Ordinary Children
Extraordinary Legacies
Childhood During the American Civil War

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ORDINARY CHILDREN

EXTRAORDINARY LEGACIES

CHILDHOOD DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Fig. 1. Carrie Berry (courtesy of the Atlanta History Center); rpt. in Emmy E. Werner,

Reluctant Witnesses: Children's Voices from the Civil War (CO: Westview Press, 1998) 107.

by Deborah S. Holder

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CONTENTS

Preface

Let me be honest--as an elementary, junior high, and high school student, I had little, if any, interest in history. I found it boring and repetitive and I still cannot recall the facts of historical moments that were so diligently taught to me by well-meaning teachers. To me, history class consisted of memorizing dates and events and then answering test questions that did not incite thought but instead required me to state, verbatim, what the teacher had lectured the week before. As a result, I still forgot key facts about the growth of our country because memorizing dates didn't appeal to me, nor did it allow me to make a connection to its people. History was dull, impersonal, and had no meaning.

When I was awarded the Blake Scholarship, I was required to write a thesis about Confederate literature. I thought it ironic that a self-proclaimed apathetic historian be given the assignment to write a scholarly thesis about a subject I knew so little about. Trying to discover a new twist to an old subject was perplexing to me, especially since I had forgotten more than I had retained from previous history and social studies classes. I did not want to repeat the practices of my teachers by regurgitating old facts; instead, I aspired to write a thesis that was intriguing to me as a researcher and to you, the reader. I wanted to go beyond reporting the facts; I wanted to discover the truth. To achieve this finding I had to write a piece of literature that explored the sociological and psychological breadth and depth of a historical moment. Consequently, I felt it necessary to produce an emotional connection to the people whose everyday lives created history by coincidence due to their proximity to the action.

It was my course work in English, not history, that taught me the most about our country and its people. English literature courses allowed me to see history in a new light, a humanistic light. My graduate course work, coupled with undergraduate work in psychology and sociology,

affected the way I read literature, particularly from Native American and Southern writers. Instead of focusing on the plot, I processed the psychological and sociological implications that these writers and their characters faced in a changing world. I also discovered that tenacious authors faced sociological backlash by writing about actual or fictionalized events, and the interpretation of this literature often created a revisionist--whether accurate or skewed--history. What I learned most, however, is this: to study history one must study its people and the widespread repercussions of just trying to survive in an ever-changing and unpredictable milieu. By focusing on these individual experiences and perceptions, my enthusiasm for history gained momentum.

Marshall University's Blake Collection provided the main literary springboard for my manuscript. Abundant in Civil War textbooks, the Blake Room furnished authenticity to my findings. In a figurative sense, the literature transported me back into 1850s and 1860s and allowed me to vicariously experience the changing societal mores of the nineteenth century. As evidenced from these texts, Southern children were born into a heritage of honor. Reflected in grammar school lessons was a culture of wounded sensibilities and a desperate effort to recapture esteem. My discourse involves interpreting literary themes from Confederate textbooks and blending a mixture of contemporary psychological and sociological trauma studies. The result was a New Historicist analysis based on literary interpretations and modern psychoanalytic findings. In fact, there are five major key assumptions of New Historicism that fuels the focus of my research:

1. that every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices;

2. that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes.

3. that literary and non-literary "texts" circulate inseparably;

4. that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging

truths nor expresses inalterable human nature;

> 5. Finally, as emerges powerfully in this volume, that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe. (Veeser xi)

My goal, along with other New Historicists, involves describing a culture in action: "New Historicists eschew overarching hypothetical constructs in favor of surprising coincidences" (Veeser xii). I have interpreted my findings based not only on texts, but from my individual interpretations about these events:

> New Historicism renegotiates these relationships between texts and other signifying practices, going so far (Terence Hawkes has observed) as to dissolve "literature" back into the historical complex that academic criticism has traditionally held at arm's length. It retains at the same time, those methods and materials that gave old fashioned literary study its immense interpretive authority. (Veeser xii)

It is my intent to shed new light on the past by, in essence, listening to the voices from the deceased children. By connecting these individual interpretations to the real events of the American Civil War, I hope to provide a humanistic perspective of a war that was surrounded by both contraction and sorrow.

In the process of my research, I became aware of my own family's connection to the Civil War. I felt a kinship to these children as I studied writings from the Beckwith family, ancestors of my maternal grandfather. Knowing that I am part of the Civil War legacy has strengthened my conviction to understand how the children suffered, survived, and learned from their experiences. As a result of discovering my heritage and my reactions to that finding, I became enthusiastic

about not just the history of our country, but the collective meanings that people assigned to their experiences. Because of my own response to these individual recollections of the past, I decided to write history not only from a psychological/ sociological perspective; I chose to make an emotional connection to its participants. But in order to make that connection, I needed to assign a contemporary link to it. Hence, I made an affiliation from my life to the past by focusing on what I know--motherhood. Because I am the mother of three young children, I found myself drawn to the experiences of our country's youth. My attraction to this segment of the population reflected not only my maternal feelings, but reiterated the fact that in order to create an understanding of our history, we must empathize with its people.

I chose to focus upon Civil War children because we all have something in common with them--the experience of childhood. In my opinion, no other group in history has accomplished so much for our country with so little recognition. Although the Civil War became a war around the issues that in part regarded slavery, I chose not to highlight this segment of the population because the written histories of African-American slaves are limited in number. Instead, I focused on the forgotten, soft voices of children in the American Civil War. I represent them not as a race, but as a small group of people trying to make sense of their childhoods--an experience each of us can relate to. By recognizing ourselves in the children who helped shaped our nation, we can cherish even more the freedoms we normally take for granted. Because we've all been children, we can make that connection to the little heroes in our lives that we remember from faded photographs and from our family oral histories as our ancestral grandparents.

Introduction

War heroes do not have to wear uniforms, display meritorious medals for bravery and sacrifice, or voluntarily fight for their country in military regiments. The real heroes are **all** people touched by conflict. The strategy of war positions the powerful against the powerless, thereby creating an absurd imbalance within society. Hence, ordinary citizens become heroes not by decision but by circumstance; had they a choice, they most certainly would not choose to participate in war. Joseph Heller once said about his war novel: "*Catch-22* says that people in power have a right to do to us anything we can't stop them from doing" (The Learning Channel). Unfortunately children, too, are often the casualties of a political Catch-22. Civil War children were the offspring of a conflicted society and they bore the brunt of the warfare. Certainly Civil War children represented the weaker segment of society and did not have the influence to stop the conflict. They did, however, become political pawns of a country torn apart. Their presence represented what we had lost in the bloody conflicts; their lives gave us hope about what we had to gain. They were victims, survivors, and heroes.

Most Civil War children did not aspire to become heroes. Many acts of heroism happened quite by accident. Many children, however, became heroes because they were "drafted" involuntarily by virtue of their proximity to the fighting. They experienced harsh and dangerous conditions and maneuvered dangerously within their environment. The dangers to these children posed many risks, sometimes fatal. Children were too often killed by accidental shootings. Many children, such as the nineteen who died at St. Mary's Orphan Home in Natchez, were infected with smallpox and measles by nearby soldiers (Marten, *Children's* 110). The American Civil War became dangerous not only due to the ammunition and weaponry they were exposed to, but the viruses and bacteria that ran rampant in the 1860s.

While many children were horrified by the fighting, some found it exciting, even an exhilarating adventure. Regardless of their perceptions, much of what they endured was not documented, and we will never realize the full impact of their experiences. However, to **not** recognize the children who both survived and lost their lives due to these tragic circumstances is to negate their importance and their contributions to our country. Most children blended anonymously into society and their voices were silenced, but that does not nullify their importance to the cohesion of our country. Civil War children were and still are of great importance:

> You know that, if you break a small wheel in a cotton-mill, the entire
>
> machinery will stop; and if the moon--one of the smallest lumps of
>
> matter in the universe--shall fall from its orbit, the whole planetary
>
> system might go reeling and tumbling about like a drunken man. So
>
> you see the great importance of little things,--and little *folks* are of
>
> much greater importance than little *things.*
>
> --Kirke, "The Boy of Chancellorsville," 600 (qtd. in Marten, *Lessons* xi)

Yes, children are important. Even in the 1860s, authors recognized the contributions that these children made to their society. In the selection above, Edmund Kirke wrote "The Boy of Chancellorsville" to commemorate the story of Robert, a child hero who seemingly commits a series of minor but important acts during the American Civil War. Like many authors of his time, Kirke emphasized that children are important to the cohesion of the community: "If they do their best and stay true to themselves, they can contribute mightily to their family's well-being, to their society, and to their country's war effort" (Marten, *Lessons* xi). Until recently, the importance of children during wartime has gone largely unrecognized by historical scholars, perhaps because the overwhelming interest was in the well-publicized and widely documented histories of adult war

heroes. While noteworthy youngsters like drummer boy Johnny Clem (who was barely ten-years-old when he ran away to join the army) have received wide acclaim, little attention has been given to the general population of children who braved the war. A silent void in history warrants attention; our ancestors, the children of the wars that preceded us were not silent bystanders, but active participants in an embattled world. They did not need to strike a military drum or fight in regiments to impact change. By knowing their stories and how they survived, we can apply that knowledge to contemporary war victims and draw parallels that will not only help us understand their plights, but become more effective in easing their traumas.

Children who survive war give us an honest interpretation of the events. Their stories are noteworthy because they give us a firsthand reminiscence of the experience of being surrounded by hostilities. Although children of all wars face similar circumstances, children of the American Civil War faced unique challenges when compared to children who live in countries where international war has been declared. To understand this fully, we must discriminate between what it means to declare a war against a nation and compare that to the purpose of a civil war. Annemiek Richters makes the distinction: the aim of declared wars is "to destroy the political system of the enemy and its leader," but the goal of civil war is different. When a civil war happens, the aim "is to destroy the culture and the identity of the population, and consequently the future of the enemy" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 117-18).

Children of the American Civil War, especially in the South, watched their culture change as the destruction of war tore apart their families, their homes, and their ways of life. The war devastated familial security, and it changed the identity of the nation as a whole. Northerners and Southerners no longer identified themselves as a collective, unified nation. Instead, Southerners declared the Confederate States of America as separate and distinct from the rest of the country.

Furthermore, the Civil War not only changed the identity of the United States, it changed what was perceived as acceptable and unacceptable behavior. As the nation changed, so did the children. Antebellum ideals about what made good little boys and girls changed from a decorum of politeness to a cautious suspicion toward others based further on political affiliation and race.

The Civil War not only broke the traditional stereotypes about what was good and proper; it stole away the idealized safe childhoods of the past and replaced them with catastrophic experiences. Children witnessed and experienced violence in their home terrain, and this chaos continually plagued their minds and made them fearful of the future. This malaise, in turn, led to many long-term psychological issues. When children experience a catastrophic event such as war, they experience a collective shift in their world views. It is this collective shift that bears weight on how they will process their experiences. "What is distinctive about the experience...would lie in the meanings brought to bear upon them, meanings which would shape what the sufferer thinks and does about the problem" (qtd. in Bracken and Perry 31). Years later after Civil War children reached adulthood, they would perceive the war "as a turning point in their lives" and document their experiences in memoirs and autobiographies (Marten, *Children's* 221). Southerners tended to perceive life before the war as "the good old days and the good old ways" (Marten, *Children's* 221) while Northerners "could not separate its social, political, economic, and racial confusion from the war itself" (Marten, *Children's* 224).

For more than a year now, the American Civil War has been the focus of my research. This experience has changed my apathy to enthusiasm and has stirred emotions inside of me that I did not expect to feel at the inception of this project. I felt despair when I researched the horror that all people endured during this war; I felt joy when I read about the victory of the North; and I felt rage when I discovered the racist messages that children were taught as truth. Most of all,

however, I was sickened to learn how ordinary citizens experienced devastating hardships and loss, all in the name of war. "Children, too, are not just 'innocent' and passive victims, but also active citizens whose values and causes are connected to collective meanings and memories....The more they were exposed to political hardship, the more they deployed active and courageous coping modes" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 23).

Children negotiate their world differently than adults, and their lives represent our hopes for the future. Their stories provide focus to our past and magnify our mistakes. The purpose of this thesis is to serve as a historical magnifying glass; in order to understand the reality of war, we must focus our vision past the obvious events and look closely at the situations that were equally as important, but perhaps less obvious. The more we concentrate on the big picture, the less we realize about the entire picture. Furthermore, for what we do **not** know, we lose an integral part of our American history. A void is created by this omission and a crucial war issue is devalued--the extent of human suffering. Just as a crawling infant sees clearly objects that we are far too removed from to notice, children in crisis pay close attention to the intimate details of their surroundings that affect all of us:

> Children are not simply short adults. There is a human kinship that unites
>
> children and adults, but there are significant cognitive, emotional, linguistic,
>
> and physical differences that separate us. Adults who seek to understand
>
> children in war must recognize these differences. Children who seek to make
>
> sense of the world must contend with the differences in their efforts to get
>
> their needs met. After recognizing this gap, however, we as adults must
>
> seek to bridge it through accessing our own childhoods and searching
>
> developmental science for knowledge, sympathy, and understanding.

