

# Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site



## American History I Lesson Guides



Mower's Charge during the Battle of Bentonville. March 21, 1865

## **Table of Contents:**

Manager's Welcome .....	<a href="#">3</a>
Bentonville Lesson Guides:	
• The Battle of Bentonville .....	<a href="#">5</a>
• Slavery at Bentonville .....	<a href="#">8</a>
Bentonville Resource Materials	
• Site Narratives .....	<a href="#">12</a>
• Primary Resource Documents .....	<a href="#">15</a>
• Secondary Resource Materials .....	<a href="#">27</a>



A replica Three-Inch Ordnance Rifle at Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site.



Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site  
5466 Harper House Rd  
Four Oaks, NC 27524

July 23, 2014

Dear Educators,

Thank you for considering a visit to Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site. The Battle of Bentonville was the largest battle ever fought in the state of North Carolina. In March of 1865, nearly 80,000 Union and Confederate soldiers fought over 6,000 acres in rural Johnston County. Although the results of the battle were inconclusive, it proved to be one of the last battles of the Civil War.

Located near Four Oaks, Bentonville Battlefield now encompasses over 2,000 acres making it the largest State Historic Site in North Carolina. The site's mission is to "interpret the Battle of Bentonville, life in North Carolina during the Civil War, and to preserve the battlefield's historical resources." To serve this mission we have a range of offerings for school groups such as tours of a Civil War hospital, a museum with battle related artifacts, and musket demonstrations just to mention a few.

The Bentonville Battlefield Site addresses several North Carolina Essential Standards from various grade levels. Some notable examples include Fourth Grade: 4.G.1.4 which covers analyzing North Carolina's role in major conflicts from Pre-Colonial days to Reconstruction, Fifth Grade: 5.H.1.3 which covers analyzing the impact major conflicts had on the development of our nation, Eight Grade: 8.C&G.1.4 which deals with analyzing access to democratic rights and freedoms for various groups over the course of NC and US history, and American History I: AH1.H.7 which covers understanding the impact of war on American politics, economics and culture.

Teachers, please avail yourselves of the resources in this packet. Better yet bring your students to Bentonville so they can experience history where it happened.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donny Taylor", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Donny Taylor  
Historic Site Manager  
Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site

**North Carolina Historic Sites and Properties**  
A Division of the Department of Cultural Resources

# *Bentonville*

## *Lesson Guides*



The Harper House, March 1895

## The Battle of Bentonville: Lesson Guide

Grade 11



In this lesson, students will learn how the Battle of Bentonville affected North Carolinians living in the area and soldiers who were involved in the battle. By critiquing various primary sources from the battle, students will gain a personal understanding of the hardships of war faced on the battlefield and in the homes of people who were influenced by the battle.

### Essential Standards:

- AH1.H.1
- AH1.H.2
- AH1.H.4.4
- AH1.H.5.1
- AH1.H.7.2
- AH1.H.7.3

### Objectives:

After classroom discussion, historical background reading of the site narratives, and examining the writings of Mary Harper, Surgeon Hostetter, and J.W. Griffith, students should be able to:

- Summarize the Battle of Bentonville
- Infer how the Harper family felt during the battle
- Infer how the soldiers and doctors felt during the battle
- Compare the benefits and negatives of primary and secondary sources

### Teacher Planning:

Provide the following materials to your students in order to complete the corresponding activities:

- Site narratives- *The Battle of Bentonville* and *The Harper Family*
- Copies of the “Reminiscences of the Battle of Bentonville” by Mary Harper
- Copies of John Hostetter’s diary excerpt packet
- Copies of correspondence about the Battle of Bentonville

**Time Required for Lesson:** 45 minutes (additional time for sharing letters)

**Bell Ringer Activity:** Have students write about how the Civil War affected the lives of civilians. How many people did the war influence in addition to the individuals who fought in the war?

**Teacher Input:**

- A. Introduce the Battle of Bentonville to students including the date, commanders, number of combatants, and outcome of the battle. This information can be found in the historical narratives of the Teacher Packet or on the website: [www.bentonvillebattlefield.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.bentonvillebattlefield.nchistoricsites.org).
- B. Instruct students to read applicable textbook reading of the Civil War and North Carolina. The Battle of Bentonville occurred near the end of the Civil War, so explain the timing of the battle near the end of the war.

**Classroom Activities – Guided Practice (choose one)**

1. Read the letter from Mary Harper concerning her experiences during the Battle of Bentonville. This can be done out loud for the whole class, in small groups, or individually depending on your preference.
  - In small groups, recall and discuss what Mary Harper experienced during the Battle of Bentonville. Infer what Mary felt during and after the battle, having been so close to so many Union troops while living above the hospital.
  - Infer and discuss the changes that were made to the Harper property to accommodate the hospital. What would the Union doctors and troops have done to the first floor of the house and the grounds?
  - Discuss the reliability of Mary Harper’s letter. Is it a primary source, because she experienced the battle firsthand, or should it be considered a secondary source for researchers because it was actually recorded much later in her life, at a meeting for the United Daughters of the Confederacy? Discuss the pros and cons of primary and secondary sources in studying the Battle of Bentonville.
2. Read the diary entries of John Hostetter (Union Army surgeon) that were recorded during the Battle of Bentonville and in the surrounding days, and the correspondence of J.W. Griffith (Confederate officer) regarding the Battle of Bentonville.
  - In small groups, recall the impressions that the battle left on Hostetter and the various things he experienced as a surgeon traveling with the XIV Army Corps.
  - Also infer and discuss how it would have felt to have been one of the Confederate soldiers left in the care of the Harper family after the battle by reading Griffith’s letter.
  - Compare the experiences of the Union and Confederate troops during the Battle of Bentonville. After the battle, the Union wounded were taken to another hospital in Goldsboro, while many Confederate wounded were left to be cared for by the Harpers. What would that be like? How would you feel?
3. In small groups, students can share with each other their “person’s” experiences through Bentonville after participating in the Faces of Bentonville Project. Students should share with each other who their person was, civilian, soldier, or slave, and how their lives were impacted by the Battle of Bentonville.

- Students should explain and compare their person's experiences with other students in the class. Who were they? Where were they during the battle? Did they survive? How would it have felt to actually be that person during the battle?
- More information on the Faces of Bentonville Project can be found on Bentonville's website.

