North Carolina and the Civil War

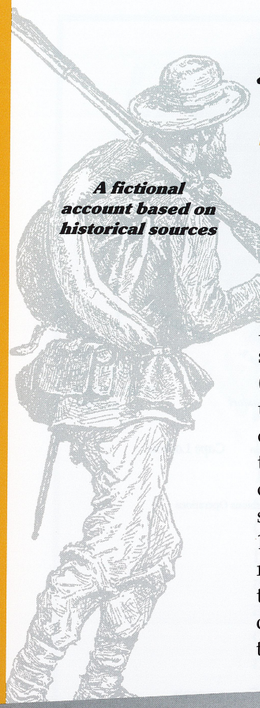
The Civil War is a complex and controversial subject in American history. It brings back a time when the United States went against its name and was divided. It recalls painful memories of enslavement and oppression. It reminds us of the thousands of lives lost in bloody battles. However disturbing, the Civil War offers important lessons—about racial equality, war, politics, and other issues—that are still relevant today.

In this educational packet:

- Read "A Soldier's Life" from the Spring 2011 issue of the *Tar Heel Junior Historian* Magazine.
- Try your hand at making Hardtack or Johnnycakes—food items that would have been found in many soldier's packs.
- Review the article "United States Colored Troops: Fighting for Freedom" from the Spring 2011 issue of the *Tar Heel Junior Historian* Magazine.
- Now that you have a better understanding of what a soldier's life may have looked like during the Civil War, complete the writing prompt and create a letter as if you were a soldier.
- Because of shortages and blockades, people used whatever was handy—the back of forms, printed ads, blank pages in books, maps, even wallpaper—to create envelopes to send their letters in. Using our pattern, create one of your own. What will you send your letter in?
- Read "Women's Contribution to the Cause" from the Fall 2000 issue of the *Tar Heel Junior Historian* Magazine.
- Complete the accompanying worksheet and explore historical pricing and inflation.
- Watch our Distance Learning Class, "Civil War Stories," and then pick at least one of the hats or historical figures to research!

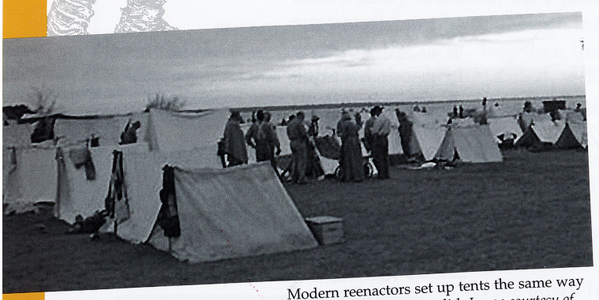
A Soldier's Life

by Randal Garrison*



A fictional account based on historical sources

Will awoke with a startled jerk, as he most always did. He still wasn't used to being in the canvas A-frame tent with three other—sometimes snoring and often smelly—comrades (not that he didn't snore or have his own unique set of smells, too). The field musicians sounded like they were right inside the tent, as their fifes and drums loudly called the men to morning roll call. The sergeants' voices began rousing the nearly 1,000 soldiers from the 10 companies of the regiment. Will remembered that he and his tentmates needed to be dressed and in front of their tents on the company street by the time the tunes making up reveille ended.

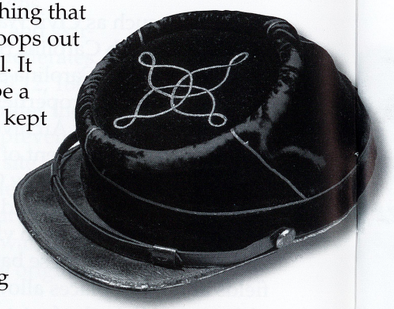


Modern reenactors set up tents the same way that Civil War soldiers did. *Image courtesy of Randal Garrison.*

Will pulled on his brogans in the gray light of dawn, making sure the right shoe was on the right foot. (This was the first pair of shoes he had owned that *had* a right and a left.) He slipped into his stylish, nine-button shell jacket, found his kepi and mashed it on his head, and crawled out of the tent. He immediately headed to the camp sinks to relieve himself. His friends in the tent were getting dressed, too. Complaints such as "Watch your elbows!" and "Get your knee out of my back!" could be heard through the tent's open flaps.

Will hustled back to his company street and fell in, along with nearly 100 other groggy men. The first and second sergeants started wrangling the men into two rows, or ranks. When the two lines became about equal in length, the first sergeant, with a gravelly voice, ordered, "Attention, Company. In two ranks, right face. . . . Size march." The taller men began moving forward, as the shorter ones moved back. Will always found this lineup a bit funny. In battle it could mean that the taller men on one side fought the shorter men from the opposing force. Will measured about average height, so he usually ended up near the center of the company. The first sergeant then gave the order to "front and cover down." This formed the file (two men, one in front of the other) for the rank and file. On one end of the front rank stood a private who was nearly 6 feet 5 inches tall. On the left flank, the final private was a shade over 5 feet.

Will and friends around him joked quietly as the roll was called. Several men fell out to report to the surgeon—usually there were only a few sick, lame, or lazy. No soldier wanted to visit the surgeon unless he was really, really sick. The doctor had too many ways to hurt a man. (Unclean water, crowding, lack of food, and other conditions did lead to lots of illness in camp. More Tar Heels died from disease than battle.) The sky grew brighter quickly in Crabtree Valley. Smoke hung close to the ground—a sure sign of rain later. Will hoped so, at least. Rain was about the only thing that might get the troops out of company drill. It would need to be a heavy rain. Will kept on hoping.



Sergeant E. C. N. Green, of Wake County, wore this kepi. Green was killed at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863. *Image courtesy of the North Carolina Museum of History.*

Soon the sergeants dismissed the men for morning mess. Will and his tentmates quickly headed back to the tent to get their breakfast ready. Two potatoes, a highly prized onion, and some slab bacon were soon cut up. The bacon hit the frying pan first to make grease for the taters and onions. Will squeezed into a spot by the one fire allowed to the company. He nestled the frying pan down over red-hot coals. Friendly banter and cooking advice drifted back and forth across the firepit, and the bacon was soon ready. Will divvied it up into four mess plates at his feet and turned his attention to cooking taters and onions. One of his friends brought out a small sack of salt, and Will used some to season the food. There was no coffee today. Supplies had gotten scarce, since coffee mostly came from the North. Will and his friends did break out some hardtack crackers. The men devoured the meal, washing it down with canteen water.

Reenactors with the 26th North Carolina Troops, Reactivated, go through a morning dress parade. During the Civil War, soldiers in camp lined up in such a parade for their colonel to inspect them. Field musicians passed back and forth in front of the regiment before orders began. *Image courtesy of Randal Garrison.*

In almost no time, the field musicians had their wooden fifes shrilling away again, accompanied by the side and bass drums. They sounded "first call." The men of the 26th North Carolina Troops had 15 minutes to clean their plates and pans, then put on their gear in preparation for the morning dress parade followed by drill.

The gear, or accoutrements (cooters), consisted of a waist belt, bayonet and scabbard, and cap pouch; cartridge box slung over the shoulder and held down by the waist belt; canteen; and most importantly, a rifled musket. The 26th had just been issued new Enfield rifles made in England and delivered into Wilmington by daring blockade-runners. These weapons were the finest, most modern available, and Will loved his. It could hit a target easily from 300 yards away or more.

The only items that the men left in their tents were haversacks. These tarred canvas bags held the few personal items an 18-year-old might possess, such as a comb, a toothbrush, a spare shirt, some clean socks, a housewife (a soldier's name for a sewing kit), and a small Bible. Will's bag also contained several letters from home, including one from a special young lady that he read every night. Haversacks stayed in the tent, because they were not needed for drill. They would just be extra weight.