We must listen to children and see children as they are. (qtd. in Apfel and

Simon 34)

The importance of youth in our nation's history may be a missing chapter in contemporary

textbooks, but without recognition of our youngest citizen's experiences, we do not view history as

a panoramic portrait, but through a narrow lens that gives us a limited focus of war and its

resultant human suffering and sacrifice. Although childhood memories about the war may not

exist in a pristine form, we must realize that these recollections shaped children's identities and

how they coped with life:

> Children who live in nations torn by war for many years feel that their
>
> neighborhoods are dangerous and their world unsafe. They cannot
>
> walk down the streets with a sense of mastery, ownership, and security.
>
> Instead, the sight of wounded and dead bodies on the sidewalk and the
>
> sounds of nightly gunfire are daily reminders of the hazards they must
>
> negotiate; friends in caskets are evidence of what could happen to them.
>
> (Marans, Berkman, and Cohen qtd. in Apfel and Simon 105)

Although memories may change and their accuracy is questionable, the effects of memory have

both psychological and sociological impact nevertheless. According to Steven Marans, Miriam

Berkman, and Donald Cohen in their essay, "Child Adaptation to Catastrophic Circumstances,"

the effects of war on children is long-term and acute:

> Children who witness violence do so in the context of
>
> developmentally shifting modes of expressing their own aggressive
>
> impulses and feelings. Aggressivity plays a central role in development
>
> as a means of achieving a sense of power and competence; it is also a

source of conflict between love and hate. (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 107)

Our ancestral children used these shifting attitudes to contribute to the shaping of America. The importance of children in our history is noteworthy because it represents the small but necessary constituents of our lineage. Until we know the breadth of their contributions, we cannot realistically understand the cumulative effect that their "little acts" had upon the shaping of our nation. Children of the 1860s were literally thrust into the fire and learned to cope with their circumstances through trial and error. The Civil War was both a learning and unlearning experience for America's children. On one hand, children held fast to the optimism of their pasts, hoping for a similar future. On the other hand, the consequences of war tainted their perceptions about life and children's voices reflected the changing societal mores. With one foot in the past and another stepping toward the future, a Civil War child developed his or her own beliefs about the ideas of justice and injustice. The war ended life as these children once knew it, but it gave birth to a changing nation and these children became integral catalysts for change.

Past historians have narrowed their focus to the facts about war, but I believe that a wide gap exists between the facts and truths of our American history. As an undergraduate student of psychology, I encountered an example given to me that illustrated the difference between facts and the truth: "There are lies, damned lies, and statistics." In other words, we can spin facts to represent our biases, but these "facts" do not necessarily represent truth. As a Master's level English student, I have been trained to focus on important details and represent them honestly and accurately.

The theoretical marriage of both psychological/sociological insights and literary analysis directs me to take a New Historicist approach to reading and interpreting a multiplicity of Civil War texts. By understanding literature of the American Civil War, we can understand the social

problems of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, critical focus on specific literary works adds a anthropological analysis of our culture. As a New Historicist, my goal is to interpret how literature reflects the societal mores as well as how society influences literary movements. From these interpretations we can differentiate between the sentiments of the nineteenth century and our own; although some the findings may be contradictory or distasteful to our modern sensibilities.

Studying the psychological and sociological impact that war has on the general population is important cultural work Literature allows us to see past the statistics and privileges us with a historical discourse of competing thoughts, opinions, and mores of a society. Most importantly, texts serve as an interpretive framework and introduce us to a diversity of voices; the epistemology of an engaged culture. As a New Historicist, I find out as much about me as the interpreter of history as I do about the actual events; New Historicism relies not only on research from others, but on personal ideologies about a particular historical occurrence. Most importantly, I want to look past the dehumanization of statistical analysis and breathe life into the departed Civil War children and their memories:

> When those in power refuse to own up to atrocious acts committed
>
> by agents in their name, they seem still to be insisting that the
>
> "disappeared" either never existed or were not the victims but
>
> the guilty ones....people understood that restoring the dead
>
> to the social fabric of their times was not just a matter of
>
> private significance and grief. It was important in connecting
>
> those lost lives to the causes of violent conflict and the motivation
>
> of its major players, in measuring the true cost of the violence and
>
> mending the holes in the fabric that had resulted. The dead are lost

but they my be redeemed to the extent that their names and

fates recover a place on the public stage and their stories

become part of contemporary history, on whose scales they

weighted something. (qtd. In Bracken and Petty 26-27)

It is my goal to redeem the children's Civil War and give meaning to their experiences. This thesis

will give a child's eye view of their suffering. It will touch less on the political propaganda and

focus most closely into what it was like to be a child as war raged throughout the land. By looking

into the past, we recognize that ordinary children--much like our own--have achieved extraordinary

accomplishments in the face of adversity. Furthermore, by studying these children, we see how

the threads of our own families were woven together to form new generations and how history was

made by something that we take for granted--just living from day to day.

Chapter One

The Civil War Comes to the Children

"In time of peace what children feel concerns

the lives of the children as children but in time

of war there is not children's lives and grown

up lives there is just lives." --Gertrude Stein

(qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 186)

The American Civil War affected nearly everyone in the United States. Prior to the war, families promoted the values of religion and hard work. There were distinct models of femininity and masculinity; little girls were instructed to act like proper young ladies, and little boys were taught to be responsible men. In both the North and South, childhood innocence was preserved and celebrated. There was a heavy emphasis on morality, and children were typically taught that obedience and piety would lead them to heaven.

Despite the emphasis on religion, morality, and propriety, there was an emotional unrest prior to the war; slavery was promoted in Confederate states, while it was more often disdained in the North. In general, Southerners considered slavery an economic necessity while the Northerners considered such human enslavement an atrocity. Tensions that were building prior to the American Civil War became not only obvious by the inception of the fighting, but became issues of solidarity and "otherness" to the nation. The nation had conflicting mindsets, and the war encapsulated these ideas and divided the nation. There was a psychological shift from an emphasis upon individual values to an emphasis upon regional allegiance.

War also changed the family structure. While military regiments increased in numbers, family sizes decreased as fathers and sons left for war. This shift in family structure meant that

mothers accepted new and increased familial responsibilities. Accordingly, the roles of children

also changed dramatically. They became pseudo-adults in many instances, taking care of

families, assuming additional household duties, and contributing to the war effort in small but

necessary ways, such as producing lint to pack into wounds or to make socks for soldiers:

> Referred to as "scraping" or "picking," it was a nearly ubiquitous
>
> activity that children could do in their spare time; a New Orleans
>
> school devoted recess time to the chore. Sometimes it seemed
>
> a little anticlimactic to youngsters thrown into a frenzy by the war.
>
> When nine-year-old Maurice Egan and his Philadelphia friends
>
> failed to get into the army as drummers, he complained that they
>
> "were reduced to making lint for the army" with the girls. Others
>
> found the chore less degrading. In one small Wisconsin town,
>
> "even little children worked" with their mothers at Soldier's Aid
>
> Society meetings at the Baptist church. "Very important we
>
> children felt," Clara Lenroot remembered, "as we scraped away
>
> at the linen, making fluffy piles of the soft lint 'for the soldiers.'"
>
> (Marten, *Children's* 177)

Many of their contributions were so small that these children did not realize the importance of

them; however, it was these "little things" that contributed to the larger themes of the day: family

cohesion, hard work, and patriotism. "The tedious work, exciting stories, and sense of contributing

to the larger community 'thrilled us and left indelible memories,'" according to Lenroot (Marten,

Children's 177).

Adults began to address children differently during the 1860s. Childhood lessons dramatically changed as the war raged throughout the south. The war, however, brought focus to different issues: broken families, destruction, poverty, and failure. Family members left, never to return again; Santa Claus stopped coming because he could not cross battle lines; and innocent childhood literature was peppered with themes of racism, poverty, and death. For some the war was a burden, for others it became a symbol for our nation's freedom. Although a generation of children lived through the American Civil War, their perceptions varied depending on their experiences.

The war was an emotionally charged time, and children could not be sheltered from it. Southern home life was no refuge from the fighting, as passing troops became constant reminders of the conflict. Even bedtime stories and educational literature focused upon North versus South issues; children's literature, which promoted family values during the antebellum years, became politically and racially focused, even for its youngest readers. In fact, many nineteenth-century authors viewed childhood as preparation for adulthood, and Southern textbooks, especially, became increasingly ethnocentric. The Civil War forced children into an adult milieu that they were neither prepared for nor experienced enough to confront. Cousins living apart in the North and South became adversaries by political association, racism was taught in Southern schoolbooks, and poverty forced children to work for pennies or beg for food to contribute to the support of their broken families.

The end result of these broken families was a resurgence in need for family cohesion. The safety and security of home that was often taken for granted in the antebellum years became a missing link to the past that all children sought. Many children lost their families and America adopted a generation of orphans, a casualty of war still known today: "There is...clear evidence

that increasing numbers of children are being placed in institutions as a direct result and indirect

consequence of war" (Bracken and Petty 7).

Children who lived through the American Civil War hoped to regain, in a sense, what they

had lost, even though many of their family members might have died due to war-related injuries or

disease. As Southern children of the Civil War became adults, they considered the postbellum

years "ruined by the war" (Marten, *Children's* 221). Their one-sided reminiscences of the

advantages of slavery is reflected in the existing memoirs we have today. Southern memoirists'

recollections of slavery are often idyllic, failing to empathize or recognize the injustices inflicted

upon slaves prior to emancipation. Some children, however, who were very young prior to the

Emancipation Proclamation, remembered slaves as faithful friends. Those who were older when

the war started felt awkward when slaves became free: "Evelyn Ward, twelve when the war ended,

remembered how strange it was to look at her father's former slaves and 'know they were no

longer our little maids and men'" (Marten, *Children's* 221).

Children comprised over one-third of the population of the United States at the inception of

the Civil War, and their compelling images of battle document their most personal and terrifying

experiences. The psychological effects varied according to the experiences of individual children;

some experienced violence directly either by observing it or becoming a victim to it, while others

were affected by the war because of casualties that happened to people they knew. Northern

children were devastated by the death of parents, siblings, and friends who fought, while many

Southern children, who witnessed battle firsthand, became war casualties. Many children

experienced war from the battlefields, outrunning airborne ammunition and sometimes dying from

fatal injuries. Still many children suffered from malnutrition, a tragic circumstance of the war that

contributed to the deaths of many people. Children resorted to desperate measures to eat,

sometimes picking undigested corn out of farm animal droppings.

Regardless of the level of violence experienced, the traumatic events of the 1860s were

never forgotten by Civil War children, and years after it ended, the war remained the subject of

diaries, letters, and oral histories. The replaying of these events was cathartic to some war

survivors and assisted in their psychological healing:

> Some horrific war experiences are so overwhelming that children may
>
> try to suppress their memories rather than confront them. But time does
>
> not heal such trauma unless it *is* confronted. The very act of talking or
>
> writing about it is a way for child survivors of wars to begin the healing
>
> process. The children and teenagers who wrote about their experiences
>
> in the American Civil War may have already discovered that road to
>
> recovery. Some of their most vivid eyewitness accounts were perhaps
>
> more than the mere telling of an exciting tale to their family and friends--
>
> they may have been a way to mend themselves and to put together
>
> the pieces of their shattered lives. (Werner 151)

Although many childhood survivors of the war tried to suppress painful memories, healing came

faster for those who shared their experiences aloud or documented their feelings in writing. For

those who had familial support, the healing process came even more quickly; however, for those

who were orphaned, lack of a support system prolonged their recovery. The protection of family

members before, during, and after the war was essential to their psychological well-being. For all

child survivors of war, the crucial factor necessary to their emotional healing came from the

adults's reaction to the stress and chronic danger of war. Contemporary researchers have found

that although children are traumatized by the circumstances of war, the presence of calming

adults--most importantly, their parents--facilitated stronger coping skills within the child. "Once

adults begin to decompensate and to panic, however, children suffer" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 41).

Because children perceive adults as the protectors, images of panic-stricken, powerless role

models threatens the security of their world. When parents panicked or became depressed,

messages of safety were no longer evident, and the parents often could not accurately interpret

the needs of their children. When children develop in a social vacuum such as this, the behavior

of the adults in the child's life becomes crucial to the child's proximal development: "the difference

between what the child can accomplish alone and what the child can accomplish with the guidance

of a competent adult" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 41). Poverty coupled with parental neglect,

undermines the social development of children. "War can do this damage and more" (qtd. in Apfel

and Simon 43). The American Civil War exacerbated this pain for its children.

The possibility of emotional and physical recovery also depended upon their individual

interpretations of what they had endured. "Trauma arises when the child cannot give meaning to

dangerous experiences in the presence of overwhelming arousal." Because of their need for

emotional security and their reaction to the threats around them, children often deal with war

differently than adults by believing in the magic of fantasy; the belief in the fantastic "gives them

access to magical sources of strength and protection through highly personalized issues" (qtd. in

Apfel and Simon 39).

For those who witnessed death and destruction first hand, emotional healing vacillated,

while those who regarded their ordeals as great adventures assumed emotional stability in less

time: "Studies of child survivors of contemporary wars suggest that those youngsters are most

likely to be traumatized who have witnessed violence against family members, suffered violence

themselves, experienced loss or bereavement, and lacked the support of their families and their

community" (Werner 152-3). As with any survivors of violence, threatened or actual, Post

Traumatic Stress Syndrome became an enduring consequence for some:

> Experiences that are cognitively overwhelming and that produce
>
> overwhelming arousal may evoke a process in which
>
> understanding these experiences has pathogenic side effects.
>
> That is, in coping with traumatic events, the child is forced into
>
> patterns of behavior, thought, and feelings that are themselves
>
> "abnormal" when contrasted with those of the untraumatized
>
> child. Children are particularly vulnerable to the trauma caused
>
> by death and fear. For example, in a study by Davidson and
>
> Smith (1990), those children exposed to trauma before age
>
> ten were more likely to exhibit PTSD than were those exposed
>
> after age twelve. (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 40)

Symptoms of PTSD are prevalent in many war survivors and include "alterations of personality,

major changes in patterns of behavior, or ideological interpretations of the world that provide a

framework for making sense of ongoing danger (Garbarino et al., 1992). This is particularly true

when that danger comes from the violent overthrow of day-to-day social reality, as is the case in

war, communal violence, or chronic violent crime" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 40). Nightmares,

enuresis, fear of strangers and loud noises, and fear of separation from family plagued children's

and adult's lives for years after the Civil War, much the same as the emotional aftereffects of war

on soldiers who fought in combat. Something as simple as a knock at the door may evoke fear in

children, remembering times when their family homes were invaded by army regiments. While no

long-term medical studies exist for Civil War children, Bruce Perry found that children who were

removed from David Koresh's Branch Dividian complex in Waco, Texas exhibited an

overwhelming, continuous sense of arousal and elevated heart rates, which is normally present in

the face of danger, not everyday living situations (Apfel and Simon 40). It could reasonably be

ascertained that Civil War children suffered from the same anxieties.

