is speculation because rarely do written descriptions by the prisoner and artifacts exist in tandem. In one instance though, we have both the detailed insights, from a diary, and three prison relics made by Lt. William "Billy" Peel of Co. C, 11th Mississippi Infantry while held at Johnson's Island.

Peel was captured at the ill-fated Pickett's Charge in Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and on September 30 he arrived at the Union's island prison in Sandusky Bay, Ohio. One key to staying alive in Civil War prisons was to pool resources and buddy-up, so the odds of acquiring enough food or living through an illness – and to be sure a prisoner would be deathly ill at one time or another – meant soldiers needed a mess-mate and someone to nurse them through the worst parts. Lt. Robert A. McDowell, Co. H, 11th Mississippi Infantry who happened to be from the same regiment and was also captured at Gettysburg became Peel's mess-mate at Johnson's Island. Early in Peel's diary he acknowledges the contribution and importance of McDowell. On

Delaware. Hunley's: The American Civil War Museum, "Storage Box," Item No. 0985.13.00809a, accessed August 13, 2017, http://moconfederacy.pastperfectonline.com/webobject/79B13587-1D8C-413A-A765-518669575480.

February 5, Peel notes that he "was assisted by his friend + constant companion, McDowell" in creating watch chains (see Image 4.8).[67] Peel's intricate linking and inlay highlight his craftsman

Image 4.8 Peel Watch Chain

skills that were presumably taught to him by his civil engineer father James Addison Peel.[68] Throughout the diary not only are McDowell's contributions recognized, but Peel also remarks about sharing the food received from Baltimore women.

Peel and McDowell are another example of soldiers who benefitted from the southern-sympathizing women living in the north organizing to aid prisoners of war. Peel and McDowell made items, then used the express agent to ship them to the Baltimore Ladies Aid members. The women then sold the jewelry and in a return package sent the two men food, clothes, and sundries they requested. In the late summer of 1864, Union Commissary General William Hoffman, in a retaliatory move for the conditions at Southern prisons, restricted food and clothing sent to the Confederate prisoners. The result of this policy was that soldiers who were acquiring additional foodstuffs through their connections were now starving. In Peel's case, he went from consuming edibles sent to him by the Baltimore ladies to catching and eating rats.[69] Once the prisoners were allowed to receive their packages again, Peel ceases to mention eating

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[67] William H. Peel, Ellen Sheffield Wilds, Ed., *Far from Home: The Diary of Lt. William H. Peel, 1863-1865* (Carrollton, MS: Pioneer Publishing Co, 2005), 315. Photo courtesy of Ellen Sheffield Wilds, all rights reserved.

[68] The 1860 U.S. census records the two male Peels living away from their Mississippi family in a Louisiana boarding house most likely working together on a project tied to his father's civil engineering occupation.

[69] Peel, *Far from Home*, 259. For discussion on Hoffman retribution by restricting rations and clothing see David Bush, *Johnson's Island, I Fear I Shall Never Leave This Island* (Miami: University of Florida Press, 2011).

rats. It is certain that these two men supported each other through the trials and tribulations of their prison experience.

The importance of the Baltimore ladies and the packages they sent to Peel became clear in the fall of 1864 as General Hoffman's restrictions were put into effect. On August 22nd Peel noted that he received the package he ordered from his Philadelphia contact some weeks prior. But as the restrictions were put in place with no forewarning to the prisoners his "eatables + clothing" were removed.[70] Peel made jewelry from Gutta-Percha and shells, as well as hand fans made from unidentified material and "ribbon" which he used to "trim" his fans.[71] The Baltimore ladies sent Peel the gutta-percha and ocean shells. Peel identified his creations as "trinkets" and oftentimes mentions that they were "presents" which he would send to his friends.[72] This distinction of his trinkets as gifts combined with the fact that other prisoners created items to send home led historians to overlook this aspect of the prisoners' creativity as merely pastimes or making items to use as physical reminders of their "plight" while in captivity.[73] Certainly, some of these items were carried home after the war, and ex-prisoners likely shared stories with their family about their war experiences based on the relics, but they were much more important than mere mementos while the men were prisoners. For those, such as Peel, who had connections with southern-sympathizing women living in the north, the "trinket" business was literally a life-line.

In July 1864, Peel noted that the rations were remarkably short, especially meat which was just enough for one meal. He further recognizes that the "many here who have no money +

[70] Peel, *Far from Home,* 244-245.

[71] Peel, *Far from Home*, 241.

[72] Peel, *Far from Home,* 103.

[73] David Bush, "Johnson's Island U.S. Civil War Military Prison," in *Prisoners of War: Archaeology, Memory, and Heritage of 19th- and 20th-Century Mass Internment,* ed. Harold Mytum and Gilly Carr (New York: Springer, 2013), 71.

are without friends in Yankee land, must sup on baker's bread +water + breakfast on what is left at supper."[74] Peel's diary before General Hoffman's restrictions represent a healthy, industrious, young man who was supplementing his rations and surviving his unwelcomed captivity, but after the August restrictions he complained of starving and being ill. He wrote almost daily until October; then there are only six entries, with one noting "all are pretty near half starved."[75] From November 1864 to January 1865 his entries are notably less than in early 1864. His February 2, 1865, entry offered that they were receiving food rations that were seven and a half ounces less than "essential to health in a temperate climate." This was Peel's last written sentence. His friend McDowell makes the final notation, marking Peel "departed this life, February 17th A.D. 1865 11 O'Clock P.M. Johnson's Island Ohio. McD His friend + mess-mate."[76] Within five months of General Hoffman's restrictions Peel, aged twenty seven years and ten days, who had spent the last nineteen months as a prisoner of war, died of pneumonia.

Peel's diary also provided details of the Johnson Island informal market, through which he negotiated with guards to ship packages, containing items he and McDowell created, to Baltimore and Philadelphia benevolent society ladies in exchange for money, food, and extra clothing needed to survive the brutal northern winters. Peel clearly identified one Union guard with helping him by most likely bypassing the censors and shipping directly to the ladies. Second Lt. John T. Hawkins of Co. I, 82nd Pennsylvania Infantry was stationed at Johnson's Island from January to May 1864, and Peel identified Hawkins as the Lieutenant in charge of prisoner roll call for his block. On February 10, Peel wrote in his diary that after Hawkins completed the roll call "he took my package of trinkets, according to promise," and in return for this service Peel

[74] Peel, *Far from Home*, 221.

[75] Peel, *Far from Home*, 276.

[76] Peel, *Far from Home,* 311.

“favor[ed]” him with a ring.[77] This entry supports the likelihood there was an arrangement made between Peel and Hawkins concerning the shipment of goods. Then, on May 6, Hawkins informed Peel that his unit would be reassigned in a few days, but before Hawkins left, he sold “a breastpin, two studs, and a pair of sleeve-buttons for eight dollars.”[78] In previous entries, with sales made with the aid of the Baltimore ladies, Peel referenced his profit margin, yet with Hawkins he did not. It seems safe to presume Hawkins needed a little cash before marching out, and this eight-dollar transaction left Hawkins with a portion of the cash. Peel’s omitting the terms between himself and Hawkins leaves unanswered questions; was it mutually beneficial or was Hawkins taking advantage of his position.

All Civil War prisons included regulations forbidding transactions between guards and prisoners to limit the ability of prisoners bribing the guards to allow them to escape. Peel apparently never hatched any escape plots, but nevertheless the transactions between Hawkins and Peel broke Union policy. It is also clear, as mentioned earlier, that Captain Kidder profited off the prisoners’ labor at Elmira. Another Confederate prisoner, John Jacob Omenhauser, documented Union officers buying prison made folk-art in the sketches he created while at Point Lookout (see Image 4.9).[79] Interestingly, Omenhauser’s sketch includes depictions of hand fans,

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[77] Peel, *Far from Home*, 103.

