

Harmonizing Hegemony:

How Music Helped Turn American Civil War Era Individuals into Collective Fighting Forces

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In memory of

Dr. Peter S. Carmichael

Abstract

Music was “a quintessential part of soldier life” during the American Civil War, namely because music impacted almost every American’s life in the mid-nineteenth century.¹ Historian Christian McWhirter argued that nearly every Civil War era primary source—from diaries to widespread publications—mentioned music to some extent and that the thoughts and feelings of everyday Americans were expressed daily through their interactions with music. Utilizing a new and immense wealth of digitized letters and diaries, this thesis tests previous historiographical conclusions about music’s place in American Civil War Era study. The letters and diaries studied were collected from across the conflict illustrating a candid and universal passion for music as a strong cultural force in the war extending music beyond soundtrack into a position of vital study. Not tangential to the war, music provides a lens to view soldiering in all its aspects and answer questions about the common citizen-soldier. This thesis argues that military music of the fife, drum, bugle, and brass band was vital for control over soldiers and contenting their soldiering life. However, folk music and camp music was necessary to counterbalance military music alleviating the suffering of soldiering. This thesis highlights the importance of musicology for Civil War era historians, the vitality of digital public history, from source gathering to public interpretation, as well as add to that growing dialog with a public history component that features this research in an online format. We will never hear the drums tambor, the fifes flouting, or the bugles blast the way Civil War soldiers did, but with this project we will better understand what that music meant to those citizen-soldiers.

¹ Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 112.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	2
Abstract	3
Table of Contents	4
List of Figures	5
Preface	6
Chapter 1: A Militarized Soundscape of Control & Contentment.....	11
Chapter 2: A Civilian Soundscape of Respite & Reconciliation	32
Chapter 3: “Civil War Mixtapes”	66
Conclusion and Final Thoughts	85
Appendix	86
Bibliography	87

List of Figures

Figure 1: Edwin Forbes, *The Reveille on the Line of Battle*, 1861, Drawing, Library of Congress

Figure 2: William Nevins, *Army Regulations for Drum, Fife, and Bugle: A Complete Manual for these Instruments*, 1861 and 1864, manuscript, Internet Archive

Figure 3: Geroge D. Klinehans, *The Manual Instruction for Drummers*, 1853, Manuscript, *Drummin' Around*

Figure 4: Unidentified soldier in Union uniform with violin and his wife, Photograph, Library of Congress

Figure 5: *Ellsworth's avengers, respectfully dedicated to the Excelsior Brigade, U.S.V. commanded by Gen. Sickel, of N.Y. Air- Annie Lisle.- By A. L. Hudson. Johnson, Song Publishers. No. 7 North Tenth St. Phila.* [Image] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/amss-cw101560/>.

Figure 6: Silex, Composer, and Arranger Wurzel. *Uncle Sam's funeral*. Chicago: Root & Cady, 1865. Notated Music. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2023783904/>.

Figure 7: George F. Root. *The Bugle Call*. Chicago: Root & Cady, 1863. Notated Music. <https://archive.org/details/buglecall00root/page/n3/mode/2up>

Figure 8: E. L. White, Composer, and Elias Howe, Publisher. *The Boston Melodeon*. Boston: Elias Howe, 1846. Notated Music. <https://archive.org/details/bostonmelodeonco00whit/page/2/mode/2up>

Figure 9: *The Southern wagon*. Image. <https://www.loc.gov/item/amss-cw201840/>

Figure 10: “The Soldier’s Last Appeal” by John Rusty in Martin VanBuren Culver to Sister, September 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/35348>

Figure 11: “Who will care for mother now?” by Chas. Carroll Sawyer in John B. Sayles to Margaret Weeks Sayles, February 7, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16243>.

Figure 12: John Collins Fulton to Mary Jane Fulton, October 4, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16262>.

Figure 13: *Civil War veterans in Grand Army of the Republic uniforms playing fife and drums with Boy Scout holding flag in front of decorated car*. United States, ca. 1910. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018652943/>.

Preface

Through my research I strived to answer a question: Do new digitized databases of Civil War soldiers' writings support or challenge historiographical arguments concerning music's role in the conflict? I argue that a wider and more accessible source base overwhelmingly supports the historiographical arguments in the field. Music enabled militaries to control individually-minded Americans and offered soldiers the emotional support needed to cope with soldiering through the war's brutality and boredom. American Civil War military music in the form of the fife, drum, bugle, and brass band exerted control over soldiers while attempting to content their soldiering life. Contrary to top-down control, grassroots folk music turned camp music was necessary to counterbalance military music. Instead of being tangential, music provides a lens to view soldiering in all its aspects and answer questions about the powers that be in the emotional world of the common citizen-soldier. In an individualistic American society these civilians entered into mass armies of uniformity and control, and in turn citizen-soldiers resenting military music's forceful presence brought civilian musical traditions unknowingly to bear in alleviating the worst aspects of soldiering. Lorien Foote states this was "a citizen army composed of millions of volunteers and draftees whose numbers dwarfed the small band of regular soldiers and West Point-trained officers."² Military music's ubiquity and control is expressed best by Union Private Andrew S. Williams: "We go to bed with the beating of the tattoo ... and get up in the morning at the beating of the reveille in the morning ... Then every fellow has to jump. We have plenty of music here. We have the brass band and the fifes and drums."³ The war in turn brought millions of collected individuals able to express their musical

² Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army*, (New York: NYU Press, 2010), 1.

³ Andrew S. Williams to William S. Williams, March 30, 1862, in *Research Arsenal*, (Spared & Shared Publications, 2023), <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/41996>. Note: emphasis added.

tastes together. Corporal Edger B. Bennett noted soldiers singing songs near Petersburg, VA while artillery dueled nearby: “Singing is a favorite [past-time] although we are not the best of singers.”⁴ Meanwhile, Private Alexander Dunn wrote in his diary: “Cloudy and raining. Some writing songs.”⁵ Citizen-soldiers were not only soldiering, but musicking.

As evidence, this thesis utilizes soldiers’ and veterans’ letters, diaries, and memoirs from four main databases: *Research Arsenal*, *Private Voices*, *Alexander Street*, and Walker Library’s EBSCOhost.⁶ These primary sources form the corpus of my research and are filled with musical references. For my thesis, I searched these databases with the keywords “fife(s),” “drum(s),” “bugle(s),” “brass band(s),” “drum corps,” “song(s),” “tune(s),” “sing(s)(ing),” “lyric(s),” “dance(d)(ing),” “fiddle/violin/viola/banjo/ bones/spoons/washboard/guitar/flute/ melodeon/squeeze box etc..,” “music,” “chorus,” “concert,” “choir,” “glee,” “bandsmen,” “musician(s),” and “minstrel(s),” among other terms. By utilizing keywords, the expedited search explored digitized and transcribed collections which form an expansive and accessible collection. What follows is a description of each database and how many sources each database contributed to my thesis.

Research Arsenal, a new 2023 initiative, holds at least 13,070 letter and diary entries, 9,595 photographs, 1,379 General and Specific Orders, 685 Morning Reports, 2,608 ledgers and books, and continues to add sources consistently. These are all text searchable and have formed the corpus of my data. These previously unexplored and inaccessible primary sources are a

⁴ Edger B. Bennett to Mary E. Marsh, December 16, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/65021>. Note: “The title [is] *Mother Dear, I’ve Come Home to Die*. Also, *Sweet Home*.”

⁵ Diary of Alexander McCloud Stevly Dunn, April 9, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/23218>.

⁶ “Civil War Database.” Research Arsenal, December 19, 2023. <https://researcharsenal.com/>; *Private Voices*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia), <https://altchive.org/>; “The American Civil War: Letters and Diaries.” Alexander Street. <https://search.alexanderstreet.com/>; “James E. Walker Library.” American Civil War, 1855-1868. <https://ezproxy.mtsu.edu/login>.

proving ground for the power of musical moments. Few historians have yet delved into the full collections. These sources span geography and chronology allowing a broad study of soldiering.

Research Arsenal:

Sing = 1383	Dancing = 95	Glee = 48
Music = 1057	Tune = 90	Minstrel = 44
Musician = 552	Concert = 90	Violin = 33
Drum = 531	Viola = 83	Lyric = 24
Bugle = 370	Flute = 80	Spoons = 21
Song = 282	Guitar = 72	Melodeon = 18
Dance = 213	Drum Corps = 71	Banjo = 15
Bands men = 159	Brass Band = 71	Chorus = 14
Bones = 157	Fiddle = 63	Squeeze Box = 5
Fife = 126	Choir = 49	Washboard = 4

The University of Georgia's *Private Voices* holds thousands of transcribed letters from semi-literate soldiers who wrote 'by ear' being "transitionally literate." These soldiers are typically underserved in the historical record due to their seemingly inaccessible linguistic character. I utilized variations on the spelling of keywords when phonetic options occur like "musick," "music," "mewzik," etc... Thanks to *Private Voices* the soldiers' common vernacular can shine and so too can their musical moments.

Private Voices:

Musician = 109	Tune = 10	Minstrel = 1
Drum = 49	Bugle = 9	Banjo = 1
Sing = 45	Fiddle = 9	Viola = 0
Song = 43	Dancing = 8	Flute = 0
Music = 33	Brass Band = 8	Choir = 0
Bones = 20	Glee = 5	Melodeon = 0
Dance = 19	Drum Corps = 4	Chorus = 0
Concert = 16	Spoons = 4	Squeeze Box = 0
Fife = 15	Violin = 3	Washboard = 0
Bands men = 13	Guitar = 2	Lyric = 0

Alexander Street augments this work with more specific textual references. This database holds roughly 100,000 pages of diaries, letters, and memoirs from 2,009 authors.

Alexander Street:

Music = 232	Bugle = 111	Violin = 41
Bands men = 230	Spoons = 99	Minstrel = 31
Sing = 227	Glee = 87	Guitar = 26
Bones = 202	Drum Corps = 86	Flute = 23
Song = 195	Musician = 82	Banjo = 18
Drum = 185	Chorus = 75	Melodeon = 13
Dance = 184	Fife = 68	Squeeze Box = 12
Dancing = 184	Brass Band = 67	Lyric = 9
Concert = 158	Fiddle = 47	Viola = 3
Tune = 113	Choir = 47	Washboard = 1

Methodologically, as stated by Willard and Porter Heaps, quotations on musical moments do not necessarily tell “a history of the war” but emphasize “events, personages, and contestants...on the basis of their contribution ... showing the spirit of the civil war period reflected in its music.”⁷ As an example, soldiers sang to such great extents that Private James F. Johnson wrote about his comrade’s personal connection to music in the ranks, “Mat Welch sings all the time. You can wake up at any hour of night and Mat will be singing his favorite song of thirty-nine verses and everyone alike.”⁸ Despite the annoyance of Mat Welch’s comrades, Welch provides additional proof to the ubiquity of music and musicking without telling us necessarily “a history of the war” but instead a history of music’s positionality. Unfortunately, as James A. Davis expresses, “the ubiquity of music can work against it; music was so much a part of everyday life that it was easily overlooked in casual descriptions, leaving the minutiae of musical

⁷ Willard Allison Heaps and Porter Heaps, *The Singing Sixties: The Spirit of Civil War Days Drawn from the Music of the Times* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), vii.

⁸ James F. Johnson to James B. Whelpley, March 2, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20897>.

practices without detailed explanations.”⁹ This requires any study of common cultural aspects to dig deep into descriptions and the presence of musical ubiquity. Additionally, those songs can each be analyzed in “song biographies” or as historian Davis calls it “a musical microhistory” with the goal “to clarify how the song’s nascent meanings resulted from its usage in volatile and ever-changing situations and how musical meaning was negotiated between performer, audience, setting, and social exigency.”¹⁰ As historian Candace Bailey concluded in her studies: “Starting with the owner generates substantive data about music in a particular time, place, and social group. The microhistories that develop from these inquiries tender a more inclusive view of how music functioned in women’s culture and across society in general.”¹¹ The utilization of these micro-historical techniques allowed smoother transitions between musical moment’s impacts on musicking in all its forms including “performer, audience, setting, and social exigency” and the experience of the individual primary source.¹² Smoother transitions result in a flowing narrative of interactions between individual soldiers, civilians, refugees, enemy combatants, and all involved in a musical moment. Civilian music contrasted, conflicted, and complimented military music holding the citizen-soldiers’ existence in the balance. That balance was what made a civil war soldier a unique creature, he was taken from individualistic civilian life to collective military life. Soldiering was a negotiation with personal philosophies of individualism.

Historiographically, several key texts come to the fore as important milestones.

Throughout the early years of Civil War historiography during the turn-of-the-century pieces like *War Songs and Poems of the Southern Confederacy* (1904) by H. M. Wharton provide tomes of collected knowledge gathered for posterity, and while useful, this effort was largely intended

⁹ Davis, *Music Along the Rapidan*, 4.

¹⁰ Davis, *Maryland, My Maryland*, xvii-xviii.

¹¹ Bailey, “Remember Those Beautiful Songs,” 286.

¹² Davis, *Maryland, My Maryland*, xvii-xviii.

for post war memory making and not much occurs in the way of musicology, lyric analysis, or the interpretation of these songs.¹³

A common man's history arrives in the post-World War II period as veterans of a new conflict come home with a host of personal experiences. The spirit of studying the man in the ranks comes largely from *The Life of Billy Yank* and *The Life of Johnny Reb* by Bell Irvin Wiley (1952 and 1943).¹⁴ His emphasis on finding a common soldier was remarkable in an age of largely big man history. He found a wealth of untapped information. My study is inspired by his, but takes his work into the digital age using databases of letters which are text searchable. While he mainly focuses on the folk and camp music, his utilization of such provides a foil for the military music. *Confederate Music* by Richard Harwell (1950) sought "to learn what music was published in the Confederacy" and while emphasizing the importance of music the focus is tangential to my study of grassroots performance. A majority of his study investigates music as distributed from the top down by publishers.¹⁵

The emotional and cultural turn of the 1960s counter culture movement also impacted Civil War musicology. *The Singing Sixties* by Willard Allison Heaps and Porter Heaps (1960) takes a deep dive into lyrical analysis and their technique is paramount to understanding any methodological approach to musicology.¹⁶ Starting with the patriotic flourishes of the war's inception and ending with a study on the conflicts post-war memory in song, the narratives of the conflict are conveyed in the medium of intense lyric analysis of an immense wealth of songs.

¹³ H. M. Wharton, *War Songs and Poems of the Southern Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Philadelphia, PA: W. E. Scull, 1904).

¹⁴ Bell Irvin Wiley and James I. Robertson, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union*, Updated ed., (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008). & Bell Irvin Wiley and James I. Robertson, *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy*, Updated ed., (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

¹⁵ Richard B. Harwell, *Confederate Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1950).

¹⁶ Willard Allison Heaps and Porter Heaps, *The Singing Sixties: The Spirit of Civil War Days Drawn from the Music of the Times* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960).

The approach does limit the scope of study to published and widely distributed materials as opposed to soldier compositions and what was utilized on the ground. While *Bands and Drummer Boys* by Francis A. Lord and Arthur Wise (1979) emphasized music's importance for soldiers, the authors do not come to a definitive conclusion as to their findings.¹⁷ My research illuminates an importance found for music as a mediating force for the common citizen soldier. *Music and Musket* by Kenneth E. Olson (1981) follows music through the chronological progression of the war emphasizing different defining moments for bands and bandsmen throughout the conflict from a previous legacy of marital music in society which I concur contributes to its centrality in the conflict and onwards through the Last Grand Review.¹⁸ His work reinforces my findings that band music provided a counter in the volatile emotions field music elicited, though not as alleviating as camp music.

With the turn-of-the millennia, *Singing the New Nation* by Ernest L. Abel (2000) can be considered an inverted and evolved version of Harwell's 1950 work in which the focus is shifted from publishers and the top-down distribution of musicking to grassroots bottom-up approach to musical experience.¹⁹ This approach provided me inspiration for a bottom-up methodology contrasting top-down hegemonic narratives. *Campfires of Freedom* by Keith P. Wilson (2002) does utilize music as a mediating force however, he focuses largely on the musings of USCT troops limiting the viewpoint within the lens of race.²⁰ While an excellent study, my focus is on the overall majority of soldiers in the conflict to confirm this positionality of music across the

¹⁷ Francis A. Lord and Arthur Wise, *Bands and Drummer Boys of the Civil War* (New York, NY: Da Capo Press, 1979).

¹⁸ Kenneth E. Olson, *Music and Musket: Bands and Bandsmen of the American Civil War*. Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance: No. 1. Greenwood Press, 1981.

¹⁹ Ernest L. Abel, *Singing the New Nation: How Music Shaped the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000).

²⁰ Keith P. Wilson, *Campfires of Freedom: The Camp Life of Black Soldiers during the Civil War* (Kent State University Press, 2002).

story of war. The scholars closest to my study both chronologically and in inspiration are *Battle Hymns* by Christian McWhirter (2012) and *Music along the Rapidan* by James A. Davis (2014).²¹ These works are inspiring contemporary pieces which dive into music's centrality to the war. *Battle Hymns* takes a broader sweeping approach to music in all aspects and I chose to dive deep into the aspects of soldiering he covers within this study. Davis by far holds the most in common with my work. The division and point of difference is that my work stays panned out and bound to digitally accessible letters while his work in 2014 is taking a microhistorical approach to a specific region and time to extrapolate musical importances which I have been confirming on a broader front.

Structurally, this thesis contains three chapters describing the processes by which individual Americans were controlled and turned into collective fighting forces. Chapter 1, examines the power of military music over the individualistic citizen-soldier during the course of the war in the form of fife, drum, bugle, and brass band. These musical moments are categorized as military, and primarily martial, in tone and purpose, expressed largely through calls to direct orders towards soldiers and sometimes through tunes to inspire the men. The purposes of military music are command and control, communication, and the maintenance of morale creating musical moments which define many aspects of soldiering. Chapter 2, contrasts this overbearing military music with citizen-soldiers' individualistic music in the grassroots form of camp music, minstrelsy, folk music, and a variety of music both popular and civilian in tone and purpose. Music enabled an emotional connection which tied soldiers to civilian life to prevent their full assimilation into the military while making them willing enough to sacrifice their

²¹ Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War*. (Civil War America. University of North Carolina Press, 2012) & James A. Davis, *Music along the Rapidan: Civil War Soldiers, Music, and Community during Winter Quarters, Virginia* (University of Nebraska Press, 2014).

individualism long enough to keep fighting. The soldiers' purposes in utilizing civilian music varied from building comradeship, humoring themselves, and providing respite from the struggles of military life and soldiering. Unknowingly, these individuals showed themselves as citizen-soldiers with civilian origins. As individuals of all walks of life joined armies created en-masse, a menagerie of musical tastes followed them into the ranks and provided dissidence to the tunes of fife, drum, bugle, and brass band, with choruses of fiddles, guitars, banjos, bones, spoons, squeezeboxes, and other civilian instruments. Chapter 3, titled "Civil War Mixtapes," functions as both a historiography of digital public history and a proof of methodology for this thesis's public history component, a digital history website exhibit. This digital exhibit allows for public access to my research in an easily digestible form. The common visitor can meet the common soldier through the medium of music. There is a gap in the public history field being filled with new and exciting digital humanities efforts, I want this thesis to not only contribute academically but also publicly through the growing field of digital history.

Chapter 1: A Militarized Soundscape of Control & Contentment

“The fife and drum are sounding To drown a Soldier cry.”²²

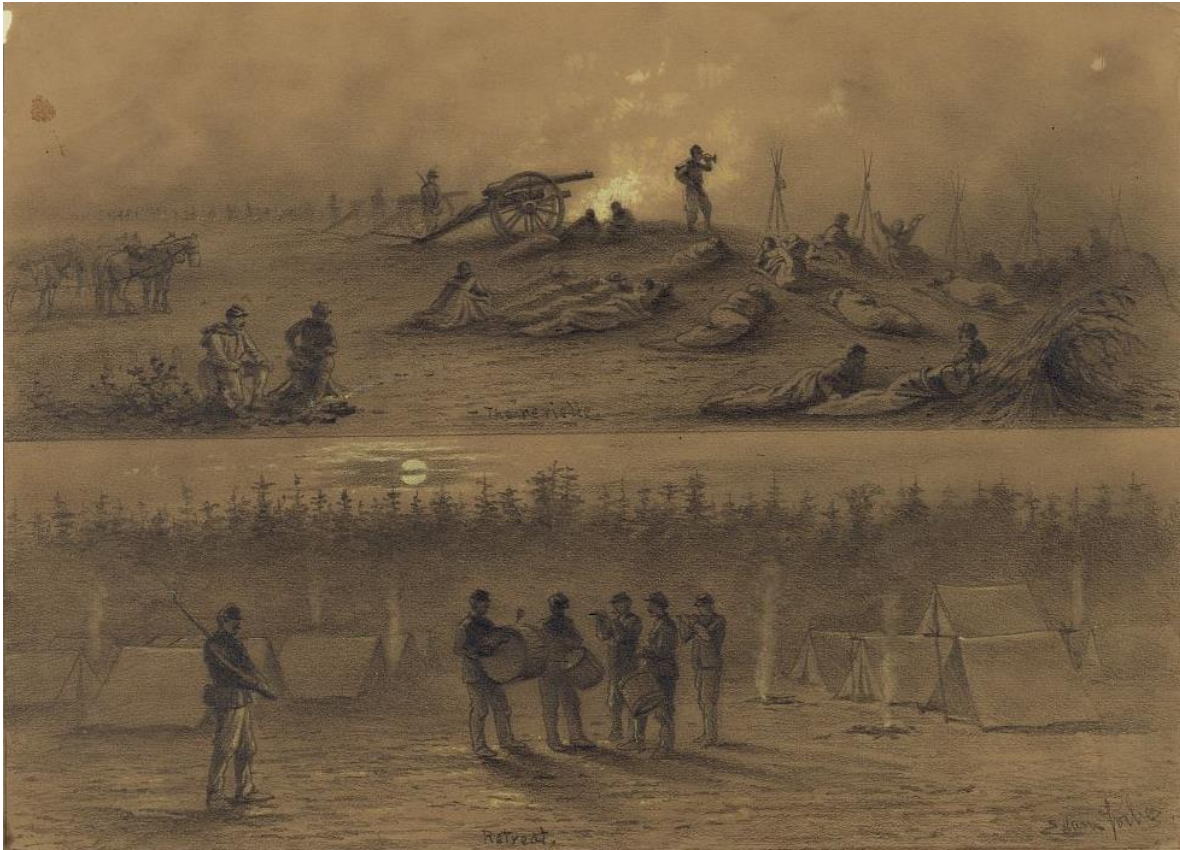


Figure 2: Edwin Forbes, *The Reveille on the Line of Battle*, 1861, Drawing, Library of Congress

²² William H. Brotherton to Martha Elizabeth Brotherton and William H. Brotherton's Aunt, February 20, 1863, in *Private Voices*, tr. Andrea Cudworth, 2011, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia, 2011), <https://altchive.org/node/10052>. (Hereinafter, I will cite sources from this database as follows: Letter Author to Letter Recipient, Letter's Date, *Private Voices*, html identifier number.)