### **Classroom Activities- Independent Practice (choose one)**

1. Explain to students that they are to pretend to be a Harper child who has just survived the Battle of Bentonville. They are to write a letter to a friend or family member describing their experiences and their emotions during the battle.
  - What are some of the things they saw during the hospital days? Were they scared? How did they occupy their time during the battle and until the hospital left their house?
  - Be sure to use accurate information for the situation, using information from the historical narratives and the primary source material, and express emotions.
2. Explain to the students that they are to become a surgeon or other medical officer who worked at the Battle of Bentonville, either Union or Confederate. They are to write in their journal the things they experienced during the battle and the emotions they felt.
  - Use the Hostetter diary as a guideline for writing.
  - What types of wounds did injured soldiers have when they were brought to the hospital? Were you scared, as a doctor? What other emotions were you feeling while working in the hospital?
  - Be sure to use accurate information and express emotions.
3. Using the identity of the person they received for the Faces of Bentonville Project during their trip to Bentonville, write a letter to a loved one or family member describing your situation during the battle and the days surrounding the battle.
  - This historical narrative should tell the story of that individual, so their story will not be lost in history, but available to future researchers as a primary source.
  - Be creative, but maintain as much accuracy as possible.

### **Closure:**

Students may share their letters with the class. They can present individually or in small groups and take turns discussing their experiences during the Battle of Bentonville.

### **Assessment:**

Students should be able to write a detailed essay explaining the Battle of Bentonville. The essay should show their understanding of the battle and its influence on the people who lived in the small community of Bentonville. Students should discuss the various points of view of the battle and how these points of view create multiple perspectives and opinions of a single event.

## Slavery at Bentonville: Lesson Guide

Grade 11



In this lesson, students will learn that slavery differed from region to region. Students will examine slave schedules from 1860 to compare and contrast how the institution of slavery was practiced in the Bentonville area. Students will also analyze primary source documents and compare them to secondary sources.

### Essential Standards:

- AH1.H.1
- AH1.H.2
- AH1.H.4
- AH1.H.5
- AH1.H.7
- AH1.H.8

### Objectives:

After classroom discussion, historical background reading, and examining the census slave schedule for 1860, students should be able to:

- Recognize and critique census records
- Write historical narratives that compare and contrast the practice of slavery in different regions
- Critique the practice of slavery in Bentonville and in the United States in the 1860's

### Teacher Planning:

Provide the following materials to your students:

- Site narratives- *The Battle of Bentonville*, *The Harper Family*, and *Slavery in Bentonville*
- 1860 Census for Bentonville, Johnston County
- 1860 Slave Census for the District West of the Neuse River, Johnston County

**Time Required for Lesson:** 45 minutes

**Bell Ringer Activity:** Have students write about how they think slavery in Bentonville differed from slavery in other regions.

**Teacher Input:**

- A. Give historical background on slavery by discussing why people owned slaves and the types of work for which they were used. Discuss the differences in the northern industrial economy and the more rural, agrarian southern economy and why slavery flourished in one area as opposed to the other. Supplement classroom discussion with any available textbook readings about slavery in the United States.
- A. Lead a class discussion about how slavery was practiced differently in various regions of the United States, and that the number of slaves varied greatly between slave owners.
- B. Explain how to read the census records.

**Classroom Activities—Guided Practice (choose one)**

1. In small groups, students should examine and analyze the census records from Bentonville (Bentonville) in 1860.
  - Discuss the census of the free inhabitants—that it lists the families who lived in Bentonville in 1860.
  - Listed on the free inhabitants census are four black males and one black female. Infer why these individuals were not slaves. What did they do in the community?
2. In small groups, examine the census of slave inhabitants in Bentonville, Johnston County. This sheet lists the number of slaves owned by several of the white citizens of Bentonville.
  - Recognize that John Harper is listed as owning three slaves in 1860, and that other people owned more slaves than he did. Discuss why this would have been the case.
  - Infer why some of Bentonville’s citizens would have owned more slaves than others. Discuss some of the common tasks of slaves.
3. In groups, critique the census records as primary sources. Analyze the information they provide when compared to the historical narratives written about slavery in Bentonville and in other parts of the south.
  - Discuss the pros and cons of using this type of primary source.
  - Though it is merely a list of the slave inhabitants, what can be inferred from studying it?

**Classroom Activities—Independent Practice (choose one)**

1. Students should pretend that they were a slave living during the Battle of Bentonville. The war is over now, though, and all the slaves are free. Assuming they are some of the few freed slave who could write, students should write a letter to someone in the North, who is unfamiliar with slavery, explaining what their life was like as a slave.
  - Students should be sure to differentiate between slavery in Bentonville and in other parts of the South where slaves were primarily for manual labor.

- What are they excited to do now that they are free? Remind them that they have no house, no money, no land, and no transportation unless it is given to them. What do they plan to do?
2. Students are historians writing about slavery in a new history book. They are outside observers, and have the benefit of writing about the slaves of Bentonville with an omniscient perspective.
    - Write about slavery in Bentonville, explaining how slavery there was different than in other regions where slavery was practiced. Explain why there were different practices of slavery in other places (i.e. the presence of labor intensive crops as the staple crop), and what the slaves at Bentonville did as opposed to manual labor (domestic servants, and helpers to the family). Compare the crops that were grown on farms that had only one or two slaves to the crops that were grown on large plantations with hundreds of slaves.
    - Even in Bentonville the practice of slavery varied from farm to farm. Critique these differences between farms. Compare slavery on the Harper farm to slavery on the Cole farm. What can be inferred about the farms that had more slaves?
  3. Write a letter to the President, Abraham Lincoln, from the point of view of someone in the North, discussing why slavery should be abolished.
    - Critique the system of slavery, and explain why you think that system is wrong. Discuss how slavery deprives people of their rights.
    - Mention that even though slavery in Bentonville is not as harsh as slavery in other regions, it should still be abolished.
    - Suggest what the slaves should do after they have been freed.
  4. Write an essay analyzing the use of primary and secondary sources. Discuss how each type of source has its proper place in the research process. Also explain the pros and cons of each.

**Closure:**

- A. Students may share their letters and other writings with the class.
- B. As a class, review slavery in Bentonville. Discuss how slavery in Bentonville was different than in other regions. Ask for volunteers to tell the class how this is different from their original perceptions about slavery in Bentonville.

**Assessment:**

Students should be able to write a historical narrative from the point of view of a slave in Bentonville to describe the experiences of the Harper family slaves. The narrative should explain how slavery in Bentonville was different from slavery on larger plantations. Students should express their thoughts and feelings throughout the narrative to show how slaves would have felt during the nineteenth century. Students should also be able to critique the available primary sources and discuss the benefits of using primary sources in research.

# *Bentonville Resource Materials*



Goldsboro Rifles Monument, 1895

## Site Narratives (included below):

*The three narratives below were compiled by staff members at Bentonville Battlefield. They briefly describe the battle, the Harper family, and slavery in Bentonville.*

### *The Battle of Bentonville*

By March 8, 1865, Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's entire 60,000 man Union army had crossed into North Carolina after devastating South Carolina in February. Sherman's army was in the second half of his proposed march from Georgia to the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia. Sherman's short term goal was the vital railroad junction in Goldsboro, North Carolina, so that he could rest and refit his tired army.