[78] Peel, *Far from Home*, 175-176.

[79] John Jacob Omenhauser, “Fans and Rings,” University of Maryland, Maryland Manuscripts, Item 5213, accessed May 18, 2021 at https://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/4939. The sword and stripes on shoulder means the Union soldier represented was that of an officer. Omenhauser’s folk-art sketchbook is full of images that match the words written in the published narratives.

Image 4.9 Omenhauser "Fans and Rings"

which supports Peel's account of making bulk quantities of them to sell, and it points to the women's efforts in supporting prisoners of war by buying or wanting this feminine fashion accessory. Reading diaries of guards and searching military court martial records will provide historians some information on whether the officers buying relics from prisoners was prevalent or exceptional and whether it was prosecuted or ignored. Readings of sources suggest that it was commonplace and went unchecked in all Civil War military prison systems. Guards, in some cases, generated wealth from the labor of prisoners, and that can be telling regarding the relationship dynamics between the two groups. It also suggests another way that prisoners fall into the category of "other" in the eyes of their guards, thereby making profit from prisoners' labor or perhaps stealing their trinkets guilt free. Peel's market was fairly uncomplicated; he delivered his packages to Union express agents, who were expected to check for contraband, then the next day report to the agents to pay for shipping and receive a receipt.[80] The package would contain various types and amounts of craftwork depending on what trade was most interesting to Peel at the time. He started with watch chains, rings, earrings, and pendants made out of gutta percha with shell inlays; later as his skills developed, he switched to making

[80] Peel, *Far from Home*, 264.

decorative hand fans. Peel's intricate designs served solely as aesthetic value to increase the market value of his trinkets, but other intricate designs suggest it was exclusively for the maker's benefit.

Private Robert S. Patten's cane is an example of a prisoner creating a prison artifact that was purposely created to meet a physical need, but the artistic qualities of it suggest that the time spent on it was art therapy (see Image 4.10).[81] Patten was a member of Company B, 114th

Image 4.10 Patton's Cane

Illinois Infantry captured along with twenty others from his company at the Battle of Brice's Crossroads on June 10, 1864. Patten likely spent the remainder of the war as a prisoner in Andersonville. He was paroled on April 28, 1865 at Jacksonville, Florida.[82] Patten and five others from Company B mustered out May 30, 1865, in Springfield, Illinois. There is no record of him receiving medical treatment, and he claimed, in his 1879 pension application, that he "did not go to the hospital for the reason that I understood all who did go died." It is probable he was referring to the Andersonville prisoners' hospital. Of the original twenty, two officers were separated from the group and sent to Charleston, South Carolina where they escaped.[83] Two men

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[81] Illinois State Military Museum. "Cane." Memorial Hall Card Catalogue #1886. Circa 1863-1865. Pictures taken by Beth Kruse, all rights reserved.

[82] Robert S. Patten, Pension Record, Dec. 13, 1880, NARA

[83] Captain Edward Strickland and 2nd Lt. Joseph Ziegler escaped together on November 26, 1864. Ziegler resigned

of Company B would never return to Illinois; both are buried in National Cemeteries in Georgia.[84]

The 114th Illinois ex-prisoners published no memoirs of their time or making relics at Andersonville, but their pension applications inform historians of their dedication in caring for one another in prison and after the war. John Bolin, who was one of the men captured and affected by scurvy and perhaps syphilis, had at least two men from his company care for him at Andersonville. Bolin's eyesight was so poor that Charles Bierstadt included in his affidavit that he "had to lead him around, could not go by himself." Uriah Robertson's affidavit also claimed he "waited on him and led him about a great deal of the time." A captured prisoner from the 95th Ohio Infantry supplied an affidavit for Peter Claviers and included that "Clavier's comrades waited on him and dressed his wounds" while at Andersonville.[85] Post-war prisoners of war who were suffering from the long-term effects of scurvy had to fight for their pensions, and their fellow prisoners willingly wrote testimony about their conditions as prisoners of war. Patten wrote affidavits for others in his regiment, and they wrote ones for him. The men of the 114th Illinois Infantry obviously helped each other survive during their time as prisoners of war and fought with them against the bureaucracy of the pension office post-war.[86]

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his commission in February 1865 and Strickland mustered out with the Regiment August 3rd 1865. Escaping was another form of resistance which I do not include in this work. For more information about escaping at its meanings see Lorien Foote *The Yankee Plague: Escaped Union Prisoners and the Collapse of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 2016).

[84] Leaming Ludlam, age 24, died March 25, 1865 in a hospital in Montgomery, Alabama. He was eventually interned at Georgia's Marietta National Cemetery. Joel Gordon, age 42, died April 12, 1865 and was placed in grave number 12847 at Andersonville National cemetery.

[85] John Bolin, Peter Claviers, Pension Applications NARA Bolin's file includes a diagnosis for syphilis. Scurvy is usually associated with joint inflammation, but severe scurvy can affect eyesight. Loss of sight is a common condition of syphilis. It is probable that Bolin had already contracted the venereal disease and the scurvy hastened his loss of eyesight.

[86] Prisoner of War pensions were more difficult to obtain due to the lack of Confederate hospital records, inability for officers to confirm any illness since they were separated from each other and limited medical understanding of the long-term mental and physical effects of conditions and diseases from being in captivity. Those prisoners who also suffered from gunshot wounds or amputations found their pension applications more readily approved. Those

Patten was held as a prisoner for ten months, bringing home a very decorative cane.[87] The fact that Patten carved a cane out of a piece of wood from Andersonville demonstrates the dire need of the cane. The prison authorities built no shelters for the prisoners. Any wood that the prisoners obtained, they converted to either construction materials for shelter, if material was stout enough, or fuel for fires. Fires were desperately needed to cook their food rations and provide heat in the winter. In October 1882, Patten was approved to receive four dollars a month on his war service claim for disability resulting from scurvy.[88] Pension affidavits from Patten and his comrades confirm he suffered from the effects of scurvy and that was the reason he needed a cane.[89] One of the major symptoms is joint pain and swelling which decreases the ability to walk. In all probability, Patten carved his decorative cane, not only as a pastime, but as a walking aid. But the countless hours spent whittling the intricate pattern was time well spent helping him cope with his captivity. Concentrating on his carving meant his mind was active on his task at hand versus dwelling on his unhappiness and frustration of being a prisoner of war.

The coping skills of Civil War prisoners through their prison creations is probably the most understudied aspect of prison and internment experiences. Over the last fifteen years,

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who suffered from lasting effects of malnutrition or mental disabilities were required to submit convincing documentation that their disabilities were the result of their prison experiences.

[87] Patten's cane and the figure 2 finger rings both include depictions of possibly acorns. The symbolism for prisoners of war is still unclear.

[88] Anon. *List of Pensioners on the Roll January 1, 1883; Giving the name of Each Pensioner, the Cause for Which Pensioned, the Post Office Address, the Rate of Pension Per Month, and the Date of Original Allowance, as Called for by Senate Resolution of December 8, 1882. Vol. III* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1970).