Wherever the bugles blare, drums tambor, fifes lilt, and brass bands gusto could be heard, so too was an individual's longing cry for agency. Civil War citizen soldiers were individuals first and soldiers second, balancing American cultural individualism with their country's need for military cohesion. As demonstrated by artist Edwin Forbes previously, omnipresence of military music was built into the soldiering experience from reveille at dawn to retreat at dusk. Musicians, under the direction of officers, used these instruments to communicate commands, orders, activity, and direction to soldiers, as well as to entertain, inspire, and uplift them. For "centuries before the Civil War ... until World War II," musicians functioned as "soldier's musical clock" by providing structure to military life.²³ Nearly all duties were preceded by a musical call, functioning as "a kind of 'public address system.'"²⁴ Before the age of radio and satellite communication, only instruments could coordinate movement across large distances. Private William Andrew Garner noted that he could "hear the drum & fife down in the other regiments, nearly a mile south of us."²⁵ Officers utilized military music to control fighting men through calls and tunes. Brass bands' popular music served as a connecting force between soldiers' "past and present communities, between the military and civilian worlds."²⁶ Historian James Davis even argued that music "create[ed] new identities" for soldiers distinguishing this brotherhood of soldiering from communities of officers, civilians, and religious groups.²⁷ Davis borrows from Benedict Anderson's definition of "imagined community" in which "deep horizontal comradeship" is built around ideological and behavioral affinities.²⁸ While Davis's

²³ McWhirter, *Battle Hymns*, 112; Davis, *Music Along the Rapidan*, 64.

²⁴ Bruce C. Kelley, *Bugle Resounding: Music and Musicians of the Civil War Era*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), 212.

²⁵ William Andrew Garner to Mary Ann McCallum Garner, March 19, 1862, Research Arsenal, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/14681>.

²⁶ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 234.

²⁷ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 234.

²⁸ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 2.

study limits geography to the winter quarters along the Rapidan River from 1863-1864, this study expands that argument of “imagined community” beyond a geographic region to shared experiences of soldiering interacting with music. Music made individualistic U.S. citizens into an “imagined community” of common soldiers working together.

Military music’s function can be broken into two main categories: control and contentment. This chapter concurs with James Davis’s conclusions that fife, drum, bugle, and brass band, “eventually entwined themselves with the men’s perception of military life, creating an ironic love-hate relationship with military music that supported their transformation into professional soldiers.”²⁹ Music’s control over a soldier was the antithesis of choice and created associations between military music and negative as well as limited positive emotions. This chapter’s first section, “Controlled,” illustrates the negative emotional responses elicited by military music as it enabled large bodies of fighting men to wage war. That military music angered soldiers, made them anxious and fearful, fatigued them, saddened them, and punished them. Yet still soldiers soldiered on and music continued to sound. Private John W. Reese joked that if he died in battle, at least it would be a “happy Exchange no more to Be Roused By the sound of the drum.”³⁰ Meanwhile, this chapter’s second section, “Contented,” illustrates military music’s positive emotional responses. As a brief example, false reports of success around Richmond sent the 100th Pennsylvania Infantry into premature revelry. Private Christopher Columbus Lobingier wrote in his diary “Gen. Welsh received several dispatches stating that Gen. Stoneman and Dix were in Richmond and the Stars & Stripes were floating over the Rebel Capitol. There was great excitement in camp. Great exultation over the news, drumming,

²⁹ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 5.

³⁰ John W. Reese to Christena Reese, April 23, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/9537>.

cheering, and we had Dress Parade after night. We made a grand appearance.”³¹ Military music was associated with powerful emotions of celebration, not only maintaining but boosting morale. In the end, music enabled military cohesion and the potential for victory.

Together, control and contentment elicited action as military music’s goal was to move masses of men towards common objectives. Fifes, drums, and bugles elicited action at Fairfax Court House, Virginia, as Corporal Samuel N. Gaston, described, “At 7 the next morning, 4 buglers came out in front of the General’s tent and played the signal call and in a moment the drums of nearly 50 regiments were rolling and the fifes were screaming the call, ‘to arms.’ Then the men hurried...”³² Private James M. Mobley also wrote about music’s ability to move men:

I was out in the woods not far of ... when I heard the allarm beat on the drum I went double quick to the camps to sea what was out ... when I got in sight I saw all the companys falling in ... they said the yankees was at Bethell Church well I got my musket and got in ranks and in A bout ten minits the whole Legion was of[f].³³

Control and contentment allowed military structures to elicit action from citizen-soldiers in their transformation from citizen to soldier. Harrison Nesbitt reported hopefully “But I should like to Hear the Bugle sound for us to Pack up and march Homeward But I am afraid it will be two or three months yet.”³⁴ For Nesbitt, that bugle held the control to send him home, not his own actions but the instrument held control. Truly, “When there was no bugle sounding morning roll call or drum announcing afternoon drill—a strange sensation overcame soldiers, who once again tasted the freedom of choice and action.”³⁵

³¹ Diary of Christopher Columbus Lobingier, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/86375>.

³² Samuel N. Gaston to Family, January 4, 1863, in *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/12691>.

³³ James M. Mobley to Alexander Mobley, February 3, 1862, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8374>.

³⁴ Harrison Nesbitt to Jemima Nesbitt, May 27, 1865, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/14071>.

³⁵ Carmichael, *The War for the Common Soldier*, 273; 291.

Controlled

Music structured soldiers' daily schedule. So much so that Private John Briggs explained early in the conflict at Camp Dennison, Ohio, it as being treated like "a mess of criminals."³⁶ Fife and drum "called reveille at sunrise" before calling roll, then roll call again at 9:30 am, 2:00 pm, and 6:30 pm before being driven "to bed at nine o'clock by the beat of the drum." Orders provided through music elicited these demands alongside an omnipresent fear of punishment. As Briggs put it, "If we don't strictly obey these orders we should be sent to the guard house." Discipline created a coherent fighting force. Time management for an army was immensely difficult, moving vast amounts of supply and large quantities of soldiers in a timely order was a herculean task. Music made order out of chaos and confusion. "Data on the number of men who served in the Civil War armies can be no better than estimates" however those estimates place 850,000 – 900,000 individuals in the ranks of Confederate Armies and roughly 2,100,000 in the ranks of Union Armies. With more than 620,000 soldiers losing their lives in the conflict, the immense challenges of moving hundreds of thousands of individuals becomes apparent.³⁷ With the start of war, and the mobilization of masses of men and materials, "the War Department had taken over from the states the responsibility for feeding, clothing, and arming Union soldiers" a process "marred by inefficiency."³⁸ This was a system that allowed "A campaigning army of 100,000 men therefore required 2,500 supply wagons and at least 35,000 animals, and consumed 600 tons of supplies each day."³⁹ These supplies, once arriving into a regiments camp were distributed to the men following the fife, drum, and bugle calls for "orders for orderly sergeants"

³⁶ John Briggs to Thomas Hammond, May 21, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/51563>.

³⁷ James B. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 306, 854.

³⁸ James B. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 323-324.

³⁹ James B. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 325.

gather men to distribute rations for “breakfast call” or “dinner call.” Every step of logistics within the blast of a bugle was conducted and controlled by music. In music manuals published for military use, the thirty or more calls detail every facet of a soldier’s life (see Figures 2 & 3).⁴⁰ As such, military music was a necessary evil: it elicited negative emotional reactions and degraded morale among soldiers, but provided the ability to move large armies over vast spaces.

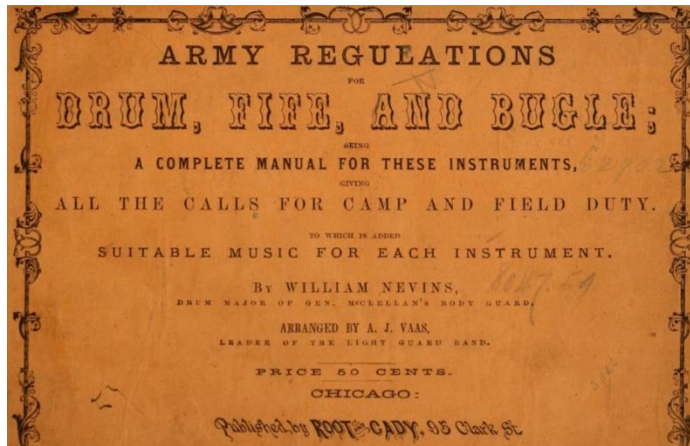


Figure 2: William Nevins, *Army Regulations for Drum, Fife, and Bugle: A Complete Manual for these Instruments*, 1861 and 1864, manuscript, Internet Archive

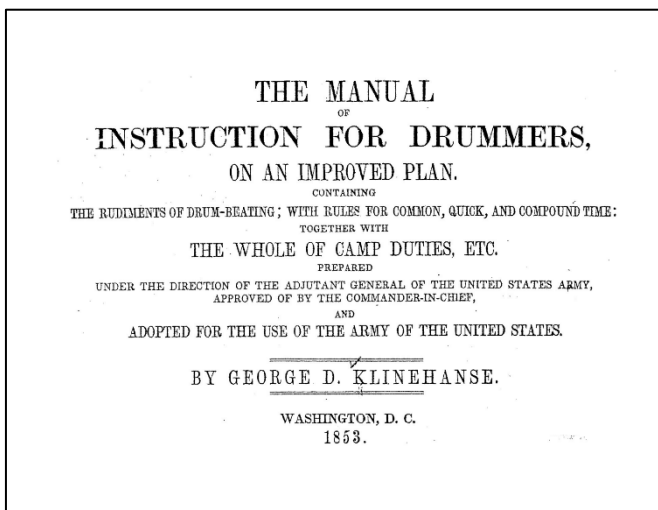


Figure 3: George D. Klinehanse, *The Manual Instruction for Drummers*, 1853, Manuscript, Drummin’ Around

⁴⁰ Examples of Civil War Era music manuals for fife, drum, and bugle: George D. Klinehanse, “On an Improved Plan. Containing the Rudiments of Drum-Beating; With Rules for Common, Quick, and Compound Time: Together with the Whole of Camp Duties, etc. Prepared under the Direction of the Adjutant General of the United States Army, Approved of by the Commander-in-Chief, and Adopted for the Use of the Army of the United States,” (Washington, D.C.: 1853); Elias Howe, “For the use of the Army and Navy, containing Full Rules and Exercises, the Duties of Musicians on all Occasions, and the full Camp Duty, Signals, Calls, &c. Also the complete Bugle Calls for the Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry. Also the Pay and Emoluments of Musicians, and of every Grade in the Army or Navy. To which is added several popular National and Patriotic Songs as Quartettes,” (Boston, MA: 1861); William Nevins, “Being A Complete Manual For These Instruments, giving All The Calls For Camp and Field Duty to which is added Suitable Music for Each Instrument” (1861).

Anger

The music regimenting military life frustrated and angered soldiers. Private Benjamin L. Mobley proclaimed that in waking up to reveille “thair is nothing that provoaks me like the role of our drum at an un useual hour if thair ever was any fight in me it is then.”⁴¹ Likewise, Corporal Freland N. Holman griped “I for one am entirely sick of the unearthly toots that come from the old fish horns.”⁴² As historian Lorien Foote emphasizes, “Military discipline was a shock to many Union soldiers, most of whom had no prior military service.”⁴³ That emotional reaction, though aimed at the military music, points to a larger issue of control over one’s time. Whether it is control of their wake-up time, or their overall daily routine and schedule. Foote goes on to state: “The most individualistic society on earth now demanded that its free men submit to the control of others and subsume themselves into units that acted with the efficiency and precision of a machine.”⁴⁴ Lacking control over action defined the soldiering experience and resounded in military music.

Anticipation, Anxiety, and Fear

Corporal Freland N. Holman, a cavalryman wrote: “we have quietly pitched our tents again and live on as before expecting to hear the call “Boots and Saddles” at any time of day or night.”⁴⁵ Holman waited in anticipation for the inevitable bugle call to get back to the work of soldiering, saddle up, and get moving. Oddly enough, the absence of music created a growing anticipation of orders and caused great anxiety for soldiers. Towards the end of the war, Private Harrison Nesbitt noted feeling “Very anxious to get started northward...But at 4 oclock this

⁴¹ Benjamin L. Mobley to Elizabeth Mobley, December 5, 1861, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8365>.

⁴² Freland N. Holman to Isabell Holman, June 10, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12486>.

⁴³ Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs*, 10.

⁴⁴ Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs*, 10.

⁴⁵ Freland N. Holman to Isabell Holman, June 10, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12486>.

morning the Bugle Sounded for all Hands to get up and get Ready for to march there was all Kinds of speculations as to where we was going ... we all fell in with Every thing on.” Nesbitt anticipated what dangers he may be marching into for “about two Hours and then got order to go Back to our old camp and pitch our tents again and stay where we was.”⁴⁶ This experience was the pinnacle of the ‘hurry up and wait’ military culture plaguing soldier’s anxieties.

The presence of enemy field music also indicated the presence of potential danger. Captain Don Carlos Newton wrote near the Confederate positions at Corinth, Mississippi: “We can hear their [railroad] cars whistle as plain as we can at home from the depot. Out on the picket lines we can hear their drums and fifes & also their words of command when they are having dress parade.”⁴⁷ Private John Weaver Cotton observed similar situations near Chattanooga, Tennessee: “We have got the advantage of a big hill to shell them from and the Lookout Mountain. We can hear their drums and fifes and horns and hear them crossing the river on their pontoon bridge and we can go out on a big hill and see all over their fortifications and them too.”⁴⁸ Music signaled the proximity of enemy troops and induced a wide range of emotions in soldiers. With enemy close at hand fear could arise. Drummer Benjamin Clark Near wrote of an incident in which he and another drummer anticipated an incoming attack near Alexandria. Near demonstrated the anxiety and sheer terror combat can bring, even if imagined as he “was awakened by Capt. Snell ... He came to my tent and called out at the top of his voice, ‘Major—Up! Up! and beat the long roll for the enemy is approaching.’ I strung up my drum and ran to the center and the beat the long roll for ½ an hour” alerting the garrison of an impending attack. As

⁴⁶ Harrison Nesbitt to Jemima Nesbitt, April 26, 1865, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/14067>. Note: emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Don Carlos Newton to Mary Marie Prindle Newton, May 28, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/44464>.

⁴⁸ John Weaver Cotton to Family, September 29, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/81160>.

anxious men flew to the stations, “cannon were made ready for action and all was still for a long time. And then I beat the call for the colors and waited 10 minutes and then the fife major struck up *The Girl I left Behind Me* and we three drummers played it up to the handle.” Playing this popular tune alleviated stress and expressed pensive energy of the hypothetical fight to come. “But the rebels did not come so all things are quiet today—but I never saw so scared a fellow as the band drummer was.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, for North Carolinian Private Neill McLeod the drum invoked a worries, writing “I cant hardley tell when day comes onely by the drum but I am afrade we will have to moove a gin.”⁵⁰ He was fearful of what movement and change brought which would result in his unit moving out of warm winter quarters into “vary cold weather.”⁵¹ In contrast, the lack of musical noise could also illicit feelings of anticipation, anxiety, and fear could consume whole masses of troops as a result of a lack military musicking directive. In light of General George B. McClellan’s Special Orders No. 108 during the Peninsular campaign, Henry Clay Long wrote: “...we have not played a note since we came here for McClellan has ordered that there shall be no playing at all nor a drum beaten or a horn or fife sounded. That is because we are so near the enemy that they might hear us and send a shell in amongst us.”⁵² Not having orders provided by music magnified the fear of nearby enemies and potential combat.

⁴⁹ Benjamin Clark Near to Sophia Tremaine Near, May 10, 1862, in Research Arsenal, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/12476>.

⁵⁰ Neill McLeod to Elizabeth McLeod, December 21, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/9198>.

⁵¹ Neill McLeod to Elizabeth McLeod, December 21, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/9198>.

⁵² General George B. McClellan, Special Orders No 108, (Army of the Potomac, April 1862), <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/24811>; Henry Clay Long to Wife, April 20, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/47644>.

Fatigue

Soldiers were frequently fatigued by tasks initiated with music. From “drill call,” in which soldiers would practice maneuvers and movement, to the literal “fatigue call,” in which soldiers were to conduct any variety of tasks—building breastworks, earthworks, gathering firewood, or collecting water—fatigue calls demanded soldiers perform their work of soldiering. Soldier James Pratt described the dread associated with standing guard through a cold night: “the BuGle Sounded at four clock the Guard was taken of it was so Cold I Could not Sleep we had Got very Short of Provisions.”⁵³ Pratt also remembered the tiresome cold as “It was rainy all day. Now snow you say what do yow do all day, we Turn out at the Beet Of the Drum at half Past 6 in morning to anser our Names.”⁵⁴ Similarly, music forced Sergeant Isaac L. Mead to move when he felt too fatigued to even think: “Before we had quite finished our dinner, toot–toot goes the bugle to fall in. Some said we had come 10 miles. We felt as though we had. But there was no time to think about it. Even thinking seems tiresome.”⁵⁵ Soldiers associated fatiguing feeling with music.

Sadness

Music elicited sadness by ripping soldiers away from their primary connection to home and family: writing. Musical calls indicated a cessation of leisure and a return to military duty or much needed sleep. However, this act of writing was vital to a soldier’s psyche. As expressed by historian Drew G. Faust, the *ars moriendi* tradition of Victorian domestic mourning preferred family to die surrounded by kin, on a death bed, with last words, as “these critical last moments of life would epitomize his or her spiritual condition.”⁵⁶ However, in wartime, few Americans

⁵³ James Pratt to Charlotte Pratt, November 1, 1862, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12966>.

⁵⁴ James Pratt to Carlote Pratt, March 13, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12989>.

⁵⁵ Isaac L. Mead to Esther Mead, November 20, 1862, in Research Arsenal, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/63859>.

⁵⁶ Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Random House, 2008), 10.

had the ability to sit at their soldier's side as they died in war far from home. Instead, "soldiers, chaplains, military nurses, and doctors conspired to provide the dying man and his family with as many of the elements of the conventional Good Death, as possible."⁵⁷ One factor that could be that last tie to a loved one was a letter sent before an untimely sudden death.

For Benjamin Lincoln writing to his beloved Isie, "The drums are now sounding tattoo—8'clock—and according to the regulations of the camp, I should extinguish my light and prepare for a night's rest, but I must write you a line first. This letter will be short but it will be better than nothing ..."⁵⁸ In defiance of the call to prepare for another night, this soldier resists music and in turn its authority over his evening writing. Private Albert W. Blair wrote that he had "but little time write fer I am listening to hear the bugle sound evry moment for us to drill."⁵⁹ Francis Patrick also wrote that "i must close for present and go to drilling the drum is calling me now."⁶⁰ First Sergeant John Preston Campbell stated of writing that "I must soon stop my sillyness the bugle will soon blow and I must be on hand."⁶¹ The homesickness can be felt in U.S. teamster, Oliver U. Guinand's poem describing his surroundings in a solemn letter:

*The winds doth howl, The drums are sounding
The shrill whistle, From the locomotive is pounding
The night is dark, The stars are hid
All nature's silence, A farewell has bid
And here I am so far from home
The South we are invading.⁶²*

⁵⁷ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 11.

⁵⁸ Benjamin Lincoln to Isie, November 5, 1862, Research Arsenal, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/57768>.

⁵⁹ Albert W. Blair to Abigail and John Blair, April 21, 1864, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8726>.

⁶⁰ Francis Patrick to Jane Patrick and Mary Jane Patrick, November 9, 1864, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/14632>.