Opposing Sherman's massive force was a ragtag group of Confederates commanded by Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. Since Johnston could only muster 20,000 men to fight Sherman's 60,000, the Confederates had to bide their time, waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike. This opportunity finally presented itself when Sherman divided his large force into two equal units marching on separate roads, therefore allowing the army to move quicker. North Carolina's 19<sup>th</sup>-century roads were notoriously bad, and could not have handled all of Sherman's men at once. Sherman was forced to march his army on parallel roads, roughly 20 miles apart, which was nearly a day's march. General Johnston could strike one of these columns of roughly 30,000 men, much easier than having to fight the entire Union force.

On March 19, 1865, Johnston placed his soldiers in position to block the path of the Union left wing. The Confederate units were concealed by brush until the Union soldiers came within easy firing range. By the time men from the Union army's XIV Corps realized they were marching into a trap, it was too late. The Federals, caught by surprise, were beaten back down the Goldsboro Road. Because Johnston was able to concentrate his small force to combat individual elements of the Union army, his plan was working. All of this changed however, when other Union contingents hastily arrived at Bentonville.

Despite the surprise inflicted on the blue-clad soldiers at Bentonville, Johnston had too few troops to capitalize on his early gains. Although the XIV Corps was severely damaged, Johnston still had to combat the rapidly arriving XX Corps, and later arriving units of the XIV Corps. This proved to be too tough a task for Johnston's men, as five separate assaults failed to dislodge Sherman's left wing. Johnston knew by night fall on March 19 that he had missed his opportunity to stop Sherman, and retreated towards positions near the village of Bentonville.

By the morning of March 20, Sherman's right wing began arriving on the field. Those units had rushed toward Bentonville upon hearing the fighting in the distance. By the time the entire right wing arrived on the field, Sherman had nearly 60,000 men, giving him a 3 to 1 advantage over Johnston. Faced with such numbers, Johnston began retreating from Bentonville on March 21. Johnston and many of his men were nearly captured by a division of the Union army's right wing commanded by Maj. Gen. Joseph Mower. "Mower's Charge" was eventually repelled by Confederate forces, ending the largest and bloodiest battle ever fought on North Carolina soil.

### *The Harper House and Family*

The Battle of Bentonville, fought March 19-21, 1865, interrupted the peaceful existence of the Harper family, a typical upper middle-class family living in southern Johnston County. As if 80,000 Union and Confederate soldiers fighting within a few miles of their residence was not bad enough, the Union army occupied the Harper House during the height of the battle, and converted the first floor rooms into a hospital. The Harpers were not asked if their home could be used as a hospital. They were told by Union soldiers to either stay upstairs out of the way, or leave, with no other place to go. Having little choice in the matter, the Harpers retreated upstairs, only coming down to help nurse the approximately 600 wounded soldiers from both sides treated in the house by Federal doctors.

The Harper House was built by the Harpers in 1855. Mr. Harper moved to North Carolina from Virginia when he was very young with his father and mother. John Harper married Amy Woodard in the late 1830s, and they had the first of their nine children in 1839. By 1855 John Harper may have owned as much as 800 acres of land, though most of the property was un-cleared and not used for farming. The land was devoted to the naval stores industry – the harvesting of tar, pitch, and turpentine from pine trees for ship building. The Harpers cleared about 100 acres of their property, which was divided into farmland for the Harpers’ needs and a homestead area. Corn, beans, and sweet potatoes were the Harpers’ primary crops, intended mostly for the family and their animals to eat. Mr. Harper was a pre-war militia captain, and also served as a community Justice of the Peace. These facts, combined with the size of the Harper House, show that the Harpers were prosperous people for their time period.

Before their home was used as a hospital during the battle, the Civil War had already touched the Harper family in a very personal way. Martin, the Harpers’ 16-year-old son, had been severely wounded in Maryland in 1862 fighting for the Confederate army. Martin recouped at home, but on the eve of the Battle of Bentonville, the wounded soldier was sent to the “invalid corps,” which was comprised of soldiers too sick, too wounded, or too old to fight in the regular army. Although the Harpers were faced with the horrible ordeal of their home being taken over by Union soldiers, their son’s injury had already given them a taste of war.

After the battle, the Harpers tried to return to a normal life. Despite their home being used as a hospital, the family was able to get the house clean enough to live in. John and Amy lived in the house until 1897. By that time the Harpers were too elderly to live in such a large home. Thus John and Amy moved in with Martin at his home in Dunn. Fortunately, their home on the battlefield was not abandoned long, as it was owned by three other families after the Harpers, and was sold to state of North Carolina in 1957. The house is now open for tours, interpreted to reflect the first day of the battle in 1865.



John and Amy Harper

*Slavery in Bentonville*

Owning enslaved people of African descent was a common way of life for many white people in Bentonville and other places in the South on the eve of the Civil War. Many people in antebellum North Carolina were born belonging to, or owning, other people. The agrarian (farming) economic system adopted by the South relied on an exhausting amount of man-power in the form of slaves. On plantations and larger farms, this man-power was typically supplied by forced labor. Not all farmers owned slaves, in fact, most did not. To get an understanding of the numbers of people in bondage at the institution's peak, historians often reference the 1860 census, the last census taken before the Civil War and the end of slavery. In 1860, only 27% of North Carolina's population owned slaves, and just 3% of the state's citizens owned enough slaves (20) to be considered plantation owners. Unlike in the Cotton Belt of the Deep South, the vast majority of North Carolina slave owners owned fewer than ten slaves.

Bentonville, like other places in North Carolina, had slaves. John Harper, whose farm home still stands, and was used as a hospital during the Battle of Bentonville, owned three enslaved people in 1860. They were probably owned by the Harpers until freed by General Sherman's army during the Battle of Bentonville. Their names were Lucy (38), her son Alexander (21), and his wife Clarsey (19). All three were most likely inherited by Amy Harper from her father, James Woodard.

Evidence suggests that the Harpers used their Lucy, Alexander, and Clarsey for domestic service. The Harpers were not plantation owners, and had no need for a large number of slaves to work vast amounts of land. The enslaved people may have assisted in the field, but their responsibilities also consisted of household chores. Lucy and Clarsey likely helped Mrs. Harper and the Harper daughters cook for the family. Alexander perhaps assisted with the livestock and the upkeep on the Harper estate. Although many people think that enslaved people were used only for field work, the type of servitude embodied by Lucy, Alexander, and Clarsey was more common in North Carolina.