[89] Scurvy is the result of malnutrition, specifically the lack of vitamin C. Individuals at risk are those with "restrictive diets devoid of fruit and vegetables." The clinical signs and symptoms of vitamin C deficiency, also known as scurvy, are manifest due to impaired collagen synthesis, and include ecchymoses, petechiae, bleeding gums, hyperkeratosis, and impaired wound healing. Other systemic symptoms include weakness, malaise, joint pain and swelling, edema, depression, and neuropathy. http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/guidelines/domestic /nutrition-growth.html. To develop scurvy a body must reach a Vitamin C depletion rate of one-fifth, it takes only a few months to reach this level Matthew Brennan, "The Civil War Diet," (master thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2005), 102.

scholars have applied the understanding of internment coping skills by researching the experiences of the Jewish Holocaust internees, U.S. POWs in the Vietnam Conflict, and Israeli POWs in the Yom Kippur War.[90] For Civil War prisoners, the best method historians have for understanding coping skills are the artifacts and the published memoirs. The published narratives arguably were a post-war coping tool used by some to process their individual trauma and should be read and considered with that in mind. The careful remembering and necessary forgetting are part of an individual's coping skills. Civil War prisoners utilized their memory skills as needed to process their individual trauma over time. The irreconcilable versions stem from people remembering events differently due to individual impact, culture, and perceptions. People who shared a traumatic event will not recall every detail of the event in the same way because the memory will imprint on each person differently in relation to the context of their individual life, so when one person retells an event one way, but another remembers the same event in another way, it is the context which is responsible for the disparity, not that one person is right and the other is wrong. Certainly, the ex-prisoners were engaging in the fight over the memory of the war and in particular the prisoner of war experience in their writings, but the narratives and the relics are testaments to how they as individuals and groups coped with their captivity. Prisoners' main need for coping skills was in adjusting to their environment as a whole which included the restriction of their movement, separation from friends and family, loss of personal space, inadequate food and shelter, and death, not their anger at their government for the collapse of

[90] Bertil Neuman, Skratta Eller Gråta: Humor I Koncentrationsläger [Laugh or Cry: Humor in Concentration Camps] (Stockholm, Sweden: Carlsson, 2005); Linda D. Henman, "Humor as a coping mechanism: Lessons from POWs," *International Journal of Humor Research* 14, No.1 (2001); Zahava Solomon, Sharon Avidor, and Hila Givon Mantin "Guilt Among Ex-Prisoners of War," *Israel Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 24(2015): 721–739.

prisoner exchanges. The "key to survival" was their ability to be a player in the informal markets, and that was directly related to their coping skills.[91]

Archaeologist Harold Mytum, focusing on the Cunningham's Camp Douglas, a World War I prisoner of war camp, argues that the "material culture in the form of buildings, equipment, personal possessions, and items produced within the internment camp all played a crucial role in enabling survival."[92] The internment camp located on the Isle of Man held male enemy aliens and had two divisions based on class: "privileged" and "normal." This camp did practice humane standards concerning treatment of the interned, attempting to provide the men with conditions similar to a resort. Survival at this World War I camp was not the life and death struggle, nor did it include informal markets of the scale found in Civil War prisons. Regardless, the humane environment does not relieve the internees of the stress and anxiety of being held captive. Mytum notes that archaeology routinely provides interpretations of coping strategies for past cultures but has not adequately performed this task when excavating prisoner of war camps.[93] If coping strategy interpretations are created out of internment camps that have limited

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[91] Glen Robbins, "Race, Reparation, and Galvanized Rebels: Union Prisoners and Exchange Question in Deep South Prison Camps," *Civil War History* 53, No.2 (June 2007),139. Robbins argues that the "key to survival often depended upon the prisoners' ability to cope with the disappointment and frustration of failed exchanges." The frustration and disappointment of the exchange cartel certainly added to the prisoners' homesickness and their coping skills include creating the prison folk-art and material culture. Robbins suggests Union prisoners enlisting in the Confederate Army was a coping mechanism, but it was more prisoners' agency and a method of escaping. Many of these men returned to the Union lines as soon as they could. In fact, both sides recruited "galvanized" troops from prisoner populations and the prisoners' decision to enlist had little to do with politics or ideology; it was simply a way to get out of prison and the horrible conditions they were living under. The Union sent the "Galvanized Yankee" soldiers mostly to the Western Frontier, so they could not easily return to the Confederacy. Many confessed when they applied to take the oath that they either were conscripted in the first place or tired of the war, so joining the Union Army and going west was considered a better option than being a prisoner or fighting in the Civil War. Coping defined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) is "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or maternal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person" quoted by Mytum.

[92] Harold Mytum, "Materiality Matters: The Role of Things in Coping Strategies at Cunningham's Camp Douglas, During World War I." In *Prisoners of War: Archaeology, Memory, and Heritage of 19th- and 20th-Century Mass Internment* (New York: Springer, 2013), 169.

[93] There are four Civil War prisons which are or recently have undergone major excavation: Camp Douglas, Illinois; Johnson Island, Ohio; Salisbury, North Carolina; and Camp Lawton, Georgia. These sites were quickly abandoned

items made by prisoners, then those interpretations can be applied to the abundant artifacts made in Civil War prisons and already in museum collections. Mytum determined that, in the World War I camp, the material culture helped relieve the anxiety caused by "barbed wire disease" by "overcoming boredom and loss of purpose."[94] Civil War prisoners, including Peel, shared these sentiments.

Some of the more perceptive prisoners not only observed but left their assessment of their comrades' coping skills. For example, F.F. Cavada, a Union officer held at Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia, noticed the psychological difference between those who created relics and those who did not. Cavada noted that "While some of the prisoners endeavor by all sorts of ingenious stratagems to divert their minds from ennui and monotony of captivity, others give up their sorrows and pine away in the midst of morbid reflections and dismal foreboding."[95] Booth believed that "The man who allows himself to become depressed and gloomy soon dies."[96] Both statements are explicit in pointing to prisoners' agency to keep their minds and hands active to fend off depression. Without a doubt, prisoners' mental anxiety combined with their lack of rations provided excellent reasons for their relic-making and participation in the markets while benefiting their own mental health.

Medical practitioners are also attempting to both quantify and qualify the role art plays in improving mental health. Heather L. Stuckey and Jeremy Nobel, in their 2010 article "The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health: A Review of Current Literature,"

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after the war and are being reinvestigated to identify lost sites, such as Camp Lawton, and develop further cultural understanding of military prisons.

[94] Mytum, "Materiality Matters," 186.

[95] F.F. Cavada, *Libby Life: Experiences of a Prisoner of War in Richmond, Va., 1863-64*. (Philadelphia: King & Baird, 1864), 83.

[96] Booth, *Dark Days of the Rebellion*, 148.

identified four methods where art therapy influenced the healing of an individual's psyche. The four therapeutic methods were "music engagement, visual arts therapy, movement-based creative expression, and expressive writing," and Civil War prisoners replicated all four of these therapies without the help or knowledge of mental health practitioners.[97] The making of relics falls firmly into visual arts therapy, which involves the ability to "express feelings through tactile involvement at a somatic level" and can be a "cathartic release" which reveals "unconscious symbols that cannot be expressed through words."[98] Peel and Patten's designs on their relics may include some intrinsic meaning to them, but unfortunately those meanings were lost when they died. It is possible that somewhere, safely kept in museum archives, other Civil war prison art exists with letters, diaries, or published narratives to provide the prisoners' meaning behind their work.

Trauma from war experiences is the reality of modern-day soldiers. Not every soldier who returns from a war zone has the ability to process their traumatic experiences. Today the military acknowledges that many soldiers suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This phenomenon is not new, and every war creates a term for soldiers who have perceptible changes of behavior in the Civil War was called "nostalgia." Modern wars do not see the "unprecedented loss of life" as witnessed in the Civil War, but the military is noticing the soldiers returning with signs of PTSD.[99] Walter Reed National Medical Center, in an effort to help veterans cope and adjust to civilian life is currently partnering with art therapists to discover treatments that will allow doctors to "more rapidly identify disease and return service members

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[97] Heather L. Stuckey and Jeremy Nobel, "The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health: A Review of Current Literature," *American Journal of Public Health* 100, No. 2 (2010): 254. Accessed September 17, 2017, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2804629/.

[98] Stuckey and Nobel, "The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health," 257.