⁶¹ John Preston Campbell to Mother, January 15, 1864, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/13039>.

⁶² Diary 2 of Oliver U. Guinand, August 31, 1862, Research Arsenal, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58167>.

What little free time soldiers had around fire or candlelight to write could end at the call to extinguish lights. For Alvin Brackett, the bugle signaled an end to the day and an end to a heartfelt letter as he stated “give my love to all the folks good night the bugle is blowing and I must turn out to roll call.”⁶³ In the case of Private William J. Darby, his letter was cut short stating “the drum is Bea tin now and i mus go.”⁶⁴ Meanwhile, Private William S. Shockley, just realized that “it is now 9 oclock and the drum wil soon tap for lights out I have little time to give newse.”⁶⁵ In these ways, music controlled even what little time soldiers afforded for family, cutting goodbyes short. William V. Fleming wrote “the drum has beat for roll call so I must come to a close by saying I remain your affectionate husband untill death.”⁶⁶ John Patrick Caldwell repeated a similar refrain: “i must close as the drum is beating for lits out i Could write you heap more if i had time but as my time is out i must close.”⁶⁷

Furthermore, military music could inflict homesickness. After hearing the brass band play ‘Auld Lang Syne’ and ‘Home, Sweet Home!,’ Colonel Alfred Perkins Rockwell stated “Such things ought not to be tolerated. I am growing homesick. Please sing me that ‘song of the olden time.’ I am listening now.”⁶⁸

Music also directed the sobering tasks of funerary duties, one of the darkest aspects of military life. Historian Mark S. Schantz emphasizes that “death was of such pervasive interest in the antebellum era” and “they understood that death awaited all who were born and prized the ability to face death with a spirit of calm resignation.”⁶⁹ While they accepted death as a fact of

⁶³ Alvin Brackett to Hattie Walker, May 14, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12396>.

⁶⁴ William J. Darby to Amos Harrison Dalton, June 12, 1861, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/10807>.

⁶⁵ William S. Shockley to Eliza Shockley, August 19, 1861, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8565>.

⁶⁶ William V. Fleming to Margaret Fleming, May 29, 1862, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/11444>.

⁶⁷ John Patrick Caldwell to “Dear Friend”, no date, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/10910>.

⁶⁸ Alfred Perkins Rockwell to Katharine 'Kate' Virginia Foote, July 21, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/10937>.

⁶⁹ Mark S. Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (Cornell University Press, 2008), 2-3.

life, death still holds an impact on soldier's psyche and associates develop between death and the sound of muffled drums and solum fifes. A military funeral far from home and away from loved ones was not the ideal "cultural model of the good death" as expressed by scholars Faust, Schantz, and Friend.⁷⁰ During a measles epidemic in his unit, Pratt stated that, "Geat many have died in 11th N. H. 12 or 15 I should think all most Every day we heare the solum role of the muffled fife Drur some tim tow three Times a day with Co. to wich they belong folering M After with a read red Coffin."⁷¹ Quartermaster Sergeant John Caleb Lockwood, recalled upon procuring a coffin for a soldier that "in his coffin in presence of his son (another soldier) and with the fife & drum playing a mournful dirge, he was carried to the soldiers' cemetery, leaving camp about dark. These scenes, as I before said, cast a gloom over my mind for a time..."⁷² Musician Henry Clay Long expressed that "they do not make much of such things [funerals] here. All that makes up a funeral procession is eight privates, two drums and fife. The drums are muffled and they play a slow march to the grave. It makes anyone feel sad to see them."⁷³ For some soldiers, death was forever associated with muffled drum, somber fife, and a lone bugle. 1st Sergeant David Fisher McGowan wrote of a musician "playing the *Dead March* on an old fife and it affects my nerves very unpleasantly, don't it yours?"⁷⁴ An association between military music and death was built by the ubiquity of both leaving an enduring mark on Civil War soldiers emotional experience of soldiering.

⁷⁰ Craig T. Friend and Lorri Glover, eds. *Death and the American South* (Cambridge University Press; 2014), 39.

⁷¹ James Pratt to Wife, March 9, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12988>.

⁷² John Caleb Lockwood to Wife and Family, November 17, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/15822>.

⁷³ Henry Clay Long to Wife, January 8, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/47496>.

⁷⁴ David Fisher McGowan to Friends & Family, January 19, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/37645>.

Punished

Additionally devastating were military court-martials, often called a “drum head” court, utilized to punish crimes like cowardice and desertion.⁷⁵ Private Lloyd Willis Manning, wrote “there was a fellow in the 56th Regiment drummed out of camp. Our company and the 56th formed two lines face to face and four guards with muskets and fife and drum played rogue’s march.”⁷⁶ To be ‘drummed out’ of camp and removed from military service was common in units suffering low morale and high instances of insubordination. Private John Futch Jr. wrote about the inclusion of the drum in punishment, “We have a man Brout threw our Camps every day With the drum and goones and his head shaved for Coward dise this is to Be done for 30 days.”⁷⁷ Lorien Foote notes that “A striking component of honor for this group of young men was courage on the battlefield and an unflinching sense of duty. Both were necessary to sustain their public reputation and the continued respect of their peers” and any form of cowardice or desertion was irreprehensible.⁷⁸ Military music and the “rogue’s march” used to remove soldiers from service associate cowardice and potential execution with the muffled roll of the drum and shrill tones of the fife.

However, a different tune was played as Private Henry W. Robinson wrote of an experience where the song yankee doodle was used as a punishment for Confederate deserters recaptured and “4 of them was North Carolinans tha had De Serted & tha giv them 39 lashes on the bare back & drumed them out of Camps under the tune of yankey doodle.”⁷⁹ The song

⁷⁵ William A. Smith to John M. Smith and Phebe Smith, Late July 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/14310>; Luther Grander to Sabra S. White Granger, May 9, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/14352>.

⁷⁶ Lloyd Willis Manning to Lydia, January 31, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46623>.

⁷⁷ John Futch Jr. to Martha Ramsey Futch, February 28, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8998>.

⁷⁸ Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs*, 100.

⁷⁹ Henry W. Robinson to Elizabeth Robinson, June 7, 1862, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8131>.

“Yankee Doodle” was revered in the north for its revolutionary pedigree as appropriated by colonists turning a tune used to mock them by native Europeans into a badge of honor. Now this badge of revolutionary identity is so engrained in New England culture, to be a ‘Yankee’ was to be a northerner. The use of a tune contrary to their cause illustrates the intrinsic nature of music not only in ceremony as symbolism but in practice as propaganda. Music was utilized in some of the worst situations of both sorrowful death and dreadful punishment.

Contented

Military music’s goal was to elicit action. Fifes, drums, and bugles elicited action at Fairfax Court House, Virginia, as Corporal Samuel N. Gaston, described, “At 7 the next morning, 4 buglers came out in front of the General’s tent and played the signal call and in a moment the drums of nearly 50 regiments were rolling and the fifes were screaming the call, ‘to arms.’ Then the men hurried...”⁸⁰ Private James M. Mobley wrote about how music moved men:

I was out in the woods not far of ... when I heard the allarm beat on the drum I went double quick to the camps to sea what was out ... when I got in sight I saw all the companys falling in ... they said the yankees was at Bethell Church well I got my musket and got in ranks and in A bout ten minits the whole Legion was of[f].⁸¹

The emotional realities of war—stress, anger, anxiety, fear, fatigue, and sorrow—necessitated that the military prioritize morale, esprit de corps, and instilling a fighting spirit in men to keep them ready for battle. In some ways, a melody is to a song what morale is to an army. Without melody—the part you likely remember and usually the central refrain—most songs fall apart. Without morale—a willingness to suffer, fight back in times of uncertainty, and not desert—most armies fall apart. Military music holds a pivotal part in the overarching apparatus of military control as a hegemonic relationship exists in which military music attempts to content

⁸⁰ Samuel N. Gaston to Family, January 4, 1863, in *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/12691>.

⁸¹ James M. Mobley to Alexander Mobley, February 3, 1862, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8374>.

soldiers' morale in addition to controlling them to lessen the negative emotions felt by soldiers. Reciprocity is the key to a hegemonic relationship and while military music could elicit excitement, encouragement, and celebration, the power of military music to create positive emotions pales though in comparison to civilian music detailed in chapter 2. Military music's ability to elicit limited positive emotions made it slightly more tolerable for soldiers with limited agency and power within the behemoth of military control.

Excitement

Excitement proves to be the positive side of anticipation as opposed to anxiety and fear. Marching into battle soldiers are certainly anticipating the experience, some excited, some terrified, and most feeling a mixture of both in anxiety. Corporal William H. Harden, recalled: "We have a Stiring excitement here to day. we have orders to cook up 3 days rations and be ready to move at the tap of the drum."⁸² The excitement elicited by a drum tap was able to move men not only physically but emotionally. The same tap and beat of the drum from the enemy could mean further anticipation as Harden stated when battlelines were close, "I could see their flag and their guard tent. it was the first place of danger that I have ever been in, we could see the smoke from their Boats, and hear them beat the drum."⁸³ In another instance, Private David Patten wrote "As the troops left this morning, the band played *Hail Columbia* and *Happy Land*. It sounded nice. Every man seemed as though he was [ready] anew to meet the enemy" showing the power of music to motivate troops in the field and heading toward danger.⁸⁴ Sometimes soldiers spontaneously broke out into song on the way into battle. "At one o'clock we were roused by the bugle and were again put upon the march. ... The soldiers ... enlivened their

⁸² William H. Harden to Nancy J. Harden, July 2, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8620>.

⁸³ William H. Harden to Nancy J. Harden, May 21, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/8609>.

⁸⁴ David Patten to Relatives, January 15, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/14303>.

march by singing Dixie.”⁸⁵ Compulsory marching and voluntary singing show the citizen soldier’s binary existence as a soldier under military directive and as an individualistic American resistance to authority.

Music also impacted soldiering throughout the course of battle. Well supported by historian Davis, military music “In all phases of a Civil War battle—moving toward the engagement, staging, enduring a nerve-wracking wait, or a grisly aftermath—music was present” and “should a soldier hear music in such a situation, its impact could be profound”⁸⁶ As example, soldiers “needed a sizable surge of adrenaline when attacking, and music could be an effective catalyst” quoting a member of the 71st Pennsylvania who exclaimed at the Battle of Seven Pines exclaimed, “There! Our bands are playing the Star-Spangled Banner! we are filled with great joy.”⁸⁷ Just after the battle of Antietam, Private Charles H. Howe recalled the events as “Burnside’s Corps was suddenly aroused by the bugles sounding ‘To Arms.’ I had my equipment on before I was half awake and the Massachusetts 36th was in line of battle before any other.”⁸⁸ Meanwhile, Private Robert F. Wilson noted of the battle of Gettysburg and his actions with the 1st West Virginia Cavalry, that “The bugles blew forward [in the late afternoon, July 3rd] and away went the Brigade. The Brigade [went] through a piece of woods, tore down a fence under fire of the Rebs, and charged on them behind a stone fence.”⁸⁹ Military music provided the necessary excitement and catalyst for combat. In fact, Musician William Stuart Walker was sure that, “Soldiering in spite of all its hardships has something so exciting about it

⁸⁵ Nathaniel Henry Rhodes Dawson to Elodie Breck Todd, July 8, 1861, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/12334>. Note: hoc signo vinces is a Latin rendering of a Greek phrase meaning “in this sign you will conquer.”

⁸⁶ Davis, “Music and Gallantry in Combat During the American Civil War,” 147.

⁸⁷ Davis, “Music and Gallantry in Combat During the American Civil War,” 150.

⁸⁸ Charles H. Howe to Sarah Ann Howe, September 29, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/13094>

⁸⁹ Robert Finley Wilson to Joseph Swihart, July 14, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/56209>.

that I believe a man could be entirely weaned from his home and friends for life to follow the fife and drum.”⁹⁰

Encouragement

Within the larger citizen soldier culture, music encouraged citizens to enlist. Elisha W. Harding wrote while traveling to St. Louis in that,

...along my journey, I noticed at almost every town and hamlet crowds of men not infrequently interspersed with women moving rapidly to and fro, drums beating, fife’s whistling everywhere evidencing the busy preparation of war. I saw little else—heard little else. It is the all absorbing question of the day. War, war—you see it in the measured tread of men, hear it in the martial strains borne upon the breeze.⁹¹

Meanwhile, as Nancy M. Brown Goodhue, resident of Springfield, Tennessee, wrote to her sister back in New Hampshire at the start of the war, “It is all we hear here or see is companies and the fife and drum.”⁹² Charles Reppert, a civilian working at Clinton Iron and Rail Works, wrote to his brother in the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, “Saturday last in evening, the new market house in Allegheny was lit up & thrown open for inspection of the public. They had a band of music, drum & fife in attendance...” showing the presence of military music across the Homefront inundating civilian life.⁹³ Music was setting the military tone from the moment a soldier enlists. Music held the power to encourage soldiers. In a show of force in Norfolk, Virginia, a soldier wrote in his diary that the 29th Massachusetts Infantry employed music to psych their men up for a parade through a hostile town. After leaving the safety of their entrenched position these soldiers “moved on again into the city [Norfolk] with drums beating, colors flying, and fifes

⁹⁰ William Stuart Walker to James A. Walker, September 3, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20545>.

⁹¹ Elisha W. Harding to Cordelia Harding, August 31, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/94967>.

⁹² Nancy M. Brown Goodhue to Sister, May 19, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/55176>.

⁹³ Charles Reppert to William Eichbaum Reppert, April 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/38074>.

playing, bayonets fixed ready for work, if needed.”⁹⁴ The demonstration indicates music held a place to psych up men in the ranks, encourage and motivate them, and control them as they elicit control and intimidate a civilian population. Sometimes the encouragement was simple. Corporal Lyman B. Hannaford described a night march in which “the boys [of the fife and drum] strike up a song and keep time to the music and all goes on lively.”⁹⁵ In this case, music helped encourage men to forgo sleep and make the most of a forced march.

Celebration

Music also offered officers and their men a means to celebrate. Many soldiers enjoyed a share of performances from their brass bands, but no group were serenaded more than the officers. As officers held more power than the men in the ranks, those officers could solicit the positives of military music and in turn reinforce their status over their men. As a Musician Xenophon Demosthenes Tingley wrote “Our band played at the Col.’s last night till nearly nine o’clock. The Col. had a lot of company. Major Potter, the pay-master, was there & Col. Rogers’ wife among the rest. ... I am satisfied that the whole crew is unfit company for a decent person.”⁹⁶ This wasn’t the only time Tingley played for the Colonel. “Night before last, the leader of the 1st Connecticut Band played with us at dress parade. ... We are now in the habit of playing a piece in front of Col.’s after dress parade. The Col. requested us to the first time and we have since kept it up. It attracts considerable attention.”⁹⁷ This attention paid to the performance for those officers by the men reinforces military hierarchy and stratification.

⁹⁴ Diary of an Unknown Soldier of Company G, 29th Massachusetts Infantry, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/53841>.

⁹⁵ Lyman B. Hannaford to Mary C. Spencer, September 15, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58035>.

⁹⁶ Xenophon Demosthenes Tingley to Family, March 12, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20053>.

⁹⁷ Xenophon Demosthenes Tingley to Sophia, March 26, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20055>.

Music accompanied celebrations. Ceremony turned to celebration and coalesced pageantry into pride over the idea of success. Military music embodied itself in the celebration of military culture. Dress parades like that written by U.S. Teamster Guinand were a ceremonial performance where musicians, march down the length of a regiment, playing tunes in the presence of the national and regimental flags and officers reenforcing military discipline, order, and hierarchy. On New Year's Eve, "the drum and fife are playing a lively tune ... I see the several long battle lines" at which point the Colonel orders his men to attention, "Now the drum and fife again plays, 'Bonapart's March.' Now another regimental band strikes up 'yankee Doodle.' There goes all the commissioned officers up to the Colonel. Now they hold a council. ... Now they disband [and] they play, "The Girl I left behind me." All have broke ranks & gone to camp" and in turn this ceremony's pivotal importance reenforces the structure, order, hierarchy, and the positionality of music as a force of control.⁹⁸ Private Charles Henry Howe describes celebrations in which from a mile and a half "I distinctly heard all the cheering and drum beating of that night. ... the brigade paraded round, cheering, beating the drums, &c. I could plainly see the whole performance and it was the grandest sight I ever witnessed. Speeches were made by the officers and many were the songs that were sung."⁹⁹ In a limited way military music allowed these citizen-soldiers to celebrate soldiering. As historian Davis emphasizes, "Unlike any other process used to create communal bonds within the army, music was the only activity that could quickly, effectively, and permanently form community by itself. Making music was a ritual that immediately established a social group" and for the common citizen-soldier held a bond with each other through common experiences of music and soldiering.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Diary 4 of Oliver U. Guinand, in *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/57993>.

⁹⁹ Charles Henry Howe to Father and Mother, May 12, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, (Spared & Shared Publications, 2023), <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/13252>.

¹⁰⁰ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 21.

Conclusion

The common citizen-soldier was controlled and contented by military music confirming the historiographical record on military music currently upheld by James A. Davis, Lorien Foote, among other scholars who conclude the difficult position citizen-soldiers found themselves in was liminal. Music defined these citizens' relationship to soldiering and the power excreted over them by the military superstructure. The hardships of soldiering, their anger, anxiety, fear, fatigue, sadness, and punishment resided in association with military music. However, music also demanded excitement, encouragement, and celebration. That controlled and contented soldier required more to ease them than solely military music. After all, these were *citizen* soldiers. These citizen soldiers were civilians at heart and that status came first and foremost demanding more than military pomp and circumstance to ease them into submission.

Chapter 2: A Civilian Soundscape of Respite & Reconciliation

“That other song you sent is getting quite popular here.”¹⁰¹



Figure 4: Unidentified soldier in Union uniform with violin and his wife, Photograph, Library of Congress

¹⁰¹ Lyman Beecher Hannaford to Brother and Sister, April 4, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/19842>.

Civil War civilian music held an important impact for the citizen-soldier by building comradery, humoring soldiers, and providing respite from the struggles of military life. James A. Davis, noted “cherished activities included singing with messmates and playing a guitar or fiddle around the evening campfire” and “a surprising number of unofficial organized ensembles and performances appeared ... including glee clubs, string bands, and even fully staged minstrel shows.”¹⁰² As the above quote from Corporal Hannaford indicates, civilian songs were exchanged like a commodity between military theater and home front with soldiers desiring civilian music in their lives. The above picture also displays the powerful ties citizen-soldiers held for both music and home featuring a soldier and his wife, the soldier holding a fiddle showing that civilian connection to home. The songs of the 1860s America comprised a conglomeration of previous musical trends including “parlor songs dating from the 1830s, 40s, and 50s ... minstrel show songs of the 1840s and 50s ... traditional songs of the Afro-American slaves ... traditional songs of the Anglo-American immigrants... a numberless set of words to any of those tunes” and patriotic songs popularized by war fever.¹⁰³ Far more than a mere practicality or mundane time killer, music was necessary. Music had the power “to appeal to vast numbers of people, both literate and illiterate, [as] songs simplify complex ideas to gain popularity.”¹⁰⁴ Inundated with music, I argue soldiers used civilian music to provide respite and reconcile the hardships of soldiering, to distract, vent, and in some cases justify, the political, social, and racial struggle, fatigue, economic burdens, conflict, homesickness, the unknown, disease, imprisonment, wounding, and even death, as these citizen-soldiers endure soldiering.

¹⁰² Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 5.

¹⁰³ Caroline Moseley, “Irrepressible Conflict: Differences Between Northern and Southern Songs of the Civil War,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 25, no. 2 (Fall 1991): 46.

¹⁰⁴ Ernest L. Abel, *Singing the New Nation: How Music Shaped the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000), x.

Being surrounded by music, from parlors to public gatherings to the march and the camp, music permeated American life and with it, the war's soundscape and music held the power for citizens to justify soldiering. The example of 1st Sergeant Lot Abraham, 4th Iowa Infantry demonstrates a citizen soldier's desire for music. In the fall of 1861, Abraham, wrote in winter quarters at Camp Harlan, Mt. Pleasant Barrack, in Iowa about performances and musical expression beyond the control of a regimented military day. Initially Abraham wrote in his diary, "Hard wind blowing irregularly from the west. Sprinkling rain & snow. 7 P.M. here writing & oh, how noisy, but the fiddle is broke now & that fun all over. Piled in about 10."¹⁰⁵ That fiddle provided a fun contrast to the usual drudgery of barracks life. However, the next evening Abraham stated: "I got back to camp about 9 o'clock. Found all quiet except the dancing (the fiddle was alright again)."¹⁰⁶ The fun and respite had resumed. Later on, Abraham wrote of the fiddle stating: "I'm in my lonely bunk writing here & oh how the fiddle and dancing is making the hall roar. I finally had to get out & give them a round."¹⁰⁷ As he stated: "I am in my own bunk writing on the desk I made today & oh, the singing I can hear. Can't write. Just quit and joined in awhile after 9 o'clock."¹⁰⁸ Music motivated and compelled Captain Abraham to join in the fun. By the war's end, the now Captain Abraham had three songs written in his journal: "The Sword of Bunker Hill," "My Own Native Land," and "The Sailors Love."¹⁰⁹ Music impacted Abraham in a way that expanded his experience of the war, not only quelling boredom but additionally motivated him to continue soldiering as the song "The Sword of Bunker Hill" is feverously patriotic and timely alongside the equally stirring poem "My own Native Land." "The

¹⁰⁵ Diary of Lot Abraham, 1859-1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/65541>.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Sword of Bunker Hill” written in 1861 by William Ross Wallace with music by Bernard Covert describes a sword given from father to son. The father, a veteran of the American Revolution, leaves a sword to his son more valuable than gold, taken in battle from a British officer, which “lighted freedom’s will” with “it’s glory growing still.” Meanwhile, the poem “My Own Native Land” by Sir Walter Scott from 1805 describes a man who died without expressing “This is my own, my native land!” The man died never “wandering on a foreign strand” in contrast to 1st Sergeant Abraham who had wandered in the foreign land of the American south. That nameless man, “For him no Minstrel raptures swell” and “Despite those titles, power, and pelf ... The wretch, concentrated all in self.” In the end, the morale can be interpreted that a man whose “heart hath ne’er within him burn’d” with pride for his native land would be “Unwept, unhonour’d, and unsung.” Lastly, “The Sailors Love” expresses a call to the sea, reminiscent of a call to war, and in turn the departure from loved ones. The sailor expresses as he leaves “God knows when I’ll be back” but that “It seems my heart is happiest. When I sail the briney deep” with “freedom – that’s the heart of it” with “a port of call and the comradeship. Life’s grueling race has gone.” The process of a sailor finding solace and happiness at sea might be a tempting narrative to a soldier trying to find solace in coping with war. For the full lyrics see the Appendix.