Though the Harpers were not plantation owners, there were at least two slave owners in 1860 Bentonville that owned the requisite amount of slaves to be considered planters (planters were people that owned a plantation). One of Bentonville's planters was Mr. Willis Cole, a neighbor of the Harper family who owned a prototypical small North Carolina plantation. Cole owned nearly two dozen enslaved people, but except for its size, his farm may have not been much different from that of the Harpers. A few of these people may have performed household chores, while the remainder planted corn, beans, and sweet potatoes. Some may have assisted with the naval stores industry, which consisted of extracting the sap from pine trees for sealing the beams and riggings on ships. In fact, it was naval stores, not cotton or tobacco that was the primary cash crop in Bentonville and Eastern North Carolina before the Civil War.

Slavery ended in Bentonville in 1865 with the arrival of Sherman's army, which enforced the terms of the Emancipation Proclamation. Lucy, Alexander, and Clarsey were freed, but they could not afford to travel far from Bentonville and the only life they had ever known. The Harpers and their former slaves lived as neighbors for the next forty years. Alexander and Clarsey took "Harper" as their last name, and named their oldest son John Harper. John and his decedents lived in Bentonville well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Primary Sources (included below)

John L. Hostetter Civil War Diary, MS 662, Special Collections Department, Iowa State University Library.

This packet is a transcription of Hostetter's original diary, kept during the Battle of Bentonville. Hostetter was a Union surgeon present during the Battle of Bentonville. He recorded the activities of the days of the battle, and his description is helpful in illustrating the medical treatment that was available during the Civil War.

Mary F. Hatcher nee Mary Harper. "Reminiscences of the Battle of Bentonville: An Address Given to the A.M. Waddell Chapter of the UDC." Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Mary Harper was the fourteen year old daughter of John and Amy Harper at the time of the Battle of Bentonville. Mary was the only Harper family member to leave a firsthand account of what happened in the house during the battle. This address was given in 1905, 40 years after the battle and to the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Ask your students how audience and the passage of time may have influenced Mary's account.

The United States War Department. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, series 1-Volume XLVII in Three Parts*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895.

Volume XLVII of the *Official Records* details the Carolina's Campaign. The attached correspondences from the *Official Records* are the only mention of the Harper House, and they refer to the Confederate wounded soldiers that were left behind by the Union doctors after the battle.

*The Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1860.

The first two census pages show John Harper and his "free" neighbors in the Bentonville area in 1860. The two additional pages show the "slave schedule" for that same area in 1860. The 1850 and 1860 censuses were unique in that they contained "slaves schedules," documenting the amount of slaves and slave houses that individual slave owners possessed. These documents list Mr. Harper's three slaves and Willis Cole's more than twenty.

**Excerpt of 34<sup>th</sup> Illinois Surgeon John L. Hostetter's Diary.**

March 11th.

*Saturday we marched within a mile and a half of Fayetteville and encamped for the night. Roads continue bad but the day was fair. Rec'd the first rebel papers we had seen since leaving Sister's Ferry. News about Charleston being evacuated and burnt is confirmed, also evacuation of Wilmington.*

March 12th.

*Sunday. Lay in camp all day. About seven o'clock in the evening the pontoon bridge was completed and we marched eight abreast in close order through Fayetteville by the light of a full moon down to the river. We got into camp about twelve o'clock at night in an open field and tried to rest till morning.*

March 13th.

*Boats went out with a mail yesterday morning to Wilmington eighty miles from here. Moved our camp early this morning about two miles. Got quite a pleasant place plenty of wood and water. Fayetteville has a good appearance, is a very old town and was the home of the late Mr. Dobbin.*

March 14th.

*Remained in camp. Troops were crossing the pontoons all night. There must be an arrival from Wilmington as I just heard a boat whistling.*

March 16th . *(Battle of Averagesboro)*

*On the road to Goldsboro the enemy, today, made obstinate resistance to our further progress. Two companies of our Regt. were on the skirmish line and we lost three killed, Irvine Palmer, Co, A; David Merrick, Co. F & John H. Gull, Co. F. Wounded were Saml. Miller, Co. A, fracture of lower jaw; Blanchard, Co. F, right arm amputated; Taylor, Co. F, right arm, slight. In the evening, rained. Remained on the field all night.*

March 17th.

*Crossed Slack river & went into camp late after a tedious march of four miles.*

March 18th.

*On the road to Goldsboro we marched ten miles when we were again interrupted by the enemy. Skirmishes drove them two miles and our Division went into camp.*

March 19th. *(Battle of Bentonville)*

*A hard & desperate battle was fought today. The 1st and 2nd Divisions of the 14th corps had proceeded but two miles this morning when it was discovered that the enemy was in our front in great force. The 2nd Division was formed on the right of the 1st & skirmishing commenced about ten o'clock. The 1st & 2nd Divisions of the 20<sup>th</sup> corps came up about noon, the 1st being ordered to join on the left of the 14th corps. They had got but one Brigade on the left in position when the enemy massed his right on our left and drove back the unformed Division of the 20th in some confusion, capturing two pieces of*

artillery. The 2nd Division of the 14th now changed its line so as to front in the direction of where our left had rested. During the afternoon the enemy made repeated charges upon the 2nd Division but it stood firm and the foe was successfully repulsed, suffering great slaughter toward evening. The noise of battle was terrific, I was at Stone River, Lookout Mt., Mission Ridge, Resaca, Jonesboro & many other battles but such incessant firing for three hours I never heard. As night closed in the rebel lines were much disordered and many of the lost rebs straggled into our lines. The battle ground was (a) tremendous swamp, with low brush in many places, almost impassable for footmen. The place where our hospital was first established had to be removed a mite further to the rear out of reach of rebel shells. Hardesty, a private out of Co. F was taken prisoner, as he thought, by five rebels. They strolled along with him a little distance when they were halted by two soldiers of the 121st Ohio, also in our Brigade, The five rebs sent Hardesty over to see how many there were of our men and agreed if ours outnumbered them they would surrender, but if not our men should surrender to them. Hardesty returned & reported twelve or fifteen Federal soldiers; whereupon they handed over their guns and cartridge boxes to Hardesty and came in. On learning that they were sold (there being but the two men of the 121st) they exclaimed, "There is a damned Yankee trick for you.11 I was at Rd. Qrs. when Hardesty came in and he narrated the cir-cumstances, here related, to me, We lost today of our Regt. as follows:

<i>Killed:</i>	<i>Lieut. Lindsay Black</i>	<i>Co. C.</i>
	<i>A.W, Wright, Sergt.</i>	<i>F.</i>
	<i>Geo. Ehrman, Corpl.</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>James Deaver, pvt.</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>J.C. Forbes, pvt,</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>K. Druger, pvt.</i>	<i>D.</i>
<i>Mortally wounded:</i>		
	<i>Corpl. Jno, Henry, abdomen</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Lewis Gleichman, brain</i>	<i>D.</i>
<i>Dangerously wounded:</i>		
	<i>Pvt. Wm . S, Ellis, skull</i>	<i>F.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Wm, H. Meisner, leg off</i>	<i>I.</i>
	<i>Pvt Jacob Seneff, fract, arm.</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Tho 1 s Waly, scalp &amp; depressed skull</i>	<i>D.</i>
<i>Severely wounded:</i>		
	<i>Truman Kinney, pvt.</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>Michael Gaffany, pvt.</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>James Hensie(left side)</i>	<i>D.</i>
	<i>Sgt. James Wells (right knee)</i>	<i>I.</i>
<i>Slightly wounded:</i>		
	<i>Isaac Fish scalp</i>	<i>F</i>
	<i>Corpl. Byron Taylor, right leg</i>	<i>F.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Geo. Nichols, right arm</i>	<i>C.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Dave Henry, face</i>	<i>A.</i>
	<i>Pvt. Geo. w. Connard, killed</i>	<i>C.</i>

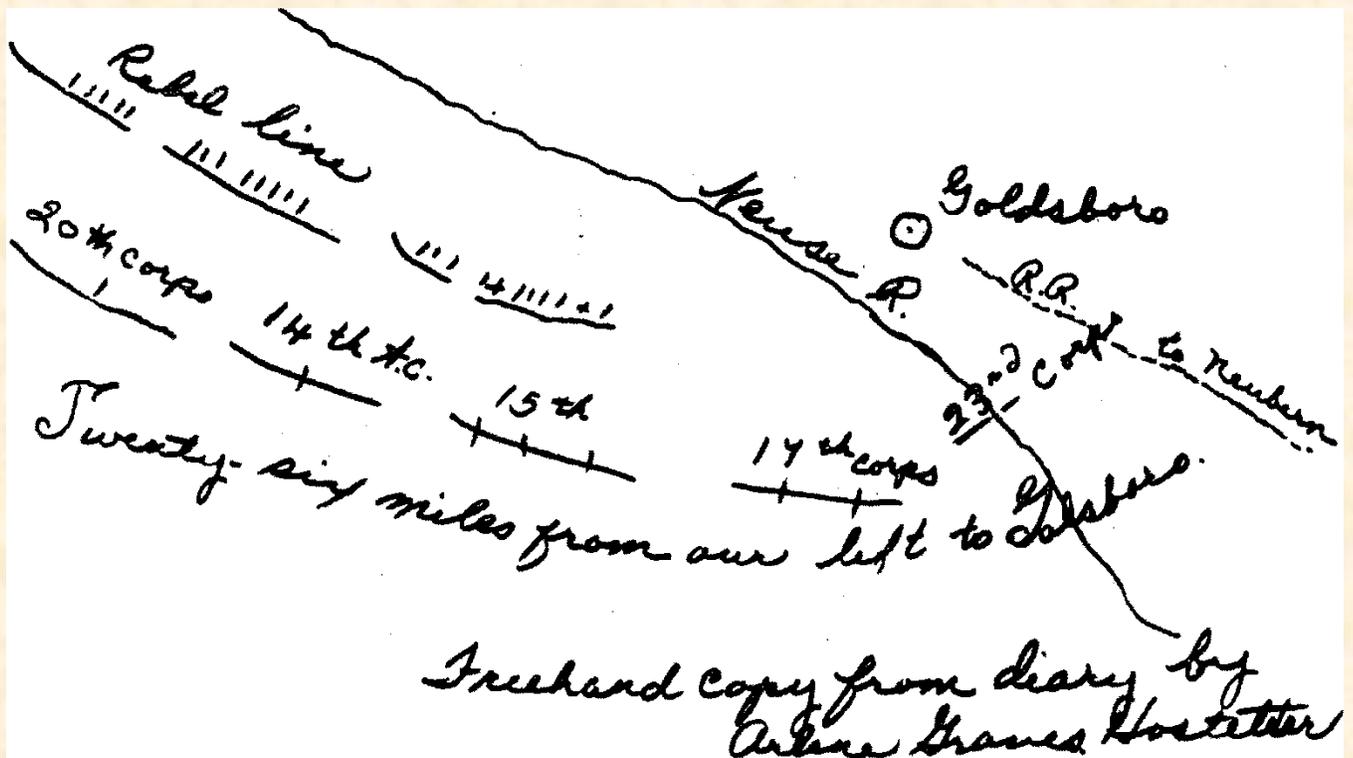
Rode back to hospital and made my tent near it at night. The wounded of our Brigade could not be taken from the field tonight.

March 20th.

Was up at four o'clock and as soon as it was light moved out to the front. Dressed wounded all day and sent the wounded off in ambulances. In the afternoon our Division lines were advanced and in doing so the 16th Ills. and the 14th Michigan suffered severely. A very large number of rebel wounded were sent to the rear after having their wounds dressed. Went to Hosp't to the qrs. I occupied last night.

March 21st.

Went out to the front at an early hour. The sky looks lowering and it rains some. Our lines now extend to the Neuse river on the right.



*Communication is established and the wounded will be sent forward to Goldsboro & from thence by rail to Newbern immediately. Night & drying myself by a campfire. Today communication was opened with the Neuse river and our wounded were all sent away. Our supply train caught up with the army tonight. My negro Jim got lost on the first day of the fight but turned up today all right. He says he lived on parched corn and was very hungry. He stuck to the axe and tin can he had with him faithfully.*

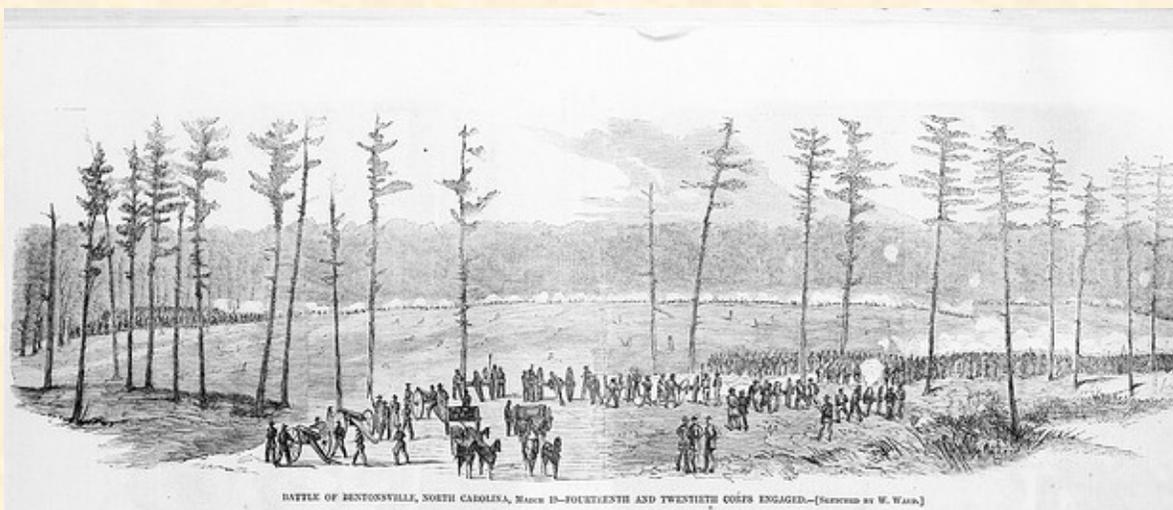
*The rebel prisoners taken report the forces of Hardee, Cheatham, Hill, Beauregard, Hake & Lee (not Rob 1 t) in our front. The battle ground is a vast swamp of unknown dimensions and it is barely possible to get a horse through it. Our Division covered itself with glory and in the Division foremost was the 2nd Brigade & among the most gallant regiments in the Brigade were the 78th Ills, commanded by Lieut. Col. Vernon, & the old veteran 34th. Each of these breasting the repeated charges of vastly greater numbers.*