American society also fell victim to the psychological effects of war upon its children. One

of the results noted by twentieth century historians is that Civil War youth became more rebellious.

The closing of many schools had a detrimental impact upon children. With less discipline and less

enforced order in their lives, children became reckless. Acting out for some children became a cry

for help; children felt much more secure when life was predictable and controlled. Others took

advantage of the chaos by lowering the inhibitions that society had previously imposed upon them.

Girls, exhibiting more rebellious behavior toward their mothers, developed incorrigible

temperaments that could not be tamed. Boys living in the Confederacy formed gangs, committing

minor crimes such as bullying smaller children and Negro refugees, and more serious crimes such

as firing guns at innocent bystanders. Rebellious youth also vandalized property, committed

robbery, and became general nuisances to the public. B.H. Wilkins wrote, "They had all caught

the fighting spirit, just like the new soldier boys. Their battles were like Second Manassas or

Antietam with rocks and had to be broken up by policemen" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 163).

These behaviors are in marked contrast to the obedience that was emphasized during antebellum

America; in fact, the chaos of the nation shaped the changing attitudes of the citizens. For young

Americans, the resultant violence and rebelliousness reflected their fears concerning the long

gone emotional and physical security they longed for prior to the war. The acts of violence were

side effects of the fears war incited in youngsters. It also demonstrated their "desire to integrate

their horrible experiences with their hopes" and subsequently, boys and girls acted out their

aggressions. As with contemporary war survivors, Civil War children wanted to make sense of a

world gone chaotic; their perceptions about solutions to the conflict varied according to gender. In

a study conducted by Celia Petty and Elizabeth Jareg, exposure to distressing circumstances and

further traumas for contemporary war children generated this common response, regardless of

their experiences. Furthermore, another study found this result: "Boys often say that they wish to

be soldiers to avenge their lost loved ones through violence. Girls, however, are more invested in

reestablishing and maintaining community" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 42). Civil War children would

attempt to do both.

The community as they knew it, however, was gone. Prewar child rearing practices

encouraged aggressiveness in boys, yet mothers were not comfortable encouraging this behavior.

Discipline normally came from fathers, although it rarely involved "physical coercion or

punishment" (Werner 133). Fathers imposed limits, but their behavioral management was based

upon discipline that was repugnant, not punitive, to the child: "When the departure of fathers for

war upset this patriarchal order, the tenuous balance between indulgence and control was tipped

in ways women often found difficult to redress" (Werner 133-4). "The danger for war-affected

children, is that their sometimes difficult behaviour can be interpreted as 'naughtiness' and

punished, for example by caning, isolation and insulting verbal reprimands. Again, these are all

factors which hinder the healing of psychological wounds" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 157). In war,

the family structure changes and the familial adaptive style mirrors its surroundings. A 1982 study

about refugee families illustrates the unique adaptations that war forces upon its families:

"Economic pursuits, sex roles, courting and marriage, child bearing, and child rearing occur within

the context of the family. The family aids acculturation to the extent that it can support its

members as they undergo changes in these areas. But to the extent that the family opposes such changes, it can add to the children's burdens" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 85). Civil War children adapted to this acculturation by mirroring the chaos that surrounded them. Hence, the dysfunctional familial milieu effected change within the community and not surprisingly, the nation.

Family demands, coupled with anxiety and depression about absent warfaring fathers and sons, exhausted women and they expressed their frustrations in letters and diaries. Mary Bell of Tennessee described her daughter as a "lioness" (qtd. in Faust 130), and "Cornelia Noble of Texas acknowledged her 'deep solicitude about my children' but confessed a painful awareness of 'how poorly and ineffectually I govern them'" (qtd. in Faust 131). Children rebelled against the absence of their fathers by lashing out, and mothers bore the brunt of their incorrigibility. Children often refused to obey their mothers, and tempers flared as children reacted to the apparent stress in the household. Anger about the war and the resulting separation from family and friends increased disciplinary problems on the home front. There are a variety of factors within the family structure that contributed to the childhood pathogenesis of the American Civil War, and this is a common thread among all children who experience similar trauma. For instance, if parents experience trauma or death, this tragedy threatens the child's security. Many times in the instances of war, the passing of events does not allow that child to openly grieve the loss, thereby necessitating another outlet for the grief. Often the primary caregiver, most generally the mothers, neglect and abuse their own children in reaction to the grief they are feeling.

Soldiers tried to control their misbehaving children via letters, albeit ineffectually. As the war raged, so did many of its children. Even if absent fathers attempted to influence their children from a distance, mothers assumed hands-on responsibility for the day-to-day child care. Depressed by the uncertainty of their futures, women grieved openly and their children felt their

despair. To some mothers the presence of children comforted them, while others felt burdened. While some women sought motherhood as a means of personal satisfaction to distract them from the war, other women could not enjoy motherhood with the impending threats that were the consequence of military strife. The extra responsibility of children only intensified their frustrations and despair while they worried about husbands, sons, fathers, and brothers in the war. Also, the unpredictability of home invasions increased their discomfort. The absence of men in the household changed the dynamics of the family structure, and behavioral problems among siblings escalated. One Louisiana woman wrote to her soon-to-be betrothed cousin, "I wish you peace, security, and happiness, and few children in this time of war" (qtd. in Faust 129).

Modern day historians and psychologists have theorized that the absence of fathers and older brothers contributed to the martial violence in youth, especially in the Confederate South, which was notably a more violent society:

> Although it is impossible to know how much of this behavior can be
> attributed to conditions brought about by the crisis, some contemporaries
> did blame the war for the restlessness and willfulness of children. A
> Northern expert on juvenile delinquency suggested that the absence of
> fathers and older brothers had "removed the restraints which had
> held in check many wayward boys," unleashing a "tide of disobedience
> and incipient crime," while another estimated that one-fourth of all
> wartime child offenders had fathers or brothers in the army. (qtd. in Marten,
> *Children's* 169)

Rebellious youth were children in crisis, innocent victims of a war that had removed the emotional and physically stability in their lives. Ironically, rebellious children wanted peace but their

incorrigibility masked their fears. Sometimes children mirror their surroundings, even if their

behaviors do not reflect their true feelings. Civil War children were trapped between wanting "what

was" and existing between "what is." This confusion led to behaviors that they found difficult to

manage.

The rise in new child offenders caused reform schools and asylums to release their older

inmates to military service. Surprisingly, wartime annual reports document the "loyal service and

steady habits of inmates of refuges and asylums who went into the Union army, no doubt to

impress both current inmates and the politicians and philanthropists on whom they depended for

funding" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 169).

Although there was a marked increase in youth rebellion during the Civil War years, not all

children reacted violently. Some children became helpmates to their mothers. Sarah Kennedy

wrote to her husband that they had turned into a "Yankee family." With the departure of the

slaves, her children had assumed their responsibilities. Some women found "the love and intimacy

denied them in their disrupted marriages" through their children (Faust 129). When women

reacted in this way, familial closeness increased. Undeniably, the trauma of war deepened their

sense of family commitment, and the imposing threat of death was a source of anxiety for mothers

and children alike. The war strengthened family cohesion for some.

The capricious acts of this war, tempered with both kindness toward others and hostility to

all, deepened a sense of suspicion in its people, including the children. The American Civil War

was marked with psychological contradictions; the grand representation of war documented in

newspapers and magazines bombarded children with stories, songs, and poetry of patriotic glory

while the reality of war caused hardship and sorrow. There was often a difference between the

literary depiction of events and the bleak reality of them. Certainly the fighting was romanticized

by some authors and its participants; valiant heroes became a favorite subject of Civil War

propaganda and such publicity sent many young soldiers to the battlefields with dreams of

heroism. After boys enlisted in the military, however, they found a different scenario awaiting.

Private George Alphonso Gibbs of the Eighteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment must have

recognized this disparity when he told his men: "You my boys...know that war is not the fine

adventure it is represented to be by novelists and historians, but a dirty bloody mess, unworthy of

people who claim to be civilized" (qtd. in Werner 1).

In fact, the American Civil War was "the bloodiest conflict ever fought on American soil"

(Werner 2). More soldiers perished in this war than any other American conflict, and diseases

killed many soldiers and civilians alike. Conditions were horrid; soldiers marched all day in

adverse weather conditions and they slept in mosquito-infested tents. Disease ran rampant;

conditions were "primitive and unsanitary" (Werner 19). Despite the efforts of Civil War physicians,

their ignorance about effective medical treatments provided more emotional comfort to dying

soldiers than actual relief. "It was as though intellectual paralysis had seized every aspect of

American medical thought in the mid-1800s. In its ignorance, the medical profession split into

warring factions, like contending religious cults" (Lowry 100). The naturopaths, neuropaths,

osteopaths, and hydropaths disagreed about treatment processes. Many drugs manifested the

same symptoms as the diseases under treatment. Allopaths, the Civil War version of today's

physicians, had some surgical knowledge and success, but many surgeries, specifically

amputations, facilitated infections, increased hemorrhaging, and even quickened death for their

patients.

When the war hit the United States, it became an integral part of the culture until the

fighting ceased and for years thereafter. Though "everyone talked of war" (qtd. in Werner 7),

Northern and Southern youngsters felt the devastation with varying degrees of severity. Northerners were not subjected to as much of the physicality, yet the psychological impact of the death of family members influenced their psyches. The crushing effects of losing a father or brother in battle was a heavy burden for children; their senses of stability were shaken as family members went off to war, never to return again. This uncertainty exacerbated incidents of separation anxiety among children; if their fathers and brothers died, would the same thing happen to their mothers? Family members sought to temper children's fears; yet the judgment used to encourage children sometimes had the opposite effect. In an attempt to comfort their children, some soldiers put pressure upon them, making a direct correlation between good behavior and the protection of their families at war. Colonel Hans Heg wrote to his daughter Hilga, "A great many little girls like you, have lost their fathers in this battle....When I get into Battle I might get shot, but if you are a good girl and Edmund is a good boy, God will take care of me for you" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 116). Religion was used to reinforce values, but as the war continued and the death toll increased, children questioned the validity of their religion; they felt that God had failed to protect them.

Another Union soldier, Marcus Spiegel, suggested to his three children that their good behavior shielded him from cannon balls flying overhead. Henry Abbott wrote to his five-year-old brother Grafton, "Now you must be good all the time & remember, when you get mad & begin to cry, it makes the rebel bullets come a good deal near to me." Although Heg, Spiegel, and Abbott used these words to comfort their children and younger brother, these children must have suffered a huge psychological price "when Colonel Heg was killed at Chickamauga, Colonel Spiegel died in a Confederate ambush in May 1864, and twenty-two-year-old Major Abbott died in the Wilderness at about the same time" (Marten, *Children's* 116). Many children assumed that there was a direct

correlation between their behaviors and the safety of family members. There was a marked shift in the belief that God will take care of everything; it was replaced with guilt from children who felt that in some way they contributed to the war's death toll.

The Civil War instilled an ongoing fear into the minds of children that became a brutal reality for thousands of children: the death of a parent. Consequently, Americans felt obligated to provide for Civil War orphans, and President Lincoln accepted responsibility for the children on behalf of the government "to care for him who shall have borne the battles, and for his widow, and his orphan" (qtd. in Werner 14). The nation grieved over the fact that politics had dramatically changed the family structure, and it struggled for answers to correct the mistakes of the nation. War orphans were memorials to their dead fathers and mothers, and schools such as The Institute of Reward for Orphans of Patriots raised scholarship money for educational programs for these youth. New York opened three schools for orphaned children, and Iowa opened a temporary school in 1864, partially funded by donations from Iowa regiments. America, the land of family values, now struggled to provide justice to the families that had been disrupted by war.

If orphanages provided physical protection to the orphans, they certainly neglected many of their emotional needs. Civil War children shared a commonality with today's institutionalized youths of war:

> Besides the developmental, psychological and child rights concerns
>
> that are associated with institutional care, in a very pratical [sic]
>
> sense, the loss of a family name and a place of origin deprives
>
> children of the links they need in many societies, to establish a
>
> foothold in the adult world. (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 150)

Because legal protection concerning the separation of children during wars is non-existent, many children were (and still are) exposed to the abuses of institutionalized care. According to Celia Petty and Elizabeth Jareg, institutionalization places many children at risk:

> During conflict, other groups of "children in difficult circumstances"
> at risk of institutionalisation are: children with disabilities caused
> by war injuries, babies born as a result of rape or liaisons between
> civilian and military/peace-keeping personnel, babies and small
> children left with widowed fathers, and children who have been
> demobilised from the military. (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 152)

Often, there are no efforts made to provide contact to widowed mothers, fathers, or siblings, and many children are separated from their families when those living outside of the institution must flee for protection. Furthermore, staff members reportedly did not always report the death of family members to the children to protect them from further trauma. This resulted in feelings of abandonment within the children because they did not know where their families were and why they had stopped visiting.