For historian James M. McPherson, “after reading at least 25,000 letters and more than a hundred diaries of Civil War soldiers, were deeply felt convictions. That was the age of romanticism in literature, music, art, and philosophy.”¹¹⁰ Society utilized romantic mediums to convey sentiments convincing many Civil War soldiers to accept death, a key feature of soldiering.

¹¹⁰ McPherson, *What They Fought for 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994), 13.

The musical exchange between the home front and the warfront illustrates that the common soldier, or citizen-soldier, was a citizen and civilian first and foremost. Corporal Hannaford requested music from his siblings stating: “I meant to ask you to send me that song entitled, ‘Ellsworth’s Avengers.’ ... I wish you would write it off for me and send the verses too. That other song you sent is getting quite popular here.”¹¹¹ Soldiers not only craved music, they created it. This song in particular detailed the heroic sacrifice of Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth who became the first officer killed during the war. Hannaford also exchanged music from the front and wrote: “I have no news to write this time but will send you a song that I copied from memory.”¹¹² The exchange of songs was a bilateral act in which soldier’s solicited songster books, bantered for broadsides, and reciprocated the desire for music with the home front. The north’s population romanticized Col. Ellsworth’s death as a heroic, courageous act, removing a rebel flag from a hotel in downtown Alexandria, in the process being shot and killed the hotel owner. In such a poem, and song as “Ellsworth’s Avengers” we glimpse into the Civil war soldiers’ psyche. The song calls the Army of the Potomac a “patriot army” with Ellsworth as inspiration and a “youthful martyr.” The chorus implores “Strike, freemen for the Union” and the soldiers need not sheath their swords “while remains in arms a traitor.” Popular music held sway and effect, inspiring and motivating the common citizen-soldier.

¹¹¹ Lyman Beecher Hannaford to Brother and Sister, April 4, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/19842>.

¹¹² Lyman B. Hannaford to Brother Albert, October 19, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58049>.



ELLSWORTH'S AVENGERS,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO THE

EXCELSIOR BRIGADE, U. S. V.

Commanded by Gen. Sickel, of N. Y.

AIR —Annie Lisle.—By A. L. HUDSON.

Down where the patriot army,
Near Potomac's side,
Guards the glorious cause of freedom,
Gallant Ellsworth died.
Brave was the noble chieftain,
At his country's call,
Hastened to the field of battle,
And was first to fall.

CHORUS.

Strike, freemen, for the Union,
Sheath your swords no more;
While remains in arms a traitor,
On Columbia's shore.

Entering the traitor city,
With his soldiers true,
Leading up the Zouave columns,
Fixed became his view.
See that rebel flag is floating,
O'er yon building tall!
Spoke he, while his dark eyes glistened,
Boys, that flag must fall!

CHORUS.

Strike, freemen, for the Union,
Sheath your swords no more;
While remains in arms a traitor,
On Columbia's shore.

Quickly from its proud position,
That base flag was torn,
Trampled 'neath the feet of freemen,
Circling Ellsworth's form;
See him bear it down the landing;
Past the traitor's door,
Hear him groan, Oh! God, they've shot
Ellsworth is no more. [him,
CHORUS.—Strike, freemen, &c.

First to fall, thou youthful martyr,
Hapless was thy fate;
Hastened we as thy avengers,
From thy native state.
Speed we on, from town and city,
Not for wealth or fame,
But because we love the Union,
And our Ellsworth's name.
CHORUS.—Strike, freemen, &c.

Traitor hands shall never sunder,
That for which you died;
Hear the oath our lips now utter,
Thou, our nation's pride.
By our hopes of you bright heaven,
By the land we love,
By the God who reigns above us,
We'll avenge thy blood.
CHORUS.—Strike, freemen, &c.

NEW SONGS.

Yankee Boys so Handy, O!
Jeff Davis' Dream.
Yankee Generals.
Down the River.
Good Ship Cumberland.
Whack Row De Dow.
We'll Follow the Flag.
Stars and Stripes, Nos. 1 & 2.
Our Country's Flag.
Good Bye, or Soldier's Farewell
Col. Owen's Irish Volunteers.
Father Abraham,
Vive P'America,

Sons of Columbia.
Save the Union.
Death of Lyons.
Ellsworth's Avengers.
Death of John Brown.
Old Mountain Tree.
Battle of Fair Oaks, Va.
We are for the Union.
We will have the Union Still.
I Want to be a Soldier.
Captain with the Whiskers.
To a Soldier's Sister
Irish Volunteers,

Secession Wagon.
Goose Hangs High.
God Save the Union.
Hail to the Union.
Torn Flag.
Abraham's Daughter.
Liberty Tree.
Effe Lane, [600,000 more,
Coming Father Abraham,
That's What's the Matter.
Jockey Hat and Feather.
Kingdom Coming,
Rock Me to Sleep, Mother.

Johnson, Song Publisher, No. 7 N. 10th St. Phila.

Figure 5: Ellsworth's avengers, respectfully dedicated to the Excelsior Brigade, U.S.V. commanded by Gen. Sickel, of N.Y. Air- Annie Lisle.- By A. L. Hudson. Johnson, Song Publishers. No. 7 North Tenth St. Phila. [Image] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/amss-cw101560/>.

Soldiers not only notated songs they held important in their own writings they also utilized published songsters, or songbooks. 1st Sergeant McGowan wrote his sister Ellen: “Mr. Hart & I have worn ‘Uncle Sam’s Funeral’ (see Figure 6) and several other tunes in the ‘Bugle Call’ (See Figure 7) completely out and are wishing for some other good tunes. We will get the ‘Patriotic Glee’ book the first opportunity. I have played on the flute several times...”¹¹³

Corporal Isaac Cochran Richardson wrote of his fondness for music and stated: “I am having a good time now in the singing line. I meet nearly every day with the Fife Major & others of the 21st Connecticut & have a good sing from a book just like [the] one I had (the Boston Melodeon) (see Figure 8).”¹¹⁴ A Union army teamster Oliver U. Guinand wrote that he “Bought a dime songster & an Illustrated News.” A couple days later, lyrics from *The War Press* to the Southern version of “Wait for the Wagon” appear in his diary (See Figure 9).¹¹⁵ Surrounded by song books and other literature, soldiers hoarded the material when encamped, Union Teamster Oliver U. Guinand wrote “[I] went up to the camp of the sharpshooters who have just went to Rienza. We were gathering up old books, novels, song books, & anything readable. Soldiers on the march leaves everything behind except what is really necessary.”¹¹⁶ The obscene number of discarded materials including song books suggests that these songs were consumable goods to be utilized as necessity dictated. Their high level of use and the commercialized industry behind musicking, and in turn the activities of soldiering, can be gleaned.

¹¹³ David Fisher McGowan to Sister Ellen, December 15, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/37632>.

¹¹⁴ Isaac Cochran Richardson to Esther Langdell Richardson, May 22, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/44540>.

¹¹⁵ Diary 2 of Oliver U. Guinand, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58167>.

¹¹⁶ Diary 3 of Oliver U. Guinand, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58016>.

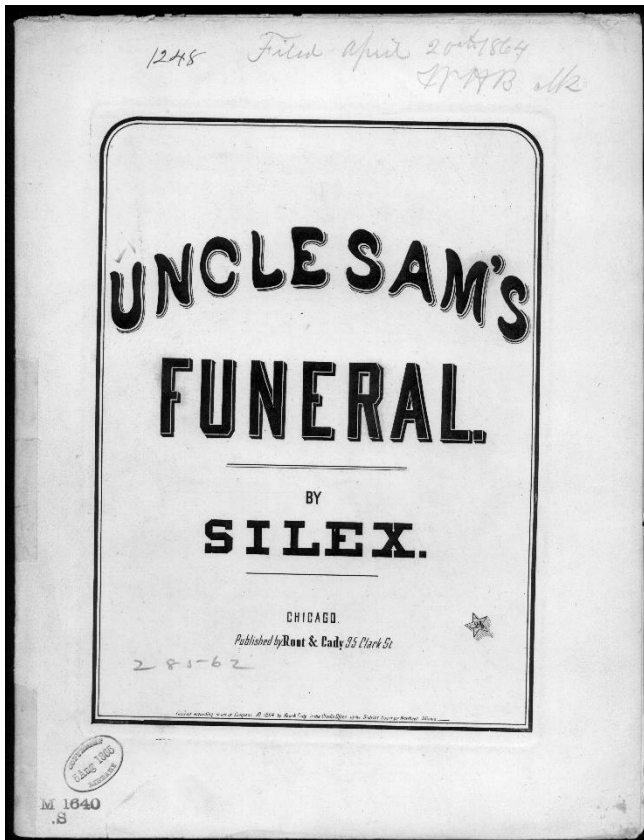


Figure 6: Silex, Composer, and Arranger Wurzel. *Uncle Sam's funeral*. Chicago: Root & Cady, 1865. Notated Music.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2023783904/>.

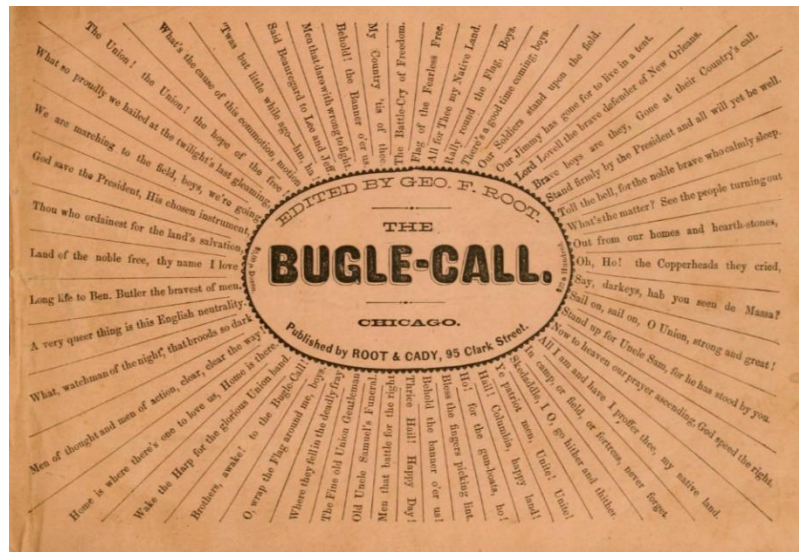


Figure 7: George F. Root. *The Bugle Call*. Chicago: Root & Cady, 1863. Notated Music.
<https://archive.org/details/buglecall00root/page/n3/mode/2up>

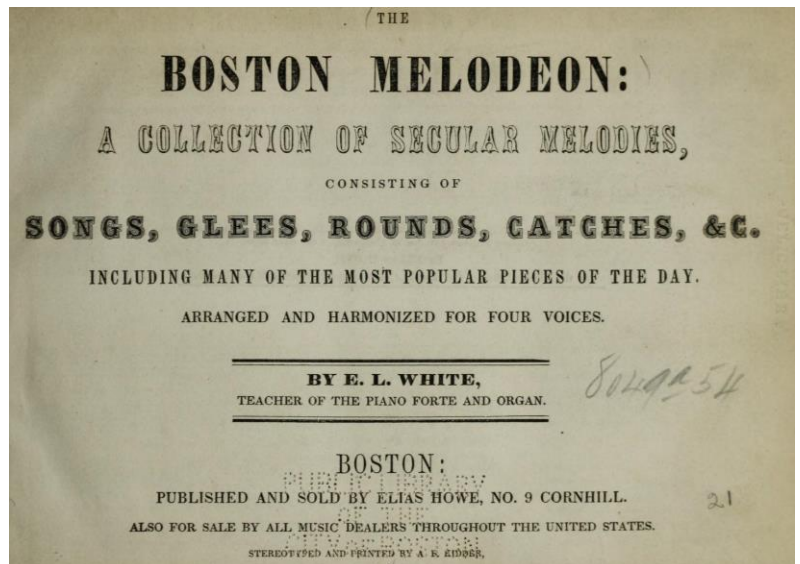


Figure 8: E. L. White, Composer, and Elias Howe, Publisher. *The Boston Melodeon*. Boston: Elias Howe, 1846. Notated Music.
<https://archive.org/details/bostonmelodeonco00whit/page/2/mode/2up>

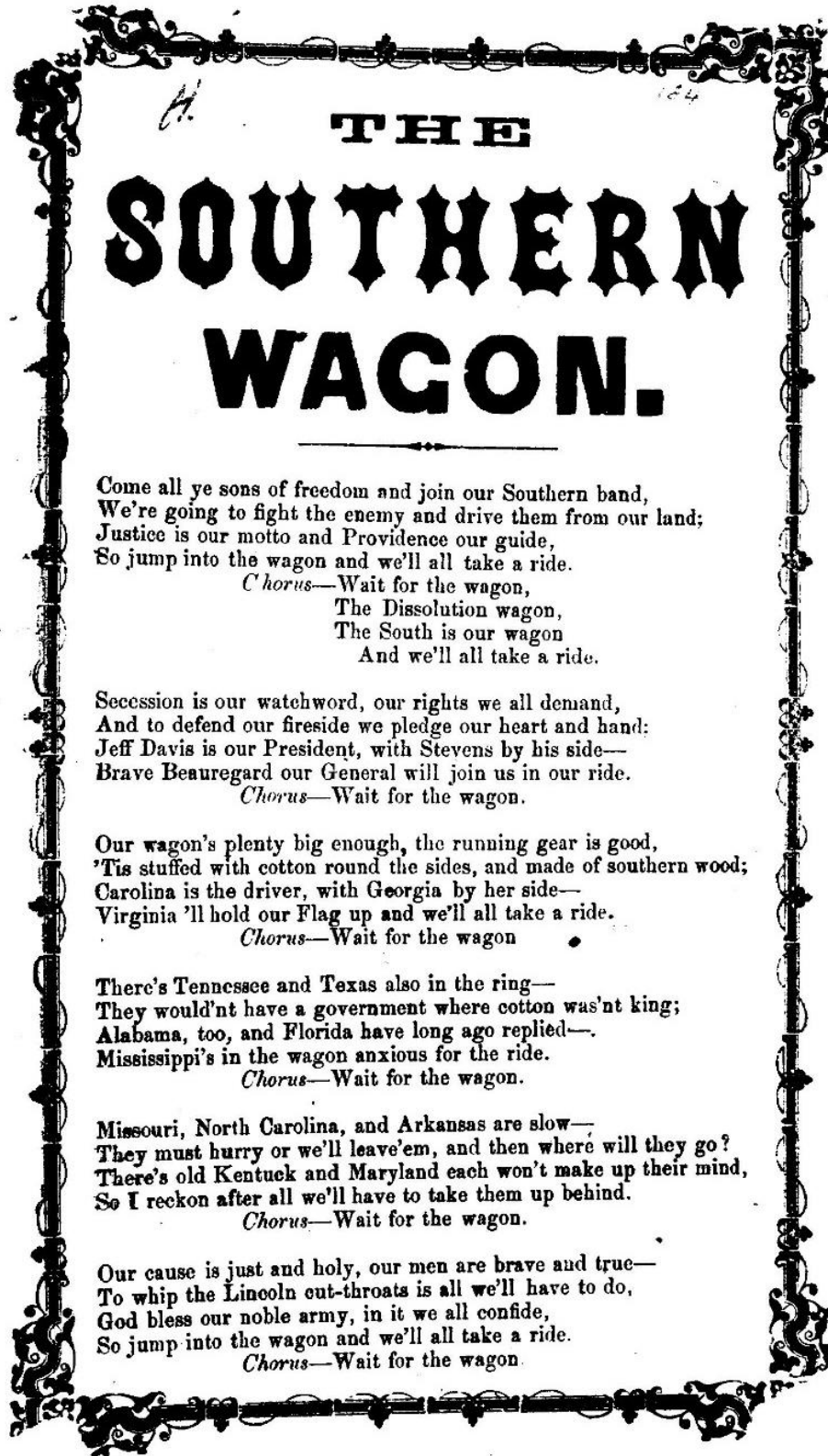


Figure 9: *The Southern wagon.* Image. <https://www.loc.gov/item/amss-cw201840/>.

Using these songsters, as well as their own talents, soldiers were musicking constantly. Civil War soldiers' musicking was extraordinarily important in justifying their experiences and in turn allows them to gain respite and reconciliation with their experience soldiering. Communities, such as militaries, form social environments in which music proved a principal feature.¹¹⁷ Historian Davis, expresses two key beliefs: "music was a particularly meaningful social process during the American Civil War and that the idea of community was central to Americans' world-view at this time."¹¹⁸ The importance of music and the value of community merge allowing music to embody a critical aspect of a community. Davis concludes: "appreciating Civil War music requires understanding the social environments in which music occurred, and ... recognizing how a cultural icon like music contributed to the formation and expression of social identities that came to the fore during the war."¹¹⁹ Soldiering featured several universal experiences, historian Johair Jabir states, "I am interested in affect as a social and political force, not as isolated personal experience. Through their musicking, the soldiers did indeed tell us how they felt, and those feelings live on..."¹²⁰ My sources indicate musicking enabled soldiering.

Musicking enabled Soldiering

The following paragraphs detail the varied aspects of soldiering musicking enabled either through respite or reconciliation including the political, social, and racial struggle, fatigue, economic burdens, conflict, homesickness, the unknown, disease, imprisonment, wounding, and even death.

¹¹⁷ Note: Social environments, attributed to sociologist Emile Durkheim, are generally defined as a setting in which people interact where social relationships, social facts or culture, and power interact. Each musical moment, and the individuals involved, can be interpreted as existing in a social environment with large forces at play.

¹¹⁸ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 2.

¹¹⁹ Davis, *Music along the Rapidan*, 2.

¹²⁰ Johari Jabir, *Conjuring Freedom: Music and Masculinity in the Civil War's "Gospel Army,"* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2017), 21.

Soldiers used music to reenforce and entrench their political divisions. Alice Fahs notes: “The importance of songs throughout the Civil War, in both the North and South, cannot be overestimated. ...war songs, like war poetry, were widely understood to be an important part of a patriotic culture that united the private world of the parlor with a larger public world.”¹²¹ Fahs argues that music contributed to a patriotic culture, I concur and also see the patriotic fervor helped soldiers justify the war and their participation. In reenforcing his political position and reconciling political doubts, Sutler Theodore H. Barnum, who followed the 11th Connecticut Infantry, wrote “I have been outside of our lines among the secesh, and have heard them sing their secesh songs. It made me feel a little angry to hear them. Still, I had the curiosity to hear them.”¹²² In his curiosity, Barnum heard opposing musical communities, their social environment confirming and solidifying his own pro-union positions. Musicking reinforced divisions which allowed for conflict.

Historian Coleman concluded Confederate symbols, music included, “all have roots in the inability of Union military regimes to combat Confederate cultural expressions without being obliged to extend them a measure of legitimacy at the same time” throughout the wartime Confederacy.¹²³ Meanwhile, Private John W. Cotton of the 10th C.S. Cavalry wrote of a similar awareness to the political times, “I will send you a song ballad that suits the times very well.”¹²⁴ For Confederate 1st Lieutenant William Taylor Presley, knowing both of the times he lived in and the need for pertinent music, “Henrie, I send you two song ballads to sing if you can learn

¹²¹ Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North & South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 55.

¹²² Theodore H. Barnum D. Louise Peasley, December 5, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/19000>.

¹²³ Coleman, “Confederate Music and the Politics of Treason and Disloyalty in the American Civil War,” 116.

¹²⁴ John Weaver Cotton to Family, April 11, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/81578>. Note: Again in John Weaver Cotton to Family, July 8, 1863, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/81128>, Cotton receives a song ballad in return from his wife noting “suits the times the best of any that I have seen. I did not know that you had got to be a poet.”

the tunes to them, they are war songs and very appropriate for the times.”¹²⁵ The war itself created an abundance of new and pertinent music.