[99] Eric Foner preface to *The Civil War in 50 Objects* (New York: Viking, 2013), xxvii.

to improved function."[100] The art therapists have found some success in working with soldiers to create masks and other artwork bringing "veterans' confrontations with mortality, physical and mental suffering, and trauma into focus."[101] Civil War prisoners created an abundance of material culture in the form of prison art, including relics, sketches, poems, diaries, letters, and published narratives, and it is certain that many prisoners suffered from what is now referred to as PTSD. Out of the soldiers who were captured in either Roberts' or Patten's company, several have been identified as dealing with psychological wounds post-war, including Patten. Patten never married and was reliant on the "charity of others," and his pension includes multiple testimonies that he was a "broken man," with his pharmacist swearing Patten was an "unsound man."[102] It is impossible to diagnose or estimate the prisoners who survived yet mentally suffered. Nor is it possible to quantify the numbers who created folk art that ensured their survival. But there are Civil War prisoner insights waiting to be found to help the military, bureaucrats, and medical practitioners in creating policies and procedures to lower the risk of future veterans suffering from PTSD.

Union Private Robert Roberts, Benjamin Booth, and Confederate officer Lt. Peel were but three craftsmen who chose to spend their time in the "pens" creating material culture items to sell in the informal prison markets. Roberts left no account of his relic making profits, but it is safe to infer he managed well enough since he returned home after the war. Peel, on the other

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[100] Melissa S. Walker, Girija Kaimal, Robert Koffman, and Thomas J. DeGraba. "Art Therapy for PTSD and TBI: A Senior Active Duty Military Service Member's Therapeutic Journey." *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 49 (2016): 17.

[101] Erin Blakemore, "Here's a Chance to See Art that Helps Heal the Wounds of War," The Washington Post, August 20, 2017, accessed September 17, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/heres-a-chance-to-see-art-that-helps-heal-the-wounds-of-war/2017/08/18/5d42dde8-81c5-11e7-902a-2a9f2d808496_story.html?utm_term=.e962abe2017a.

[102] Benjamin Fletcher of the 114th IL Infantry received a pension for nervous prostration and the family of John Fisher of the 83rd IL Infantry acknowledged he was, not only physically impaired by his time in captivity, but also mentally and emotionally.

hand, left a diary that provided details of his success in the informal markets, but it was not enough to stave off disease and his ultimate death just weeks before the end of the war. The items these two soldiers left behind provide valuable details about how prisoners used their agency and the resources around them to obtain extra rations in an attempt to survive. Private Patten's pension record and his cane provide information about the condition of his health as a prisoner. Patten failed to leave any remarks when he donated his cane, as to the meaning of his design or how the cane helped him cope in his surroundings. Booth and others included details of what was made, who bought the folk-art, and the importance of these prison informal markets that help form interpretations of the prison artifacts found in museums. The artifacts that remain are testaments to prisoners' agency and are reasons why some survived. The discovery of the size and scope of the markets suggest that prisoners and the local communities were deeply intertwined through these markets. Significantly, only through using insights gained from studying modern prisoners of war is it possible to expand the understanding on why a prisoner would spend hours upon hours whittling a stick to create an ornate cane and how that time improved his mental health, which directly correlates to his physical well-being. The information about prisoner relics not only needs to be understood by historians, but it needs to reach the museums too, so the items can be properly identified as more than "sculpture," "hook," or "box." Only after all this is accomplished can museums properly interpret the items for their patrons informing them of the item's importance both to individual prisoners, as well as to the collective story of the Civil War prisoners' agency, resistance, and ingenuity in the hands of the enemy.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION: SIGNS OF AN UNRECONCILED NATION

They gave to the nation and the world undying proof
That Americans of African descent possess the
Pride courage and devotion of the patriot soldier.
One hundred and eighty thousand such Americans
Enlisted under the union flag in
MDCCCLXIII MDCCCLXV[1]

On January 6, 2021, one of the most disturbing sights of the populist pro-Trump mob storming the United States capitol building was the Confederate battle flag an insurrectionist waved high just outside of the Senate chamber. The flag represents the failed attempt to divide the nation in two through secession and Civil War – a war that was based on racist ideology. That flag never made it into Washington, D.C. during the Civil War but was carried by a man in a mob who forced his way into the halls of the Capitol 156 years after the Union defeated the Confederacy. How does a flag that should only be recognized in historical discussions and museums still garner devoted admirers who again are trying to destroy national unity and democracy? The answer is Lost Cause ideology. Ideology that denies slavery was the central reason for the war, promotes mythical heroic Confederate soldiers, benevolent slaveholders, and loyal southern-sympathizing women.

[1] Charles W. Eliot, Shaw Memorial Inscription, quoted in Boston City Council, *Exercises at the Dedication of the Monument to Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of the Massachusetts Infantry*, May 31, 1897 (Boston: Boston Municipal Printing Office, 1897), 10.

Edward A. Pollard, the Virginia journalist recognized for coining the term in his 1866 book recognized that even though the Civil War had ended in Confederate defeat that there was still a war to be won in how the war was remembered. Pollard immediately went to work and published *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* one year after the Civil War ended. Pollard asserted that this was a full account of the war based on facts and in the end, he would be recognized as having made "an important contribution to Truth." After the Civil War, Pollard made his intentions clear when it wrote "The Lost Cause needs no war to regain it. We have taken up new hopes, new arms, new methods." He intended to use the power of his press for he understood "By winning words to conquer willing hearts and make persuasion do the work of fear."[2] A war for the memory of the war began immediately and continues still today with the mythological Lost Cause wrapped in nostalgia and romanticism winning. Any writer who claims to have written the truth, in fact has only written their perception of the truth based on their own worldviews, bias, and influences of collective memory. In the case of Pollard, he intentionally created the foundations and methods for a myth that hangs over the United States today and ultimately perpetuates not only racist ideas but obscures the foundations of systemic racism.

The ex-prisoner of war narrative writers wrote their "truths" in fighting over the memory of the Civil War and which side was morally right. Early-twentieth century scholars, many who believed the Lost Cause myths, discredited the narratives but focused the most on casting doubt on the veracity and usefulness of the Union memoirs. Their endeavors resulted in scholarly arguments where historians focused on removing the blame from Confederate leaders and policies and tried to decide which northern prison was the worst and who was really to blame for

[2] Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E.B. Treat and Co.,1866), iii; 214.

the mortality rates. The historians' answer was usually some combination of northern leaders and their decisions in not exchanging prisoners. The scholarly writings furthered the myths, completely obscured the prisoners' experiences, and largely failed in moving the Civil War prison studies forward. Inclusion of the narratives though, reveal prisoner of war agency, how different groups of prisoners survived, and how citizens and communities on the homefronts were entangled – politically, economically, and socially – with the prisons and prisoners. The exclusion of the narratives meant we could not understand the deep involvement of southern-sympathizing women living on the northern homefront and the Union military's dependence on these women in providing food and clothing for Confederate prisoners of war. Perhaps the most pressing gap the exclusion of the narratives created is the role it played in concealing the black prisoner of war experience.