While the orphanages serve a humanitarian role in the midst of war, "the establishment of institutions often by-passes a critical analysis of childrens' needs and rights" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 153). Long-term institutionalization increases the possibilities for delayed development. According to Petty and Jareg in their essay, "Conflict, Poverty and Family Separation: the Problem of Institutional Care," very few institutions employ staff that are adequately prepared to meet the needs of orphaned children, thereby undermining the child's developmental process and exacerbating the child's suffering:

> Several members of the caregiving staff working in Soulmona

orphanage (between 500-700 children) were interviewed about

their relationships towards the children. They all maintained

that they actively avoided holding, cuddling or trying to enter

into a conversation with individual children since these actions

caused such aggressive expression of jealousy among the other

children, who immediately clamoured for special attention. The

caregivers felt they would be totally overwhelmed (which they

would be) if they opened up for close contact with the

children. (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 155-6)

Although the actual treatment of orphaned Civil War children is left to speculation, President

Lincoln aspired to take care of children orphaned by the war by placing them in institutions. Still,

due to the circumstances of war and the suffering felt by children and adults alike, it is unlikely that

institutionalized care did little but house and feed these children. While this was a necessary step

taken to protect them, in many ways, these orphanages probably created more harm in these

already devastated lives, especially when it came time to leave:

...leaving an institution in the context of civil war, with little experience

of coping with ordinary life, and no support from social or community

networks, can be disastrous for the young people concerned. The

options open to them are extremely limited and they are likely to

their only means of survival on the streets and in the informal

economy. The likelihood of involvement in crime or commercial

sex is extremely high. (qtd. In Bracken and Perry 161)

Many children were forced out of institutions at the age of eighteen with little real world experience and very few resources for survival. This created a new generation of impoverished adults.

Whether they were institutionalized or remained with their families, children often relied on their own coping mechanisms to deal with such horrible circumstances; some played make-believe war games to process their feelings; others were devastated by the death of family members and the destruction of their homes; some of the more fortunate Northern children only read about the war in newspapers and periodicals. For those who actually lived through the war, the memories remained clear years after the fighting ended. In 1924, Amanda Beckwith Medley wrote these words from her home in Piedmont, Mississippi:

> I was a small girl, shut up in boarding school in Jackson, Tennessee,
>
> when the dark cloud of war arose. We began to hear the tramp of
>
> feet all night and day. Our dear brothers and friends gathered
>
> together in Companies of armed soldiers with flags flying, drums
>
> beating, and fifes playing....We soon found there was something else to do,
>
> a great burden to bear; and it must be borne by the women and the children.
>
> (Beckwith 1)

Historically, it has been documented that men bore the burden of war, but war was a family cross to bear that became part of their experiences and subsequently, the oral tradition of America. Amanda was just a small girl when the fighting began in Tennessee, but she never forgot the war. Her first realization of the fighting was in July 1861 when her mother, older sister, and neighbor women knitted socks and sewed together flannel shirts for the men who were organizing a company with General Jeff Thompson. Amanda later said that for the next four years, "our fingers nor our minds were never idle, day or night" (Beckwith 1). Neighbors moved supplies to soldiers

during the night, and she described this endeavor as a "very dangerous undertaking" due to the

impending violence. Men, women, and children of all ages supported the war effort, but the

imminent danger was always on their minds.

Although she wrote her memoirs in 1924, Mrs. Medley vividly remembers the day her

family fled their home to avoid Federal troops:

> One of the hardest trials, it seems to me that we had to undergo was in August
>
> of the same year [1861]. A baby boy was born to my mother and when he was
>
> just five days old, at midnight, my father was called by a friend and warned to
>
> pick up the family and leave the home at once as the Federal Army would
>
> raid over the country by seven o'clock the next morning to kill and burn
>
> every body and everything. (Beckwith 2)

It was this unpredictable existence and the constant threat of danger that contributed to the

emotional terrors of war. Although the actual combat of battle was terrifying, children feared

something more than airborne ammunition. Child survivors of every war confessed that what they

feared more than death was separation from their families. While experiences such as the one

Amanda described above were terrifying, most children noted that they would rather risk danger

with their families than find safety without them. In their 1943 study, Sigmund Freud and D.T.

Burlinghan determined that "The initial attempts to study the effects of war on children, based on

the reactions of children during World War II, concluded that separation from parents may have

contributed more to the temporary psychological distress than the war itself" (qtd. in Apfel and

Simon 55-56).

Nonetheless, such was the fervor of war that Amanda said her "blood boiled with

patriotism," and she "thought it would be glorious and patriotic to avenge the great insult to and

robbery (as we thought it to be) of our dearly beloved Southland" (Beckwith 1); but her enthusiasm soon changed to despair. During the next three years she received only one letter from her extended family; battle lines prevented most mail from reaching its destination. The fate of missing family members remained unknown during that period. Another devastating blow came when Underwood Beckwith, Amanda's brother, was captured by Federal troops. For several months he remained a prisoner in St. Louis's Gratiot State Prison and was released only due to his mother's persistent pleadings for his freedom. Children of the war faced crises with their own identity as separation from nuclear and extended family members disjointed the stability of the family units. The splintering of the familiar sanctuary of family, or at least the possibility of it, contributed to the overall emotional anxieties of children. This loss of family security, coupled with the menacing threat of violence, devastated the psyche of war children. Family became more important than ever, not only for love, but for survival. Children feared separation from their families more than death. In his essay "Practical Approaches to Research with Children in Violent Settings," Peter S. Jensen's findings paralleled the Freud and Burlingham report in that "...most of the available evidence suggests that these [family] separations were probably more harmful for the development of children...than were the psychological effects of the bombings on children who stayed with their parents" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 207).

Civil War children became acutely aware of the nation's economics as their quality of lives diminished. The declining grade of goods became evident; falling economics inconvenienced the lives of Northern children, but with less vengeance than for their Southern cousins. For instance, even small treats such as peanuts were wormy, and candy sticks were reduced to the size of pipe stems. Confederate children, however, felt the strain of their economic condition in the essentials of daily life. Shoddy candy was the furthest thing from their minds. More importantly, clothing and

food became scarce, and children resorted to drastic measures to obtain food; undigested food found in livestock pens provided nourishment to some. Peas were the one food item that was in fairly good supply, and women cooked cane shoots for their children. Tree buds, weeds, and berries were mixed with half-ripe peaches to make a stew, and adults drank sweet potato coffee. As the nation's children learned to live with lowered expectations, they discovered value in simplicity. Even clothing was worn to the point of turning into torn and tattered rags. Some children had no clothes.

While war affected nearly all the children in the 1860s, most Northerners experienced war from a safe distance. Rather than living through the scenes of war, they watched it from their homes with the safety of distance between them and the warfare. While some children ventured closer to battlefields out of curiosity, most were spared from real danger. The curious youngsters who dared to get a closer glimpse regarded the war as a source of entertainment; the reality of the bloodshed was overshadowed by its visual effects. For instance, a Wisconsin teenager, James Newton, wrote this to his father:

> It is a pretty sight to see the shell from the mortars going up higher
> and higher until they look as though they were clear up among the
> stars....Some of them burst high in the air scattering pieces of shell
> in every direction and...dealing death to the inhabitants; others do
> not burst until after they strike, and then we can hear the crash as the shell
> goes down through the house....Our pickets are getting to be quite sociable
> with the enemy: it is quite a common occurrence for them to meet half way
> without arms to drink a cup of coffee together, and have a long talk over
> matters and things in general. (qtd. in Werner 86)

Because of this distance, Northern children responded to the war with curiosity and intrigue. They began reading about it in newspapers and magazines that documented current events of the war and its effects upon their lives.

Children coped with their fears by acting out their sources of their fear. With no control over the war in general, playtime gave children jurisdiction over their destinies. Boys and girls alike pretended to be soldiers while they marched and fought make-believe battles. "One young Louisianan was so adept at the manual of arms that she and her brothers would heckle the raw recruits fumbling through their maneuvers in a field near their home" (Marten, *Lessons* 75). Although pre-war society separated children's roles by gender, the Civil War coaxed a change in girls. No longer were they giggling on the sidelines as boys played war games; girls became adept at drill practices in pretend battles.

Play strongly resembled reality. While war was considered a man's domain, records document that many girls and women impersonated the opposite sex and joined the military. It is estimated that as many as 400 women served in the American Civil War (Burgess 2), many under the age of 19. Physical exams during recruitment were superficial, and young females easily impersonated male soldiers. Many physicians did little than determine if the recruit "had a working trigger finger," or perhaps could "show that his teeth were strong enough to rip open a minnie ball cartridge" (Burgess 2-3). Surprisingly, women often fooled their male comrades. Petite, attractive young women fought side by side with men and were even promoted among the ranks. Little girls, wanting to emulate those women who defied the traditional stereotype, transferred that sexual incompatibility of tradition to their role play.

Dramatizing war themes provided children with a sense of patriotism and gave them an emotional outlet to deal with the conflicts that surrounded them. Northern children were proud of

their righteous attempts to end slavery; Southern children held fast to racist beliefs in slavery. Regardless of the side on which they fought, boys and girls became heroes on their make-believe battlefields. This play was their way of desensitizing their fears of the war and transforming negative feelings into non threatening coping mechanisms.

On the other hand, play could not alleviate all of their fears. There was a reality of war that still existed: many children were innocent casualties of violence. Random acts of violence could not be predicted and many Southern children feared that Yankee soldiers would single-handedly torture them if they invaded their homes:

> The frightening stories about children captured by "savage" Native
> Americans in Peter Parley's *Child's History* haunted one Southern
> girl. "My hair 'stood on end,'" remembered Sallie Hunt, "when I
> thought of the Yankees tying the children up in bags and
> knocking their brains out against a tree." As Northern armies
> approached New Orleans, Grace King shuddered when she
> recalled the "pictures of captured cities of the Bible where
> men and women were cut through with spears and swords,
> and children were dashed into walls." (Marten, *Lessons* 121)

Clearly, each side of the Civil War did its share of instigating fear. This type of propaganda frightened children into adopting unnecessary fears regarding soldiers. While there was some evidence of the slaughter of innocent children, many Union soldiers were kind to children and even befriended them: "Throughout the South, Union soldiers acted as faithful guards, shared rations, and made presents of worn-out horses that could be nursed back to health and used by hard-strapped Southern families" (Marten, *Lessons* 121). Most soldiers were not fighting the

children; they were fighting the war. Northern soldiers missed the their own families and found

comfort in surrounding themselves with children from the opposing side. The affection that the

Southern children often displayed toward the Union soldiers eased the men's loneliness and

suffering:

>An officer whose unit occupied Dosia Williams's plantation in Louisiana offered
>
>to let her peek into a gold locket in return for a kiss. "I must have descended
>
>from Pandora," wrote Dosia years later, "for I could not stand it." She pecked
>
>him on the cheek, and he showed her a "miniature of a lovely little girl about
>
>my age." He and the Williams girls soon became great friends, and his aides
>
>brought us candy and made much of us." After learning how badly "they
>
>wanted to see their children back up North," the Williams girls "excepted
>
>these particular Yankees from our fear and hatred." (Marten, *Lessons* 122)

The original perspective from the Williams girls resulted from a more devastated overall conflict,

but many children learned that some of the rumors about soldiers were sensationalized to add to

the fear and hatred of the opposing side.

In fact, many Northern soldiers welcomed the presence of children for their emotional

well-being. They often enticed children to stay close with gifts, stories, and a general camaraderie.

Clearly these small acts of kindness between the Northern soldiers and Southern children

benefited both sides; soldiers enjoyed innocent childhood affections in the absence of their own

children, and Southern children who encountered these soldiers became less fearful of the Army

troops. Despite sectional loyalty, soldiers formed emotional bonds with children during the war,

identifying them with their own children or younger siblings left behind. Feeling homesick for their

own families, many soldiers befriended children on opposing sides. Trinkets and treats were

offered to youngsters as gifts, and the children romanticized the roles of the Northern soldiers. Although Christian virtues before the war instructed children to believe in peace and human kindness toward others, their parents taught them that violence and inhumanity toward others was acceptable during the war. Such mixed signals affected the emotional status quo of Civil War children. While some children befriended soldiers, others feared them. No doubt, some youngsters sought paternal or big brother nurturance from soldiers, and identified with them as if there were family ties that bound them. If anything, these relationships between Northern soldiers and Southern children became symbiotic gestures of peace; a small, but positive step toward healing. Many children learned that although the politics of the North differed from their own, Northerners were similar in that they were loyal to their beliefs. Despite these difference of opinions, Northerners were kind and gentle people who wished them no harm. As children assimilated the events of the war, they began to realize that regardless of which side they lived, sectional loyalty was paramount, but above all the values of kindness toward others was still important. Although tales of slain children still haunted them, they realized that the brutality directed toward children was the exception rather than the rule of war.

The reality of war was that life was a contradiction. Children feared soldiers, yet became more comfortable with them through interpersonal interaction. Daddies promised to return home, never to be seen again. Even though popular games might divert the anxieties of children, the devastation of the war frightened them. While the Civil War might try to intrigue and entertain children with games, productions, and other popular forms of entertainment, there was a marked difference in the reality of daily life. Northerners read about the war and formed their opinions from a comfortable distance, while Southern children witnessed the chaos first hand. Confederate family yards became war zones, and homes were invaded and set afire. Sitting rooms became de

facto hospitals, and children heard screams of tortured soldiers as physicians amputated war torn limbs. Home was no longer a sanctuary of safety, but rather a weak defense against the terrors of the war. As war became a harsh reality, children were emotionally scarred by the sights, sounds, and smells of death that surrounded them. It was common for housebound physicians to toss amputated arms and legs through windows; thus, children's play zones became mortuaries for severed limbs. Cloistered within the walls of their homes, children witnessed the violent death of soldiers, and could only speculate whether their own fathers and brothers had met with similar consequences. Certainly danger always existed for children and their families because they lived in the middle of the war zones. Children were sometimes killed in their mother's arms by stray ammunition, houses were burned, and home invasions threatened the safety of their home life.