Historian Wiley brings song and music into play frequently, expressing the feverous patriotism of soldiers as “war bound volunteers frequently found expression in song.”¹²⁶ Regiments often took to song to express their prowess and ambition, and, in addition, their motivation to fight. The 100th New York Infantry promoted a song “We’re all going South” stating in one stanza:¹²⁷

*We Buffalo Boys are no [sardines]
In a [few] days
For we can live on [pork] & Beans
We’re all going South*

While these soldiers simultaneously criticize their ration of pork and beans, they also submit to their hierarchy and officers. Music is enabling their compliance with military life and helping them balance the duty and honor of fighting with the sacrifices these actions entail. “Col. Brown will lead the way in a few days few days,” “Lt. Colonel is going too in a few days few days,” “Our Major also for the right in a few days will not be wanting in the fight,” “The Adjutant will fall us in in a few days few days And the way we’ll fight will be a sin.”¹²⁸ Alluding to killing, these individuals put aside personal religious beliefs and values in the name of their cause, union and freedom. Their civilian values are supplanted for military values. Additionally, they resolve that “Jeff Davis from a tree will swing,” “Old Beauregard will shake with fear,” “We will teach

¹²⁵ William Taylor Presley to Henrietta A. Ward Presley, March 17, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/12403>.

¹²⁶ Wiley and Robertson, *The Life of Billy Yank*, 32. Note: the songs mentioned include the “Star-Spangled Banner,” “Johnny Is Gone for a Soldier,” the German “Morgenroth,” and “John Brown’s Body.”

¹²⁷ Song about 100th New York Infantry, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/79997>.

¹²⁸ Song about 100th New York Infantry, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/79997>.

old Braxton Bragg” showing commitment to the war and its ends.¹²⁹ These soldiers’ song represents a commitment to their call to arms. These soldiers sang to reenforce their military commitment to a larger cohesive cause in the face of any previously held beliefs against killing, or reservations with the rations of pork and beans.

The presence of formerly enslaved populations fleeing to Union lines prompted the exchange of culture and music. For the formerly enslaved and the citizen soldier, communities finally overlapped through the conflict and campaigns of the war creating a new social environment resulting in countless musical and cultural exchanges. As Amy Taylor argues: “The sounds of voices—the songs, the prayers—became a noticeable and remarked-upon part of a camp’s soundscape.”¹³⁰ Taylor continues in quoting a visiting journalist at Fortress Monroe’s refugee camp who stated: “It is one of the most striking incidents of this war to listen to the singing of the groups of colored people in Fortress Monroe.”¹³¹ Private Reuben Smith Jr. of Massachusetts noted while stationed at Fortress Monroe that “There are lots of darkies here. I have heard regular plantation melodies and seen real gig dancing. We have lots of fun with the darkies getting them to sing and dance.”¹³² In the same letter he noted with the same fascination, “We have all kinds of folks amongst the soldiers from lawyers to paddies. There is a real Irishman singing an Irish song now on the other side of the room.”¹³³ This fascination for entertainment provided soldiers intriguing and eye-opening encounters with ‘other’ populations. Historian Williams noted that “what we see evolving, however, is the common cultural currency

¹²⁹ Song about 100th New York Infantry, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/79997>.

¹³⁰ Amy Murrell Taylor, *Embattled Freedom: Journeys Through the Civil War's Slave Refugee Camps* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 183.

¹³¹ Amy Murrell Taylor, *Embattled Freedom: Journeys Through the Civil War's Slave Refugee Camps* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 183.

¹³² Reuben Smith Jr. to Melvina Louise Stetson, June 12-13, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16278>.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

for Irishness in America; the symbols and images that form the *public* discourse about Irishness.”

¹³⁴This othering of people and their music resulted in a variety of reactions from white soldiers. However, most evidence found in my research shows that hearts and minds take time to change, and even amid crisis and war, racism is not so easily hampered.

On the cultural collisions and stereotyping, Daniel Martin Varisco stated of his analysis that “Othering as an intellectual exercise of power: this was an issue someone had to drag out of the closet. It was the general thrust, the vivid examples of stereotyping, that I recall most attracting me.”¹³⁵ Historian Billy Coleman notes that “songs worked as remarkably successful and accessible ‘cultural tools’ that facilitated ‘overlapping communities’ of belonging among combatants and civilians and how music could even help Union soldiers make sense of the southern environment by ‘render[ing] an alien land and people familial.’”¹³⁶ These white Union soldiers arriving in the southern states encountered music a people differing from their own personal experiences of the ‘other’ seen in minstrelsy and other stereotyped cultural performances and depictions.

For Private Richard C. Hulse, 5th New York Heavy Artillery, he wrote “We have two *** [African Americans refugees] in camp here and have plenty of fun with them. All us soldiers set out nights by our tents and sing all the Union songs.”¹³⁷ Hulse wrote from Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, in 1862 as the city functioned as throughway to the North and Union lines for self-emancipating enslaved. In 1860, census data indicates 3,832,590 white individuals lived in the

¹³⁴ William H. A. Williams, *’Twas Only an Irishman’s Dream: The Image of Ireland and the Irish in American Popular Song Lyrics, 1800-1920*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 6.

¹³⁵ Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid*, 2nd ed. (University of Washington Press, 2007) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvcwnwb7>, 22.

¹³⁶ Billy Coleman, “Confederate Music and the Politics of Treason and Disloyalty in the American Civil War,” *Journal of Southern History*, 78.

¹³⁷ Richard ‘Dick’ C. Hulse to Parents, August 17, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/94943>.

state of New York while only 49,665 free blacks lived in the state. New York City had wards which held as many white individuals in residence as black individuals residing in the entirety of the state. The common soldier from New York had few interactions with African Americans pre-war. Despite Hulse's language, the intermingling political exchange between the enslaved and these New Yorkers produced unionist music. Both groups, to a degree, reconciled their cause and motivated each other to continue the fight. Songs like "Yankee Doodle," "Kingdom Coming," and "John Browns Body" should mean more to the New Yorkers after meeting enslaved who held the largest stake in the conflict. As one example, "Battle Cry of Freedom" features the lyrics about liberating "a million free men more" and that "not a man shall be a slave:"

Yes, we'll rally round the flag, boys,
We'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom,
We will rally from the hillside,
We'll gather from the plain,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

CHORUS:

The Union forever,
Hurrah! boys, hurrah!
Down with the traitors,
Up with the stars;
While we rally round the flag, boys,
Rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

We are springing to the call
So we're springing to the call
From the East and from the West,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom;
And we'll hurl the rebel crew
From the land that we love best,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

Of our brothers gone before,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom;
And we'll fill our vacant ranks with
A million free men more,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

CHORUS

We will welcome to our numbers
The loyal, true and brave,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom;
And although they may be poor,
Not a man shall be a slave,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom.

CHORUS

For these white soldiers, the music of the enslaved is ‘other,’ a point of interest and curiosity for its uniqueness in their minds.¹³⁸ Some hearts and minds would change and racism partially alleviated, however, this process of reconciling issues of race took enormous effort. Historian Michael C. Cohen stated in his article that the repertoire of the enslaved influenced so many soldiers in the field as they saw the conflict’s key political issue and ramification first hand.¹³⁹ He “explore[s] the social history of “contraband songs.” ... songs [that] articulate a broad range of political perspectives on the war and so offer a distinctive vantage on the chaotic 1860s: as mediations of a shifting wartime social imaginary, contraband songs allow us to see Civil War culture as a contested field continually negotiating the unprecedented public crisis of the war.”¹⁴⁰ Cohen argues that “these songs intervened in wartime culture both through their timely content and in their movement across the social and political ground of the 1860s.”¹⁴¹ Cohen’s work builds the complexities of African American music during the war and gives context for countless letters of soldiers mentioning the presence of ‘contraband singing.’ Music inundated society and crossed borders with greater ease than any individual could. Few seemed to transcend the war’s landscape like African Americans seeking self-liberation in journeying to Union lines. The efforts of individuals formerly in bondage are compounded by their musical impact on culture at the front.

¹³⁸ Note: The concept of the ‘Other’ originations in the work of Edward Said. Oleg Graber, another scholar of orientalism, stated that: “The complexity of modern American culture is such that there are many ‘others’ in its psychological makeup and that the ‘others’ of some are the ‘us’ of others.” Daniel Varisco added: “One ought never to assume that the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies or of myths which, were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away.” The lies or myths imbedded in culture underwent a process of clarification and in most cases undoing when northern soldiers encountered formerly enslaved African Americans. Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid*, 2nd ed. (University of Washington Press, 2007) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvcwnwb7>, 48-50.

¹³⁹ Michael C. Cohen, “Contraband Singing: Poems and Songs in Circulation during the Civil War,” *American Literature* 82, no. 2 (June 2010): 271–304. doi:10.1215/00029831-2010-002; Robert Darden, *Nothing but Love in God’s Water, Volume 1: Black Sacred Music from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014).

¹⁴⁰ Cohen, “Contraband Singing,” 272.

¹⁴¹ Cohen, “Contraband Singing,” 272.

However, this cultural exchange is interpreted in varied ways, some white soldiers have their racial ideologies modified having fun alongside African Americans whereas others simply have fun at the expense of formerly enslaved individuals due to their perceptions limitations. Private John W. Cleland wrote of an unnamed formerly enslaved man, “He has been in the Secesh army about 14 months and ran away from them and came to us. He is quite a smart fellow for a negro. He can sing songs, tell stories, and dance like everything.”¹⁴² Historian Wiley noted in 1952 that “Countless soldiers commented on the Negroes' accomplishments in music and dancing, and many an evening was enlivened by their impromptu performances about the campfire.”¹⁴³ Private Cleland and his fellow soldiers had the opportunity to change stereotyped views thanks to increased interactions, particularly positive interactions with this unnamed freedman and potentially never looked at African Americans the same way as before. Phrases such as “quite a smart fellow for a negro” do show a previously held stereotype in Cleland’s mind, it is increased contact and examples contrary to stereotypes that wear away these images and create newfound experiences. Exposure to other cultures initiates cultural dialogue and leaves the potential for positive exchanges. While historian Chandra Manning notes “Union soldiers’ newfound acquaintance with the South, firsthand observations of slavery, and first taste of combat quickly led them to take a much firmer stand against slavery than many could have imagined before the war.”¹⁴⁴ Based on my evidence, despite increased efforts to end the institution of slavery and building sympathies for the enslaved over the course of the war, Black cultural features in music needed time to become accepted and appreciated by northern ears. If

¹⁴² John W. Cleland to Mary J. Cleland, October 28, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/19071>.

¹⁴³ Wiley and Robertson, *The Life of Billy Yank*, 119.

¹⁴⁴ Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 21.

White soldiers were hesitant to fight and died for Black liberation, they were also hesitant to embrace Black music as a newly acquainted cultural feature.

African American music was foreign to the soldiers' ears and these individuals had almost exclusively experienced African American music through the distorted and manipulated view of minstrelsy. 2nd Lieutenant Herbert Merriam, 44th Massachusetts Infantry, remarked that martial music impacted formerly enslaved blacks, "We returned just in time to see the last of a mock dress parade...".¹⁴⁵ While inclined to racial generalizations, Merriam noted the musical tradition and connections between the Union army and the folk music of formerly enslaved populations: "The colored population are a source of great amusement to the soldiers. In the evening, we illuminated & had dancing, singing, negro drinking, one funny speech & song. We have a very fine violin player in our company who had his instrument brought out. He furnished the music."¹⁴⁶ Of note, Merriam does not identify the violin player and ambiguity exists as to whether this man was "in our company" referring to the military unit as a "company," or the man may simply be an unnamed individual not attached to the unit. This violin player, this music maker, is nameless without reference to his race or affiliation to the unit. Again though, the question appears as to whether this "source of great amusement" found in the formerly enslaved population was mutual and whether the fun was not made at others expense. For many of these Massachusettsans, they likely had few interactions with the enslaved and formerly enslaved communities until venturing on campaign. The unit, the 44th Massachusetts, was organized in Readville, then Norfolk County which held 109,702 White residents and 248 Black residents. Black individuals made up only 0.2% of the population; a ratio of one black individual to five

¹⁴⁵ Herbert Merriam to Caroline Ware Merriam, November 26, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/84545>.

¹⁴⁶ Herbert Merriam to Caroline Ware Merriam, November 26, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/84545>.

hundred white individuals. With limited interactions, these white soldiers drew most of the opinions and views from the culture of minstrel performance. Union Teamster Guinand wrote of the contraband population of formerly enslaved: “8 o’clock found us all watching the comic dances of the darkies. Old 50-year-old negroes seem as lively as any under that age. The sharpshooters are camped in 100 yards of us and so is the 7th Kansas and the 12th Illinois. We hear their drums and fife keeping time. Our darkies feel and fiddle all together. All is gay and happy, not dreaming nor caring for our boys in the march after the enemy.”¹⁴⁷ Guinand shows his emotional distress towards African Americans as he tried to weigh the sacrifices of soldiers amid the celebration of liberation. Civilian fiddle music provided a “gay and happy” attitude for the formerly enslaved, and at the same moment, military music of the fife and drum demanded control and obedience for the citizen-soldier. A diversity of musical experience is displayed sharply in musical moments featuring the transient figure of the formerly enslaved musician. Manning does note “not every white Union soldier experienced a racial epiphany, but the willingness of a growing number of men who had evinced no interest in racial justice before the war to reexamine their own attitudes” at least shows a momentous chance for so many white northerners to change their tune on the issue of slavery.¹⁴⁸

For soldiers to justify and reconcile the fatiguing tasks befalling their life, soldiers sang allowing musicking to enable soldiering. The 5th Massachusetts near Newbern, North Carolina earned their name “that singing regiment” due to their persistent singing distracting them from their sore feet.¹⁴⁹ Corporal Lyman Uriah Lee wrote:

Singing to fill up the time unoccupied by anything else. We have the most good singers in our regiment of any on the ground. We have already got the title of the “Singing

¹⁴⁷ Diary 3 of Oliver U. Guinand, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/58016>.

¹⁴⁸ Manning, *What This Cruel War Was over* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 124.

¹⁴⁹ Lyman Uriah Lee to Chauncey Cleveland Lee, November 18, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20426>.

Regiment,” by the old regiments. While we were on that long march ... at every halt we *sung*, and on the march we sung. In the evenings we sung & the N. Y. Cavalry would want to ride up by “that singing regiment” — the Massachusetts 5th.¹⁵⁰

That long march seems shorter and quicker with a good song sung and this experience was utilized by the 5th Massachusetts Infantry to great effect. For Union soldiers camped around Harrisburg in November of 1862 amid a snowstorm, 1st Sergeant James Drolsbough described arduously gathering firewood one fourth of a mile from camp stating “the men has to stay in their tents but the men begins to hollow to one another till the noise is so great that it almost deadens one to hear them. There is plenty of music all around us. Some singing psalms, others hymns, and patriotic songs.”¹⁵¹ Enduring the elements together, soldiers took ease in songs sung between tents. Meanwhile, Drolsbough described: “It is snowing and blowing. We cannot see hardly.”¹⁵² Earlier that fall, Drolsbough establishes that soldiers’ music varies as did their behavior. While some sang hymns and some secular music, music was ubiquitous and utilized in justifying actions whether perceived moral or immoral. Drolsbough stated: “We have prayer meetings and preaching every night and we can hear the cursing and swearing and the fiddle, the bugle, and the patriotic songs as well as the songs of the lowest grade all at the same time at night.”¹⁵³ Whether the music was religious, patriotic, or that of the “lowest grade,” music gave soldiers a means to achieve their ends in respiting and reconciling soldiering and also the aspect of fatigue.

¹⁵⁰ Lyman Uriah Lee to Chauncey Cleveland Lee, November 18, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20426>.

¹⁵¹ James Drolsbough to Belle Marshall Drolsbough, November 7, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20079>.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ James Drolsbough to Belle Marshall Drolsbough, October 30, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/20073>.

Additionally, the economic concerns of soldiering also needed reconciled and music allowed that reconciliation. Lighthearted humorous songs were also written about the soldiers struggles such as “The Soldier’s Last Appeal” by John Rusty as he describes the local sutler and businessman.¹⁵⁴ Martin VanBuren Culver wrote to his sister, “I will send you a song that was made up by one of the boys about our sutler.”¹⁵⁵ Culver describes a sutler who exploited and profited off of the soldier’s needs and wants selling them subpar products. For example: “Beer that’s mixed with water. And cheese that walks alone.”¹⁵⁶ However, music not only provided a means to despise economic injustice but also provide entertainment and coincidently payment in good food and drink. Private Lloyd W. Manning wrote home that “I have enjoyed myself very much for a short time past. I have joined a glee club. There are six of us.” Not only did Manning and the glee club alleviate the sorrow of soldiers in the sick ward and provide others with much needed entertainment, these singing soldiers also utilized their talents to befriend officers. Manning wrote, “We were invited to a big supper at Point of Rocks Office and quarters of Brigade and Express. We got there just as they got down to the table, nine o’clock, formed a circle, and sung *Beautiful Star*. They then made us come in and we sung several pieces and they treated us up good. They has oysters, turkey, pie, coffee, pudding, apples, raisins, &c.”¹⁵⁷ A happy accident befell these individuals as their musical talents allowed this glee club to inadvertently sing for their dinner.

¹⁵⁴ Martin VanBuren Culver to Sister, September 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/35348>.

¹⁵⁵ Martin VanBuren Culver to Sister, September 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/35348>. See figure 3.

¹⁵⁶ Martin VanBuren Culver to Sister, September 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/35348>.

¹⁵⁷ Lloyd W. Manning to Lydia, February 25, 1865, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46695>.

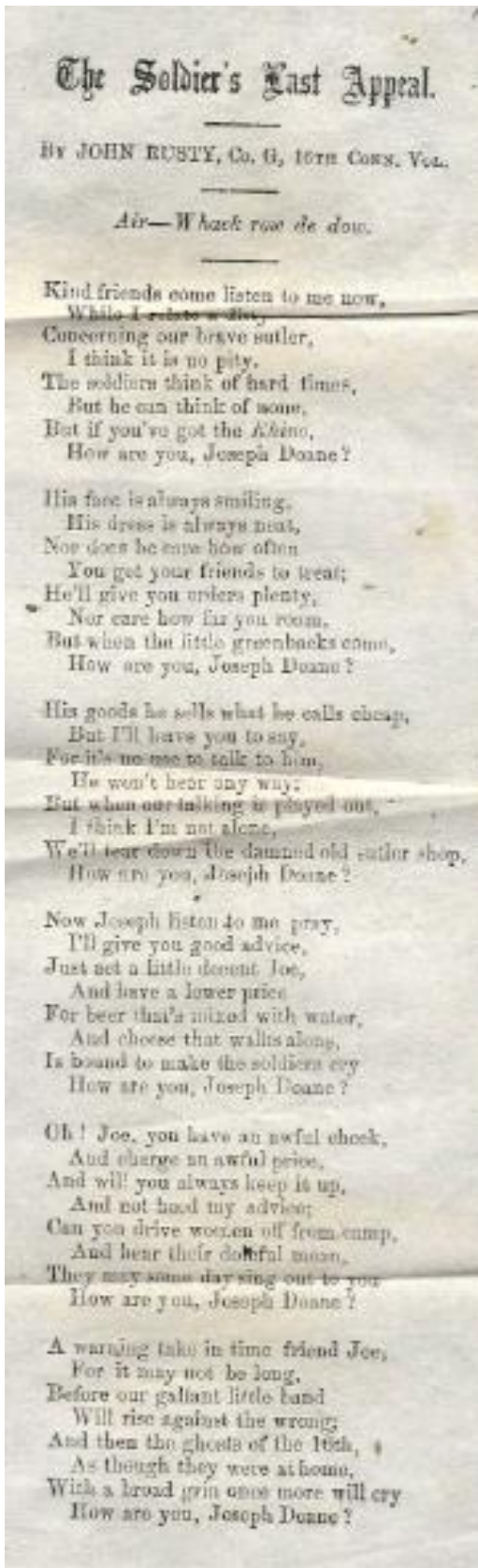


Figure 10: “The Soldier’s Last Appeal” by John Rusty in Martin VanBuren Culver to Sister, September 27, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/35348>.

Music also provided respite from the fight, even literally in some cases of truces between combatants and a means to reconcile with the enemy. Fighting, an integral aspect of soldiering, was avoided through musicking. Captain Don C. Newton wrote about interactions with the enemy as they connected over a shared sense of humanity, “The Rebel skirmishers & ours had lots of fun talking last night. One of ours & one of theirs came out & met half way and exchanged papers. Then they sung songs to each other & told stories.”¹⁵⁸ While Newton does not describe the songs sung, these songs were at the most pointed and at the least for amusement and diversion from the fighting. Such song and sights were probably more profound in his mind two years earlier on March 21, 1862 at Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, days before the Battle of Shiloh. He stated: “Our boys are peculiarly happy tonight, singing all kinds of songs & hymns, laughing, telling stories around their grand old camp fire. There is a grand sight here tonight—camp fires burning all through the woods, drum beating, roll callings going on on every side. Could you only be at such a place as this where 80 or 90 thousand were disembarking, you would not wonder at the slow movements of the grand army.” These soldiers knew bloodletting would occur sooner or later, but in the meantime, music provided a sense of security and an air of excitement, not only in the roll calls and drum beating, but in the songs and hymns which provided soldiers with respite and increased morale.