*March 22nd.*

*The morning is cool and clear. Rebels have fled & our Division is out of the swamp on the main road. Everybody has something to say about the battle; hair-breadth escapes, bullet holes through hats & clothes exhibited, charges and changes of line recorded. Every soldier looks as though the fact of his being yet alive was a subject for everlasting congratulation. Joy is depicted on every face. The first and third Brigades have just moved out and we will soon follow. In addition to the bright morning the bloom of the peach trees lends additional beauty to the day.*

*March 23<sup>d</sup>.*

*We are twelve miles from Goldsboro. The morning is cool and beautiful for March. Last evening we came up to Genl. Terry's forces. (Later) Passed through town with banners flying, marching Companies abreast. Encamped about two miles N. of town.*



A contemporary sketch of the fighting on the Morris Farm at Bentonville, March 19, 1865

## “Reminiscences of the Battle of Bentonville,” by Mary Harper

“About the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, 1865, Col. Joe Wheeler’s men passed down the road from Averasboro to Goldsboro. My father’s country home was located about half-way between those places, where that road was crossed by the Clinton and Smithfield Road, giving access to the home from four different directions. Our home was one of those very large, perfectly square two story buildings, of ye olden time, when the servants prepared the meals away down in the kitchen and took them up to the ‘Big House,’ as they expressed it.

When Wheeler’s men reached our home, tired and hungry, they went immediately to the kitchen, took the breakfast, and ran off the cook. Their explanation was that Sherman’s army was just behind them, and would have us and all our belongings in their possession. Hence we told them to take what they would for both horse and rider. They remained in our neighborhood several days, and took their meals from our table, treating our family with utmost respect.

About the same time, General Hampton and his staff spent a day and night at our home. Sherman’s army was expected hourly. They had heard of our Confederate guests, as we termed them, and it grew within their hearts a hatred that knew no bounds.

In the afternoon of March 19, 1865, Wheeler’s men, unknown to us, were resting in a plum nursery, about two hundred yards away, when seven drunken Federal soldiers came to our home seemingly to torment us. Two of them took my father before then, tramping him down with their horses, making him rise to repeat the insult, and swearing they would kill him. We plead with one, who was not so intoxicated, to follow and save him. The other four were threatening, at the point of guns, the lives of mother and children. Wheeler’s men heard our screams, and swore they would rescue us at the risk of their own lives. They saw we were on a lower veranda, and they poured a volley into our home, too high to reach us. They ran up, shooting one yankee from his horse, and took the other three prisoners. Then they came back to comfort us, whistling *Dixie*. They took the prisoners into the woods and gave them a ‘Furlough,’ they said. My dear old mother begged for the lives of her persecutors, saying, ‘They are not fit to die.’ One Dixie boy said, ‘Woman, how can you?’

Our family, then at home, comprised, father and mother, two daughters and three small brothers. One older brother, Dr. M.W. Harper of Dunn, N.C., had enlisted in 1861, as a 16 year old volunteer. He went all through the war, was wounded at the battle of South Mountain, Md., and being unable for service, was at home at the time referred to. Knowing Sherman of old, however, he decided not to be his prisoner, hence selected the best place for hiding—in a distant wood, under the bark of a massive pine tree. There he lay for days, without food, expecting every hour to be sabred, for the boys in blue were probing the ground in twenty feet of him.

Another brother, Dr. H.D. Harper, Sr., of Kinston, N.C., was then in service in Eastern Carolina as a courier for Col. Stephen D. Poole.

The general in command of the Federal troops allowed us no guard, and after looting every nook and corner of the whole plantation, the blue-coated scavengers made fire beneath our home, thinking to drive us out, but we did not go. One good heart among them saved our home, not knowing that so soon it would shelter their own sufferers.

By this time—noon of the 19<sup>th</sup>—the great Battle of Bentonville was on the way. The line of battle that had been formed across our grounds had been advanced as the Confederate boys marched for death, those fearful yells, the awful roar of the cannon, the hurtling grape and canister scattering destruction everywhere, made an impression that can never be described, and today rests in the memory as a funeral dirge. Only a few hours, and our home was being filled

with the bleeding and dying from the Federal lines. After the battle was over, the army remained several days, removing their wounded to Goldsboro. Our Confederate wounded were prisoners, and still on the bloody field of battle.

My father offered his home as a hospital for them, and fifty-four heroes, some dying and some soon to die, were brought by their enemies to our hearts and hands. My mother and two daughters nursed them each day and night, dressed their wounds, cooked for and fed them for eight to ten days before any nurses came. We sat by and saw them die, loving and comforting them, as we would our own.

The Federal army furnished provisions, of course, for them and from their supply, we were saved from starvation. Twenty-three of the fifty-four died, and we wrapped their blankets about them, and laid them in the cold, cold ground. I must make special mention of one—Lieutenant Willie D. Reid, of Washington, N.C. On the day of his arrival, he asked me to be his nurse, and though I was only a child of fourteen years, he was my special charge for nearly two months. In his delirium, he talked of battles, of death, of home and mother. He professed faith in Christ, and expressed himself ‘at peace with God.’ On the day of his death, he asked me not to leave him, saying, ‘It will all soon be over.’ During the hour of dissolution, he exclaimed: ‘Oh, if I could only see mother once more, I’d be willing to go.’ (His mother soon followed him [in death]). I sat by his side until his soul passed into eternity. Not more than one hour after the burial was over, Willie’s father came, almost heartbroken. He had been near Smithfield for several days, trying to get through the Federal lines. He brought many delicacies for his wounded boy, but all the efforts of physicians, nurses and friends could not keep him. Willie, the last of the twenty-three, was laid beneath the sod, one lovely morning in sunny May. We praised the Lord for his triumphant death; but our hearts are wrung even unto this day, when we remember the horrors of death to some of those brave soldier boys. But in those days, we did not have time to weep and be sad, there were others to be nursed into health. We continued our work day and night, and one after another would say, ‘I am strong enough to start for home.’ By June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1865, we had said goodbye to the last dear boy in gray. And though the journey on foot was long for some of them, pale and emaciated as they were, yet it was real glory to watch those happy faces, as they shouted ‘Hurrah! Hurrah! We’re going home.’