Will fell in with the Company I men and watched as morning parade—quite a sight—formed. The entire regiment lined up for the colonel's inspection. The color guard, the sergeants who guarded the flag of the regiment, were placed, or posted, in line first. Captains then led out the two center companies to form on the right and left of the colors. The rest of the companies followed in order. Will was always fascinated by the mathematical precision of even the simplest movement. The process felt like a dance with 1,000 armed men.

Orderly Sergeant Alfred May, Company F (Trio Guards), 61st Regiment North Carolina Troops, used this oil-cloth haversack with leather straps. Soldiers sometimes marched 12 to 15 miles a day, carrying all their gear and weapons. May's regiment fought in Virginia, eastern North Carolina, and South Carolina. It took part in the final major battle at Bentonville. *Image courtesy of the North Carolina Museum of History.*

Morning parade offered even more military ballet than forming the line. The field music trooped the line, passing back and forth across the face of the whole regiment. The adjutant, an officer who was an assistant or aide to the colonel, opened the two ranks by bellowing, "Prepare to open ranks. To the rear, open order!" The rear line moved backward three steps, and the officers checked the dress, or straightness, of the line. The lieutenant colonel and major double-checked the dress. All the officers moved forward into their positions ahead of the companies and wings of the regiment. The adjutant reported to the colonel, and then called the first sergeants "front and center" to report each company's numbers of men

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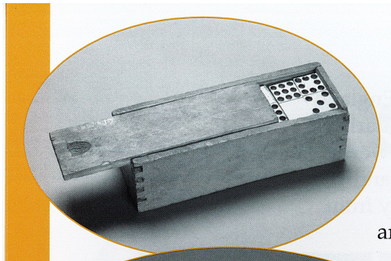
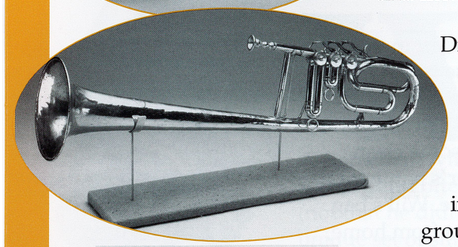




Civil War soldiers spent more time in camp or marching than in battle. Religion, music, the reading and writing of letters, and games helped pass the time. (*Top*) Dominoes, ca. 1863. (*Above*) Flugelhorn belonging to Oliver J. Lehman, of Forsyth County, a musician in the 33rd Regiment North Carolina Troops. Music was important to Civil War soldiers. It signaled parts of their day, relayed battle commands, lifted spirits on long marches, entertained troops in camp, and consoled those in field hospitals. Band members sometimes played other roles, such as ambulance drivers. See what else you can learn about music of the era. *Images courtesy of the North Carolina Museum of History.*

as "presented or accounted for." Soon the adjutant sent the sergeants back to their places, and the orders of the day were read. Will groaned inwardly. Drill, drill, and more drill—it never changed.

Drill meant practicing all the maneuvers that a regiment or a company might be ordered to attempt while marching or in battle. With the company split into small, manageable groups, drill time began. First came what they called the "school of the soldier." Will knew most of this drill by heart, but a fair number of men (some of them new) had trouble remembering the commands. Some did not know left from right. The nearly 10-pound musket felt awkward, but after much repetition, most of the movements came naturally: Right shoulder shift! Shoulder arms! Order arms!

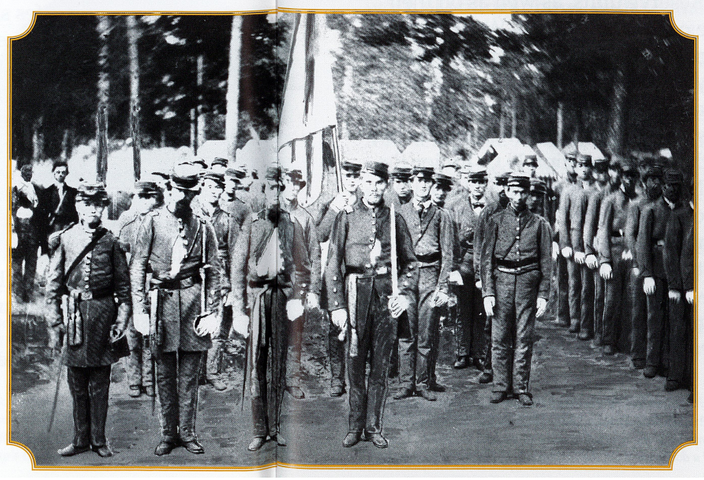
The first sergeant and his assistants were not easy to please. Every movement must be just right and done together in unison with the other soldiers. Will's right arm felt an inch longer than his left because they practiced so much. Simple marching, or moving from two ranks into four ranks, was complicated and needed to be perfected as well. Right wheel! Left wheel! By the right flank! By the left flank! Sometimes drill commands sounded like a foreign language, but the men learned. Loading and firing the rifle in nine commands, also known as "load in nine times," was one of Will's favorite parts. The soldiers had seldom actually fired their guns, however, due to a shortage of powder and caps. Sometimes the first lieutenant or the company captain would give the orders, but usually they hung back as observers. The sergeants and other noncommissioned officers gave most orders.

After about two hours, the school of the soldier ended. The troops began company drill, led by each company's officers. The men practiced more marching and maneuvering. Will had noticed that company drill was basically the school of the soldier with bigger groups. The troops practiced commands such as "On the right by file into line," "Left turn," and "Right about" until they were thoroughly tired. Noonday mess was announced by bugles and the field music. Will and his pards relaxed for an hour, cooked a dinner just like their breakfast, and complained about drill. Unkind remarks about the officers—especially the slim, aristocratic colonel who headed the regiment—made the rounds. Real combat would soon prove the wisdom of all this practice, but the men did not know that yet. They would find out at the Battle of New Bern that drill saved lives.

The afternoon included skirmish drill, when the soldiers practiced spreading out and advancing in front of the main line of battle, firing in pairs and charged with uncovering the enemy's lines. The day ended with battalion drill, as the whole regiment went through the maneuvers practiced throughout the day. Rain finally arrived, but it only canceled the evening parade and made the supper mess a *real* mess. Soon darkness fell. Will crawled into his tent, going last since he slept on the end closest to the flap. He took off his wet shell jacket and brogans, and rolled up in his big, state-issued wool blanket. He was sound asleep and snoring before the field musicians finished their regular evening tunes.

What you have just read is a fictional account of the daily, somewhat boring, and physically demanding life of a Civil War Confederate soldier in a training camp near Raleigh. Much more time was spent in drill than in battle, and Will's story would be a common one. Constant research of historical primary sources—especially diaries, letters, and journals—helps modern-day reenactors such as the large 26th North Carolina, Reactivated, group re-create the soldier's experience every time they take the field. Read more about the real 26th North Carolina Troops, and the 26th North Carolina, Reactivated, at 26nc.org. Several other reenactment groups exist across the state. Who knows—one day, you might help keep these wartime memories alive as a reenactor.

The "Confederate Grays," Duplin County, later Company E, 20th Regiment North Carolina Troops, pictured ca. 1861. *Image courtesy of the State Archives, North Carolina Office of Archives and History.*



Not So UNIFORM?

See what you can find out about North Carolina's struggles to clothe its Confederate soldiers.

Joining Up

Will and several pals jogged down the dirt road toward town on a cool June morning. They were in a hurry. Today, something very exciting was happening at the county courthouse: not a trial, not a hanging, but recruiting. A company of local men was being gathered to go off to fight the Yankees. Will had just turned 18, and his friends were a bit younger. They could not remember ever being so excited. War! They could become heroes! Girls would swoon at their feet when they returned home in handsome uniforms, with medals.