As regimental violence destroyed family homes, parents felt helpless as they attempted to protect their children from the fighting. Families panicked, taking shelter to avoid flying bullets and invading troops. Young Lucy McRae was buried alive when a Federal shell exploded and collapsed an underground cave in which she sought refuge:

Everyone in the cave seemed to be dreadfully alarmed and excited when suddenly a shell came down on top of the hill, buried itself about six feet in the earth, and exploded. This caused a large mass of earth to slide...catching me under it. Dr. Lord, whose leg was caught and held by it, gave the alarm that a child was buried. Mother reached me first, and...with the assistance of Dr. Lord who was in agony...succeeded in getting my head out first....They pulled me from under the mass of earth. The blood was gushing from my nose, eyes, ear, and mouth...but there were no bones broken.... During all this excitement there was a little baby boy born in the room dug out at the back of the cave....The firing continued through the night and early next morning....

> Mother decided to leave the cave...determined to risk her life at home with father.
> We left the cave about eight o'clock....I was bent over from my injuries and could
> not run fast, though between the shells we would make the fastest time possible;
> watching the shells, we learned to run toward them, to let them go over us if they
> would. (qtd. in Werner 82-3)

Lucy learned from her experience in the cave that life continued, despite the bombing that surrounded them. Her mother gave birth to another child during their refuge. Lucy's tenacity and spirit for survival gave her the strength to beat insurmountable odds. While her home was under fire, she ran toward airborne shells, guided only by the mental images of her family guiding her home. The love of family is a common thread that ties war survivors together, and despite the treacherous milieu of war, it is this determination to keep families together that may give people strength to survive. Civil War children frequently emerged from the war with a strengthened sense of family loyalty and values that they would pass down to their own children. These values were catalysts to the changes that would later affect the nation such as civil rights, women's rights, and many more human rights movements.

Parental distress during bombings made children even more vulnerable to their own fears; death was on the minds of everyone during times of siege. Nearly every household mourned the death of a family member, and war hardened the sensibilities of men and women as they fought to protect their children from harm. Mary Loughborough's two-year-old daughter clung to her skirt while they hid in a cave. As shells fell just outside their hideout, the little girl asked, "Was it a mortal tell [sic]?" (qtd. in Werner 152). "The little girl's distress increased when, a few days later, she witnessed how an exploded shell took off the hands of a soldier who had befriended her" (Werner 152). As with Mary's young daughter, the devastation of seeing soldiers wounded and

killed presented children with experiences far too advanced for their tender years to understand or process. The resulting nightmares haunted children, and their fears of death escalated. Fortunately for some children, these experiences occurred at such young ages that they were able to block out the haunting memories.

Not all children were so clearly scarred by witnessing warfare. Some children, fascinated with the gunfire and bombing, felt less threatened by the chaos. Carrie Berry, a ten-year-old in 1864, wrote of her experiences in Atlanta, Georgia. Although her parents were near hysteria, Carrie reacted with calm resistance as the family lay hiding in their cellar while Federal shells landed in their garden. "I think it would be so funny to move" (Faust 130), she wrote in her diary. After troops evacuated Atlanta, Carrie "joined other children in 'plundering about...seeing what we could find.' She spent three full days picking up nails among the ruins of the burned city. Later, after her mother gave birth to another sibling, she did much of the cooking and cleaning for the family" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 170 -1). Because many children like Carrie assumed adult responsibilities out of necessity, a nation of children committed to the values of hard work, responsibility, and devotion to family emerged.

Southern memoirists who were Civil War children later wrote of the terror they experienced when Union troops visited their homes, stealing food and other valuables. "On one plantation a young girl finally told her inquisitors where her mistress's valuables were hidden. When he discovered this betrayal, her master hanged her for disloyalty" (Marten, *Children's* 140). Children were subjected to an adult war they had not waged, but were forced to face. Poverty, hunger, and the fear of death replaced the innocence of childhood, while violence against women and children increased:

An unverified newspaper story claimed Union troops had murdered a toddler

because he was named for a noted Confederate general; a Confederate

officer in Florida passed along a story that three Yankees had taken a

ten-year-old girl into "the scrub & ravesed her"; and a Louisiana woman

reported that soldiers raped and beat a girl so badly that she never regained

her sanity....On another occasion a drunken Federal guard in Lexington,

Virginia, seized the four-year-old brother of Rose Page Pendleton and

threatened to shoot him. The boy cried to his mother, "Mother, won't you

save me?" but the soldier threatened to kill her, too. A passing Yankee

colonel managed to end the standoff. (Marten, *Children's* 144)

Psychologically, war shaped not only the children, but the adults as well. A mentality of violence

was created, and otherwise law-abiding citizens became violent. Whether war incited this violence

or lowered inhibitions can not be known, but one-on-one violence increased, and children became

less trusting.

Youngsters assumed adult responsibilities around the home as fathers and older brothers

went off to war. Children supported their families by selling war souvenirs found in battlefields or

given to them by soldiers. They worked harder, but the Civil War taught them to expect less.

Birthdays, normally a source of childhood celebration, became simplified. Carrie Berry wrote on

her tenth birthday that there were no presents to unwrap nor a cake with candles "...so I celebrated

with ironing" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 144). Children learned to substitute long forgotten parties

and presents with gratitude for being alive.

Chapter Two

Boys Will Be Men: Children Fight the War

"...it is evident that children are not recruited for primarily for their

fighting qualities but rather because of manpower shortages"

(qtd. in Bracken and Petty, 61).

As war fever raged in the 1860s, many boys begged their parents to let them join the

Army. Propaganda-based literature and tall tales of heroism inspired children to find adventure

and autonomy, despite their parents's protests. Schoolbooks and magazines brought the war

closer to children, and they wanted to have a hand in shaping history. Intensely loyal, children

developed their ideas of right and wrong and wanted to impact change. While antebellum children

were taught to be seen and not heard, Civil War children wanted to make a difference. No longer

silent and obedient, many of them immersed themselves in the politics of warfare. War was an

emotionally charged issue, particularly for young boys eager to join the fighting. In the spring of

1862, seventeen-year-old Walter Stone and his brothers were so consumed with patriotism they

could hardly concentrate upon anything else; however, when Walter's mother failed to give him

permission to fight in the men's Confederate army, he cried for a week. A few months later Walter

got his wish; he joined the Army, only to die from fever in a Confederate hospital in 1863.

Despite the grim realities of war, boys from the 1860s volunteered in great numbers to join

the war effort. Given the odds against them, they still chose to fight. Contemporary historians

have found that child soldiers in all war share several characteristics. Particular groups of children

are more vulnerable to recruitment because of their economic, social, political, or cultural

influences. Margaret McCallin lists three main categories and how child soldiers from the past and

present make the decision to fight: the poor and disadvantaged, the inhabitants of the conflict

zones, and separated children (Bracken and Petty 62-64).

The military had a charismatic appeal to poverty stricken children. Poor and

disadvantaged youth joined the military to earn money for themselves and their families.

Impoverished children suffered from educational deprivation and as a result, they had to find an

avenue of support that did not require an elaborate education. Abandoned and orphaned boys

often attached themselves emotionally to the other soldiers in the units to replace the families they

lost. Ironically, the surrogate military family put them in great physical danger while creating an

emotional sense of belonging, family, and community.

Children who inhabited conflict zones also volunteered their services to the military in

increasing numbers. Because children in war zones had limited education and resources, they

were at highest risk for long-term impoverishment. According to McCallin, "In some cases

government armies and opposition forces will pick up unaccompanied children for humanitarian

reasons--to protect the children--but these children may well end up fighting, particularly if their

association is prolonged, and they identify with the group as their protector or new family" (qtd. in

Bracken and Petty 63). Children often see this type of affiliation as a way of achieving security

and stability. Many of the existing memoirs written by child Civil War soldiers parallels this finding.

Finally, children who were separated from their families became vulnerable to the

intoxicating effects of the fighting. As McCallin observed, because they are without family

protection, they become most vulnerable to recruitment because they are seeking the protection of

adults to replace their own families:

> There will inevitably be a high proportion of such children
>
> within the conflict zone itself, but also children from unstable

or disrupted backgrounds: for example, children living in situations

where the father has been killed or detained, where the mother is

the head of household or where the child for whatever reason is

living on the streets. These children are more likely to become

child soldiers than others living in a stable, if poor, situation.

(qtd. In Bracken and Petty 64)

Consequently, these children are vulnerable to recruitment because there are no protective family

members to prevent enlistment. As a result, displaced children often seek the military as a means

to substitute their own families if not to replace them.

The desire to engage in warfare became such an obsession that boys were willing to die

for their country, whether they fought in the war or not. Although many parents prevented their

children from fighting, some boys refused to accept "no" for an answer. Ironically, parents' desire

to keep their children from harm often collided with their boys' "hard-headed patriotism":

In the fall of 1862 a seventeen-year-old Ohio boy, angry that he was

not allowed to join his two older brothers in the army, hanged

himself in his father's barn. A year and a half later a thirteen-year-old

Mississipian "had become a great annoyance to his mother about

going to the army. After she whipped him for his continued

begging, he shot his brains out" with a shotgun. (Marten 166)

Estimates vary greatly about the number of boys who fought in the Civil War.

Conservative numbers document between 250,000 - 420,000 boy soldiers in the Union and

Confederate armies combined (Werner 2), while other figures estimate that 1,151,438 boys under

the age of nineteen served in the Union army alone (Miller 190). Regardless of the actual total,

historians agree that the numbers of boy soldiers increased as the wave of patriotism inundated

the everyday lives of Americans. The relaxed standards of the armed services made it easy for

young boys to enlist. Charles King, Brigadier-General of the United States Volunteers wrote:

> So long as the recruit appeared to be eighteen years old and could
>
> pass a not very rigid physical examination, the was accepted without
>
> question; but it happened, in the early days of the war, that young lads
>
> came eagerly forward, begging to be taken--lads who looked less than
>
> eighteen and could be accepted only on bringing proof, or swearing
>
> that they were eighteen. It has since been shown that over eight hundred
>
> thousand lads of seventeen or less were found in the ranks of the Union
>
> army, that over two hundred thousand were no more than sixteen, and
>
> there were even one hundred thousand on the Union rolls who were no
>
> more than fifteen. (qtd. in Miller 190)

Although some had not reached their teenage years, many boys fought side by side with

the men. Johnny Clem, nicknamed Johnny Shiloh for his bravery and valor when a Confederate

artillery shell smashed his drum at Pittsburgh, was only ten-years-old when he enlisted in the

Union army. Johnny, one of the most famous boy soldiers of the Civil War, was commended for

his valor when "armed with a sawed-off musket cut down to his small size, he shot and wounded a

Confederate officer who had asked him to surrender." Eventually Johnny retired from the Army in

1915, a Major General and the "last man in the Armed Forces of the United States who had fought

in the War to Preserve the Union" (Werner 1).

It was not unusual to see these miniature soldiers on the battlefield. Bugler-boy Jimmy

Dugan enlisted in the band at Carlisle barracks as the Civil War began. Stationed at the calvary

depot in Pennsylvania, "he was about three feet six high, could ride anything on four legs, sound all the calls, and marched behind the band at guard-mounting at the regulation twenty-eight-inch step at the risk of splitting himself in two" (qtd. in Miller 189). Like the other soldiers, Jimmy performed his "duty under fire" and was heralded for his bravery in battle. As children gained recognition for their bravery, adults realized that the youth had as much to do with wartime victory as the adults. It is evident that although the Civil War began as an adult's battle, children willingly did their share to contribute to the causes.

The eldest son of General Grant was just a year older than Johnny Clem "when he rode with his father through the Jackson campaign and the siege of Vicksburg" (King, qtd. in Miller 192). Sons often rode into battle with their fathers--commanding officers--for the glory and the experience of war. George Meade rode with his father in Gettysburg; the sons of Generals Humphreys, Abercrombie, and Heintzelman accompanied them into battle; Sam Sumner and his brother "Win" also followed their father into battle, later becoming generals; and Francis Greene, who won double stars at Manila, was locked up to prevent him from following his father "into the thick of the fray at Gettysburg" (qtd. in Miller 192, 194). The Civil War became a bonding experience for men and their sons. More than that, fathers discovered that their children were dedicated to the issues behind the war and would carry with them a family legacy that would shape their futures. Long after the war ceased, children used their experiences as a catalyst for change in America.

Boys, caught up in the heroism of war, enthusiastically enlisted only to be sobered by the realities of fighting. Private George Alphonso Gibbs related this sentiment to the Eighteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment when he said, "You my boys...know that war is not the fine adventure it is represented to be by novelists and historians, but a dirty bloody mess, unworthy of

people who claim to be civilized" (qtd. in Werner 1). Private Gibbs was correct; more than

620,000 men, women, and children died in the Civil War. "That figure far outdistances the number

of dead in any other war; even in the global World War II, American dead reached only 407,000"

(McPherson and Cooper 2). Furthermore, at least "another 500,000 suffered wounds, carrying the

complete casualty count to an incredible 1 million out of a population of 32 million" (McPherson

and Cooper 2). Still, boys wanted to be part of the fighting and were willing to die for their country

to preserve the Northern and Southern values. Ironically while some adults paid money to the

government for the right to stay out of battle, more and more youngsters ran away from home to

preserve the freedoms they cherished. This patriotic dedication remained with most children years

after the war ended, and they used the experience of the war as an emotional bonding experience

in order to work together to shape the politics of the nation.

Still, mere warnings about the dangers did not prepare boys for the traumas they endured.

John A. Cockerill was just sixteen-years-old when he witnessed the sight of the dead boy soldier.

John, a regimental musician, found the dead boy when he was separated from his unit after an

attack. Away from their families for the first time, boys were faced with the uncertainty of life and

death. Horrors such as this resonated in the memories of soldiers for years to come:

> I passed...the corpse of a beautiful boy in gray who lay with his blond
>
> curls scattered about his face and his hand folded peacefully across
>
> his breast. He was clad in a bright and neat uniform, well garnished
>
> with gold, which seemed to tell the story of a loving mother and
>
> sisters who had sent their household pet to the field of war. His neat
>
> little hat lying beside him bore the number of a Georgia regiment....
>
> He was about my age....At the sight of the poor boy's corpse, I burst

into a regular boo-hoo and went on. (qtd. in Werner 25)

Boys were clearly ill-prepared for the sleight of hand that war dealt to them. War propaganda had related tales of heroism and glory to increase enlistment in the regiments, but the fate that awaited soldiers once they began their tour of duty was not quite as intoxicating. The sights and sounds of combat were devastating. At the battle of Bull Run in 1861, an unidentified correspondent described a horrific scene in which soldiers were under intense fire for eight hours:

Men would raise their heads a few inches from the ground to peep,

and would be shot in that position.