Some years after, the bodies of our twenty-three heroes, and many others, were moved from their first resting place, and given each his own six feet of earth in our family burying grounds. A beautiful monument has been erected there to their honor and memory. The names of our noble twenty-three were engraved upon it. Also, space was given for the names my father and mother—John and Amy Harper—which were beautifully engraved therein, as a memorial to their many sacrifices and unwavering devotion.

Kinston-----Mrs. B.W. Hatcher, nee Mary F. Harper

-----President of the A.M., Waddell Chapter UDC



Bentonville the morning after the battle.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST KENTUCKY CAVALRY,  
Near Bentonville, March 27, 1865.

Lieutenant-Colonel ANDERSON,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General:*

COLONEL: My scout sent (in charge of Sergeant Ellis of this regiment) to the battle-field near Bentonville has returned. He reports finding none of the wounded of the enemy left. There are forty-five of the wounded of our army at the house of Mr. Harper (exclusive of those left at Bentonville). They are in a suffering condition for the want of proper supplies, and there is no surgeon to attend them. Mr. Harper and family are doing all their limited means will allow for the sufferers. Their wounds have been dressed and six or eight amputations performed skillfully by the surgeons of the enemy. There were no supplies left either with the wounded or in the country. There are no marks left by which the loss of the enemy can be estimated. Citizens report that they employed all their ambulances and 200 wagons constantly and actively, from Sunday afternoon until Thursday night, removing their dead and wounded. They admit a heavy loss in the Fourteenth Army Corps. Sergeant Ellis followed the enemy to the junction of the Bentonville and Goldsborough road with the Wilmington and Goldsborough road, at a point eight miles southwest from the latter place, ten miles from the battle-field, where he found the enemy's pickets. There was no straggling from the enemy's ranks. He ascertained that the enemy was crossing the Neuse River at Cox's Bridge, and at a point three miles above Goldsborough. One corps moved on the left-hand road from the battle-field to Neuse River. He also learned that a division of mounted infantry from Wilmington joined the enemy on Saturday. Captain Taylor, who was sent (in obedience to your order of yesterday) to ascertain the probable loss of the enemy will return this afternoon or to-morrow, and report more minutely.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. W. GRIFFITH,  
*Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding Outpost.*

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—  
HEADQUARTERS, &C.,  
*Near Smithfield, N. C., March 27, 1865.*

Surg. J. H. ERSKINE,  
*Medical Director:*

DOCTOR: General Johnston directs me to inform you that there are forty-five of our wounded at the house of Mr. Harper, in the neighborhood of Bentonville. It is represented that they are in a suffering condition for the want of proper supplies. There is no surgeon to attend them. The general wishes you to take immediate steps to relieve the condition of these men. Such as are able to be moved he wishes brought to the railroad.

I am, doctor, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
KINLOCH FALCONER,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in *Dist. W. of New River* in the County of *Schenston* State of *Marland* enumerated by me, on the *29<sup>th</sup>* day of *August* 1860. *S. P. Phillips* Ass't Marshal  
Post Office *Bentonville*

821

Dwelling-house— numbered in the order of valuation.	Family numbered in order of valuation.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.	
			Age	Sex	White, black, or color.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	983 965	Henry Brill	50	M	✓	Farmer ✓	400	285	Virginia				
2		Rebecca Gregory	212	F							1		
3		Roses "	20	M	✓	Farm laborer ✓							
4	984 966	Seabell Brill	52	M	✓	Farmer ✓	150	85	" "				
5	985 968	David W. Wood	27	M	✓	Mechanic ✓	300	3000	" "				
6		Martha "	20	F									
7		William B. "	1	M	✓								
8		John S. "	12	M	✓								
9	986 967	John C. Wood	30	M	✓	Mechanic ✓	1700	7000	" "				
10		Martha "	24	F									
11		Sarah "	5	F									
12		Thomas "	3	M	✓								
13		James B. "	12	M	✓								
14	987 967	Edward King	24	M	✓	Merchant ✓		100	Virginia	1	1		
15		Martha "	20	F						1			
16	988 968	Marion Powers	24	M	✓	Mechanic ✓		100	Virginia				
17	989 969	George W. Hapgood	26	M	✓	" ✓		100	" "		1		
18		Nancy "	24	F									
19		William "	1	M	✓								
20		Mary "	1	F									
21	990 970	John Allen	28	M	✓	Mechanic ✓		100	" "				
22		Sarah "	24	F									
23		James "	5	M	✓								
24		William "	3	M	✓								
25		Willis "	2	M	✓								
26	991 971	Levi Beeche	54	M	B	Blacksmith		150	" "		1		
27		Disa "	50	F	B						1		
28		John "	14	M	B								
29		Araron "	12	M	B								
30		Levi "	9	M	B								
31	992 972	Thomas Cole	40	M	✓	Day laborer ✓		250	" "				
32		Elizabeth "	70	F							1		
33	993 973	Robert Hood	42	M	✓	Farmer ✓	1000	7830					
34		Dicy "	44	F							1		
35		William "	20	M	✓	Farm laborer ✓					1		
36		John "	17	M	✓	" " ✓					1		
37		Mary "	14	F							1		
38		Lugenia "	1	F									
39	994 974	John Harper	57	M	✓	Farmer ✓	3000	4000					
40		Smy "	39	F									
No. white males, 22    No. colored males, 4    No. foreign born, _____    No. blind, _____ No. white females, 18    No. colored females, 1    No. deaf and dumb, _____    No. insane, _____							6,750	23,000	No. idiotic, _____	No. convicts, _____			

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in *Dist. W. of New River* in the County of *Johnston* State of *N. Carolina* enumerated by me, on the *29<sup>th</sup>* day of *August* 1860. *S. P. Phillips* Asst Marshal Post Office *Bentonville*