What is a regiment? Confused about lieutenants and sergeants? For information on army ranks and army organization, as well as battles fought in North Carolina, access ncmuseumofhistory.org/exhibits/civilwar/resources.html.

At the stately, columned courthouse, the group ran into a crowd. Everyone in the county, it seemed, was there. The growing crowd pressed in toward a stage set up on the front lawn, at the base of the main steps. On this stage sat the mayor, several aldermen, and young men in uniform. Will recognized one of the young men. Sam, the popular son of the wealthiest man in the county, had been off at school in Chapel Hill. Now he was back, dressed as an officer. One slender, dark-haired man in uniform, on the mayor's left, radiated authority. The two men checked their pocket watches just before the mayor motioned for musicians to play. Three fifers and two drummers, plus a bass drummer, performed a rousing 15 minutes of music. The same tunes likely had stirred the hearts of would-be volunteers 90 years earlier during the American Revolution. The mayor thanked the musicians, introducing them as belonging to the Sixth North Carolina Regiment. Some men from Will's hometown had joined that unit, raised about five months earlier in May 1861.

The mayor gave a short, enthusiastic speech about the need for this gathering. He introduced Captain Sam Williams. The military board in Raleigh had given Williams the authority to raise a company of 100 men from the county and surrounding area. But rather than give a lengthy, fire-eating speech, Williams introduced Major Abner Pettigru, military officials' choice to travel through the state and deliver recruiting speeches.

Pettigru began by outlining the state's hesitance toward secession in 1860 and its movement toward secession after Fort Sumter in South Carolina was fired upon. Pettigru spoke of the Confederate victory at First Manassas in July 1861, explained the naval blockade of the coast, and began a fiery description of Federal troops' invasion of Tar Heel soil. They were encamped in the state's eastern region right then, he said, biding their time before moving west.

By the time Pettigru finished, the crowd had reached a fever pitch of emotion. Pettigru gave the invitation to join Company I of the 26th North Carolina Troops, soon to start training at Camp Crabtree near Raleigh. There was a mighty surge forward, and Will found himself swept along. One of his friends tried to stop him: "Will, your Ma's gonna kill you; you won't have to worry about the Yankees!" Before Will knew it, he stood in front of a wooden table, attesting to being of sound mind and body and signing the oath of allegiance to the military. It seemed very official and more than a little frightening. Will was guided to a tent he had not noticed. A small, beady-eyed military surgeon examined him and asked him odd questions. Did he possess 10 fingers? Could he see out of both eyes? Did he have all his toes? And, most strangely, did he have two front teeth that met, one top and one bottom? Will had all his teeth, fingers, and toes, so the doctor cleared him quickly. He went to stand in a two-row line of men accepted for service "for the duration of the war."

Reenactors from the 26th North Carolina Troops, Reactivated, drill. *Image courtesy of Randal Garrison.*

Will had a lot of hard, and sometimes mightily boring, training in his future. But then his regiment would be sent to serve under General Robert E. Lee as part of the Army of Northern Virginia. There would be no romance. The brutal truth would be that tens of thousands of Tar Heel soldiers like Will would die in the bloodiest of America's wars: the Civil War.

—Randal Garrison

Hardtack and Johnnycakes Recipe

Hardtack crackers

- 2 cups of flour
- ½ to ¾ cup water
- ½ tsp of salt

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Mix the flour, water, and salt together into a stiff dough.
3. Knead several times and spread the dough out flat to a thickness of ¼ inch on a non-greased cookie sheet.
4. Using a pizza cutter or a knife (make sure you have an adult to help with this step!), cut the dough into 3-inch cracker squares.
5. With the end of a fork or bamboo skewer, dot four rows by four columns into each cracker. .
6. Bake for 30 minutes.
7. Remove from oven, turn crackers over on the sheet and return to the oven and bake another 30 minutes.
8. Cool completely.

Johnnycakes

- 2 cups of cornmeal
- 2/3 cup of milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- Pinch of salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix the cornmeal, milk, vegetable oil, baking soda, and salt together into a stiff batter.
3. Form 8 biscuit-sized "Johnnycakes."
4. Bake on a lightly greased sheet for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown.

P.S. If you have a little butter or molasses, spread that over the top of your hardtack crackers or Johnnycakes for added flavor.

United States Colored Troops: Fighting for Freedom

By John H. Haley, PhD

From *Tar Heel Junior Historian* 50:2 (Spring 2011)

An elaborate ceremony took place February 7, 1998, in Southport. Modern Civil War reenactors, representing both Confederate and Union troops, honored the memory and rededicated the graves of two veterans of that war: Abram Blount and Abraham Galloway. Blount, a 20-year-old formerly enslaved man from Hyde County, enlisted in the 37th Regiment United States Colored Troops (USCT) on December 10, 1863. In the final stages of the war, 18-year-old Galloway, born a slave in Smithville (now Southport), enlisted in the same regiment. When the war ended, both men settled in Smithville. Upon their deaths, each was buried there in John Smith Cemetery.

Few soldiers in history better understood the goals for which they fought than African Americans—often called "colored" people at the time—who joined the Union army during the Civil War. Especially after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, these men knew that the war's outcome would mean the difference between slavery and freedom for African Americans in the United States. Risking capture or even death, free and enslaved African Americans sought refuge within Union-occupied territory in northeastern North Carolina. They flooded areas including Plymouth, New Bern, Beaufort, and Roanoke Island, which fell under Federal control in early 1862. Often referred to as refugees, freedmen, or contraband, these African Americans provided valuable service to the Union as spies, pilots, messengers, guides, and laborers. They also served in the United States Navy and as recruits for USCT units.

Before the establishment of the national Bureau of Colored Troops in May 1863, it was reported that freedmen near Beaufort were drilling with weapons they had purchased for themselves. In New Bern they had formed their own militia. On June 19, 1863, the first company of USCT raised in North Carolina—and quite possibly the nation—was organized as an element of Colonel Edward A. Wild's proposed African Brigade. The brigade's First Regiment of North Carolina Colored Volunteers was based at New Bern. That town's Colored Women's Union for the Benefit of the Colored Brigade paid for its battle flag, inscribed with the word *liberty*. *The Christian Recorder*, a publication of the

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African Methodist Episcopal Church, reported that the colored people of New Bern were glad to cooperate in the defense of freedom.

The African Brigade did not develop as originally planned. Its major units were later designated as the 35th Regiment USCT, 36th Regiment USCT, 37th Regiment USCT, and 14th U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery. USCT recruits came from a variety of states, so these units were not exclusively made up of native North Carolinians. (Perhaps the best-known unit of African American troops was the 54th Massachusetts Infantry; the 1989 movie *Glory* told part of its story.)

At first, African American troops faced racial discrimination and prejudice from both the U.S. War Department and white Union soldiers. Colored troops received less pay and fewer food rations than white soldiers, they were given inferior equipment, and they were often required to perform servile labor for white units. They could not become officers unless they were chaplains (clergymen) or medical doctors. Besides, black soldiers had no guarantee that if captured, they would be treated properly as prisoners of war. They were more likely to be killed or condemned to excessive hard labor. They could also be returned to slavery.

The number of African American recruits from the Tar Heel State steadily increased during the war. John Randolph, a former slave from Washington, North Carolina, wrote in July 1864 that he hoped "the heroic deeds of colored men on the battlefield would show the world that we are deserving of the rights and title of citizens—a people worthy to be free—worthy to be respected." Units formed in North Carolina participated in a variety of combat or combat-support operations and missions in Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, and Texas, as well as in their home state. Their performance equaled that of other units. Occasionally, USCT members received recognition, including the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest decoration for bravery in combat.