The erasing of black histories is integral to the current resistance of a large portion of the white population in accepting the reality of systemic racism. Their resistance is found in the pushback against the inclusion of the "1619 Project" and critical race theory in education, and ultimately the increase in hate groups and racial violence in America.[3] Civil War military prison studies might at first glance seem irrelevant to the current strife, but it is not. The shell game of distracting the public from understanding the treatment of captured black soldiers and not attrition policies as *the central* cause for the collapse of the prisoner exchange is another version of the same sleight of hand that obscured slavery as *the central* reason for the Civil War. Removing black prisoners of war from the inclusion in monographs and erasing the 54th Massachusetts prisoners fighting for their freedom through citizenship rights ensured *the central* cause and meaning for the Civil War – slavery – hampered the public's ability to fully

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[3] Nikole Hannah-Jones, 1619 Project, August 2019, *New York Times*, accessed July 9, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html.

understand the Civil War era, the Reconstruction era, and the Jim Crow era. To be clear, if the majority does not understand how black soldiers were furthering their political goals in abolishing slavery by enlisting, then it is hard for them to understand how after their ability to fight was taken away from them as prisoners of war, they reverted to fighting for their freedom through their ideology and the pen. If the public does not understand that antebellum laws often included enslaving or re-enslaving free blacks, then it is hard for them to see how impressing black prisoners of war was related to this practice. More importantly, the failure to understand the impressment of captured black soldiers challenges the understandings of the modern carceral state and Jim Crow laws for scholars and the general public alike. The experiences of black prisoners of war were an important cog in the complicated gears of systemic racism that plague the United States today.

The easiest way to see the erasure of black prisoners of war is their exclusion in public history projects of the past. The National Park Service (NPS) is currently making concentrated efforts to add this element to their interpretations, but there are two major obstacles. The first is that few southern Civil War prisons sites are part of National Park system and second many battlefields provide only snippets of prisoner of war data in their interpretations. Most of the prison sites were simply erased from the landscape directly after the war. For instance, many were temporary stockades, some were industrial complexes that were repurposed after the war, and some fell victim to urban sprawl. Another factor was many of the sites were on property not owned by the federal government, so the property reverted to private or local ownership. Even though the NPS is working to include black prisoner of war experience, the scholarship is also still developing. One Andersonville NPS misinterpretation that must be remedied immediately is

that black prisoners were not "frequently paroled to work."[4] They were impressed by the Confederacy to labor and there were severe consequences if they refused. Ultimately, black prisoners' compliance was coerced through violence as found in the testimony of Frank Maddox and William Jennings. Maddox swore that Wirz ordered the sergeant in charge of the labor detail "to take a club, and kill" those who refused and Jennings testified that he received thirty lashes for not going to work one morning."[5] Black prisoners of war did not volunteer to work at camps in return for extra rations as the white prisoners did. Captured black soldiers in military prisons were not treated as captured soldiers but as runaway slaves who engaged in servile insurrection. They were forced to labor for the Confederate military with no extra benefits. The stark differences between white and black Union prisoners of war treatment must be clearly differentiated in government sponsored interpretations.

Private entities and state parks, on the other hand, are slower to embrace black experiences during the Civil War and unintentionally allow history based on Lost Cause mythology to drive their narratives and events. Examples of private and state ownership historical events that are hampered by the Lost Cause influence is Charleston City Jail and Florida's Battle of Olustee Park. Charleston City Jail, where the 54th Massachusetts soldiers were held in captivity, is currently owned by a limited liability corporation, and used for commercial profit. The unknown owners lease the property to a commercial tourist group.[6] For thirty-seven dollars, one can tour the remaining compound and hear ghost stories about nineteenth-century criminals. The tour guides logo is grey bulldog wearing a pale blue Civil War kepi. Charleston

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[4] "Burial of Prisoners," last updated April 14, 2015, *Andersonville National Park*, accessed June 29, 2021, https://home.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/prisonerburial-overview.htm.

[5] Chipman, *Tragedy of Andersonville*, 265; 270.

[6] A phone call to the tourist site representative confirmed the site was still being considered for use as office space but she did not know who the actual owners of the building were.

City Jail held two types of soldiers during the war: Union prisoners of war and Confederates charged with military crimes.[7] The advertisement for the site implies all who were held captive were "infamous criminals," which was certainly not the case. Thousands of Union prisoners of war were held temporarily at this site. Their conditions could certainly be considered "infamous" but the captured soldiers fighting to hold the nation together and end slavery were not. Ignored are the conditions and experiences of the 54th Massachusetts soldiers who were held at the jail for nearly eighteen months. The commercial website also claims "a portion of your ticket purchase is invested back into the properties they tour" ensuring the buildings remain.[8] Keeping the sites structurally sound though, is not the same as preserving the buildings historic significance. Currently, there is ongoing discussion about renovating the jail into commercial office space. which would be a barrier for continuation of historical studies as well as drastically changing the physical space. Charleston City Jail is not a registered state or national historical landmark, so the historical architecture of this site could possibly be irreparably damaged in converting this site for commercial use. The implications of the current focus of making a profit from titillating accounts of possible paranormal activity or creating office space over interpretations based on the history of the prison as a place to hold free black antebellum seaman or the 54th Massachusetts means the ties to systemic racism now and in the future remains elusive to both the local population and visiting tourists.

Interpretations in northern Florida state park are somewhat more problematic as they are government sites which are still affected by Lost Cause interpretations. Every February twentieth Florida promotes the Battle of Olustee reenactment. This battle was significant as the 54th

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[7] The prison did also held citizens charged with criminal offences.

[8] "Charleston Haunted City Jail Tour: Ghost Tours," Bulldog Tours, accessed June 25, 2021, bulldogtours.com/tours/charleston-haunted-jail-tour/3.

Massachusetts, the 8th and the 35th and USCT were involved. The memory of this battle regarding the black soldiers, similar to Fort Wagner, is that they were massacred on the battlefield, which perpetuates the concealment of their prisoner of war status.[9] Part of the misunderstanding regarding the number of captured stems from a dispatch by Confederate General Joseph Finegan claiming that out of 150 captured Union soldiers only three were USCT. What historians and others overlook is the following line where Finegan queried, "What shall I do with the large number of enemy's wounded in my hands? Many of these are negroes."[10] The captured black soldiers Finegan referred to would be sent to the nearest Confederate military prison: Andersonville. Although the number of total captured USCT from Olustee is unknown, it appears there was Confederate documentation that listed the names of seventy-one captured USCT who were sent from Tallahassee, Florida to Andersonville after the Battle of Olustee.[11] Corporal James Henry Gooding was one of the captured 54th Massachusetts soldiers who was sent to Andersonville. He is a renowned example of black soldiers' agency. He used pen and paper to fight for equal pay for the USCT. Unfortunately, he died in captivity before the act he lobbied for was enacted. Gooding rightly deserves recognition for his wartime activity but he and the previously mentioned Maddox, Jennings, and other captured USCT must also be recognized for their agency during their captivity.

[9] Florida Department of State, "The Battle of Olustee," https://www.museumoffloridahistory.com/exhibits/permanent-exhibits/florida-in-the-civil-war/the-battle-of-olustee/; American Battlefield Trust, "Olustee Ocean Pond," https://www.battlefields.org/learn/civil-war/battles/olustee; Nicole Campbell, "The Battle of Olustee (February 20, 1864)," Black Past https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/the-battle-of-olustee-february-20-1864/. All sites accessed June 27, 2021; Steven Trelstad, "Civil War Memory and the Preservation of the Olustee Battlefield," (Masters Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2019).

[10] *OR*, Series I, Vol. XXXV, Pt. 1, 328.

[11] *OR*, Series II, Vol. VII, 174. Andersonville National Park Service "prisoner database yields at most 106 African Americans held prisoner. The number of deaths is no more than 33." All of the 106 were not captured at Ocean Pond. Don Pettijohn, "African Americans at Andersonville, February 2006, accessed June 27, 2021, *Andersonville National Historic Site*, https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/african_americans.htm.