Musicking also provided soldiers with an alleviation from the homesickness brought on by soldiering. Historian Bell Irvin Wiley argued in favor of the prevalence of music in the ranks of Civil War armies stating, “Perhaps the favorite recreation of the Confederate Army was music. In camp and on the march, Johnny Reb found comfort in the sentimental melodies of the

¹⁵⁸ Don C. Newton to Mary Prindle Newton, June 18, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46245>.

time.”¹⁵⁹ Wiley’s argument is illuminating and predicated on the soldiers’ necessity to “invent all sorts of escapes from the boredom of camp life. So frequent and varied were diversions, ... that a considerable number of men seemed to find more pleasure than hardship in soldiering.”¹⁶⁰ Wiley argues that soldiers utilized music for comfort, diversion, and a cure to boredom, I confirm these conclusions and further that music allowed soldiers to endure far more with music than without.

In reconciling with his homesickness, Surgeon Edwin Ruthven Bursh wrote home stating, “My darling, I think of you a great deal and often think of the song, ‘Do they miss me at home, do they miss me?’ It would be an assurance most dear to know at this moment *some loved ones* were saying I would be were here.”¹⁶¹ Music was pivotal to combatting homesickness. For Corporal Hannibal Augustus Johnson he expressed: “There is so much noise around camp tonight that I can hardly keep my mind on my writing, for the men seem very happy, singing songs of every description, some congregated together in groups talking about home, for that is the subject of the evening like this.”¹⁶² That evening many soldiers recounted in “all kinds of expressions” their fondness for home and wishing they could return if even for a night with “some few wishing they had never enlisted.”¹⁶³ In just a short line Sergeant Charles T. Boomer wrote towards the final months of the war, “Won’t it be gay if Johnny should come marching home by the Fourth of July? I suppose that you remember the song?”¹⁶⁴ The song referenced, “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again,” written by Band Leader Patrick Gilmore in 1863, speaks with glee about a soldier boy’s grand return to the home front following the

¹⁵⁹ Wiley and Robertson, *The Life of Johnny Reb*, 151.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁶¹ Edwin Ruthven Bursh to Amy Fletcher Brush, July 15, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/42123>.

¹⁶² Hannibal Augustus Johnson to Samuel Burn Valpey, mid-November, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/57819>.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Charles T. Boomer to Sister Nellie, May 4, 1865, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/94905>.

conclusion of war; a conclusion which would not occur for two more bloody years. For Boomer in May 1865, the war's end is so close at hand and he emulated Johnny as he might march home again. In similar heartfelt sentiments, Private Erastus Winter wrote a letter to his family expressing his hope for his sister to write more, Winter wrote "I would like to hear from her sometimes. Enclosed you will find a song entitled, 'What's a home without a sister.'"¹⁶⁵ Winter expressed his homesickness through song making music a medium for reconciling a soldier's life. Meanwhile, Corporal Robert James Wear wrote: "Caroline, I sent you a song ballad in the other letter I wrote. I would send you all some now but I hadn't got none."¹⁶⁶ He reconciled his homesickness through song in the form of a ballad evoking and expressing his homesickness. Sergeant Mast Maitland wrote to Arabella 'Bell' including a song, unfortunately not with the letter any longer, and a poem he personally wrote to her. The poem reconciles homesickness professing his love for her. They married following the close of the war.

Meanwhile, music helped citizen-soldiers reconcile the unknown and uncertain aspects of soldiering, Engineer Frederick A. Whitfield found new purpose for an old song writing, "We are now located in a wilderness where civilization sheds but a feeble ray and it seems the elements are against us and determined to keep us in... The old song, 'Out of the Wilderness,' I could now sing indeed with a very good grace and many are the not complimentary epithets..."¹⁶⁷ The old hymn "Ain't I glad to get out of the wilderness" meant far more to Whitfield after serving throughout the "Wilderness" of Northeastern Virginia with its dense forests, swamps, and brackish rivers. The unknown and known dangers and uncertainties within this wilderness scared

¹⁶⁵ Erastus Winters to Sister, April 24, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/14427>

¹⁶⁶ Robert James Wear to Father and Mother, April 19, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/12699>.

¹⁶⁷ Frederick A. Whitfield to Catherine Devir Whitfield, April 10, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/85391>. Lyrics: O, ain't I glad I've got out the wilderness, Got out the wilderness, got out the wilderness, Ain't I glad I've got out the wilderness, Leaning on the Lord.

and unnerved those not familiar with the land. For Whitfield referencing this biblical song alluding to Moses' traveling an unknown land of danger and mystery, he not only reflects on his experience traveling through Virginia, but also indirectly the experiences of enslaved self-emancipating themselves traveling through the American south on the Underground Railroad to freedom in the north. For some soldiers they saw soldiering through their far-flung travels, and endless marching, as a means to explore. Soldiers like Captain Don Carlos Newton worried about never coming home but insisted if his travels continue, "I think I shall see Washington & New York and the briny ocean ere I return and when I get home, can sing the good old song, 'I've seen all Nations of the Earth.' And 'since last, with spirits wild and free, I pressed my native strand, I've wandered many miles at sea, and many miles on land.'"¹⁶⁸ These song lyrics which Newton found solace in and reconciliation with his hard marching and endless enlistment came from the song "I'm with you once again, my friends" in Isaac Baker Woodbury's *The Chorus Glee Book* published in 1850. Music books and songsters provided soldiers with their repertoire. Soldiers, musical beings, expressed, respited, and reconciled their feelings in song.

To reconcile the horrors of sickness, which constituted two thirds of the conflict's deaths and affected countless more, music could alleviate the suffering which decimated both Union and Confederate armies, Private Lloyd W. Manning wrote home that "Last night we went into the wards and sung to the sick soldiers. I tell you it did them good. ... You see now the reason of my hasty letter a week ago and why I sent for the music."¹⁶⁹ Manning, and his fellow singers, alleviated some sorrow with music. Death itself, in all its forms, needed reconciled. A poetic

¹⁶⁸ Don Carl Newton to Mary Prindle Newton, November 6, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46738>.

¹⁶⁹ Lloyd W. Manning to Lydia, February 25, 1865, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46695>. Manning's Glee Club sung throughout the war including the tunes: "Come Home Father," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," "Lillian Lee," "Cora Lee" in Lloyd W. Manning, Lyric Sheet, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/46850>.

example, “They have laid him away” by G.G. Field, was made in camp on the death of fellow soldier Isaac Barker.¹⁷⁰ The soldier in question is “Afar from his home in a stranger’s land” with “no coffin” and “no shroud save his uniform coat” having died without the idealist features of a Victorian bedside death “in a little white cottage in the land of the North.” The good death was not afforded but “his name is sustained in the laurels of fame” because “for his country he fought, for his country he died. A martyr to liberty’s cause” and he lies in a “patriot grave.” These words justified his passing for Victorians seeking a “good death.” (See appendix for full lyrics)

Religious music also provided some comfort for the dying, Nathaniel Prime stated: “we took him to the grave quietly and there we had our chaplain to make a nice prayer & sung a beautiful song and in the absence of his relations (but not in the absence of friends).”¹⁷¹ Soldiers connected with songs that resonated with their own personal experiences, many written and/or preserved by the very men who endured these trials. Private James Birney Van Ornum, 106th New York Infantry, stated: “I have just been writing a copy of a song written on the Battle of Cedar Creek the 19th September in which Horatio and so many others of our boys were slain.”¹⁷² In losing so many friends and even family in the ranks, song was a means to cope with this loss.

To understand and reconcile the horrors of imprisonment as a prisoner of war, soldiers also turned to song. The “Song of our Union Prisoners” or “Dixie’s Sunny Land” was published describing the atrocities and horrors experienced by prisoners at Andersonville. The song is often attributed to Private John Lauffer who survived Andersonville; however, the piece was published before his release. Regardless, the piece is reconciling the experience of the prisoner of war

¹⁷⁰ George E. Blakelee, October 8, 1862, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/14637>.

¹⁷¹ Nathaniel Prime to Mary Jane and children, February 9, 1863, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/21627>.

¹⁷² James Birney Van Ornum to Ann Van Ornum, February 1865, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/15295>.

resigning themselves to die rather than give up the fight. Suffering from exposure, starvation, threats, and violence, these prisoners held hope and resistance in song. The song described “Our wretched state and hardships great, No one can understand” as they “When captured by this ‘chivalry,’ They stripped us to the skin,” keeping them in “lousy rags of gray discarded by their band.” With guards surrounding armed with loaded guns, “We were stationed in an open plain, Exposed to rain and sun. No tent or tree to shelter us” and “Thus side by side great numbers died.” The prisoner talks about the “daily bill of fare In that secesh saloon” as lacking sugar, tea, or coffee, only featuring a pint of ground cob corn meal which “for want of fire we ate it raw.” Through this the prisoners were “Reduced to skin and bones; A lingering starvation, worse Than death we could but own.” Not only were they treated inhumanely, these prisoners were accosted by guards “By many a threat and bribe, To desert our glorious Union cause, And join the rebel tribe;” but they keep renewed hope for “We’d rather die, than thus disgrace Our flag, in Dixie’s land.”¹⁷³ These soldiers turned prisoners utilized song to express their circumstances and justify their resistance and endurance against their treatment through song.

Lieutenant John W. Thomas also utilized songwriting to express his time spent in Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia. The songs included in his Journal included: “Do They Think of Me at Home?” “Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still,” “Old Ben Butler's Coming” (self-written), and “Side of Jordan.”¹⁷⁴ The lyrics reminiscent of a minstrel's style of diction included lines referencing being fed scant unappetizing meals, receiving strict curfews, being inundated with lice, and recommending that “dear Ebony man [referencing the local enslaved population of Richmond], and leave dis place as soon as you can,” encouraging self-liberation and escape for

¹⁷³ John Lauffer, “Dixie's Sunny Land,” *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/72594>.


¹⁷⁴ Diary of John W. Thomas, Songs, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/10765>.

the enslaved. The lyrics also criticize General Benjamin Butler's futile and failed attempts to advance from Ft. Monroe down the peninsula towards Richmond to liberate these prisoners. The soldier wrote "To go to Libby am a sell, Butler at once be sent to hell." He expresses that "Dey feed you on cornbread & rice, And cover you all in de Rebel lice." The prisoner discusses that cash can be used to bribe guards to acquire goods, but that once it is gone "dere's nothing but hash to lib upon." All there is for the prisoners to do is "hunt for de news" and in turn "And soon as yer eat yer reg'lar rice, You muse yerself hunting lice." This prisoner utilized song to place blame on officers such as Ben Butler for hi lack of anything to do but eat rice and pick for lice.

To justify and reconcile wounds and maiming many soldiers like Captain Alfred Perkins Rockwell wrote of a song titled "The Empty Sleeve." He stated: "I send enclosed a little song which o heard an officer repeat the other day. It was new and struck me as quite spirited. One must see a goodly number of empty sleeves at the North now."¹⁷⁵ The song's lyrics include reassuring ideals of bravery, heroism, and honor which helped reconcile a soldier's fear of maiming wounds: "But the heroes come with empty sleeves. From out the battle's roar. That empty sleeve, it is a badge of bravery and of honor." Writing similar sentimentalism, Corporal John B. Sayles implored his wife Margaret to write him soon: "I bought this little song and there being a place to write, I thought I'd fill it with something. I have not heard from you yet. You can little imagine how I would like to hear from you."¹⁷⁶ Sayles writes with sentimentalism and homesickness; however, he also writes to reconcile death. The song in question, "Who Will Care for Mother Now," features lyrics: "Let this knapsack be my pillow, And my mantle be the sky; Hasten, comrades, to the battle! I will like a soldier die." (see figure 11).

¹⁷⁵ Alfred Perkins Rockwell to Katharine 'Kate' Virginia Foote, March 24, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/10668>.

¹⁷⁶ John B. Sayles to Margaret Weeks Sayles, February 7, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16243>.



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WHO WILL CARE FOR MOTHER NOW?

Words and Music by Chas. Carroll Sawyer.

(During one of our late battles, among many other noble fellows that fell, was a young man who had been the only support of an aged and sick mother for years. Hearing the surgeon tell those who were near him that he could not live, he placed his hand across his forehead, and, with a trembling voice, said, while burning tears ran down his fevered cheeks, Who will care for Mother now?)

Why am I so weak and weary?
See how faint my heated breath;
All around to me seems darkness;
Tell me, comrades, is this death?
Ah! how well I know your answer,
To my fate I meekly bow,
If you'll only tell me truly
Who will care for mother now.

CHORUS.
Soon with angels I'll be marching,
With bright laurels on my brow;
I have for my country fallen,
Who will care for mother now?
Who will comfort her in sorrow?
Who will dry the falling tear,
Gently smooth her wrinkled forehead?
Who will whisper words of cheer?

Even now I think I see her
Kneeling, praying for me! how
Can I leave her in anguish?
Who will care for mother now?

Cho.—Soon with angels, &c.

Let this knapsack be my pillow,
And my mantle be the sky;
Hasten, comrades, to the battle!
I will like a soldier die.
Soon with angels I'll be marching,
With bright laurels on my brow;
I have for my country fallen,
Who will care for mother now?

Cho.—Soon with angels, &c.

PURCHASE MAGNUS' ORNAMENTAL AND GLORIOUS UNION PACKET,
Containing Mirror of Events, and excellent Stationery Articles. Price 25 Cents, and Magnus' HALF DOLLAR MAP and STATIONERY PORTFOLIO, comprising those desirable large Circle Maps, termed the U. S. Army Guide, acknowledged the best published, also: CIVIL WAR ILLUSTRATIONS (over 1000 kinds) printed on Note Paper, as heading for Songs and on Envelopes. Evidence of the immense assortment will strike you at once, if you only look at the 100 different battle scenes, illustrating that one song: "When this cruel war is over."

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Figure 11: "Who will care for mother now?" by Chas. Carroll Sawyer in John B. Sayles to Margaret Weeks Sayles, February 7, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16243>.

Soldiers reconciled their own deaths through music while also accepting their inability to care for their loved ones should they die. Sending such a sentimental song, Sayles inquired to his wife Margaret for her emotional support and does what he can with his pay “to express that money ... as soon as I can” supporting his family.¹⁷⁷ For Sayles, song provided a means to reconcile homesickness, maintain connections to his family, and justify his potential death. Historian Faust writes extensively on *ars moriendi* or ‘the art of dying’ as soldiers “turned to the resources of their culture, codes of masculinity, patriotism, and religion to prepare themselves for what lay ahead.”¹⁷⁸ Faust describes two songs “Be My Mother Till I Die” and even the reply sequel “Answer to: Let Me Kiss Him for His Mother” as “a nationwide conversation between soldiers and civilians ... as they worked together to reconstruct the Good Dead amid the disruptions of war.”¹⁷⁹ Private John Collins Fulton confirms Faust’s conclusions as he recognized and reconciled his motivations to continue the fight and even suffer death stating powerfully that: “This song [“Soldier’s Memento”] is what we want to fight for and I offer this lock of hair as the memento of the song. But I must close now but please write soon.”¹⁸⁰ The song, “Soldier’s Memento,” includes the lines more powerful after understanding the dominance of military music “And every day fifes and drums play, inspiring me bolder. I do not fear death when I hear that old tune ‘Yankee Doodle!’” The “Soldier’s Memento” allows the citizen soldier’s perspective to come full circle recognizing and acknowledging his potential death, justifying and reconciling it through his own music, and transferring that justification back towards the military music of the fifes and drums.

¹⁷⁷ John B. Sayles to Margaret Weeks Sayles, February 7, 1864, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16243>.

¹⁷⁸ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 10; 5.

¹⁷⁹ Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 12-13.

¹⁸⁰ John Collins Fulton to Mary Jane Fulton, October 4, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16262>.



Figure 12: John Collins Fulton to Mary Jane Fulton, October 4, 1861, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/16262>.

Conclusion

American Civil War civilian music was vital for a citizen-soldier to cope with their military service and the soldiering experience through musicking. The music of violins, violas, melodeons, banjos, guitars, and most often vocals, echoed through the Civil War soundscape and formed a necessary counter to military music. This dualistic system balanced a soldier's soundscape between the military music's domineering necessity and civilian music's alleviating presence. The musical moments soldiers experienced moderated morale through respite and reconciliation.

Chapter 3: “Civil War Mixtapes”

“I think I shall miss the drums when this cruel war is over!”¹⁸¹



Figure 13: *Civil War veterans in Grand Army of the Republic uniforms playing fife and drums with Boy Scout holding flag in front of decorated car. United States, ca. 1910. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018652943/>.*

Follow this link to access my Public History Component:
<https://nedrowmathesis.wordpress.com/>

¹⁸¹ Charles George to Ellie George, “Camp near Brandy Station,” February 12, 1864 in Davis, “*Bully for the Band!*” 125.

Introduction

One of the primary goals of my thesis is to make my work readily available in the spirit of public history.¹⁸² The present public has never heard the music as it was which proved so powerful for so many American Civil War soldiers. But just as seeing is believing, sometimes, hearing is humanizing. What can be heard is still a crude reproduction of the soldiers' experiences, although if even a sliver of empathy, understanding, and knowledge can be gleaned, my intent is fulfilled. When Bandsman Charles George expressed while watching an evening performance of "Tattoo" that he "shall miss the drums when this cruel war is over," I hope that my work can glean meaning from this Bandsman's words for the viewer.¹⁸³ The best dissemination method for my research is online exhibition as it offers a virtual experience to the largest number of visitors through easy accessibility. In making a public history component

¹⁸² Note: Public history forms the backbone of my graduate work and professional experience. In the grand scheme public history is a relatively recent adaption of traditional practices as "by the late 1970s public history entered the professional vocabulary" (Patricia Mooney-Melvin, "Professional historians and the challenge of redefinition," in James B. Gardner and Peter S. LaPaglia, *Public history: Essays from the Field*, (Malabar, FL: Krieger Pub. Co, 2006), 14). However, over the intervening years the field has changed adapting from a simple typology of historians work to a methodology. As stated in 1978 by Robert Kelley, "In its simplest meaning, Public History refers to the employment of historians and the historical method outside of academia: in government, private corporations, the media, historical societies and museums, even in private practice" (Robert Kelley, "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects," *The Public Historian* 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1978): 16. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3377666>). By 2002, Jill Liddington asks: "So: are we all public historians now?... The answer is probably a generous 'yes': let a thousand flowers bloom" (Jill Liddington, "What Is Public History? Publics and Their Past, Meanings and Practices," *Oral History* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 83-84). As predicted by Roland J. Grele in 1981, "If the public history movement lives up to its name, those of us who work in the field will recognize allies in the struggle to make historical consciousness a reality in American life" (Roland J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What Is the Goal of a Public Historian?" *The Public Historian* 3, No. 1 (Winter, 1981): 48). The field has grown encompassing a variety of intellectuals working in a variety of environments. Robert Kelley did see a portion of this disciplinary concept as academic history is conducted "by means of formal schooling, within each generation" and that "in Public History, the historian answers questions posed by others. He or she serves as a consultant, a professional, a member of the staff" (Robert Kelley, "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects," *The Public Historian* 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1978): 18. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3377666>). While public history is viewed as a separate profession, the methodological differences are actively being defined. What Liddington calls "a thousand flowers" are all differing methodological approaches which vary a hundred-fold. Liddington sees "broad meanings and usages of 'public history'" (Roland J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What Is the Goal of a Public Historian?" *The Public Historian* 3, No. 1 (Winter, 1981): 48). This concept of "usages" is the key to understanding present public history.

¹⁸³ Charles George to Ellie George, "Camp near Brandy Station," February 12, 1864 in Davis, "*Bully for the Band!*" 125.

utilizing my thesis research in a digitally facing display, my work can further awareness to digital exhibition options for public history professionals. Online exhibits provide immersive and interactive (and fun) experiences to engage viewers, prompt academic investigation, and bring primary sources and interpreted narratives to the fore. An online exhibit enhances the web presence and visitation of relevant historic sites or in turn increases online traffic for organizations without historic sites. An online exhibit also ensures long term exposure for a project preserving the work for future viewers, be they scholars or the public at large, so long as publication and hosting issues are adequately addressed. As historians are flung into the digital age, they have largely harnessed the internet's power. Falk and Dierking are quoted by Bautista as stating, "effective digital media experiences require situating the experience within the broader context of lives, the community, and the society in which visitors live and interact" with our lives, communities, and societies defined by the internet and the digital age.¹⁸⁴ The digital age allows visitors to a virtual exhibition to receive historical context through text and audio. Robert Weible directs, "Rapidly changing technology has enabled historians, especially younger ones, to work with electronics experts, graphic designers, educators, and others to bring good, professional history to a public that would have been hard to envision even a few years ago."¹⁸⁵ Museums and their exhibits, digitally born, can expand historiographical conversations between professionals while also providing the general public with an accessible educational experience. This chapter features alternating paragraphs on theory and on practice detailing the defining elements of this prototype online exhibit.

¹⁸⁴ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture*, (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 10.

¹⁸⁵ Robert Weible, "Defining Public History: Is It Possible? Is It Necessary?" *Perspectives on History*, March 1, 2008. <https://www.historians.org/perspectives-article/defining-public-history-is-it-possible-is-it-necessary-march-2008/>.

What is the project's purpose?