The gigantic Union naval and army forces that invaded North Carolina near Carolina Beach in the winter of 1864–1865 included at least nine USCT regiments. Seasoned veterans who had fought in the battles of the Wilderness, the Crater, and New Market Heights in Virginia made up some of these regiments. Once ashore, they took part in attacks and other combat engagements that led to the capture of Fort Fisher and surrender of Wilmington. USCT units were among the victorious Union forces that entered that town on February 22, 1865. Approximately six weeks later, on April 3, 1865, the 36th USCT—formed in North Carolina—enjoyed the distinction of

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being the first Union infantry regiment to enter Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the Confederate States of America. After the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnston's Confederate troops near Durham on April 26, 1865, USCT units participated in a grand Union victory parade in Raleigh, reviewed by General William T. Sherman.

Along with their combat role, USCT units often thought of themselves as liberators and carriers of culture. They established churches, schools, lodges, and literary societies. Their very presence in an area offered vivid testimony to the end of slavery and the beginning of a new social order. *The Christian Recorder* reported that during the parade that followed the surrender of Wilmington, colored people (young and old) crowded the streets, cheering and exclaiming, "The chain is broken, joy! Freedom today." Sergeant N. B. Sterrett, of the 39th USCT, asked one elderly African American woman if she was glad to see black troops. She replied, "It seemed that the good Lord has opened the heavens and handed you down in answer to my prayer." Another woman reunited with her son, who had "left his home a slave, but had returned in the garb of a Union soldier, free, a man."

Colored troops also gained knowledge and leadership skills that became useful later in life. For example, David Chapman, of Pitt County, enlisted in the 37th USCT in 1864 at age 17. Chapman was discharged as a sergeant when the war ended. He settled in Brunswick County, where he became a civic, educational, and religious leader. For him, as for so many others, the Civil War changed everything.

At the time of this article's publication, Dr. John H. Haley was a retired history professor, who had last taught at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

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A Soldier's Life
Writing Prompt

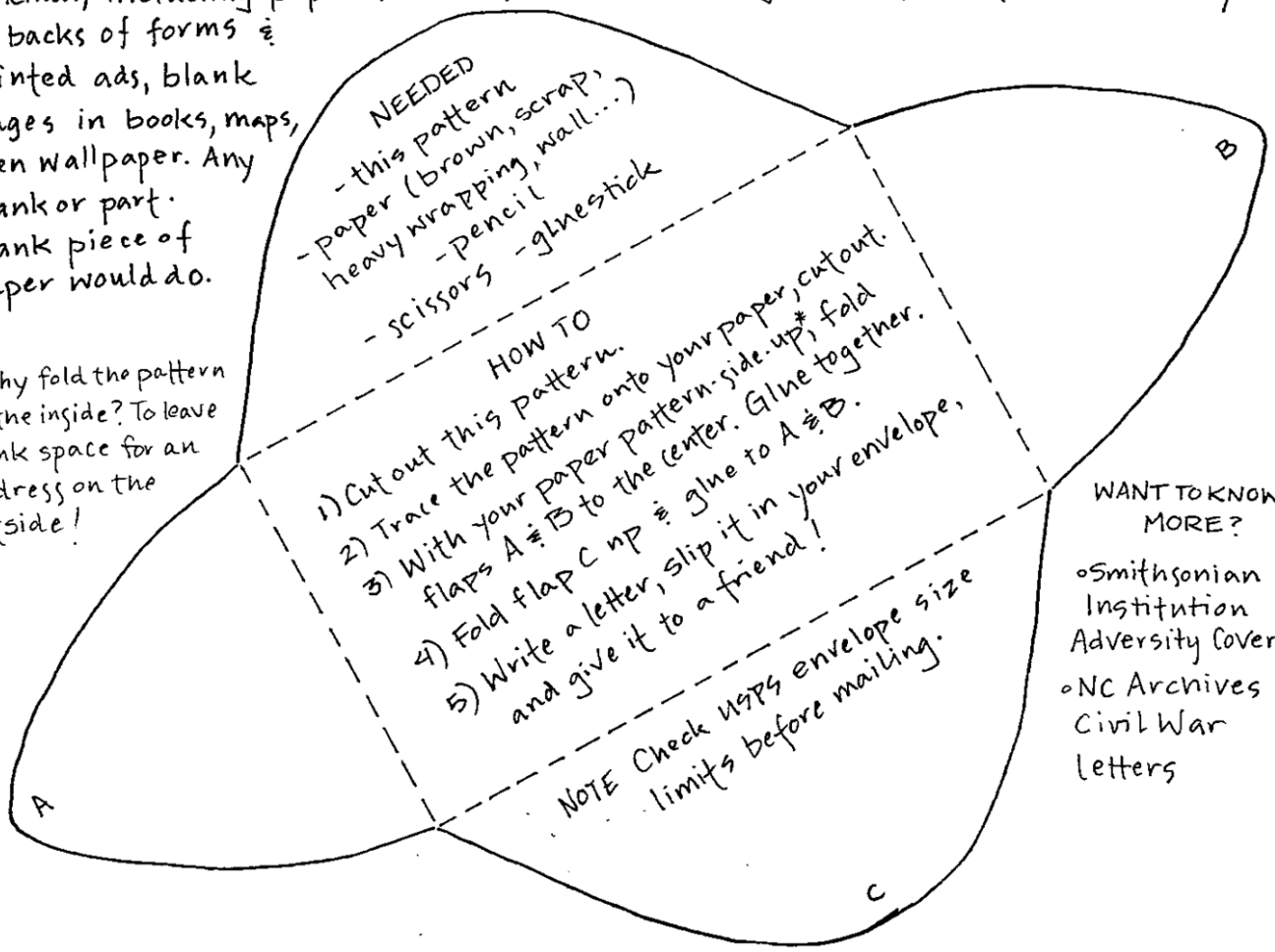
Imagine that you are a soldier in the Civil War. Write a letter to your best friend at home. Describe some of the items that you carry with you. Write about your daily life, including where you are now, what you eat, whether you're in camp or in battle, etc.

A Soldier's Life
Create an Envelope

CIVIL WAR ENVELOPES

1860s = How did you keep in touch with family & friends? Write a letter. What if you lived in the South, where Union blockades caused shortages of all kinds, including paper & envelopes? Writers began to use whatever was handy - the backs of forms & printed ads, blank pages in books, maps, even wallpaper. Any blank or part blank piece of paper would do.

* Why fold the pattern on the inside? To leave blank space for an address on the outside!



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- Smithsonian Institution Adversity Covers
- NC Archives Civil War letters

Women's Contribution to the Cause

By Dan Brennan

From Tar Heel Junior Historian 40:1 (Fall 2000)

A young woman named Lucy Wood confided to a friend that she had "nearly broken down" from exhaustion after devoting the previous month of May 1861 to making uniforms for the young men of her town who had volunteered to go off and fight a war of independence against the government of the United States. Lucy was not alone in her work. As thousands of men took up arms in the Confederate army, thousands of women supported the cause by forming volunteer ladies' aid societies. These societies made uniforms, tents, leather goods (such as belts and cartridge boxes), socks, and many other items that the men in the army needed.

At the beginning of the war, many women produced company flags for their hometown men. These flags were unique, sometimes made from expensive silk shawls or dresses, and no two looked exactly alike. When a new company went into service, the local ladies carried out an elaborate presentation ceremony, officially giving the flag to the men. Many of these company flags were based on the Confederate First National flag pattern, commonly known as the Stars and Bars.

Another way that women supported the war effort was to work on government contracts. They got paid for each piece of clothing that they produced. An additional workforce came from the enslaved population. Catherine Edmonston, the wife of an army captain, organized some of the female slaves to sew tents, while she and her friends worked on uniforms.