The dead play a major role in the fight for the memory of the Civil War, and this includes Olustee Battlefield. The dead Confederates were buried in the nearby Lake City community cemetery, but the Union dead were buried in hastily dug trenches on the battlefield. They were not moved to a National Cemetery but reinterred immediately after the war in a mass grave at Olustee. In 1866, Lieutenant F.E. Grossman reported to the Quartermaster General's Office that the shallow graves "were disinterred by hogs," which resulted in "the bones and skulls scattered broadcast over the battlefield." The bones were collected and buried in a mass grave. Grossman noted that there were 125 skulls. A twelve-foot wooden monument and fence enclosure were erected at the site before the detail moved on, but by 1873 all that remained according to Loomis Langdon was "two sides of a weather stained fence."[12] The gravesite of the Union soldiers remained unmarked until 1991 when the Union Army District of Florida erected a white cross similar to the 1866 wooden marker.[13] The Quartermaster General's Office failure to designate Olustee as a National Cemetery or transfer the remains to another National Cemetery resulted in the loss of the exact location of the graves. It also removed all obstacles for the locals with Confederate ties to interpret this site through their own lens influenced by Lost Cause myths thereby ignoring the Union graves and the black soldiers' contributions and experiences.[14]

[12] Loomis L. Langdon, "The Dead of Olustee," quoted in William L. Haskin, ed., *The History of the First Regiment of Artillery, from Its Organization in 1821, to January 1st, 1876* (Portland: B. Thurston and Company, 1879), 462-463.

[13] "Battle of Olustee Union Memorial," *The Historical Marker Database*, accessed June 30, 2021, https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=146335.

[14] Olustee, Florida dead are not found in the *Rolls of Honor* for Florida or Beaufort, South Carolina. Luis Emilio claimed in 1901 that the 54th Massachusetts dead along with the other Olustee dead were reinterred in 1867 or 1868 at Beaufort. It appears he misunderstood that, in 1867, their remains were reinterred but that they remained in a mass grave at Olustee. Emilio, *History of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry*, 173. The lack of gravesite care and oversight by the United States Government meant the wooden marker and fence eventually disappeared and by 1950 Mark F. Boyd realized the actual location of the Union remains were unknown. Mark F. Boyd, "The Federal Campaign of 1864 in East Florida: A Study for the Florida State Board of Parks," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (July 1950), 29.

The Battle of Olustee celebration of Confederate victory and the memory of the Lost Cause mythical southern valiant soldier began with the United Daughters of the Confederacy monument campaign. In 1898 and 1899, the Florida women were organizing fundraisers for a monument to "honor the Confederate heroes" at Olustee.[15] By 1899, the State of Florida proposed to allocate $2,500 for the monument.[16] But, in 1900, the UDC were fighting the advancement of the Florida Bill for the monument as it now included placing a monument for the Union dead. Those dead included USCT and the UDC was adamant that the bill must be repealed for "To decorate the graves of negroes along with the graves of the Confederate dead seems impossible for the society."[17] The women were successfully in their lobbying campaign and on May 28, 1901 the appropriation was approved minus the language to include a Union monument.[18] The monument was unveiled in 1912 but the Olustee Monument Commission postponed the ceremony from February battle anniversary date to October to coincide with the annual meeting of the United Veterans of the Confederacy, which was being held in the nearby

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[15] *The Ocala Evening Star* (Ocala, Fla.), 12 April 1898, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 29, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84027621/1898-04-12/ed-1/seq-3/; *The Ocala Evening Star* (Ocala, Fla.), 12 Sept. 1899, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 29, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84027621 /1899-09-12/ed-1/seq-2/.

[16] *The Ocala Evening Star* (Ocala, Fla.), 14 April 1899, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 29, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84027621/1899-04-14/ed-1/seq-4/.

[17] *Bradford County Telegraph* (Starke, Fla.), 16 Feb. 1900, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 29, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn95047406/1900-02-16/ed-1/seq-4/.

[18] *A Journal of the Proceedings of the Senate of the Regular Session of the Legislature of the State of Florida, Held under the Constitution Adopted by the Convention of 1885. Begun and Held at the Capitol, in the City of Tallahassee, on Tuesday, April 4, 1899, Florida State Senate, 8th Session* (Tallahassee: Tallahassee Book and Job Print, 1901), 1317, accessed June 30, 2021, http://archive.flsenate.gov/data/Historical /Senate%20Journals/1900s /1901/1901C/5_28_01.pdf.

Lake City. The event was promoted as "an unveiling to commemorate the great victory won by the Confederate soldiers."[19]

The Confederate memory of this battle still dominates the local narrative. The echoes of the 1899 UDC women could be heard at a 2013 Lake City town meeting protesting the addition of a Union monument. One man argued "Putting a Union monument at Olustee would be like placing a memorial to Jane Fonda at the entrance to the Vietnam memorial."[20] The white locals are adamant in their exclusion of incorporating recognition of the Union in this battle as to do so they would be forced to acknowledge the black soldiers' contributions. Their major contribution was the 54th Massachusetts double quick march to the front, which stopped the Confederate advance and allowed for the Union retreat. In 1982, the interest of local black civil war enactors resulted in the formation of a group who portrayed the 54th Massachusetts during the annual reenactment.[21] The movie "Glory" and the black reenactors who played them temporarily increased the black participation in the annual event. According to Mary Fears, the black men who came back for the reenactment after the filming of "Glory" asked, "Where are the black people?" Her response to that question was starting the Voices of Pride Civil War Reenactors. Her decision was influenced by Lake City's exclusion of black stories and its pro-Confederate activities around the Battle of Olustee commemoration events.[22]

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[19] *The Lakeland Evening Telegram* (Lakeland, Fla.), 06 Feb. 1912. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 27, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn95047222 /1912-02-06/ed-1/seq-1/. *The Ocala Banner* (Ocala, Marion County, Fla.), 25 Oct. 1912. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress, accessed June 27, 2021, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88074815 /1912-10-25/ed-1/seq-7/.

[20] Staff, "Proposed Union Soldier Civil War Monument In Florida Sparks Outrage," *CBS Miami*, December 3, 2013, accessed June 30, 2021, https://miami.cbslocal.com/2013/12/03/will-union-soldiers-return-to-florida/

[21] Charlie Patton, "Reenactor sees Olustee battle from a different viewpoint," *Florida Times-Union*, February 13, 2009, accessed July 1, 2021, https://www.jacksonville.com/article/20090213/NEWS/801239679.

[22] Mary Fears, Personal Interview, Olustee State Park, February 15, 2020.

A day spent at the Olustee reenactment left me repeating the 54th reenactors' question. On February 15, 2020, there were few black reenactors or visitors. Visitors were overwhelmingly white and wearing apparel and insignia that advertised their affiliation with the Sons of the Confederacy and other white hate groups. The other predominant apparel choices were Trump political hats, t-shirts, and even yoga pants. Confederate iconography was prevalent among the spectators and venders. Most visitors stopped and proudly had their images taken in front of the Confederate monument, but I had difficulty finding the Union burial ground and had to ask several people before locating it. The time I spent viewing the Union dead marker was the only time I was completely alone at this event. Most startling though, was when the Confederate band reenactors played "Dixie." Many stood up for the song when they had remained seated during the national anthem. During the Saturday battle maneuvers, the crowd was entirely in support of the Confederate soldiers and there was only one black man representing the USCT. Talking to a spectator next to me about the overwhelming embrace of the Confederacy had her inform me that the saying about the Florida geography is that "the farther north you go, the more south it gets." The dominant Lost Cause slant to the state sponsored event combined with the overt racism I witnessed at the park and the activities in Lake City caused me to cancel my plans for attending the following day's events. I chose to leave so as not to spend any more money supporting either the state park or Lake City's Battle of Olustee commemoration festivities.