In theory, my purpose in proposing a public history component is to continue expanding museum exhibition into the realm of the digital humanities. Susana Smith Bautista emphasizes that museums represent “a more public means of communication and interpretation” and as “technology continue to permeate the museum institution and, in the process, it continues to change the institution, changing technologies as they are adapted to new uses and changing culture....”¹⁸⁶ Bautista concludes that we are “once again (re)defining [museums’] social role, its authority, and its popularity as it responds and adapts to a changing society.”¹⁸⁷ For Cameron, “Digital and online tools represent an increasingly important part of the museum experience, despite the fact that they were both relatively insignificant features in the world of museums when the first edition of this book was written.”¹⁸⁸ While most of their book focuses on “the visit” before, during, and after, a final chapter details events “Beyond the Visit” stating definitively, “museums all over the world are rethinking what it means to be a museum.”¹⁸⁹ For public historians, “Digital access allows for independent learning and global connections that extend beyond a traditional education environment.... institutions should define the digital skill-set needed to activate museum content using the accepted educational framework and available technology.”¹⁹⁰ Even still, great works in the museum canon like *Museum Basics* by Ambrose and Paine largely ignore the digital facing presence of a museum focusing instead on the brick and mortar. Digital access, and in turn the digital skill-sets that enable it, contribute to the highest

¹⁸⁶ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture*, (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), xviii & xxiii.

¹⁸⁷ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture*, (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 5.

¹⁸⁸ F. Cameron, “Digital Futures I: Museum collections, digital technologies, and the cultural construction of knowledge,” *Curator*, 46, (2003): 325–340.

¹⁸⁹ John H Falk and Lynn D Dierking, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, (Walnut Creek: Routledge, 2012), 296.

¹⁹⁰ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 250.

ideals of public history, accessible educational opportunity, making more and more possible. To overlook the importance of digital presence, be it on websites, social media, etc... is an oversight to say the least. “The visit” and the visitor need redefined as the internet and communications technology evolve so to do museum professionals need to adapt and overcome.

In practice, my public history component provides a culmination of graduate work both academic and public. That cumulative work focused topically on the music of the American Civil War and structurally in museum studies and the digital humanities. Combining these aspects results in a great passion to further the knowledge of my topic and its education through digital means within the museum world. Museums deserve furthered advances to combine quality interpretation and digital “usages” to build online exhibitions. My purpose is to expand the digital humanities in museums through the practical creation of a public history component. The main obligations can be idealized by varied professionals but my interpretation is shared with Majorie Schwarzer who emphasizes:

Museums do matter. They are the only institutions that collect, preserve, display, interpret, and educate for the public good. They are stewards of who and what we are today, and have been in the past: our shared heritage, good and bad, accomplishments and failures as humans, the treasures of a natural world that we ourselves endanger. Museums offer us an opportunity to be informed and inspired, to be enriched culturally, intellectually, emotionally. Without them we would be infinitely poorer as individuals and as a nation.¹⁹¹

What form should the public history component take?

In theory, this public history component must take some form to accomplish the purpose of expanding and combining Civil War era studies, digital humanities, and museum studies. The American Alliance of Museums determined “An exhibition is successful if it is physically,

¹⁹¹ Marjorie Schwarzer, *Riches, Rivals and Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America* (Washington, D.C.: AAM Press, 2006), 2; and for Joseph Veach Noble they collect, conserve, study, interpret, and exhibit, for Peter van Mench they preserve, study, and communicate, and for John Henry Merryman they promote preservation, truth, and access in Stephen E. Weil, “Rethinking the Museum: An Emerging New Paradigm,” in Gail Anderson, *Reinventing the Museum* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2004), 74-75.

intellectually, and emotionally engaging and accessible to those who experience it.”¹⁹² Specific to digital humanities, Beck and Cable outline, “interactive computer exhibits can take three forms. They can be used as a reference device, as a personal tour guide, or they can offer simulation.”¹⁹³

However, and in practice, no human alive experienced the music of the American Civil War in its truest original form, and none will again. Yet my public history component, a digital exhibit, provides these musical moments, snapshots of human experience from primary sources. All the while visitors can participate by hearing facsimiles of that experience. However, these three forms are purist, one informational, one interpretive, and the other experiential. An exhibit must balance these extremes to prevent the creations of either an encyclopedic archive with information for information’s sake, a directive and unengaging narrative, or a freewheeling experience void of interpretation and curation. My prototype exhibit seeks to mediate these extremes and provide a balanced experience. The project functions as a reference device for selected primary sources, media content, and interpreted narratives. The project serves as a personal tour guide for the visitor to curate these selected primary sources, media content, and interpreted narratives. Furthermore, these components are accentuated with simulation in the form of audio clips of reproduced music. This is a personal tour of musical references through the medium of simulation. In not being an exclusively reference project, programs like Omeka, PastPerfect, and Content-DM were too archival in design and not inclined to as much flexible interactivity and curation as a HTML website such as WordPress. Archives such as *Research Arsenal* full of primary sources already exist and to make an archive of archived materials seemed reductive. Additionally, a comprehensive archival arrangement of musical moments,

¹⁹² American Alliance of Museums, “Standards of Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence,” 2012.

¹⁹³ Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 105.

while beneficial for an interpreter, is daunting for a visitor to a museum whether digital or in person. The behind the scenes of archiving is, for the purposes of this project, where the project is made, not where it is displayed. Meanwhile, multimedia productions such as a prerecorded video or audio podcast episode in line with a personal tour would be linear and unable to be explored at leisure by a curious observer and emulate public interpretation as opposed to a museum exhibit able to be taken in at a self-paced rate. The direct format of an interpretive video or audio may be an acceptable follow-up project in which this information gathered through this thesis can be summarized as either an academic talk or in an interpretive public history educational video with options being most accessible over YouTube. However, public interpretation, while beneficial both digitally and in person, was not aligned with the goal to bring digital humanities to museums. The last option provided by Back and Cable, the simulation, is where I draw the most available resources. In using reproduced audio of civil war era music both military and civilian, the site can immerse the visitor in the soundscape through embedded audio perfect for receiving musical moments with curated primary sources in the form of quotations, images, lyrics, and artifacts digitally displayed. Trapped between the archive and the public. Museums naturally balance the two. I decided instead of an archival site (fitting for archivists) or an interpretive video (fitting for public interpreters), I would produce a curated website accessible to the public at large (fitting for museum curators).

Do tech savvy historians exist?

Yes! In theory, a concern to address is a preconceived notion that only computer programmers and tech savvy individuals can conduct work in the age of the internet using the tools computers offer. This notion is simply untrue. In a straightforward manner David Dean

states: “The perception that only programmers can master the use of computers is incorrect.”¹⁹⁴

In 1998, Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen called the question: “Why not make use of the World Wide Web, which has emerged as a popular venue for amateur historians, to create virtual meeting grounds for professionals and nonprofessionals.”¹⁹⁵ Several scholars emphasized in 2011:

Attention spans are breaking down, and expectations are growing that everyone could and should arrange, direct, produce, curate, comment, and upload on any and all means of cultural production. ... Web 2.0 and social media may have forced the public historian’s hand...¹⁹⁶

We as historians, though we are typically accused of living in the past, are at the end of the day beings in the present experiencing a shared human existence. We can learn, adapt, and overcome, just as the people we study did to get us this far. By using easily accessible tools, like some story map services, WordPress and other pre-generated website templates, and handy tutorials made by computer scientists, we as historians can make digital history happen, and have for actually been doing this work for years now.¹⁹⁷ As one example of many, Steve Zeitlin noted

¹⁹⁴ David Dean, *Museum exhibition: Theory and practice* (London, UK: Routledge, 2005), Chapter 8.

¹⁹⁵ Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 184.

¹⁹⁶ Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 17.

¹⁹⁷ Examples of digital history initiatives:

“The 1916 Rising: Personalities and Perspectives.” National Library of Ireland - 1916 exhibition, 2016, <https://www.nli.ie/1916/exhibition/en/#:~:text=Through%20the%20National%20Library%20of,the%20Rising%20and%20its%20aftermath.>

“A More Perfect Union.” National Museum of American History, September 7, 2023. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html>.

“Between a Rock and a Hard Place.” National Museum of American History, September 7, 2023. <https://www.americanhistory.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/sweatshops>.

“Bittersweet Harvest.” National Museum of American History, August 23, 2023. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/bittersweet-harvest-bracero-program-1942-1964>.

“Collaborating for Indigenous Rights 1957–1973.” National Museum of Australia, April 3, 2024. <https://indigenoustrights.net.au/>.

“Exhibitions.” Library of Congress. Accessed September 10, 2024. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/>.

“History of Labor in Virginia: An Interactive Timeline and Map.” The Commonwealth Institute, August 30, 2022. <https://thecommonwealthinstitute.org/research/history-of-labor-in-virginia-an-interactive-timeline-and-map/>.

“Mekong Lifeways.” Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 2004. <http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/mekong/index.html>.

Musei Vaticani, 2024. <https://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en.html>.

that in the *City of Memory* project “connects stories geographically as well thematically through virtual “tours,” creating synergy among them.”¹⁹⁸ While cityofmemory.org created, for present residents, “a web of interlocking memories, chronicling the city’s inner life... [as] It links stories and memories in ways that cut across chronology, sparking connections and enabling visitors to rediscover the city through the memories of others,” my project produces the same interlocking thematic memories and allows visitors to experience shreds of their memories through musical moments inspired by many good projects conducted before.¹⁹⁹ Donald A. Ritchie noted key advances in methods in which oral history, a methodological discipline within public history, has “been quick to embrace the Internet for the universal and cost-effective means it offers for disseminating information that once languished on dusty shelves, read only by occasional researchers.”²⁰⁰ Ritchie concludes his article stating: “The future of the past lies not just in classrooms and monographs, but in museums, historical sites, the media and on the Internet.”²⁰¹

“Online Exhibits.” National Women’s History Museum. Accessed September 10, 2024.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibitions/online-exhibits>.

“Permanent Exhibition.” Apartheid Museum, 2024. <https://www.apartheidmuseum.org/permanent-exhibition>.

“The Price of Freedom.” National Museum of American History, February 21, 2023.

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/explore/exhibitions>.

“Progressive Era.” National Women’s History Museum. <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/topics/progressive-era>.

“Remembering: The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire.” Cornell University - ILR School, 2018.

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/>.

“Search the Collection.” National Postal Museum. Accessed September 10, 2024.

<http://arago.si.edu/flash/?eid=385%7Cs1%3D6%7C>.

“Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education.” National Museum of American History.

<https://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/>.

“Slavery in New York.” New York Historical Society, 2009. <http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/>.

¹⁹⁸ Steve Zeitlin, “Case Study: Where Are the Best Stories? Where Is My Story? - Participation and Curation in a New Media Age,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 35.

¹⁹⁹ Steve Zeitlin, “Case Study: Where Are the Best Stories? Where Is My Story? - Participation and Curation in a New Media Age,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 43.

²⁰⁰ Donald A. Ritchie, “When History Goes Public: Recent Experiences in the United States,” *Oral History* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 96.

²⁰¹ Donald A. Ritchie, “When History Goes Public: Recent Experiences in the United States,” *Oral History* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 97.

Just as Ritchie saw the internet as part of the oral history methodology, it is also a methodological tool for museum studies and general interpretive historical work and a tool for all historians' "usages" regardless of professional discipline.

Furthermore, there are doubts that need addressed over the virtual world being inferior to a real-world experience of historical interpretation. Graham Black author of *The Engaging Museum* emphasize individual control of exhibits and information sources, but retains a stance that in-person experiences are more engaging over experiences adapted to the virtual world.²⁰² There is a worry present that "machines by themselves can be impersonal and complex, and therefore counterproductive. ... Without friendly interpreters to personally encourage, assist, and guide visitors, the technologically timid will be driven away by the machines."²⁰³ The goal of an online exhibition is then in turn to provide an inspirational educational experience albeit the impersonal nature of machines. Thankfully, this exhibit itself is built on personal stories and relatable human emotions. This exhibition is also born-digital and derived from digital collections. This is not an adaption of a physical exhibit, nor could it be, there is less in the way of a physical alternative with its musical component presenting logistical difficulties for audio display. Bautista referenced Hilda Hein's terminology, the "experiential museum" emphasizes "process over stasis" and in turn is a "vehicle for the delivery of experience rather than as ends unto themselves."²⁰⁴ Online exhibits are a vehicle to deliver an experience of Civil War music.

²⁰² Graham Black, *The engaging museum: Developing Museums for Visitor Involvement* (Hoboken, NJ: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 2.

²⁰³ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 101.

²⁰⁴ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 10.

In practice, yes, I had to learn how to use WordPress. But did I need to learn how to code HTML to do this, no. Did I learn how to code HTML anyways, yes. However, there are a host of accessible (open source/low cost) programs for curious digital humanists. Thankfully, I got my start through: <https://dh.sites.gettysburg.edu/toolkit/>. Among many programs listed as intuitive are content managers like WordPress, PressBooks, Scalar, and Omeka, as well as storytelling tools like TimelineJS, StoryMapJS, Twine, and ArcGIS Story Maps, among others. Digital humanists should not learn a language of code, learn a program or two, dabble as needed. These programs are helpful in reaching a broader and more diverse public through principles of accessibility and technology, while intimidating, crosses borders which are otherwise impenetrable to in-person interpreters and in-person exhibition.

What components constitute the project?

Proper technological usage described previously provides a practical structure and form, a digital public history project in the form of a WordPress site. This option proves to be the best for exhibition styled display. With that groundwork, an exhibit of self-paced participation, involved environments of interaction, a series of “big ideas,” professional exhibit practices, and a canvas of digital space is established. This public history digital component uses digital means, embraces the digital humanities, and allows for technology to build a modern form of public history. In the end, the goal is to further education in an organized and curated form. The visitor to this exhibit can search through the musical moments at their own pace, another benefit of digital content.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ “Self-paced learning has been one of the principal advantages of the museum educational environment” (David Dean, *Museum exhibition: Theory and practice*, London, UK: Routledge, 2005, Chapter 8)

Self-Paced Participation

In theory, Bautista referenced philosophy professor Hilda Hein’s terminology, the “experiential museum” emphasizes “process over stasis” and in turn is a “vehicle for the delivery of experience rather than as ends unto themselves.”²⁰⁶ The digital exhibition will follow this educational and experiential model in which self-paced participation is key. “Research has shown that interactive exhibits of any sort are more effective than passive exhibits at attracting and holding attention, and enhancing learning. Interactive computer exhibits are no exception. They have been shown to strongly attract and hold attention and promote learning.”²⁰⁷ Simon states “The goal of participatory techniques is ... to meet visitors’ expectations for active engagement.”²⁰⁸ The spirit of participation is injected into the curation of this digital project. The stories of these musical moments do not stand on their own, but stand on the collective experiences of fellow humans distanced only by time. A song is nothing without a singer and its lyrics are nothing without an audience. Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable push that:

Modern technology can allow visitors to view things that previously could not be seen, experience environments that could not be experienced, and manipulate and respond to stimuli that previously could not be perceived. These advances expand, rather than stifle, interpretive opportunities. We can open new worlds of meaningful experiences to our visitors.”²⁰⁹

In practice, while the bugle, fife, drum, brass band, and folk instruments of the Civil War echo far distant from our present, first and foremost, I wanted as best a facsimile as possible. For this reason, I utilized a plethora of YouTube videos and embedded audio/video into the website.

²⁰⁶ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 10.

²⁰⁷ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 106.

²⁰⁸ Nina Simon, “Thought Piece: Participatory Design and the Future of Museums,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 21.

²⁰⁹ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 101.

As both WordPress and YouTube present relatively stable platforms the longevity of this content is largely insured and the work is available for posterity so long as these titans of the internet stay standing. With this audio/visual environment audience members can be immersed in an “experiential museum” in which the multi-media drives the experience delivering a cohesive thematic narrative. Furthermore this “experiential settling is excellent for self-paced individuals who seek to browse and roam throughout the site as if it were a gallery space. At their leisure, visitors can explore the soundscape of the Civil War from the comfort of their home.

Involved Interactive Environments

In theory, listening alone is not enough. A simple soundtrack is not intuitive and the music of the past needs to be interpreted just as any artifact. An artifact without interpretation cannot tell its own story. Standing alone, a song, like an artifact, is devoid of context, but with interpretation that element of exhibition is far more powerful. A digital exhibit such as this needs top quality interpretation, primary sources, and research, while providing a narrative true to the source material and accessible to the public. This interpretation aids the artifact, or in this case the embedded audio, which needs to meet public history standards. In the end, “exhibit media are designed for comfort and accessibility.”²¹⁰ All content should be designed “that audience members of varying ages, cultures, and cognitive abilities are able to understand and learn from the exhibition.”²¹¹ The goal exhibit design should contribute to, not hamper, the experience of the visitor. Together all these factors create an involved environment of interaction. Additionally, “people learn best when they are *involved* in some way, not just passively looking or listening.”

²¹² Audio and text in thematic divisions provides stimulus without overwhelming the viewer. As

²¹⁰ American Alliance of Museums, “Standards of Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence,” 2012, 4.

²¹¹ American Alliance of Museums, “Standards of Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence,” 2012, 4.

²¹² Tim Ambrose and Crispin Paine, *Museum basics: The international handbooks* (Abingdon, VA: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 75.

“the development of *computer systems* that can also involves sound and video is creating a whole new medium of interactive displays in museums...the most exciting developments are those that give visitor choices.”²¹³ Visitors are able to take away information in the form of favorite songs, musical moments, and interpreted history. Questions engage visitors and reflective questioning will be placed throughout the exhibit.²¹⁴ In combination, audio, text, visual, thematic exploration, and active questioning all engage the visitor in an interactive fashion.

Exhibitions can also be participatory, a best feature and advantage in modern exhibit design. Technology enables furthered interpretation allowing music to transcend time. In debating the issue of curation and participation, “while digital collections provide much needed access, collection databases can be difficult to navigate without meaningful interpretation. Like on-site museum audiences, virtual visitors require intervention to synthesize digital content...”²¹⁵ The sources of my thesis are an expanse of digital collections in need of curation and synthesis.

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In practice, visitors to this website can not only listen to the music in self-paced participation, they can experience this music in the context of the era with primary sources and

²¹³ Tim Ambrose and Crispin Paine, *Museum basics: The international handbooks* (Abingdon, VA: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 76.

²¹⁴ Tim Ambrose and Crispin Paine, *Museum basics: The international handbooks* (Abingdon, VA: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 77.

²¹⁵ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 247.

²¹⁶ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 247.

interpretation side by side. While listening to a song, the visitor can read lyrics, relevant quotes, view advertisements and broadsides, and explore valuable interpretive signage. Because “computer technology allows us to travel the globe with just a few clicks of the mouse,” visitors can explore the soundscape of the Civil War listening to musical moments within context.²¹⁷ That context transposes simulated sound, primary source material, and interpretive text into impactful meaning.

“Big Ideas”

In theory, as stated by the American Alliance of Museums, a museum should strive for “a clear idea or set of ideas expressed, and those ideas are made clear to viewers.”²¹⁸ This concept is the “big idea” Beverly Serrell refers to throughout Chapter 1 and is aimed to “give visitors a ‘minds-on’ moment.”²¹⁹ Each musical moment displayed in a digital exhibit tie into a big idea, an emotional response felt by a soldier towards music. These moments and their big ideas are strung together in a form of an itinerary or tour, as James Clifford wrote in 1997 that location is more about “an itinerary rather than a bounded site – a series of encounters and translations.”²²⁰ The greater whole is increasingly useful as “big ideas” and tied together to form a comprehensive immersive educational experience based around thematic areas of intrigue.

In practice, the musical moments are also searchable thematically based on the sections this thesis has been divided into.²²¹ Those subheadings listed in the website’s navigation bar are

²¹⁷ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 99.

²¹⁸ American Alliance of Museums, “Standards of Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence,” 2012, 4.

²¹⁹ Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit labels: An interpretive approach* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 1-8; 14.

²²⁰ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture*, (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 12.

²²¹ “the goal of participatory techniques is both to meet visitors’ expectations for active engagement and to do so in a way that furthers the mission and core values of the institution” (Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world*, Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011, 21).

divided into military and civilian sections with emotional themes. Military themes detail a soldier's emotions which military music elicited: anger, anxiety, death, fatigue, fear, sadness, punished, pride, excitement, encouragement, and status. Meanwhile, civilian themes in another drop-down menu deal with the way civilian music allowed soldiers to cope with aspects of soldiering such as the large struggle and causes of the war, the economic burden facing soldiers, moments of peace found through music, the alleviation of homesickness, the fear of the unknown, and the dangers of disease, imprisonment, wounding and death. These thematic pages, organized in the navigation bar, take visitors into "big idea" sections that pride quality interpretation and bite size emotional vignettes.

Professional Exhibit Practices

All the while, professional exhibit practices must be upheld. In theory, a digital exhibit also has advantages in providing valuable and reliable historical information in a digital age of dubious information. Trusted information and citation is imperative to be conveyed to the public. As emphasized, "Interpretation is an educational activity that aims to reveal meanings about our cultural and natural resources" and "good interpretation encourages a greater sensitivity to one's surroundings, a heightened ecological and cultural awareness, and a meaningful link to the past and future."²²² In a survey, "72 percent of participants said that the role of museums as trusted sources of online information would become more important in the digital age."²²³ The public demands that trusted information be conveyed in historical information and in turn in digital exhibition. Beck and Cable emphasize: "The Internet can be both a source of information for

²²² Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), xi & 3.