Unfortunately, the Civil War lasted longer than just a few months. As the months turned into years, the ladies' aid societies continued to produce items for the soldiers. But, at the same time, women had to cope with severe shortages of everyday items such as candles, cloth, cooking utensils, and sewing needles. Women had to relearn the age-old practices of spinning and weaving cloth to make up of the lack of mill-produced fabric.

Some women did not want to make homespun clothes for fear of affecting their high social standing. These women hated the idea that they had to make and wear homemade dresses. Even the Confederate president, Jefferson

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Davis, became annoyed with this class awareness. He publicly announced to the upper-class women of the Confederacy that they needed to put their social status aside and behave like patriotic Southerners.

When the men went off to war, many women were left with the huge task of running the family farm or plantation. Most families in North Carolina did not own slaves. But those families that did faced great difficulty in running their businesses. At first, the Confederate Congress exempted, or excused from military service, overseers and owners. It passed a law known as the Twenty Negro Law in October 1862. This law allowed one man to stay at home as long as he supervised at least 20 slaves. Some people became angry about this law and said that conflict had become a "rich man's war, but a poor man's fight." Eventually, exemption laws were changed, and all able-bodied men were called into the army for the rest of the war.

By the time the war ended, Southern women found themselves living entirely different lives than they had only a few short years before. War and deprivation had made them tough and bitter, yet self-reliant. Women had developed the ability to make their own decisions.

Farms were ruined, crops were destroyed, and the male population was severely depleted from battlefield losses and disease. Postwar life presented a grim prospect for all North Carolinians. And women faced the task of redirecting their energy from surviving four years of war to rebuilding their lives and their state.

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Women Contribute to the Cause
Information Sheet

The Civil War caused food shortages throughout North Carolina and many other states. With many farmers fighting in the war, fewer people were producing food. Those who did raise crops had to give a portion to Confederate agents for use in the war, further reducing supplies for those on the home front. The demand for this diminished food supply raised prices quickly and dramatically. Protests and bread riots over the lack of food and high prices occurred in some cities.

RALEIGH FOOD PRICES, 1862–1865

	1862	1863	1864	1865
Bacon (lb.)	$ .33	$1.00	$5.50	$7.50
Beef (lb.)	.12	.50	2.50	3.00
Pork (lb.)	___	1.60	4.00	5.50
Sugar (lb.)	.75	1.00	12.00	30.00
Corn (bu.)	1.10	5.50	20.00	30.00
Meal (bu.)	1.25	5.50	20.00	30.00
Potatoes (bu.)	1.00	4.00	7.00	30.00
Yams (bu.)	1.50	5.00	6.00	35.00
Wheat (bu.)	3.00	8.00	25.00	50.00
Flour (bbl.)	18.00	35.00	125.00	500.00

lb. = pound bu. = bushel bbl. = barrel

(From William K. Boyd, "Fiscal and Economic Conditions in North Carolina during the War," North Carolina Booklet [1915].)

Women Contribute to the Cause Worksheet

1. What percent did the price of a bushel of wheat increase from 1862 to 1864? _____%

2. Between 1862 and 1865? _____%

3. Graph the change in price of a bushel a corn between 1862 and 1865.

$30.00				
$25.00				
$20.00				
$15.00				
$10.00				
$ 5.00				
$ 1.00				
	1862	1863	1864	1865

4. A pound of bacon costs about $3.15 today. If the price of bacon rose the same percent in the next three years that it rose between 1862 and 1865, what would the price be in 2002?

Women Contribute to the Cause
Worksheet, Answer Sheet

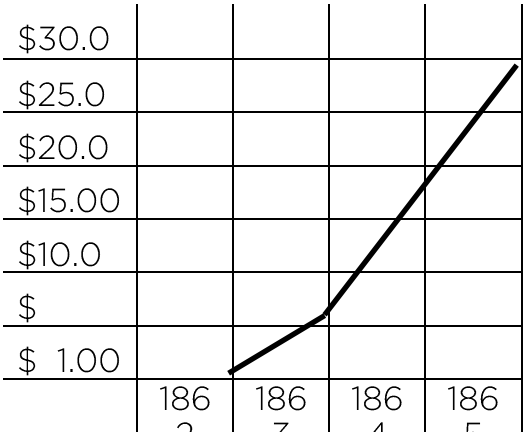
1. What percent did the price of a bushel of wheat increase from 1862 to 1864?

Percent increase from 1862 to 1864 = $\frac{\text{Cost in 1864 - Cost in 1862}}{\text{Cost in 1862}} = \frac{25 - 3}{3} = \frac{22}{3}$ = **733%**

2. Between 1862 and 1865?

Percent increase from 1862 to 1865 = $\frac{\text{Cost in 1865 - Cost in 1862}}{\text{Cost in 1862}} = \frac{50 - 3}{3} = \frac{47}{3}$ = **1567%**

3. Graph the change in price of a bushel a corn between 1862 and 1865.



4. A pound of bacon costs about $3.15 today. If the price of bacon rose the same percent in the next three years that it rose between 1862 and 1865, what would the price be in 2002?

Cost in 1862 *0.33*

Percent increase from 1862 to 1865 = $\frac{\text{Cost in 1865 - Cost in 1862}}{\text{Cost in 1862}} = \frac{7.50 - .33}{.33}$ *= 21.73 =* ***2173%***

The price in 2002 = (3.15 x 2173%) + 3.15 = ***$71.60***

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Watch our Distance Learning Class, "Civil War Stories," and then pick at least one of the hats or historical figures to research!

While the class is generally completed in groups, we think you're up to the challenge of completing the class on your own! Choose one of the hats that represent a historical figure and then follow along to read the Information Sheet, Primary Source Sheet, and Video Introduction that goes with the hat (person) of your choice. When you've learned all about your historical figure, then complete the accompanying worksheet.

You can watch the class at: https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/civil-war-stories-north-carolina-form-grades-4-8.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 1

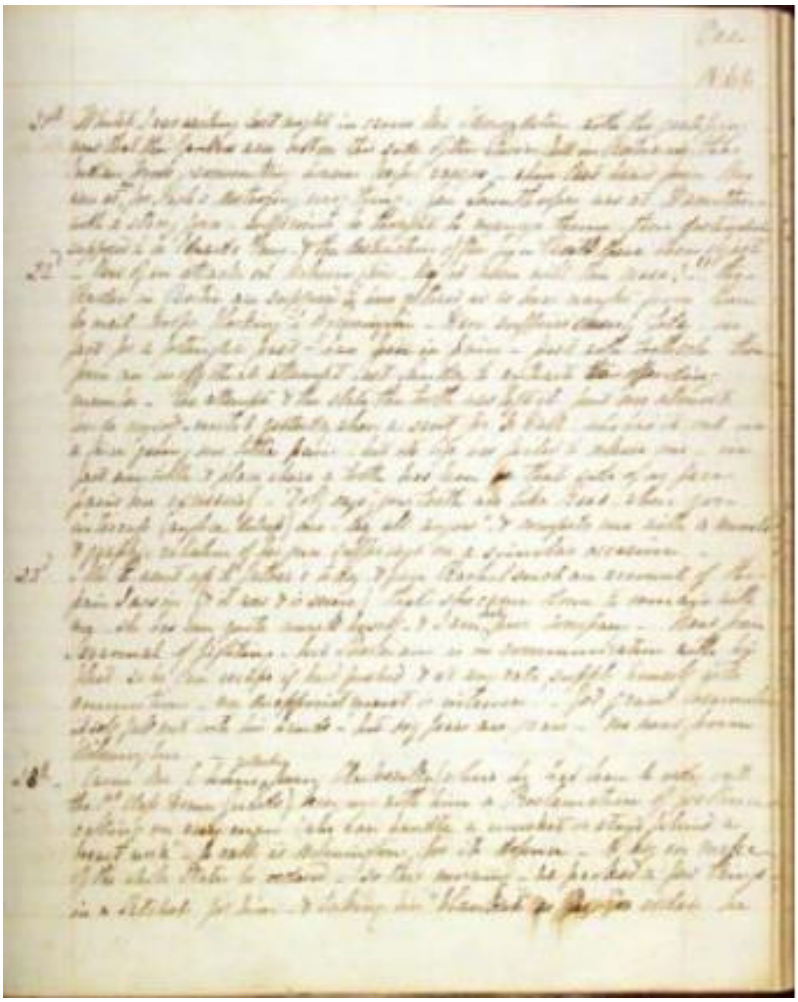
Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Catherine Edmonston: Page A, Information