The fight for the memory of the Civil War that Pollard recognized and the UDC successfully waged is ongoing. The southern-sympathizing women living in the north aiding Confederate prisoners of war were political and actively participating in efforts to win the war. Their post-war efforts in organizing northern branches of the UDC helped spread the Lost Cause in northern states and western territories and helped form a national consensus about the cause

and meaning of the war. The overwhelming acceptance of the Lost Cause narrative does more than haunt the United States, it is a major contributor to the ongoing racial division. Civil War prison studies can bring forth the overlooked stories of how black captured soldiers fought for their freedom and help in understanding systemic racism through the Confederacy's attempts to enslave prisoners of war. The historical knowledge gained from reinserting prison narratives into scholarly studies is integral for the scholarship on the Civil War, Reconstruction era, and Jim Crow era. Scholars must then engage with their local communities and government entities to pushback against the mythology dominating the public understanding of what the Civil War was and what it meant for the United States, then and now.

APPENIX

APPENDIX A 54TH MASSACHUSETTS SOLDIERS CAPTURED AT BATTLES FOR FORT WAGNER, JULY 1863

Name	Co	Rank	Captured	Birth	Death	Age at Death	Died as POW	Where
Allen, James	A	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1835	1865	30	Yes	Florence
Gardner, Ralph	A	Corp	July 18, 1863	1840	1869	29	No	
Hill, Wm. F.	A	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1865	20	Yes	Florence
Taylor, Wm.	A			1843			No	
Blakes, Lemuel	B	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1841	1885	44	No	
Counsel, George	B	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1826			No	
Green, Alfred	B	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1837	1921	84	No	
Anderson, Solomon	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1829	1865	36	Yes	Florence
Bailey, David	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1841	1865	24	Yes	Florence
Brown, Jesse H.	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1840	1916	76	No	
Ellets, James	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1836	1864	28	Yes	Charleston
Grant, George	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1840			No	
Hardy, Charles	B	Corp	July 18, 1863	1843	1865	22	No	Goldsboro
Rigby, Wm.	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1842	1948	106	No	
Simmons, Rbt. John	B	1st Sgt	July 18, 1863	1837	1863	26	Yes	Charleston
States, Daniel	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1892	47	No	
Williams, Charles	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1843	1865	22	Yes	Florence
Wilson, Samuel	B	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1842	1865	23	Yes	Florence
Henson, Cornelius	C	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1841	1880	39	No	
"Unknown"	C				1863		Yes	Charleston Hospital*
Cogswell, George E.	D	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1864	19	Yes	Charleston
Prosser, Geo. T	D	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1842	1904	62	No	
Butler, Morris	E	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1844	1865	21	Yes	Florence
Grover, Wm.	E	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1865	20	Yes	Florence
Hurley, Nathaniel	E	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1844	1865	21	Yes	Florence
Ellis, Jefferson	F	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1844	1930	86	No	
Gray, John	F	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1841	1863	22	Yes	Charleston
Moshroe, George	F	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1840			No	

W.								
Thomas, George	F	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1844			No	
Stanton, Charles	G	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1842	1865	23	Yes	Florence
Caldwell, James	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1844	1898	54	No	
Dickinson, John W.	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1833			No	
Harrison, Wm. Henry	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1828	1865	37	Yes	Florence
Jeffries, Walter A.	H	Sgt	July 16, 1863	1825	1884	59	No	
Kirk, Wm. Henry	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1841	1888	47	No	
Leatherman, John	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1839	1865	26	Yes	Florence
Proctor, Joseph T.	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1839			No	
Smith, Enos	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1833	1865	32	Yes	Florence
Wallace, Frederick	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1843			No	
Willams, Olmstead	H	Corp	July 16, 1863	1827	1864	37	Yes	Charleston
Williams, J. Oscar	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1828	1914	86	No	
Worthington, Henry	H	Pvt	July 16, 1863	1845	1865	20	Yes	Florence
Randolph, Brady	I	Corp	July 18, 1863	1839	1863	24	Yes	Charleston
Smith, Baltimore	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1822	1873	51	No	
Stoner, Thomas	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1863	18	Yes	Charleston
Whiting, Alfred	I	Sgt	July 18, 1863	1840	1865	25	No	Alexandria
Williams, Ezekial	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1829	1863	34		Charleston
Williams, Henry	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1845	1863	18		Charleston
Williams, John	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1844	1863	19		Charleston
Woods, Stewart W.	I	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1836	1865	29	No	Wilmington
Bayard, Joseph	K	Pvt	July 18, 1863	1835			No	

* “Unknown” from case in *MSHW*

APPENDIX B 34TH MISSISSIPPI MEN CAPTURED WITH LAFAYETTE ROGAN

Name	Co.	Rank	Enlistment	Notes
Childers, David Richard	A	Sgt	03/08/62	Captured at Lookout Mt. and sent to Rock Island Prison, released 1865, 1844 - 1903 buried Antioch Cem., Tippah Co., MS
Lansdal, William J.	A	Pvt	03/17/62	Died 1/7/64 Rock Island, IL
Reed, Michael	A	Pvt	02/25/62	Captured Lookout Mt. 9/24/1863 and sent to Rock Island IL prison, 4/9/1836-12/14/1915 buried Little Hope Cem., Tippah Co.
Rogers, Pleasant M.	A	Cpl	02/25/62	Born about 1830, died 7/13/64 Rock Island, IL
Scott, David P.	A	Pvt	03/15/62	Died 12/14/63 Rock Island, IL
Tate, Thomas J.	A	Pvt	04/24/62	Died 2/1/64 Rock Island, IL
Bills, John G.	B	Pvt	05/08/62	12/29/1842-9/30/1873 Kaufman Co., TX, took Oath of Allegiance 10/11/1864 and enlisted 3rd US Inf. verified
Hunt, Thomas	B	Pvt	02/26/62	2/9/1841-9/8/1918 Ripley, MS Captured 24 Nov. 1863 at Lookout Mountain. imprisoned Rock Island, IL Bunked with Rogan
Rogan, Lafayette	B	2 Lt.	02/26/62	1/21/1831-11/12/1906, captured 24 Nov. 1863 at Lookout Mt., imprisoned Rock Island IL until close of war
Collins, Jackson E.	C	Pvt	03/03/62	Died 1/24/64 Rock Island, IL
Reeves, James T.	C	Pvt		Died 11/30/64 Rock Island, IL
Tidwell, John Henry	C	Pvt	04/23/62	Died 8/5/64 Rock Island, IL
Turner, Clark West	C	Pvt	03/03/62	Died 1/7/64 Rock Island, IL
Williams, James P.	C	Pvt	02/19/63	Died 1/18/64 Rock Island, IL
Wilson, Wm. Alexander	C	Sgt	03/03/62	Captured Lookout Mt. TN 11/24/1863. LKR - Arkansas, lived in Sevier Co. AR
Jones, Pickrum	D	Pvt	05/10/62	Died 12/27/63 Rock Island, IL
McLeroy, Needham Franklin	D	Pvt	03/04/62	Enlisted at Waterford, MS age 22 (born about 1840), 6' 6" tall. Captured at Battle of Lookout MT. 11/24/1863, exchanged 3/20/1865
Colson, Jefferson	E	Pvt	03/10/62	Died 7/26/64 Rock Island IL
Fitzhugh, Andrew M.	E	Pvt	02/28/63	Died 1/13/64 Rock Island, IL
Fleming, Samuel T.	E	Pvt	03/10/62	Born 2/20/1844, captured Lookout Mt. TN, POW Rock Island, IL, released 3/13/1865, applied for pension in Shelby Co. TN
Towns, Wm. H.	E	Pvt	03/08/62	Died 12/26/63 Rock Island, IL
Vick, Allen F.	E	Pvt	03/10/62	Captured 24 Nov 1863 Lookout Mt., sent to Rock Island prison for rest of war.
Williams, James Y.	E	Pvt	03/10/62	Died 1/18/64 Rock Island IL
Bradford, Larkin H.	F	Pvt	03/17/62	Died 2/16/64 Rock Island, IL
Clayton, George W.	F	Pvt	03/17/62	Died 12/30/63 Rock Island, IL
Greer, David E.	F	Pvt	05/10/62	Died 12/10/63 Rock Island, IL
Bray, Alexander W.	G	Sgt	03/17/62	Died 5/4/1864 Rock Island, IL
Campbell, George	G	Cpl	03/17/62	Died 8/17/64 Rock Island, IL