The fight lasted eight hours--from nine to five. Noise and confusion

of many kinds prevailed--the firing of cannon, the discharge of musketry,

the whizzing of balls, the bursting of bombs, the roar of artillery, the tramp

of horses, the shouts of conquering, the groans of the dying and the

shrieks of the wounded. *Our enemies are not cowards.* Many men

were found with bayonets in them, some side by side, each with his

bayonet in the other (Garrison 109).

Patriotic youth viewed war through rose colored visions. Publicly, war was glorious but privately, the suffering was hell. Lyricists wrote patriotic ballads about the valor of soldiers. The terrors of war were sometimes overshadowed by stories of heroes and emotional welcome home parties. Few poets were willing to write about the truth of war; fewer men were willing to speak openly about it. Heroic glory and patriotic sentiment became the big lie that seduced youths into joining the armed forces; however, in reality war was a "dirty, bloody mess." Civil War nurse and poet Walt Whitman wrote about the "real war," although he was criticized for his honesty. In "The

Wound Dresser," Whitman writes graphically details the scenes of military hospital during the Civil

War:

> On, on I go, (open doors of time! open hospital doors!)
>
> The crush'd head I dress, (poor crazed head tear not the
>
>> bandage away,)
>
> The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and
>
>> through I examine,
>
> Hard the breathing rattle, quite glazed already the eye, yet life struggles
>
>> hard,
>
> (Come sweet death! be persuaded o beautiful death! In mercy come
>
>> quickly.)
>
> From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
>
> I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and blood,
>
> Back on the pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and side-falling
>
>> head,
>
> His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on the bloody
>
>> stump,
>
> And has not yet look'd on it.   (Whitman 250)

Many children ended their lives in the military with similar circumstances. Although they enlisted

as strong and able-bodied soldiers, many ended their lives literally torn apart from the physicality

of fighting. Because "The Wound Dresser" is graphic, it illustrates a less glorious fate of a soldier's

demise. In contrast to patriotic tales that made people feel good about the war effort, "The Wound

Dresser" symbolizes a darker yet more realistic side of war.

It was this attempt to capture the real war that inspired Stephen Crane to write *The Red Badge of Courage* years later. Although Crane was not born until 1871, his version of the Civil War has been hailed as realistic, both in its documentation of day-to-day experiences and its psychological probe into the minds of soldiers:

> His thoughts, as he walked, fixed intently upon his hurt. There was a
> cool, liquid feeling about it and he imagined blood moving slowly down
> under his hair. His head seemed swollen to a size that made him
> think his neck to be inadequate....Amid it he began to reflect upon
> various incidents and conditions of the past. He bethought him of
> certain meals his mother had cooked at home, in which those dishes
> of which he was particularly fond had occupied prominent positions.
> (Crane 54)

Similar thoughts haunted children as they discovered the "bloody, dirty mess" of war. Although many children emerged from the war as heroes, many others learned that first and foremost, they were sons and daughters first, soldiers second. The tales of glory days seemed like bygone untruths, and they realized that although they were making a difference in the war, the war also made a difference in them. Their wounds reminded them that they were far from the comforts of home. They learned that with heroism came fear and uncertainty about the future. Although Crane did not experience the war, he adequately portrayed the fear, cowardice, and egotism of his character Henry Fleming. As many young soldiers discovered, war did not emulate the popular ballads of the time. Instead, fear prevailed over glory. Young boys eager to fight a man's war soon became homesick for childhood comforts.

Other authors attempted to write realistic portrayals of the war. Louisa May Alcott, author

of *Hospital Sketches*, documents "An Army Nurse's True Account of her Experience during the

Civil War." The following scene depicts the nightmares that haunt children before, during, and

after war. Children need security and the battlefield robbed children of that basic need. While

children and adults bonded emotionally in the ranks, death was always a possibility. The main

character in Alcott's story, Tribulation, remembers a scene from the hospital room where a child

mourns the death of a soldier who had delivered him to an ambulance, then died before reaching

the hospital. Billy cried as he awoke from a dream remembering his friend Kit: "Oh! if I'd only been

as thin when Kit carried me as I am now, maybe he wouldn't have died; but I was heavy, he was

hurt worser than we knew, and so it killed him; and I didn't see him, to say good bye" (Alcott 48).

The nurse's assurance that Kit would have died otherwise did not assuage the boy's grief.

Pastoral Counselor Bob Deits states that when processing the death of a loved one, children

"often assume they are somehow to blame for the loss. They are used to thinking in terms of

blame for spilled drinks and broken toys" (Deits 124). Many war children--those who fought the

war and those who did not--grieved the deaths of family members and friends by internalizing their

grief into blame. Years later, even when adult coping mechanisms repressed the blame, adult

children of the war continued to struggle with feelings of anger.

Accounts of the war, both fictional and true, added fuel to the patriotic fire. While a certain

amount of reality was portrayed in literature, suffering was often attributed as something that

happened to someone else, either a character in a story or another person. Children often entered

battle feeling invincible. Those who were aware of the dangers that could befall them had a

distorted realization of what those dangers meant. Although they may have imagined that they

would die a glorious death like the characters they read about, the actual pain and suffering they

might suffer didn't seem real. While fictional portrayals of the injustices of war attempted to clarify

the reality of battle or provide a balance of reality to the text, these portrayals often triggered an

even keener interest in the war. Children read stories to escape reality and by joining the military,

they hoped to find adventure, glory, and power.

Armed with dreams of prestige, many children entered the war only to be disillusioned and

disgusted by it; yet not all boys entered the military with unrealistic expectations. Many young

men under the age of 21 not only performed valiantly under fire, but rose quickly through the

ranks. These boys contributed to the strength of the Armies, and they fought with the bravery of

men. Henry King Burgwyn, Jr., known as the boy colonel of the Confederacy, was noted for his

courage under fire. Graduating second in his class from the Virginia Military Institute, he received

his commission as captain upon the inception of his military duty. Notably, he was only 19 when

he took over the command of the Twenty-sixth North Carolina regiment. Burgwyn, known for his

strength of character and maturity, documented his experiences in his personal war journal. Upon

being promoted colonel he wrote:

> I was to day elected Lt. Col. of the 26th Regmt. N.C. Troops. I am now
>
> 19 years 9 months & 27 days old & prpbably the youngest Lt. Col. in
>
> the Confederate or U.S. service. The command of the Camp of
>
> Instruction was given me on the 5th of July & after being disappointed
>
> in the organization of the 12th Re. I have been elected to a position
>
> in this. May Almight God lend me his aid in discharging my duty
>
> to him and my country. (Davis 83)

Burgwyn demonstrated a maturity that was well beyond his years. He took his role as a leader

seriously and is an example of how many boys entered military command and progressed among

the ranks to lead their troops. Many boys mourned the loss of their home lives and their families,

but soldiers like Burgwyn fulfilled their duties as soldiers well beyond the call of duty. Although he

ended his teenage yeas as a Lieutenant Colonel, he accepted a man's responsibility when he

entered the service. Children who fought the war functioned as adults even if they thought with

the minds of children. Still others, like Burgwyn, matured much sooner than their peers and

became adults much more quickly.

Fatally wounded on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg, Burgwyn died at the age of

22. Like many young soldiers, he carried the weight of a man on boy's shoulders. Upon his

death, one of his friends wrote the following letter to Burgwyn's parents:

Captain Young has undertaken to give you the sad news of your son's

death but I can not let the opportunity pass without expressing my deep

sympathy with his bereaved parents & famiy, as well as testifying to the

gallant & soldier's way in which he met his death. He was one of 11

shot bearing the Colours of his regt. & fell with his sword in his hand &

cheering on his men to victory--the ball passed through his lower part

of both lungs & he lived about 2 hours--among his last words he asked

how his men fought & said they never would disgrace him. He died in

the arms of Lt. Young bidding all farewell & send love to his mother

father sisters & brothers.

It was my painful privilege to assist Capt. Young to inter his body

under a walnut tree about one mile west of the town on the North

side of the turnpike road--75 yds. N.E. of a medium sized stone

farm house, which has a large yellow barn on the opposite side of

the road. There are several graves under the tree but his is

directly east of the tree with the head strait toward it. I have given

this description that in case none of us should ever return & this

reached you, you might still recover his reamains. I can not attempt

to offer consolation to friends so bereaved but can only mourn

with them the loss of one of my most cherished friends. His death,

however, was so noble & so glorious that it was all a soldier could

desire. (Davis 335)

One of the casualties of war is that many parents outlived their children. This intensified the hurt

and anger of the people that later struggled to put the pieces of a broken nation together. Letters

such as the one written above attempted to exemplify the glory of America's lost sons and

daughters. These letters are tributes to the children who gave their lives in the American Civil

War. Some perished as preteens and teenagers while others, like Burgwyn, extended their

military careers into young adulthood. The deaths of children during the war symbolized what the

nation lost as a result of the military strife. Families, so determined to stay together, were torn

apart by uncertain circumstances.

Many soldiers of all ages were taken prisoner during combat. The following account is

from sixteen-year-old Michael Dougherty, a Union soldier taken prisoner in October 1863 in

Virginia. He was aboard a train February 15, 1864 when it stopped at a Confederate prison camp

in Macon, Georgia:

We were taken from the railroad cars to an open piece of ground....

Looking eastward about a quarter of a mile we could see an immense

stockade....The sight near the gate of a pile of dead...their faces

black with grime and pinched with pain and hunger...gave us some

idea that a like fate awaited us inside....The gates swung open on

their massive iron hinges and we marched in....At various places

[we saw] different instruments of torture: stocks, thumb screws,

barbed iron collars, shackles, ball and chain. Our prison keepers

seemed to handle them with familiarity. (Werner 93)

The mass graves at Andersonville hold some thirteen thousand dead soldiers who were taken

captive by Confederate forces. Eventually, retribution came

when Captain Henri Wirz, the commandant of Andersonville,

was hung by the neck in Washington, D.C. He had been found

guilty by a military court of a long list of crimes designed "to

injure the health and destroy the lives" of some forty-five

thousand Union soldiers who had been prisoners at Andersonville

during the time he was in charge. Wrote the judge advocate: "The

widespread sacrifice of life...was accomplished slowly and

deliberately by packing upwards of 30,000 men, like cattle in a

fetid pen--there to die for need of air to breathe, for want of

ground on which to lie, from lack of shelter from sun and rain,

and from the slow agonizing process of starvation." There were

also specific acts of brutality--hunting men down with dogs,

confining them in the stocks, cruelly beating and murdering

them--of which Wirz was found personally guilty. (Werner 94)

Age was no factor in the capture of prisoners. Boys as young as thirteen were imprisoned during

the Civil War. Youngsters left childhoods behind as they entered the adult world of war, and as

prisoners they were treated as any adult under similar conditions. Camps were full of sick and

dying soldiers, with little or no reprieve from the nearby maggot infested swamp. Food was

scarce, and Dougherty wrote in his journal of men who "are almost crazy with hunger" and that

rations consisted only of "one pint of meal, two spoonfuls of beans and two ounces of bacon" (qtd.

in Werner 98). John McElroy, another imprisoned soldier, said that his clothing literally dropped off

his body "like petals from the last rose of summer" (qtd. in Werner 98). Boys sacrificed not only the

conveniences of home to fight the Civil War, but they left their childhoods behind.

Chapter Three

Readin', Writin', and Racism

Prior to the American Civil War, beginning in 1838, the textbook of choice for most

American schools was the *McGuffey Reader* series published by William Holmes McGuffey. In

fact, it dominated the public school systems. So popular was the series, that an estimated

122,000,000 copies sold by 1920 ("McGuffey Readers" slide 14), and it is considered "the most

influential schoolbook in our nation's history" (Weiner 1). McGuffey, president of Cincinnati

College, was said to be dedicated to the cause of education but received only $1,000 for his

efforts ("William Holmes McGuffey" 1). The goal of *The McGuffey Readers* was to not only teach

reading, but to convey moral lessons. The series focused on reading, right and wrong, practical

knowledge, God, death, and nature. Antebellum children across the nation accepted his teachings

of goodness, morality, and religion, and parents and teachers alike praised his efforts:

> The consequences of behavior were stark. The little chimney sweep
>
> who did not steal came to live in the rich lady's house. The idle
>
> schoolboy became a beggar. George paid his only dollar for the
>
> window he broke; he got two back from the rich homeowner, went
>
> to work in his store, and became a partner. The tricky boy broke
>
> his leg. "So much the better. The lesson will do him good, and
>
> he will be out of the way of mischief." (Wiener 1)

Titles from McGuffey's lessons include "The Greedy Girl"; "The Kind Little Girl"; "The Honest Boy

and the Thief"; "The Lord's Prayer"; "The Effects of Rashness"; "On Speaking the Truth";

"Consequences of Bad Spelling"; "Happy Consequences of American Independence"; and

"Decisive Integrity," to name a few (Wiener 1). Antebellum children learned simple but important lessons from the readers.

However at the inception of the Civil War, Southerners wanted to impart Confederate mores to their children. If anything contributed to the shaping of young minds, it was the growing scholastic publishing industry. Textbooks became the widespread vehicle of political and racist propaganda, particularly in the South. The Confederacy launched a campaign to literally shape the thinking of their children by presenting their racist opinions as genuine facts. Schoolbooks became a major source of not only promoting racism, but also of instigating hatred and prejudice against the North.