Catherine Devereux was born in 1823, in Halifax County. After marrying Patrick Edmondston, she lived at Looking Glass plantation. The Edmondstons owned 88 slaves. The Edmondstons were secessionists; they believed that the southern states should leave the Union and join the Confederate States of America. Catherine Edmondston wrote frequently in her diary about her life. During the war, many people in the state were hungry and without enough clothing. The Edmondstons did not experience these shortages. The enslaved people at the plantation grew or made much of the food and clothing needed by the Edmondstons. Catherine Edmondston remained loyal to the Confederacy, even after it was defeated. The Edmondstons lost much of their wealth when the enslaved people were freed. She died at age 51, in Raleigh.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Catherine Edmonston: Page B, Primary Source



February 18, 1861 Today was inaugurated at Montgomery [Alabama] Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America. . . . O that North Carolina would join.

January 31, 1862 Dined with Sister Frances. All well & as usual, she was busy making haversacks and flags for the regiments to take the field in the spring.

March 15, 1865 There will be many days this summer when we cannot taste meat, but what of that if our army is fed.

April 11, 1865 Yesterday came the . . . officers with orders from General Johnston to take all the best of our horses, to leave us only the worthless & the inferior. . . . We have given & freely given all we could spare.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Catherine Edmonston: Page C, Video Introduction

- In February 1861 most North Carolinians did not want to secede from, or leave, the Union.
- Still, three months later, on May 20, 1861, North Carolina joined the Confederate States of America.
- After secession, many North Carolina men joined the Confederate army, and family members at home learned to do without them.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Catherine Edmonston: Worksheet

The answers to the blanks in Part 1 can be found on Information Page A and Primary Source Page B.

Part 1—Fill in the Blanks

Catherine Edmondston was born in _____ in _____ County. She and her husband owned _____ slaves and lived on _____ plantation. The Edmondstons were _____, which means they believed that North Carolina should join the Confederate States of America. During the Civil War, Catherine Edmondston wrote in her _____ frequently. She did not suffer many hardships during the war because of the _____ and _____ produced by the enslaved people. In 1862, Edmondston recorded in her diary that her sister Frances was busy making _____ and _____ for the regiments. Just before the war ended, (Primary Source page B) (Primary Source page B) in April 1865, Edmondston wrote, "We have given and freely given _____ _____."

Part 2—Discussion questions!

1. After the Confederacy lost the war, did Catherine Edmondston's feelings about the Confederacy change?

_____

_____

_____

2. Do you think her life changed after the war? If so, in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 2

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 3

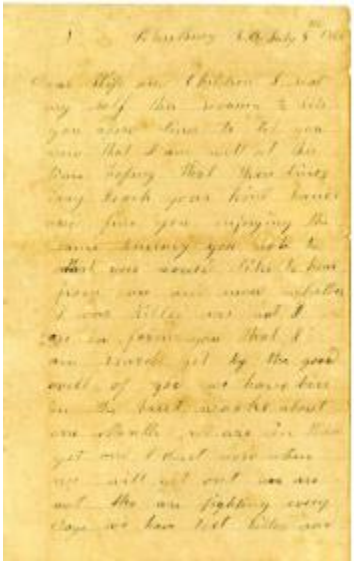
Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Francis Marion Poteet and Martha Poteet: Page A, Information

Francis and Martha Poteet were born in Burke County in the mid1820s. Francis was a carpenter, miller, and farmer. Martha tended the home and raised their 13 children. In 1863 Francis was drafted into the Confederate army. He faced many hardships, including hunger, tiredness, and the dangers of battle. Martha also had hard times running the farm and home by herself. The family was often hungry and sick. In 1863, Francis left his army unit without permission to visit their dying son, Alvis. When Francis returned to the army, he was sent to prison for desertion. Two of their children died during the war years. After the war the family moved. Francis worked in a grinding mill while Martha tended store. Martha and Francis died a day apart in 1902. They were almost 80 years old.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Francis Marion Poteet and Martha Poteet: Page B, Primary Source



Francis Poteet to Martha Poteet, July 5, 1864

Dear Wife and Children I seat myself this evning to rite you a few lines to let you now that I am well at this time hoping...you injoying the same blessing. you rote to me to come home and save the wheat. I cant come. I would like to come home and see you all once more in this life and see my sweete littel baby. . . . I haint slep one good night sleepe in two month. I have to work and stand gard every night. I am very nigh broken down. . . . fare well dear wife. god bless you is my prayer.

Martha Poteet to Francis Poteet, November 2, 1864

Dear husband I seat myself this evning to try to write you a few lines to let you know what has happend at home. Poor little Francis Emmer is dead. She died the 29 of oct last saturday a little while before sundown. I cant tell you how bad it was. . . . she was buried Sunday. I hav ben sick about 5 weeks...I am fixing to send you somthing to eat and a pare of socks. . . .All the children sends you howdy. They say that we are badly whipped. God bless and save you.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Francis Marion Poteet and Martha Poteet: Page C, Video Introduction

- The war years brought great changes to most people in North Carolina.
- Soldiers traveled far from home.
- People left behind tried to keep farms and families going.
- Supplies were hard to come by, and some people went hungry.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Francis Marion Poteet and Martha Poteet: Worksheet

The answers to the blanks in Part 1 can be found on Information Page A and Primary Source Page B.

Part 1—Fill in the Blanks

The Poteets were born in the mid-_____ in _____ County. Francis worked as a _____, _____, and _____. Martha looked after their home and raised their _____ children. Francis was a soldier in the _____army. Some of the hardships he faced included _____, _____, and dangers of battle. Martha also had hard times. _____ of their children died during the war years. Martha and the children were often hungry and _____. Francis wrote to Martha, "I haint slep _____." In a letter, Martha tells Francis she is sending him _____ and _____. She comments that "we" [the Confederacy] are "_____."

Part 2—Discussion questions!