Kidd, James H.	G	Pvt	3/17/62	Captured at Lookout Mt. 24 Nov 1863, exchanged 13 Mar 1865; LKR - Finger, MS, 3/1/1842-2/19/1919 bur. Mt. Zion (East) Benton Co. MS
Rowland, James D.	G	Pvt	3/17/62	Later became a "Galvanized Yankee", a Pvt. in 3rd U.S. Vol. Inf. Regt, USA 10/18/64
Jamison, Samuel D.	H	Pvt	05/14/62	Died 1/4/64 Rock Island, IL
Stewart, David Alex	H	Sgt	03/18/62	Captured 25 Nov 1863 Chattanooga, imprisoned Rock Island, released 25 May 1865; LKR - Texas
Woods, Wm. C	H	Cpl	03/03/62	Died 2/23/64 Rock Island, IL
Freeman, John S.	I	Pvt	03/22/62	Died 12/15/63 Rock Island, IL
Frost, John	I	Pvt		Died 12/18/63 Rock Island, IL Sec. A #31
Walker, R.J.	I	Pvt		Died 01/01/64 Rock Island, IL Sec A #95
Autry, George Monroe	K	Pvt	04/30/62	Captured Lookout Mt. Nov. 1863, imprisoned Rock Island until 3/13/1865, 1/4/1842-2/15/1907 bur. Kenedy, TX
Brewer, James I.	K	Sgt	03/08/62	Died 2/16/1864 Rock Island, IL
Day, Moses	K	Pvt	04/25/62	Died 4/21/64 Rock Island, IL
Jobe, Francis M.	K	Pvt	05/12/62	Died 9/3/64 Rock Island, IL
Orman, Calvin Lee	K	Pvt	04/25/62	Captured Lookout Mt. 24 Nov. 1863 sent to Rock Island IL prison enlisted Frontier Services Co. I 3rd Reg. U.S. Vol. Inf. (Galvanized Yankee), 9/6/1834 -2/5/1913 buried Elm Grove Cem. Van Zandt Co. TX

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NOTES

Abbreviations

ALPL	Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL
ISMM	Illinois State Military Museum, Springfield, IL
LC	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
PHS	Peoria Historical Society, Peoria, IL
SCDAH	South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC
OR	U.S. War Department, *War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*

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Boston Liberator
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*Bradford County Telegraph (*Starke, FL)
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Charleston Mercury
Chicago Tribune
*Civilian and Telegraph (*Cumberland, MD)
Confederate Veteran
Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL)
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper
Harper's Weekly
*Hopkinsville Kentuckian (*Hopkinsville, KY)
Independent Press (Abbeville, SC)
The Lakeland Evening Telegram (Lakeland, FL)
Maryland Gazetteer and Business Directory
New York Daily Tribune
New York Herald
New York Times
Ocala Evening Star (Ocala, FL)
Richmond Whig
*Spirit of the Age (*Raleigh, NC)
*Staunton Spectator (*Staunton, Virginia)
The Appalachian
*The Longton Gleaner (*Longton, KS)
Washington Post
*The Western Democrat (*Charlotte, NC)
*Western Sentinel (*Winston, NC)

Yorkville Enquirer (Yorkville, SC)

VITA

BETH A. KRUSE
bkruse@go.olemiss.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D., United States History, University of Mississippi, expected August, 2021
Dissertation: "Beyond the Lines": A Reassessment of Civil War Prisons
Advisor: April Holm, Director University of Mississippi Center for Civil War Research

M. A., United States History, University of Illinois-Springfield, 2016
Thesis: "U.S. Civil War Prisoner of War Experiences and Modern Psychology: Lucifer Effect, Obedience to Authority, and PTSD"
Advisor: Holly Kent, Associate Professor of History

B.A., Workforce Education and Development, Southern Illinois University, 2014

A.S., Business Administration, Lincoln Land Community College, 2013

HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

University of Mississippi Graduate School Fellowship, 2020
Rock Island Arsenal Historical Society Richard C. Maguire Scholarship, 2020
University of Mississippi Center for Civil War Research McMinn Fellowship, 2019
University of Alabama Frances S. Summersell Fellowship, 2019
University of Mississippi History Department Fellowship, 2019
University of Mississippi History Department Research Grant, 2018
University of Mississippi Ventress Summer Graduate Fellowship, 2017
University of Illinois-Springfield Chapin Award for Student Research, 2016
University of Illinois-Springfield History Department Graduation Marshal, 2016
Southern Illinois University Magna Cum Laude, 2014
Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, 2013

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed

"Remembering Ida, Ida Remembering: Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Black Political Culture in Reconstruction-Era Mississippi," with Shennette Garrett-Scott, Jodi Skipper, and Rhondalyn Peairs, *Southern Cultures*, Fall 2020.

Op-Eds

"Making a Shrine out of the Confederate Cemetery is Amoral and Ahistorical," *Daily Mississippian*, June 2020.

Book Reviews

"*Penitentiaries, Punishment, and Military Prisons: Familiar Responses to an Extraordinary Crisis during the American Civil War*, by Angela M. Zombeck," H-Net, forthcoming.

PUBLIC HISTORY EXPERIENCE

Assistant Principal Investigator, The Ida B. Wells Commemorative Tour: Tourism as a Form of Community Development, University of Mississippi Constellation Grant, 2019-2020.

Creator of Weebly Labor Memory Website: *Mother Jones and Coal Mining Memory* https://motherjonesandmining.weebly.com/, 2017.

Co-creator of a Weebly website for HIS: 515 Digital History: *Captured & Confined: Enemy Combatants and Illinois Military Prisons,1861-1865*. http://catpuredandconfined.weebly.com/about.html, 2015.

Provided location for PBS *History Detectives* shoot; "Lincoln Oath," episode 1004, 2012.

PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

"Surviving Northern Prisoner of War Camps with the Aid of Confederate Sympathizers and Selling Prison-made Handicrafts," 22nd Annual Conference on Illinois History, Springfield, IL, October 2020.

"Shall They be Turned over to the State?: The 54th Massachusetts Prisoner of War Experience," Arch Dalrymple III Graduate History Conference, Oxford, MS, March 2020 – Cancelled due to COVID-19.

"Markets and Coping: The Economic and Psychological Value of Curios in U.S. Civil War Prisons," The Filson Institute Academic Conference "From Colonial Encounters to the Iraq War: Prisoners of War and Their Place in History," Louisville, KY, October 2017.

“Finding the “Truth” in U.S. Civil War Prison Narratives: “’Chickamauga’ in Andersonville,” University of Illinois-Springfield Student Technology, Arts and Research Symposium (STARS), Springfield, IL, April 2016.

“Finding the “Truth” in U.S. Civil War Prison Narratives: John Ransom, Henry Eby, and the ‘Jack of Clubs’,” Louisiana State University History Graduate Student Association Conference, Baton Rouge, LA, March 2016.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, University of Mississippi, 2016-Current

Graduate Assistant, University of Illinois Springfield, 2015-2016

Graduate Public Service Intern, University of Illinois, 2014-2015

Certified Tutor, Lincoln Land Community College, 2013

Writing Center Student Worker, Lincoln Land Community College, 2012-2013

SERVICE

Volunteer Civil War Flag Conservationist, Illinois State Military Museum, 2015-2016.

President, UIS History Club, 2015-2016.

Docent, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 2013-2016.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society of Civil War Historians
Southern Historical Association
American Historical Association