²²³ Matthew MacArthur, "Thought Piece: Get Real! : The Role of Objects in the Digital Age," in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 61.

interpreters and a means for interpreters to disseminate their information to the world.”²²⁴ This exhibit utilized the internet to gather information and in turn curate and disseminate.

In practice, the implementation of Chicago citation, a further reading and bibliography sections, image sourcing and accreditation, is imperative. By providing citations, documentation, and accessible sourcing, the visitor can be secure in the information and public historians can bridge the gap to promote academic and intellectual standards beyond the academy. With public interpretation we as public historians connect the academy to the general public.

Digital Space

In theory, space is infinite within the internet, only bound by server space and bandwidth. Predicated on the presence of a hosting apparatus, the space is defined by this apparatus. The internet can be intimidating for historians. Nina Simon posed the humorous question “Imagine, for a moment, the Web as a history museum” and continues to detail the “you oversee more than 550 billion documents...most are personal and of interest to only a few people. The content is of variable quality, relevance, and importance. ... as the collection grows, you and your fellow trustees are increasingly worried about the quality of the visitor experience at the museum.”²²⁵ The internet is a powerful tool, as demonstrated by my research utilizing immense databases to curate the basis for a digital exhibit. The internet, unwieldy as it is, takes an infinite amount of time to consume whole, hence we curate it the same as any aspect of history.

In practice, Simon suggests that “You’d likely separate the acquisitions storage facility from the public-facing facility, both for the sake of efficiency and coherence of visitor

²²⁴ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 109.

²²⁵ Nina Simon, “Thought Piece: Participatory Design and the Future of Museums,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 18.

experience.”²²⁶ At least for the internet, “rather than curate and restrict the growth of content, programmers stayed true to the inclusive ethos and open protocols of the early Web.”²²⁷ Yet, as historians we need to curate content to insure a succinct message is received and not found to be overwhelming. My product will display a curated amalgamation of my sources taken from my thesis, while tapering the scale and breadth to fit a public-facing product. While programmers’ intentions are aimed at quantity in what Simon calls a “folksonomy,” I hope for quality over quantity in presenting research to a public by distilling letters into an organized and curated form. Websites, such as those developed in WordPress allow this compartmentalization of information and a curated historical exhibit. Thankfully, “with interpretation, museum content—whether physical, digital, conceptual, or interactive— can introduce new ideas and provide deeper connections to previous knowledge.”²²⁸ My public history component emphasizes interpretation and exhibition. Within this digital space, the musical moments my thesis emphasizes exist as amorphous artifacts for exhibition each telling a story with music accompaniment, sheet music, broadsides, images, and letters. Artifacts like musical ephemera means much more displayed alongside digital context. These stories of civil war music gain new life as digital objects engaging with the public. These Civil War soldiers never had a chance to express their experiences to the present public, but posthumously these soldiers can share their musical moments. Utilizing digital means and the growing digital humanities, historians, while not programmers, can embrace technology to expand our field’s professional and public presence.

²²⁶ Nina Simon, “Thought Piece: Participatory Design and the Future of Museums,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 18.

²²⁷ Nina Simon, “Thought Piece: Participatory Design and the Future of Museums,” in Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 19.

²²⁸ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 248.

Hosting Apparatus

In theory, for Gerda Lerner, “new technology, which has produced the tape recorder and the computer, has opened new fields, such as oral history and cliometrics.”²²⁹ Just as technology enabled oral history to be recorded digitally, preserved and framed in perpetuity, museums exhibition has taken a turn for the 21st Century. Concurring with David Dean, “the concept of a visitor being able to peruse collections (within limits, of course), access research documentation, and even examine images of collection items, expands the meaning and use of museums as educational and research institutions.”²³⁰ By curating sources from databases, interpreting history, and providing contextual primary sources, the museum’s meaning and use is extended further to aid visitor turned viewer. While in-person interpretation is valuable, digital interpretation is simply different and should work concurrently as a valuable alternative. In referencing the expanding perspectives of Freeman Tilden, a titan of public interpretation, Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable voice: “High technology can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and care.”²³¹ While Beck and Cable do conclude that “it is unlikely that Enos Mills or Freeman Tilden ever imagined the possibilities associated with using current technologies in interpretation. New tools are available to interpreters as technology races ahead opening the doors to new worlds, both virtual and real”²³² However, Tilden does predict “whether one likes it or not, we are going to have more—and I should hope, better—mechanical devices aimed at multiplying the interpretive effort.”²³³ Tilden concluded that “Gadgets do not supplant the

²²⁹ Gerda Lerner, *Why History Matters: Life and Thought* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 122-123.

²³⁰ David Dean, *Museum exhibition: Theory and practice* (London, UK: Routledge, 2005), Chapter 8.

²³¹ Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.

²³² Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 99.

²³³ Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 100.

personal contact; we accept them as valuable alternatives and supplements.”²³⁴ David Dean concludes much the same stating “Computer use in the exhibit context will increase and develop into a normal part of the exhibit developer's bag of tricks for getting the message across.”²³⁵ My work expands the public history front further into the digital world, as Tilden prophesized and Dean realized, allowing my digital product to reflect the values of public history on a digital platform.

In practice, an online exhibit can ensure long term exposure for a project preserving the work for future viewers, be they scholars or the public at large, so long as publication and hosting issues are adequately addressed. Beck and Cable emphasize a “dependable” experience.²³⁶ The presence of an online exhibit can extend the life of work that otherwise would be relegated to a temporary exhibit space. With audio components and a personal at-your-own-pace style, the consistent availability of a digital exhibit is preferable. Preservation issues still arise in the digital world in the form of web hosting, broken links, outdated technology, faulty infrastructure, and more. But with proper preparation and foresight many of these issues can be prevented or mitigated. Utilizing popular and stable open-sourced tools ensures economic concerns do less to hamper the exhibit. Additionally, partnering with established institutions also allows web maintenance. For example, potential partnerships being sought by this project could give it a more substantial reach as well as a great preservation potential.

²³⁴ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 113.

²³⁵ David Dean, *Museum exhibition: Theory and practice* (London, UK: Routledge, 2005), Chapter 8.

²³⁶ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 101.

How marketable is digital history?

In theory, another aspect of concern is how marketable digital history is. The short answer is, it is marketable. An online exhibit enhances the web presence and visitation of relevant historic sites or in turn increases online traffic for organizations without fixed historic sites. There is a present worry about adopting digital infrastructure. “Some cultural institutions have been slow to adopt digital trends for fear that this increased access to museum content might dissuade audiences from physically visiting brick and mortar institutions, thereby decreasing attendance and revenue.”²³⁷ Even if the approach isn’t motivated by higher ideals of public history including accessibility and outreach, “this approach isn’t just about egalitarianism; it’s also an economic model for success. As Ian Rogers, former VP of Video and Media Applications for Yahoo! famously said in 2007, “Losers wish for scarcity. Winners leverage scale.” He and other Web 2.0 leaders have argued that the money invested in gatekeeping and protecting content—whether copyrighted music, films, or images—is wasted. Instead, institutions that control media content should be looking for ways to get that content out into as many environments as possible, to be shared, remixed, and discussed.”²³⁸ Getting content out into the public eye is vital even if it means sacrificing and disseminating treasured knowledge. Not only is the practice ethically sound, but it proves economically viable.

Web sites have the advantages of being on duty all day, every day of the year and they are relatively inexpensive. Web sites reduce the consumption of printed brochures and information sheets which are often discarded anyway, thereby reducing printing costs and potential litter. Postage and handling of mailings are also saved as the public comes to rely on the web site for information. Park agencies and museums use web sites to

²³⁷ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 246-247.

²³⁸ Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a user-generated world* (Philadelphia, PA: Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage, 2011), 20

disseminate information to tens of thousands of people each year, many of whom would not normally visit the park or museum.²³⁹

The economic viability is enhanced by open-source software and social tagging, “along with a strong Web presence, provide the museum with an audience larger than that of its immediate community and one which, according to museum officials, in turn generates local interest in the museum.”²⁴⁰ With local interest featured sites and affiliated organizations gain visitation and thereby funding opportunities. In an example of digital humanities work, utilizing digital programming, “IVL [interactive virtual learning] did not replace a physical visit, rather, the digital outreach package inspired an on-site trip to the Penn Museum. The school scheduled additional on-site programming and developed a gallery lesson that built on skills acquired during their IVL programs.”²⁴¹ The visitation turnaround from the site paid off their investment.

While surveys conducted by Paul Marty conclude that “online museum visitors have specific preferences for viewing artifacts and exhibits in the museum, and for accessing information on the museum’s website,” there is still a place for online exhibitions.²⁴² In-person access to artifacts does aid our ‘universal collecting behaviors,’ however, for some accessibility is integral to their eventual attendance on-site. Digital exhibitions produce positive results, albeit not being the perfect on-site experience. As “a proper understanding of how museum visitors use digital museum resources in their daily lives is critical for the success of museums in the

²³⁹ Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen guiding principles for interpreting nature and culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Pub, 2002), 108.

²⁴⁰ Susana Smith Bautista, *Museums in the digital age: Changing meanings of place, community, and culture* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), xxiv.

²⁴¹ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 247.

²⁴² Paul Marty, “Museum websites and museum visitors: Digital Museum resources and their use,” (2009) arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/bitstream/10150/105782/1/marty_mwmv_part2.pdf, 10-11. Note: “The majority of survey respondents preferred or strongly preferred to be in the museum when viewing artifacts/collections (92.6%) or touring galleries/exhibits (92.3%). On the other hand, the majority of survey respondents preferred or strongly preferred to be using 10 the museum’s website when learning about basic information such as hours of operation, location, and directions (82.4%), or admission fees and pricing (80.2%).”

information age” I encourage sites to embrace digital exhibition and aides as a tool in their toolbox.²⁴³ While not everything, “digital access allows for independent learning and global connections that extend beyond a traditional education environment.... institutions should define the digital skill-set needed to activate museum content using the accepted educational framework and available technology.”²⁴⁴ As George Hein condones, “online services provide opportunities for visitors to contribute their voices to every aspect of museum practice, and enable museum exhibitions and programs to reach an astonishingly wide international audience.”²⁴⁵ Whether for economic, or higher ideals, digital exhibits are marketable. My prototype seeks accessibility to historical interpretation in an economic manner utilizing open-source/free usage platforms.

In practice, in selecting WordPress, I noted several key features. The program was free (but upgradeable), notable (but stable), and intuitive (but complex). In working on a limited budget of \$0, I decided free open-source software would be king. However, if the prototype is a success, I wanted a product that is transferable or upgradable depending on the necessity of circumstances. As many professional organizations utalize WordPress, it is notable, but stable. Projects and their code are transferable and exportable, being able to morph and shift with minor editing to fit other hosts domains or even transplant to other platforms. A standalone WordPress site would be difficult to reach a large audience, but the intent of the prototype is to support flexibility. With substantial partnership this prototype can reach a larger audience in a preserved format able to be marketable, engaging, and interactive, promoting accessibility, the digital humanities, and public history along the way.

²⁴³ Paul Marty, “Museum websites and museum visitors: Digital Museum resources and their use,” (2009) arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/bitstream/10150/105782/1/marty_mwmv_part2.pdf, 2.

²⁴⁴ Allyson Mitchell, Sarah Linn & Hitomi Yoshida, “A Tale of Technology and Collaboration for 21st-Century Museum Visitors,” *Journal of Museum Education* (2019) 44:3, 250.

²⁴⁵ George E. Hein, *Progressive Museum Practice: John Dewey and democracy* (New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group, 2016), 184.

Conclusion & Final Thoughts

In utilizing technology to expand public history and museum studies into the interpretive digital world, we as public historians can better serve the public, our sites, and our organizations. Hein does note that “museums may embrace modern technological methodologies for economic reasons or for status, rather than from a basic desire to promote democracy. Or, they may see the new technological opportunities, like more traditional progressive pedagogy, as a further means to expand their ability to help visitors to engage with the museum’s offerings and explore their own interests.”²⁴⁶ Museums need digital exhibitions and continued utilization of technological advancements. Utilizing programs such as ArcGIS KnightLab, ArcGIS Storymaps, Omeka, or WordPress, a variety of forms can emerge fitting of inspirational, immersive, marketable, and enduring products can be made. These products all offer zero cost, or low-cost options, free hosting, and open-source material. This allows for digital preservation, a long-standing product, and an economically viable investment. Additionally, these programs offer upgraded version which can be investments for sites to use further for future endeavors if a prototype proves successful. With cost low, preservation prepared, a methodology outlined, and the interpretive capacity of this thesis research available, a prototype is practical and legitimate deliverable. I have determined that the WordPress prototype site upholds the values of digital public history, allows for an inspirational, immersive, marketable, and enduring product with flexible construction, accessibility, site preservation, and professional presentation held paramount. With this project and in turn the thesis at large I hope my work has contributed academically and publicly to the history of the American Civil War era music and the craft of digital history.

²⁴⁶ George E. Hein, *Progressive Museum Practice: John Dewey and democracy* (New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group, 2016), 185.

Appendix

“A Soldier Farewell”²⁴⁷

So Farewell
So fare yow well my darling ,
So fare yow well my dear
dout greive for my long
while I am present here

Since it is my misfortune
A Soldier for to be
oh try to live contented
And do not grieve for me

I am gowing away tomorrow
To tarry for a while
So far from my dear darling
about 500 mils

She Rang her lilly white hands
So mowrnful She did cry
yow listed as a Soldier
And in the war yow shal die

The cannon lowdly Roaring
The bullet whistle by
The fife and drum are sounding
To drownd a Soldier cry²⁴⁸

Stand Steady by your cannon
make balls and grape shot fly
oh trust in God your Savior
And keep your powder dry

I hope the time is coming
when yow and I Shal meet
with words and looks and kisses
we will each other greet

Written by W H Brotherton
to Elizabeth Brotherton

²⁴⁷ William H. Brotherton to Martha Elizabeth Brotherton and William H. Brotherton’s Aunt, February 20, 1863, in *Private Voices*, <https://altchive.org/node/10052>.

²⁴⁸ Emphasis not in original.

“The Sword of Bunker Hill” (1861)

Words by William Ross Wallace

Music by Bernard Covert

He lay upon his dying bed;
 His eyes were growing dim,
 When with a feeble voice he called
 His weeping son to him:
 Weep not, my boy! The vet'ran said,
 I bow to Heav'n's high will,
 But quickly from yon antlers bring
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.
 But quickly from yon antlers bring
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.

The sword was brought, the soldier's eye
 Lit with a sudden flame;
 And as he grasped the ancient blade,
 He murmured Warren's name;
 Then said My boy, I leave you gold
 But what is richer still,
 I leave you, mark me, mark me now,
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.
 I leave you, mark me, mark me now,
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.

Tw'as on that dread immortal day,
 I dared the Briton's hand,
 A captain raised this blade on me
 I tore it from his hand;
 And while the glorious battle raged,
 It lighted freedom's will
 For, boy, the God of freedom bless'd
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.
 For, boy, the God of freedom bless'd
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.

O keep the sword, his accents broke
 A smile and he was dead;
 His wrinkled hand still grasped the blade
 Upon that dying bed.
 The son is gone; the sword remains,
 It's glory growing still;
 And eighty millions bless the sire,
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.
 And eighty millions bless the sire,
 The Sword of Bunker Hill.

“My Own Native Land” (1805) – Words by Sir Walter Scott

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,
 This is my own, my native land!
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd
 From wandering on a foreign strand!
 If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
 For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
 High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
 The wretch, concentred all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down
 To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

“Facing Death”

Why should we not, when'er the fear of death
 Takes hold of us, look upward and believe. . . .
 And fit ourselves for heaven: for only there
 Will glorious visions of eternity
 Possess our souls with rapturous delight.
 Where, then, O cruel Death, will be thy sting?
 And where, O yawning tomb, thy victory.

“The Sailors Love” (unknown)²⁴⁹

Today I go to sea again
 With my duds packed in a sack
 I’ve said goodbye to my loved ones
 God knows when I’ll be back.

The salt of the sea is in my blood
 It’s the way I earn my keep
 And it seems my heart is happiest
 When I sail the briney deep.

The cry of the gulls and the slap of the waves
 The feel of the deck on my feet
 Buring sun and starry nights
 The captain in his lofty seat.

The morning with its shrouding mist
 Dissolves with a whispering sigh
 As the sun’s bright orb seems to break from the sea
 And rockets into the sky.

Red in the morning
 Sailors take warning
 That’s how the saying goes
 Red at night, sailors delight
 It’s the way of life I’ve chose.

Freedom—that’s the heart of it
 I taste it in the air
 Hear it when the ship’s bell rings
 In weather foul or fair.

This love of the sea is a feeling within
 And it leads you on and on
 It’s a port of calling and the comradeship
 Life’s grueling race has gone.

Irene

²⁴⁹ Irene Pecoraro, *The Sailors Love*. In *Partners in Poetry*, by Irene Pecoraro and Blondell Whitehead, 8. Self-published, 1979.

“They have laid him away” by G. G. Fields²⁵⁰

They have laid him away in the cold damp ground
On the banks of a southern stream,
Afar from his home in a stranger’s land
Where the ray of a southern sun gleams.

No coffin enclosed his mangled remains
No shroud save his uniform coat,
But his name is sustained in the laurels of fame
And on memory’s pedestal is wrote.

He sleeps all unheeding the cannons deep roar
As the song of the murmuring stream
The armies march o’er him in battle array
Yet he heeds not the musketry’s gleam.

For his country he fought, for his country he died
A martyr to liberty’s cause;
Fair freedom he loved & to see her prevail
He died while defending her laws.

In a little white cottage in the land of the North
They are waiting his coming again;
But they dream not his body all mangled and torn
Has been laid ‘neath the field of the slain.

Sleep, soldier sleep! in thy rough southern tomb
While above thee the soft breezes wave,
In the summer the birds they requiem sing
From the trees o’er thy patriot grave.

²⁵⁰ George E. Blakelee, October 8, 1862, *Research Arsenal*,
<https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/14637>.

“Song of our Union prisoners”²⁵¹

“Come friends and fellow soldiers brave,
 Come listen to our song;
 About the rebel prisons, and
 Our sojourn there so long.
 Our wretched state and hardships great,
 No one can understand
 But those who have endured this fate
 In Dixie’s sunny land.

When captured by this “chivalry,”
 They stripped us to the skin,
 But failed to give us back again
 The value of a pin —
 Except those lousy rags of gray,
 Discarded by their band,
 And thus commenced our prison life
 In Dixie’s sunny land.

With a host of guards surrounding us,
 Each with a loaded gun.
 We were stationed in an open plain,
 Exposed to rain and sun.
 No tent or tree to shelter us
 We lay upon the sand,
 Thus side by side great numbers died
 In Dixie’s sunny land.

This was our daily bill of fare
 In that secesh saloon:
 No sugar, tea or coffee there,
 At morning, night, or noon;

But a pint of meal, ground cob and all,
 Was served to every man,
 And for want of fire we ate it raw,
 In Dixie’s sunny land.

We were by these poor rations, soon
 Reduced to skin and bones;
 A lingering starvation, worse
 Than death we could but own.
 Three hundred lay both day and night,
 By far too weak to stand;
 Till death relieved their sufferings,
 In Dixie’s sunny land.

We poor survivors oft were tried
 By many a threat and bribe,
 To desert our glorious Union cause,
 And join the rebel tribe;
 Though fain we were to leave the place,
 We let them understand
 We’d rather die, than thus disgrace
 Our flag, in Dixie’s land.

Thus dreary days and nights rolled by,
 Yes, weeks and months untold;
 Until the happy time arrived,
 When we were all parolled.
 We landed at Annapolis,
 A wretched looking band,
 But glad to be alive and free,
 From Dixie’s sunny land.”

²⁵¹ John Lauffer, “Dixie’s Sunny Land,” *Research Arsenal*,
<https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/72594>.

“Old Ben Butler’s Coming” ²⁵²

‘Rived in town de oder day
 took my banjo down to play
 Oh! Oh!
 Raised my not to such a sound
 Lift my heel right of de ground
 Oh! Oh!

Chorus

Oh! Old Ben Butler Cumming
 Old Ben Butler cumming to town.
 Old Ben Butler is cumming, cumming,
 Old Ben Butler’s cumming soon.

2nd

To go to Libby am a sell,
 Butler at once be sent to hell.
 Dey feed you on cornbread & rice,
 And cover you all in de Rebel lice.

Chorus

3rd

As longs de mess got plenty cash,
 Der is no trouble getting hash.
 But soon as de blunt is gone,

Dere’s nothing but hash to lib upon.

Chorus

4th

At nine o’clock you must turn in,
 Oh Lord golly, dat and sin.
 And after dat you blow yet shell,
 De sergt’ll take you down to de cell.

Chorus

5th

And in de morning, you wake from yer
 snooze,
 You get right up & hunt for de news.
 And soon as yer eat yer reg’lar rice,
 You muse yerself hunting lice.

6th

Take my advice dear Ebony man,
 and leave dis place as soon as you can;
 for if you don’t subsist yourself,
 just mark my words, you’ll starve to death

²⁵² Diary of John W. Thomas, Songs, *Research Arsenal*, <https://app.researcharsenal.com/imageSingleView/10765>.

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