While many schools closed during the war, others thrived. Confederate authors published textbooks with a vengeance, eager to instill Southern values into the hearts and minds of children. Southern children who continued to attend school learned more than just academics in the classroom; racism was rampant and the textbooks reflected themes of war, slavery, and white superiority. In contrast, most Northern textbooks did not mention the war, although a few grammars included war themes into their exercises or short stories. There were a few exceptions to this practice, however, and one notable example of a war theme occurred in the *Union ABC*. The textbook illustrations were colored red, white, and blue, and the educational format catered to preschool and early school aged children:

> With two letters and pictures on each page, the booklet began with
>
> "A" is America, land of the free," and ended, inevitably with "Z is
>
> Zouave, who charged on the foe." In between were such obvious
>
> images as a captain; a flag; a "Drummer Boy, called little Ben";
>
> Union; and knapsack. Others included "H is for Hardtack, you

scarcely can gnaw"; "J is for Jig, which the Contrabands dance";

and "T is a Traitor, that was hung on a tree." (Marten, *Children's* 61)

These images of the war were meant to excite Northern children and to increase their feelings of

patriotism. Although many Union children were far removed from the harsh realities of the conflict,

literature such as this inspired them to believe in the Northern cause. The Civil War politicized the

classroom for youngsters and coupled morality with patriotism in their lessons.

The one-sided editorializing found in some Northern grammar books, and most certainly in

Southern texts, provoked a sense of right or wrong about the values each side was fighting for.

Eager to explain the civil strife and to justify their partisan beliefs, authors educated youngsters

while introducing them to the causes and the effects of war. Unlike the *McGuffey Reader's* of the

1850s which avoided the issue of slavery, the standard texts of the 1860s dealt with these issues

directly. The nonsectarian *McGuffey Reader*, eager to obtain both Southern and Northern

readership, continued to focus upon religious values and standards of acceptable behavior. For

instance, on page 24 in the Volume Two reader, McGuffey writes, "I do not love little girls that eat

too much. I do not think they will have such rosy cheeks, or such bright eyes, or such sweet lips,

or such happy tempers, as those who eat less. Do you, my little readers?" A note to the teacher

in this text indicates that students should practice their lessons frequently and thoroughly, which is

indicative of the rote learning of the time. Clearly McGuffey's textbooks set the standards for

idealized patterns of behavior. Northerners continued to subscribe to the McGuffey textbooks,

while Southerners phased them out for modern publications once the Civil War began.

As the 1860s began to break free of the restraints of literary politeness, the Southern

presses published school books that reflected the partisan attitudes about society, racism, and the

superiority of the white race. Geography textbooks provided extensive commentary about the

politics of the war, and the Confederacy's perceptions about the differences in the people of the world. *A System of Modern Geography, Compiled from Various Sources. And Adapted to the Present Condition of the World Expressly for the Use of Schools and Academies in The Confederate States of America* , written by John Rice and published in 1862, was a standard Southern textbook during the Civil War. The following passages set the precedent for the education of Southern youth: "The most desirable country in North America is the Confederate States. The people are the freest, most enlightened and prosperous people in the world. The independence of man is here asserted, and the Christian religion has full sway" (15). Clearly, the goal of Rice and other Southern authors was to preserve the Confederacy's values by using classrooms to promote their beliefs.

Enslavement of the African race was also promoted, citing the Bible to justify the Negro's condition in the South: "Slavery is expressly recognized in the Constitution, as it is in The Word of God, and practiced in all the states, and universally approved of and by the people" (Rice 21). Rice further clarifies his argument by stating: "The Caucasian race is found among the civilized nations of Europe and America, and is superior to the rest in mind, courage, and activity" (7). Students were taught that transplanting Negroes from Africa to the Confederate states was kindhearted and an attempt to better their standard of living. Pupils in the 1860s accustomed to teaching methods that promoted blind acceptance were conditioned from a very young age to uphold their identities as the purest race, and they were the products of a racist education system and society. Rice's writing was typical of Southern textbook writers, and his lessons taught students that the black race had been "humanely reduced to their proper condition of slavery" (8). The institution of slavery was promoted as a "blessing" (85) upon the Negroes, and it was this type of thinking that solidified the acceptance of slavery among children.

A clear defining line distinguished civilized and savage cultures, and African Negroes and American Indians were identified as savages. Students were taught that the savage state was "The lowest stage of existence among the nomadic tribes. Such live by hunting and fishing, and upon roots and wild fruit. They are very cruel in their warfare" (11). Educationally, students were taught to demean the Negroes, and at home proslavery issues were heated debates in the war. School lessons were custom made to tailor the thinking of Southern children. Not only was slavery promoted, but Negroes were seen as un-Godlike. Rice described the African tribes as Pagans, and promoted Christianity as the one true religion.

The North, obviously the enemy, was not ignored in their daily lessons. The Southern experience is further reflected in Rice's historical perspective, "Infidelity and a reckless puritanical fanaticism is fast robbing the people of all ennobling traits of character....The secession was caused by the gross injustice of the Northern States in repeated oppressive violations of the Constitution" (51). While Southerners claimed to have the Bible and the Constitution on their side, it was their interpretations of those documents that infuriated Northerners. Ironically, both Northerners and Southerners used the same book to justify their markedly diverse stances on the slave issue. To Southerners, all men were not created equal. While antislavery Northerners did not see Negroes as equal in intellect and ambition, they could not justify the enslavement or mistreatment of human beings. Christian Northerners believed it was their duty to extend kindness to other beings, while Southerners quoted the Bible to justify their stance.

Other Southern texts, like William Bingham's *A Grammar of the Latin Language For the Use of Schools, with Exercises and Vocabularies*, published in 1863, portrayed slaves as grateful recipients of their condition. One section in Bingham's text asks students to translate into Latin: "Tulley's slaves love their master" (21). *The Verbal Primer,* by Reverend S. Lander, presents a

short story about Uncle Tom, and Tom asks the following question: "What do I want to be free

for?" The rhetoric in these primers were geared to convince children that slavery was a profitable

and desirable condition for both master and slave. Because slavery was not presented as a

derogatory state, Southern children were convinced that it was their Christian duty to save the

slaves from their "derogatory" and "Pagan" African existence, and to transport and keep them

within the safety zone of plantation slavery. Southern children may not have believed in slavery

for the same reasons as their parents, but the biased literature convinced them that keeping

slaves was an act of kindness.

Mrs. M.B. Moore also produced several widely used Southern textbooks. The

Geographical Reader for the Dixie Children, written in 1863, inserted overt religious references in

the lessons: "God made the earth and put it in motion, and it will move until he commands it to

stop. Should we not love him for making us such a beautiful home" (1). Moore represented

Abraham Lincoln as the Republican president who led to hypocritical fanaticism, and she informed

young readers that since he had "declared war" on the Confederate states, the "earth had been

drenched in blood" (qtd in Marten, *Children's* 59). It was these horrific images that swayed the

opinions of young scholars against pledging their loyalty to the president, and Moore accused

Lincoln of ripping apart the country.

Moore used her Christian platform not only to degrade the president, but also to promote

racism. Moore's Southern allegiance and racist perspective was clearly evident as she described

the Negro race:

>The African or negro race is found in Africa. They are slothful and
>
>vicious, but possess little cunning. They are very cruel to catch other
>
>[sic]; and when they have war they sell their prisoner to the white

people for slaves. They know nothing of Jesus, and the climate in

Africa is so unhealthy that white men can scarcely go there to preach

for them. The slaves who are found in America are in much better

condition. They are better fed, better clothed, and better instructed

than in their native country (4).

Southern education taught white superiority, and the widespread publication of textbooks helped

spread the word to many Confederate children. Like other authors, Moore taught children to

believe that slavery was a win-win situation for both slaves and their owners. By teaching

youngsters that Negroes were in a "much better condition" in the United States, she could appeal

to their childlike good-heartedness, while instilling racist attitudes.

Moore's political stance was anti-war, but whether or not she inspired young readers is

questionable. In her *Dixie Speller*, she indicated that "if the rulers of the United States had been

good Christian men, the present war would not have come upon us" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's*

57). Calling upon the emotional appeal of children to adhere to Christian virtues, Moore further

wrote: "Let every boy learn this lesson, and when he is a man, let him not vote for a bad man to fill

an office of trust" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 57). Writers such as Moore cited Christianity to

support their views. Anyone who diversified from their racist thinking was labeled a non-Christian.

To young God-fearing minds, this kind of spoon fed rhetoric overwhelmingly convinced them to

support the Confederacy's view about slavery.

Southern textbooks rarely contained hidden meanings; their messages were blunt and

touted the Confederacy as the best country in the world. Confederate textbook publishers had a

mission to uphold Southern values, regardless of who won the war. Slavery was described as a

positive experience. Slaves were said to love their masters, and Southern textbooks reminded

youngsters that Africans were not Christians, and African-American slaves had been saved by Christian values. Negroes were referred to as the inferior race, and authors felt compelled to remind school children how "happy" American slaves were. Accordingly, there was an obvious bias in the geography lessons when comparing Southern states to Northern states. Like her contemporaries, Moore touted the "superiority" of the Caucasian race:

> The men who inhabit the globe, are not all alike. Those in Europe and America are mostly white and are called the Caucasian race. This race is civilized, and is far above the others. They have schools and churches and live in fine style. They also generally have wise and good men for rulers, and a regular form of government. The women are treated with respect and tenderness, and in many cases their wish is law among their male friends (22).

While Moore's comments offend modern sensibilities, this kind of commentary was expected and encouraged in Civil War textbooks, and Southerners embraced these publications as a means to an end: the preservation of Confederate ideals, opinions, and ways of life. Nothing was left to interpretation in these school books published during the early 1860s; children were systematically politicized through education. It was this mass effort by publishers to influence children that shaped their attitudes about white superiority, slave inferiority, and preservation of the Confederacy's ideals.

Southern textbooks were not selective in their biases; any country or region of people that did not adhere to Southern values was insulted. Rice described Asians as heathens who pray to idols; American Indians were referred to as "cruel and warlike"; and Malaysians were referred to as "cunning and treacherous" cannibals who "have killed several preachers who went there to

preach." Northerners bore the brunt of Southern ridicule. Rice described Yankees "as a keen, thrifty, speculating, ingenuous people; money-loving and moneymaking, without much restraint as to means, success being the absorbing object" (51). This prejudice must have been confusing to Southern children with Northern family members. The war not only separated fathers and brothers from their families, but severed long distance relationships between extended families. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other extended family members living up North were now portrayed as the "them" (Union) against "us" (Rebels). As children identified patriotically with the South, they were forced to reinvent their family identities.

Not all Confederate textbooks focused upon the political issues; some endeavored to provide social guidance. *Chaudron's Third Reader* generally ignored the war but attempted to improve the oratory skills of Southern children by offering a series of pronunciation and enunciation lessons geared toward the Southern dialect:

> For instance, "poor" must not be pronounced "pooah," and it was
>
> "matter," not "mattuh"; "sorrow," not "sorruh"; and "children," not
>
> "childrun." Students must be careful not to drop "ed" from the
>
> ends of words and should refrain from using "Africanisms" like
>
> substituting "d" or "f" for "the" ("deeze" for "these" or "bofe" for
>
> "both"). Other common problems included saying "neck'ed"
>
> for "naked," "stomp" for "stamp," and "git" for "get." (qtd. in
>
> Marten, *Children's* 56)

By establishing marked oratorical styles, Southerners hoped to keep the separation between the Negro and Caucasian races evident; by focusing, as always, on the superiority of the white race, as well as to sustain the sense of Southern gentility, privilege, and superiority. Small children who

assumed "Africanism" speech patterns (by listening to the slaves communicate) were reminded to speak English as a Southerner, not with an African accent. By maintaining differences, adults hoped to instill and maintain the notion of Caucasian superiority into their children and to valorize the South not only as a region, but also as a superior civilization, thereby defeating the notion that "all men are created equal."

Southern textbooks promoted the Southern cause, and many publishers attempted to shape children's attitudes in positive ways. For instance, books glorified Southern war heroes and used religion as a literary buffer. To add impact to their messages, some readers and spellers were written by ministers. One such author, Reverend Robert Fleming, cited Biblical passages in defense of slavery. Fleming was a staunch proponent of the Confederacy's right to choose their own political leaders. He expressed his distaste for the present state of the nation, writing "A despotism is a tyrannical, oppressive government. The administration of Abraham Lincoln is a despotism" (Marten, *Children's* 58). The institutions of church and state continued to battle against each other; churches established political platforms and the White House justified its actions by citing Biblical references opposing slavery. Ironically, President Lincoln ascribed charity toward all, a Christian concept, while churches maintained that ownership of slaves to run plantations, an economic concept normally ascribed to politicians, was acceptable and desirable for the economic stability of the South.

The battle of the North and South became a battle of Christian soldiers who adhered to vastly different beliefs:

> From the opening day of the war, Confederates found both justification
>
> and consolation in religion. Government officials and church leaders alike
>
> nurtured the belief in the divine purpose of the Confederate experiment.

> Episcopal Bishop Stephen Elliot affirmed that the Confederacy had been
>
> founded as "a nation to do [God's]...work upon earth," while the
>
> Confederate legislature pointedly selected "Deo Vindice"--"Defended
>
> by God"--as the motto for their new country. Ministers preached
>
> patriotism; politicians vaunted their religious purposes. Political
>
> nationalism and religious mission came to seem all but inseparable.
>
> (Faust 180)

This integration of faith and politics allowed children, along with women, to voice their opinions

about public affairs. Politics, long noted to be a man's sphere, was now wide open as it centered

religion as its justification for war. Kate Carney, a native of Tennessee, said in 1861: "It matters

not how weak our cause, if but God and justice is on our side, we will at last triumph" (qtd. in Faust

180). The divine language of God was used not only to justify the war, but to explain it as well.