1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		10	11	12	13	14
			Age.	Sex.	Color.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1		John ..	19	M							/		
2		Martha ..	17	F							/		
3		Martain ..	16	M							/		
4		Henry ..	13	M							/		
5		Marion ..	9	F							/		
6		Mary ..	7	F							/		
7		Rachel ..	6	M							/		
8		S. S. Per ..	3	M							/		
9	975	975 Reddick, Maria	53	M	Farmer	912	7555	N. Carolina					
10		Ellie ..	19	F									
11		John ..	22	M	Farm laborer								Deaf & dumb
12		Stephen ..	21	M	" "						/		
13		Eveline ..	14	F							/		
14		Ellie ..	12	F							/		
15		Reddick ..	9	M									Deaf
16	976	976 Willig, Cole	20	M	Farmer	4500	15557	" "					
17		Caroline ..	12	F									
18		William Cogdell	17	M	Student								
19		Julius Cole	3	M									
20		Infant ..	12	F									
21	977	977 Haywood Bigzell	31	M	Farmer		750	" "					
22		Elizabeth ..	22	F									
23		Lusan ..	40	F									
24	978	978 Green Flowers	16	M	Farmer	1000	410	" "					
25		Alec ..	29	F									
26		Luzenia ..	4	F									
27		Lewellen ..	3	F									
28		Elizabeth ..	1	F									
29	979	979 Nathan Flowers	85	M	Farmer	200	210				/		
30		Delana ..	83	F							/		
31		Adda ..	50	F							/		
32		William ..	25	M	Farm laborer								
33	100	980 Mary Joler	54	F	Farmer	1000	2010						
34		Colvin ..	32	M	Farm laborer								
35		Nathio ..	23	M	" "								
36		David ..	21	M							/		
37		Thomas ..	16	M									
38		Varney ..	13	F							/		
39		Martina Attonen	8	F									
40		Nary ..	6	F									
		No. white males, 21	No. colored males,	No. foreign born,	No. blind,	7612 26882		No. idiotic,			No. paupers,		
		No. white females, 15	No. colored females,	No. deaf and dumb,	No. insane,								

40

Page No. 213

SCHEDULE 2. Slave Inhabitants in Dist of New York in the County of Richmond State of N.Y., enumerated by me, on the 28 day of August, 1860. J.P. Phelps Ass't Marshal.

No.	NAME OF SLAVE OWNER	Number of Slaves	DESCRIPTION.			No. of Slaves	NAME OF SLAVE OWNER	Number of Slaves	DESCRIPTION.			No. of Slaves
			Age	Sex	Color				Age	Sex	Color	
1		1	37	M				1	10	F		1
2		1	24	M				1	6	M		2
3		1	24	F				1	4	F		3
4		1	20	M				1	3	M		4
5		1	17	F				1	24	M		5
6		1	17	F				1	18	M		6
7		1	6	F				1	15	F		7
8		1	6	M				1	15	M		8
9		1	3	F				1	15	F		9
10		1	1	M				1	11	F		10
11		1	1	F				1	9	M		11
12	Thomas Thomas	1	37	M				1	37	F		12
13		1	19	F				1	21	M		13
14		1	14	M				1	19	F		14
15		1	8	M				1	35	F		15
16		1	5	M				1	19	F		16
17		1	5	F				1	18	M		17
18		1	3	F				1	15	M		18
19	Walter Barber	1	45	M				1	12	M		19
20		1	15	F				1	18	F		20
21	Elizabeth Thomas	1	62	M				1	6	M		21
22		1	53	F				1	3	M		22
23		1	48	M				1	1	M		23
24		1	37	F				1	60	M		24
25		1	54	F				1	62	M		25
26		1	16	F				1	57	F		26
27		1	11	M				1	48	F		27
28		1	10	M				1	38	F		28
29		1	7	F				1	24	M		29
30		1	5	F				1	19	M		30
31		1	1	F				1	17	M		31
32		1	1	M				1	17	F		32
33	Wilmuth Smith	1	18	M				1	16	M		33
34	Isaac Langston	1	24	F				1	15	M		34
35		1	5	F				1	13	M		35
36	Julius Mackinnon	1	36	F				1	13	F		36
37		1	36	M				1	13	F		37
38	Edw. Poyzelle	1	38	F				1	11	M		38
39		1	58	M				1	11	M		39
40		1	12	M				1	7	F		40

No. of owners, \_\_\_\_\_ No. of male slaves, 41 No. fugitives, \_\_\_\_\_ No. deaf and dumb, \_\_\_\_\_ No. insane, \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. of houses, \_\_\_\_\_ No. of female slaves, 32 No. manumitted, \_\_\_\_\_ No. blind, \_\_\_\_\_ No. idiotic, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total slaves, 73



## Secondary Sources as Suggested Readings:

Barrett, John G. *North Carolina as a Civil War Battleground 1861-1865*. Raleigh, NC: Division of Archives and History Department of Cultural Resources, 2003.

Essentially an abridgment of Barrett's *The Civil War in North Carolina*, the final chapter covers the Carolinas Campaign and the Battle of Bentonville.

Dammann, Gordon. *A Pictorial Encyclopedia of Civil War Medical Instruments and Equipment: Three Volumes*. Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1983.

A photographic collection of Civil War medical tools, Dammann's book is great for younger readers because there are no graphic photos of Civil War operations as there are in many other medical picture histories.

Jordan Jr., Weymouth T. *The Battle of Bentonville*. Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1999.

A 35 page book intended for those with little background on Bentonville and the Civil War. Full of photos, maps, and illustrations, perfect for junior readers.

Moore, Mark A. *Moore's Historical Guide to the Battle of Bentonville*. Campbell CA: Savas Publishing Company, 1997.

Unlike its weighty companion piece, Mark Bradley's *Bentonville, Moore's Historical Guide to the Battle of Bentonville* may seem less daunting to younger readers because its focus is maps instead of text. *Moore's Guide* is great for tracing the ebb and flow of battle for visual learners.

## Secondary (advanced readers):

Adams, George W. *Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War*. Baton Rouge, LA: LSU Press, 1952.

As the title suggests, Adam's *Doctors in Blue* is the ultimate study of the Union Medical Corps during the Civil War. Although not specific to Bentonville, *Doctors in Blue* gives a good description for a Union field hospital such as the Harper House.

Bradley, Mark L. *Last Stand in the Carolinas: The Battle of Bentonville*. Mason City, IA: Savas Publishing Company, 1996.

At over 500 pages, Bradley's *Bentonville* is the definitive in-depth study of the battle. The book is illustrated with maps from *Moore's Historical Guide to the Battle of Bentonville*.

Hughes Jr., Nathaniel C. *Bentonville: The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Hughes' *Bentonville* is a sweeping narrative of the Battle of Bentonville. Slightly shorter than the Bradley book, *The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston* focuses less on Carolinas Campaign and is more a tactical account of the battle.

Teaching With Historic Places Lesson Plans. "The Battle of Bentonville: Caring for Casualties of the Civil

War. <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/69bentonville/69bentonville.htm>.

Interactive website with lesson plans, information, pictures, and maps of the Battle of Bentonville.

## Additional Teaching Resources:

Teacher Resources. Civil War Trust, 2011. <http://www.civilwar.org/education/teachers/>

The Civil War. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/civil-war/>