1. What worried the Poteets during the Civil War?

_____

_____

_____

2. Do you think their lives changed after the war? If so, in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 4

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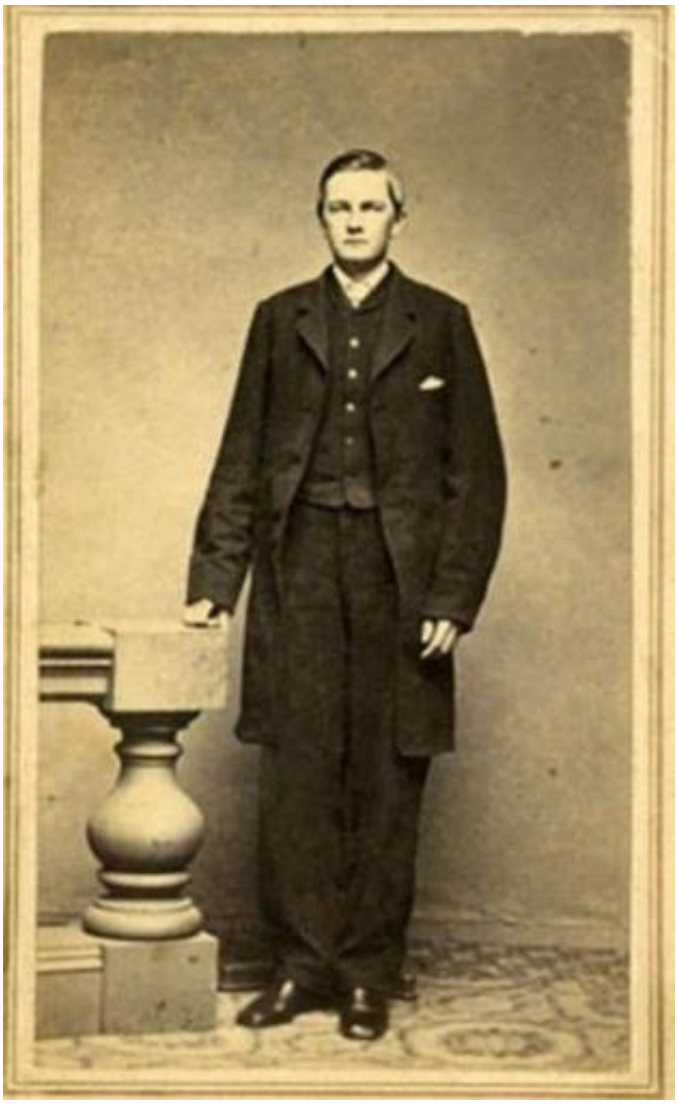
Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

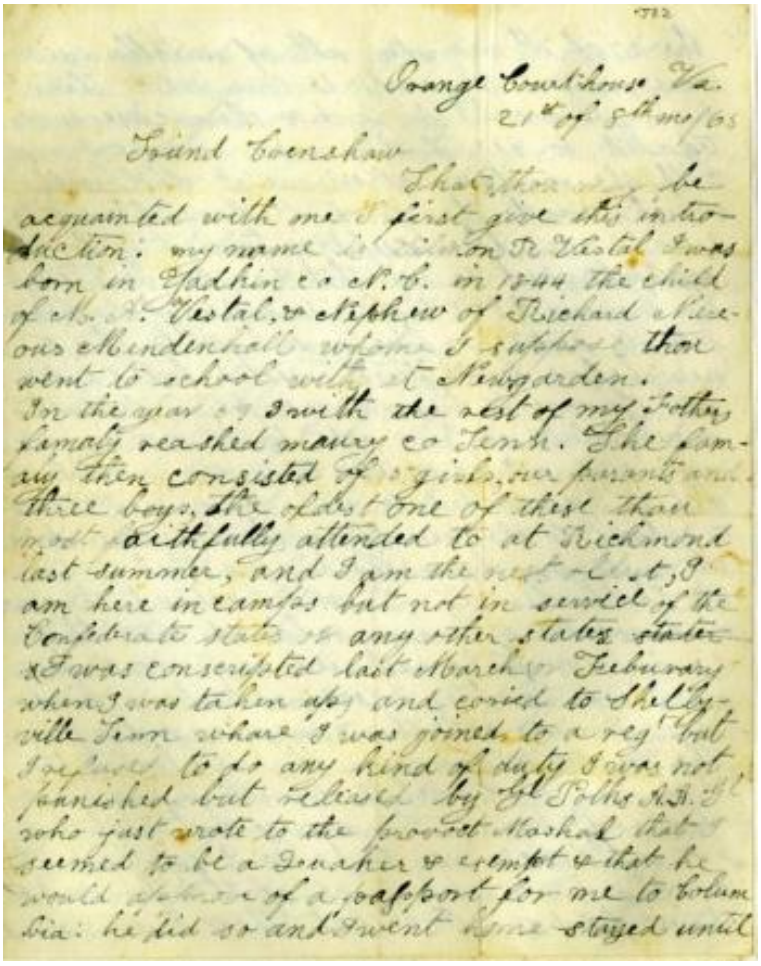
Tilghman Vestal: Page A, Information



Tilghman Vestal was born in Yadkin County in 1844. Vestal was a member of the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers. Quakers do not believe in violence or slavery. Vestal was drafted into the Confederate army when he was 18. He refused to serve as a soldier or to pay the tax that would have kept him from being a soldier. While in the army, he was stuck with bayonets (the blades on the end of rifles) for refusing to do any service, even sweeping. Vestal was sent to military prison. Eventually, a group of important Quakers had him freed. Vestal went to school at New Garden (present-day Greensboro). In 1865 Vestal moved to Philadelphia, where he studied and started work as a farmhand.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Tilghman Vestal: Page B, Primary Source



Orange Court-house Va. 21st of 8th mo /63

Friend Crenshaw

My name is Tilmon R. Vestal. I was born in Yadkin Co N.C. in 1844.

I was conscripted [drafted] last March . . . but I refused to do any kind of duty. . . . The[y] said I could be exempt by paying $500 to the Treasurer of the Confederate States. I did not choose to. . . .

Eventually I was detailed to clean up camps . . . I refused to do it. [I] told the Colonel that I could not do anything for the benefit of the army. He jumped up said I will make you went off and brought up his police with guns & bayonets one of them set a shovel by me & said take it and go to work.

I did not. . . .I looked him full in the face & said do you think I would endainger my soul to benefit my body? At this they began to pierce me with their bayonets.

I received 16 pierces one of which was an inch deep. . . . [I] still refused saying nothing could make me go to war.

affectually

Tilmon R. Vestal

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Tilghman Vestal: Page C, Video Introduction

- North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance worked to supply the troops with uniforms, food, and arms.
- Some North Carolina men, including escaped slaves and free men of color, joined the Union army.
- Many Cherokee joined forces with the Confederacy.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Tilghman Vestal: Worksheet

The answers to the blanks in Part 1 can be found on Information Page A and Primary Source Page B.

Part 1—Fill in the Blanks

Tilghman Vestal was born in _____ in _____ County. Vestal was raised the _____ faith. Quakers do not believe in fighting in wars or in slavery. Vestal was drafted into the _____ army. He refused to serve in any way and was sent to _____. His family encouraged him to pay the _____ that would have excused him from service, but Vestal refused. Vestal wrote that he had refused to "clean up camps" and that he could not do "anything for the _____ of the army." He wrote that the soldiers had used _____ to pierce him _____ times when he refused to work.

Part 2—Discussion questions!

1. Why do you think Tilghman Vestal refused to pay the tax that would have kept him out of the Confederate army?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Do you think his life changed after the war? If so, in what ways?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 5

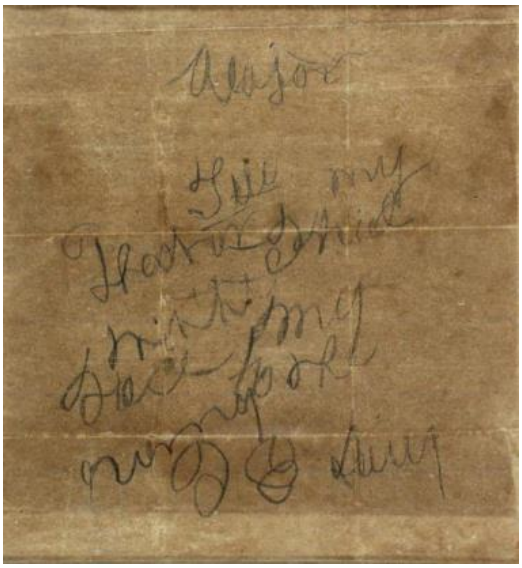
Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

I.E. Avery: Page A, Information

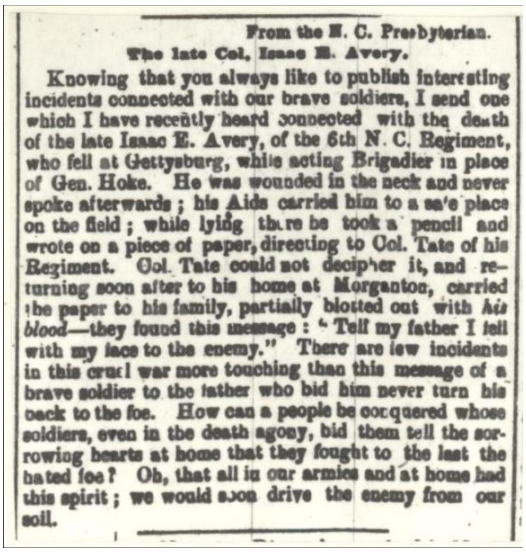
Isaac Erwin Avery was born in Burke County in 1828. Avery's family owned a lot of land in western North Carolina and was involved in farming, business, and government. Avery enlisted in the Confederate army was quickly promoted to colonel. In July 1863, Colonel Avery led an attack on Cemetery Hill at the Battle of Gettysburg. Colonel Avery led his men riding a large black warhorse. He was the only soldier on horseback in the attack. Avery was shot at the base of the neck and fell from his horse. Unable to speak, he took a pencil and a scrap of paper from his coat and wrote a note to his father. The blood-stained note was found near his hand. Avery died soon after in a field hospital. His soldiers made it to the top of Cemetery Hill, but without help they were forced to retreat.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

I.E. Avery: Page B, Primary Source



Transcript: Major Tell my Father I died with my face to the enemy I E Avery



From the N. C. Presbyterian.

The late Col. Isaac E. Avery.

Knowing that you always like to publish interesting incidents connected with our brave soldiers, I send one which I have recently heard connected with the death of the late Isaac E. Avery, of the 6th N. C. Regiment, who fell at Gettysburg, while acting Brigadier in place of Gen. Hoke. He was wounded in the neck and never spoke afterwards; his Aids carried him to a safe place on the field; while lying there he took a pencil and wrote on a piece of paper, directing to Col. Tate of his Regiment. Col. Tate could not decipher it, and returning soon after to his home at Morganton, carried the paper to his family, partially blotted out with *his blood*—they found this message: "Tell my father I fell with my face to the enemy." There are few incidents in this cruel war more touching than this message of a brave soldier to the father who bid him never turn his back to the foe. How can a people be conquered whose soldiers, even in the death agony, bid them tell the sorrowing hearts at home that they fought to the last the hated foe? Oh, that all in our armies and at home had this spirit; we would soon drive the enemy from our soil.

This image of an 1864 newspaper article about Avery encouraged devotion to the Confederate cause.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

I.E. Avery: Page C, Video Introduction

- In 1863 the Confederacy lost a major battle at Gettysburg.
- There was great suffering on the home front.
- Getting supplies became very difficult for the Confederacy.
- Some people wondered if it was time for peace.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

I.E. Avery: Worksheet

The answers to the blanks in Part 1 can be found on Information Page A and Primary Source Page B.

Part 1—Fill in the Blanks

Isaac Erwin Avery was born in _____ in _____ County. His family owned a lot of land in western North Carolina and was involved in _____, _____, and _____. Avery became a colonel in the _____ army. In July 1863, Avery led an attack on _____ at the Battle of _____. Avery alone rode a large warhorse. As he led his men up the hill, he was shot in the neck and fell to the ground. Unable to speak, he took from his coat a _____ and _____, Avery wrote a note: "_____."The last line of an 1864 newspaper article stated, "Oh, that all in our armies and at home had this spirit; _____."

Part 2—Discussion questions!

1. Why do you think Avery chose to ride a horse up Cemetery Hill?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Do you think life changed for Avery's family after the war? If so, in what ways?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Hat 6

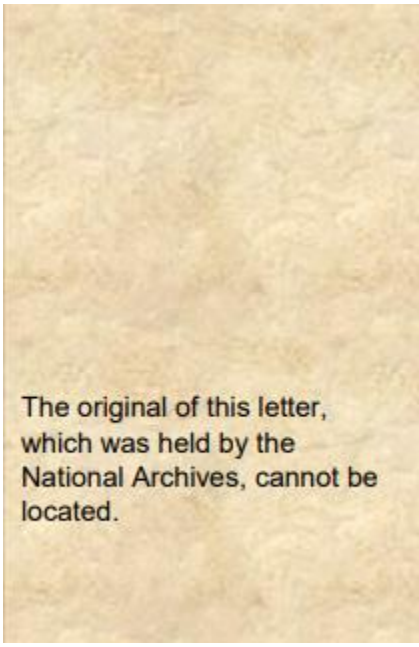
Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Richard Etheridge: Page A, Information

Richard Etheridge was born enslaved on Roanoke Island, in Dare County in 1842. Etheridge was taught to read and write by his owner's family. When Union forces captured Roanoke Island Etheridge left his owner and joined the Union army. Etheridge became a sergeant and helped recruit other soldiers. By the end of the war, over 5,000 black North Carolinians had joined the Union army. In 1866 Etheridge returned to Roanoke Island to help veterans from his regiment. Years later, Etheridge became the new commander, or keeper, of the Pea Island Lifesaving station. Etheridge's crew saved many lives when shipwrecks occurred. In 1996 the U.S. Coast Guard awarded the Gold Life-Saving Medal posthumously (after death) to Etheridge and his crew.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Richard Etheridge: Page B, Primary Source


The original of this letter, which was held by the National Archives, cannot be located.

[City Point?, Va. May or June 1865]

Genl We have served in the US Army faithfully and don our duty to our Country... but our family's are suffering.

We were promised that our family's should receive rations from government. . . . Our ration's are stolen from the ration house by Mr Steeter the Assistant Superintendent...and sold...

Mr Steeter is a thorough Copper head. . . . [He] takes no care of the colored people and has no Simpathy with the colored people. . . .

Our familys have no protection. The white soldiers break into our houses, act as they please, steal our chickens, rob our gardens and if any one defends their-Selves against them they are taken to the guard house for it.

Gen'l we the soldiers of the 36 U.S. Colored Troops humbly petition you to favour us by removeing Mr Streeter at Roanoke Island.

Signed in behalf of humanity Richard Etheridge and Wm Benson

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Richard Etheridge: Page C, Video Introduction

- In March 1865 Union general William T. Sherman invaded North Carolina.
- Confederate general Joseph E. Johnston's army was defeated on March 21 at Bentonville in North Carolina.
- April brought the Confederate surrender and an end to the war.

Civil War Stories
Distance Learning Class

Richard Etheridge: Worksheet

The answers to the blanks in Part 1 can be found on Information Page A and Primary Source Page B.

Part 1—Fill in the Blanks

Richard Etheridge was born enslaved on _____ Island in _____ County. The family of Etheridge's owner taught him to _____ and _____. Etheridge left his owner to join the 36th U.S. Colored Troops of the _____ army during the Civil War. Over _____ black North Carolinians joined the Union army during the war. After the war, Etheridge wrote to a government office to request the promised _____ for Union veterans' "family's." Etheridge complained about Mr. Streeter, who was supposed to help the freed African Americans. Etheridge wrote that Mr. Streeter was a thief. He called him a thorough "_____."Etheridge got a job working for a _____ station on Roanoke Island and became the keeper, or _____, of the Pea Island station in 1879.

Part 2—Discussion questions!

1. Why do you think the government helped freed African Americans after the Civil War?

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Do you think life changed for Etheridge after the war? If so, in what ways?

   _____

   _____

   _____