Southerners considered themselves God's chosen people, and they regarded the Union as

corrupted by modern evils. Young boys and girls, reared in the catechism of their respective

faiths, found a new avenue of intellectual and emotional expression with the war, and they drew

from their religious beliefs the strength to cope with the frightening circumstances that surrounded

their lives.

Children welcomed the opportunity to express their political beliefs, and the classroom

could provide a safe milieu to communicate freely. By discussing their experiences, their beliefs,

and their fears, children provided consolation to each other, thereby increasing their ability to cope

with the ordeals of the civil strife that defined the early 1860s. Southerners were convinced that

God had promised them a victory, drawing this assumption from the popular sermon from First

Jeremiah: "Then the Lord said unto me, out of the North an evil shall break forth upon the

inhabitants of the land, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee" (qtd. in Faust 181). Moreover, as the horrors of war emerged, Southerners held fast to the belief that suffering was not useless. Southern children and their families justified their Christianity as an avenue to salvation and believed that "death itself was within Christian understanding simply another hardship on the route to a greater glory--of salvation and eternal life" (Faust 183). The daughter of a Methodist bishop, Laura Harwood, wrote the following lines to a friend: "I know how very difficult it is for the heart to learn the lessons which God would teach us by death, but when we do learn it the destroyers' dark path becomes a way of light to Heaven" (qtd. in Faust 183-4). Young Christians, convinced that they would go to Heaven, prayed. Because many clergymen departed for war, a great number of churches closed. Families preserved their religious practices by meeting with churches of other denominations, or read scriptures in the privacy of their homes. Eleven-year-old Belle Strickland of Mississippi wrote this in her diary in 1865: "We went to church today but there was none" (qtd. in Faust 184). Before the war, children could rely upon the clergy to provide emotional balance. When the churches closed, children gathered with families and friends to form their own Bible study.

Freedmen who wanted to achieve an intellectual advantage used the nonsectarian *McGuffey Readers* for primary lessons. Northern publications, who described African Americans as beneficiaries of Northern philanthropy, urged a sense of obligation from emancipated slaves toward the Northern whites. These attitudes were promoted in *The Freedman* and *The Freeman's Spelling Book*. Because Northern whites contributed money toward the emancipation of freedmen, Negroes were encouraged to educate themselves and "to exert yourselves to the utmost that you may prove worthy it all" (qtd. in Marten 64). Northerners sent money and clothes to the contraband camps and freedmen's schools. Northern contributors identified themselves as

friends to the freedmen, and Northern war heroes such as General Benjamin Butler, who coined the term "contraband" to runaway slaves, were given the gratitude and respect of Southern blacks (Marten, *Children's* 65).

The Freedman's Book, written by Lydia Maria Child, "offered examples of African Americans seeking and achieving intellectual and spiritual equality with whites" (qtd in Marten, *Children's* 65). While Child "encouraged freedpeople to become thrifty, moral, and hard-working" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 65), she used role models such as statesman Frederick Douglass, "the revolutionary" Touissaint L'Ouveture, and astronomer Benjamin Banneker as examples of African Americans who had improved their stations in life; it was not their achievement of white middle-class values that she endorsed, but their independence and extraordinary achievements. She wanted African Americans to realize that they could achieve greatness and did not have to become laborers of white men. Unfortunately, some of *The Freedman* publications were condescending to African Americans. Historians have recognized that these publications, although published to promote the intellect of freed slaves, failed to focus upon their independence and instilled the legacy of obedience toward white Americans. By ignoring politics, educational publications for blacks undermined the potential progress of their freedom. The American Tract Society published materials that were clearly condescending to African Americans, and racist socialization was contained throughout the texts, again emphasizing obedience.

For children of emancipated slaves, finding their niche was difficult. Their parents had known nothing but slavery, and finding role models as mentors was difficult and/or nonexistent. Freedmen publications, although used widely by both children and adult African Americans, contained the much of the same information as the school books geared toward white children.

Although there were weaknesses in freedmen's literature, these publications provided important

contributions:

> In their emphasis, however condescending, on the basic humanity
>
> of African Americans; in their attempts, however stilted, to show
>
> freedpeople of all ages their common history and contributions
>
> to the Union war effort; and in their urging, however biased by
>
> middle-class assumptions, of the freedmen to meet high
>
> standards of behavior, these books and papers provided a
>
> counterpoint to the racial ideas of Southern whites. (Marten, *Children's* 66)

Apparently, efforts to free the slaves were riddled with problems. How would Americans educate

them and integrate them into a society that politically considered them free, but socially still

regarded them as inferior? These unanticipated problems complicated the quality of education for

freedpeople, and African-American children struggled to accept a new identity. Freedom, the state

that slaves awaited, seemed less secure than slavery. African-Americans were released into a

society that did not fully welcome their presence as free and enterprising citizens.

Furthermore, emancipated slaves were not equipped to handle the reality of survival.

Both Caucasian and African writers struggled with their newfound freedom; white authors

underestimated their abilities to learn; and black authors highlighted role models that achieved

extraordinary--not ordinary--successes. While many freedpeople could perform skilled labor,

others were unprepared for independence; still others, anticipating unfair labor practices, were not

willing to become wage earners under the supervision of white employers. Publications hailed the

intelligence of black men by referencing soldiers who had fought for the Union army, praising their

loyalty to the Union and soldierly behavior. Despite directing their support toward emancipated

slaves, even Northern Americans were unprepared to regard freedmen as educable, thinking, and productive members of the new society. African American children gained their freedom, but the dreams they had wished for came with a price; how would they support themselves?

Education during the Civil War was an eclectic mix of ideals, values, and mores. The schooling of Northerners, however, remained virtually unchanged. Only occasional subtle references to the war were mentioned in schoolbooks. Northern children read about the war from outside publications while taking a keen interest in the politics of the nation. Southerners, eager to hold fast to their Confederate values, took a racist stance against the world at large, and strongly politicized youngsters to believe in the Southern cause. Christianity was the foundation of both Southern and Northern explanations for the war, and students were eager to examine the causes of the conflict and apply meaning to the chaos that swept the nation. The ultimate victory for the North, however, both freed the slaves and held them in bondage. Unprepared for independence, many African Americans were frustrated with their lack of education, and even well intended black authors both inspired and intimidated freedpeople by using extraordinary African American achievers as examples for others to follow. Eager for independence yet unprepared for the reality of it, freedmen struggled with realistic expectations of their lives that lay ahead. Regardless of educational experience, those who lived through the war experience gained from it a new meaning about their country, ideals and misconceptions that would last a lifetime.

Children's experience with war literature was not confined to textbooks. At least 28 magazines were devoted to Civil War children. Unlike their predecessors that focused upon self-control and moralizing, the theme of war literature shifted to heavy-handed politicizing, controversial issues such as slavery, and other war-related topics (Marten, *Lessons* xiii-xiv). "Several themes were prominent in the magazines' response to war. First was the necessity of

informing children about the causes and conduct of the war, as well as about the incredible hardships that the war brought" (Marten, *Lessons* xvii). Many publications dealt with the war by focusing upon the sadness of it. Themes detailed loss and sacrifice, issues their readers could relate to. Most of these magazines had a didactic tone and they preached obedience and self-reliance to children. Both Northern and Southern publishers attempted to shape children's thinking by integrating politics into the story lines. Because many children lost friends and family members to the war, publishers used this commonality as a springboard to persuade their readers into egocentric thinking. By establishing common grounds among their readers, publishers were able to create a sense of "us" versus "them" in their literature. "Othering" the opposing side of the war brought children closer together and by doing so, Southern and Northern publishers effectively shaped the attitudes and political views of children.

Prior to the war, child-focused literature illustrated what made good citizens. Emphasis was upon religious values and hard work; publishers attempted to influence their readers to become good citizens. During the war, however, juvenile literature stressed dark issues, in part by publishing poetry written by and/or for children. Many Northern children heard stories about the war while Southern children existed within it. Some authors adopted an empathetic approach to the suffering of children as they dealt with war-related issues. The April 1862 issue of *The Student and Schoolmate*, a Boston-based magazine that focused upon political and moral issues, published this poem about a young child begging for food:

<div align="center">

"The Soldier's Little Daughter"

The night was stormy, dark, and cold;

My way led through the city,

Where wretched building, gray and old,

</div>

Seemed stained with tears of pity.

A little unblest with wings,

Her dark, sad eyes all tearful;

And God! To see such tender things

Out in the storm is fearful.

And thus she 'plained--"Oh! Stranger hear

I never begged before"

But mother has been dead a year,

And father's gone to war.

"And yesterday the work gave out

By which I earned a penny;

Last night I had a crust of bread;

To-night I haven't any.

"And I am very hungry, sir";

I bought her bread--to spare--

Then up into the old gray house

Climbed by the broken stair.

I asked her name, her tender age;

Intensest pity won her;

A little maid of seven years

And all this woe upon her!

"My name is Nellie Grover, sir;

My father loved me dearly;

And is it true as people say,

That the war is ended, nearly?"

"Twas strange, but as she spoke, I chanced

To look my paper over;

And there I read,--*"Shot through the heart,*

A private, William Grover."

O! awful hour! can I forget

her tears, her broken sobbing--

The little heart I pressed to mine

With bitter anguish throbbing!

And as the light grew dimmer,

And the wild cries fainter fell,

Unto my soul there came a voice,

I marked its cadence well.

"I sleep beneath the traitor's sod--

I died for Liberty;

I gave my spirit unto God--

My little child to thee.

"Teach her to hold as sacred trust,

Her patriot father's doom:

Teach her to pray that from his dust

Freedom's fair flower may bloom."

"Thus to my home, most tenderly,

With loving words I brought her;

Ah! only death could tear her from me

That soldier's little daughter.

(qtd. in Marten, *Lessons* 104-6)

Tragic poems like the one above are indicative of children's wartime literature. Although

fictional, "The Soldier's Little Daughter" provides pertinent emotional insight to the crises felt by

many American citizens. Images of abandoned children lost and alone in the world were created

in poetry to influence the attitudes of readers. True, there was widespread poverty and hunger

among Civil War children, but authors used this focus to sensationalize the war and persuade

readers to adopt the editorial opinions of the publication. Because children realized that they could

one day be in the same situation as the child in "The Soldier's Little Daughter," they empathized

with her plight. While the tragic death of her father prompts the narrator to house the child, editors

used stories like these to shape children's actions. The purpose of this poem is twofold: first, to

evoke anger about how the war tore families apart and left children alone in the world and second,

to encourage children to give unselfishly to those who suffered poverty, hunger, and perhaps

orphanage.

As the civil conflicts threatened the normalcy of everyday lives, children relied upon

magazines to provide explanations for the war. Many writers/editors served as teachers for their

readers, offering wisdom and advice. The literature of the Civil War contributed to a sense of

patriotism, and youngsters found this colorful rhetoric much more interesting than the information

in their grammar books. It not only educated them and provided games and puzzles for

entertainment; it also *involved* children in the war by bridging the gap between what their parents

explained to them and the politics of the region:

> Articles, editorials, and letters involved children in the war effort,
>
> helped to explain the cataclysm threatening their country,
>
> their families, and themselves, and provided a kind of mediation
>
> between readers and the war. A cynic might call this indoctrination,
>
> a social scientist would call it socialization, but Civil War children
>
> called it literature. (Marten, *Lessons* 2)

Like textbook writing, copy in the Civil War magazines was regionalized and their respective

biases were reflected in the writing. This mediation that existed in the literature was specifically

focused to shape the beliefs of school children. Rather than allowing readers to draw their own

conclusions, authors used creative rhetoric to create a mind set in the readers consistent with the

author's ideals. One popular magazine, *The Student and Schoolmate*, featured a popular ongoing

column entitled, "Teacher's Desk." The monthly column, written by Oliver Optic the pen name of

William T. Adams, was one of the most popular juvenile columns of the nineteenth century. He

"urged his young readers to look inside themselves for just that mixture of faith, patriotism, and

'war spirit.'" The following column of "Teacher's Desk" appeared in the March 1863 issue of *The*

Student and Schoolmate, issue 12, page 93:

> The war has increased our vocabulary, and words which are now
>
> used and understood by all, would have been unintelligible two
>
> years ago. And the work of coining new words still goes on.
>
> Every month or two we receive an addition to our language,
>
> and if the war lasts a few years longer, the English tongue
>
> will be as copious as any other in the world.
>
> The last new word we have to record, is "copperhead"--
>
> an epithet applied to those who desire to make peace with the
>
> rebels on any terms; who are willing to submit to all the
>
> demands of the traitors of the South, and we respectfully
>
> suggest to Worcester and Webster that, in subsequent
>
> editions of the Quartos, "copperhead" shall be defined as
>
> simply "a traitor." Any long and elaborate explanation of the
>
> meaning of the term would be superfluous.
>
> We like this word for the class to whom it has been
>
> applied. The copperhead is a snake, quite as dangerous as
>
> the rattlesnake. It has no rattle to warn the passerby that he
>
> means to strike a deadly blow; and we find the political
>
> copperheads are just as much the enemies of their country,

as the Southern rebels who rattle before they bite.

Clearly, such colorful language appealed to children. Moreover, publishers knew how to play upon

children's fears. By attributing the figurative copperhead to the literal snake, writers could produce

negative feelings in children. Such strong language, like "traitor," gave writers the emotional edge

they needed to shape the opinions of their youngest readers. With such finesse in the art of

literary manipulation, children were easily persuaded by the editorial spin doctors.

On the other hand, Adams's columns were written to inspire sincere patriotism among his

readers. He berated the "'cheap patriotism' of drum-beating and flag-waving that had appeared

early in the war" (Marten, *Lessons* 3). One goal of Northern publications was to focus attention

upon slavery and the challenges faced by the freedmen, but children rarely heard the truth about

the reality of the lives of freed slaves, such as children selling rags to support their families,

motherless children who suffered from sickness and malnutrition, and those who lived in sheds full

of mud with no food, fire, or intact clothing to wear (Marten, *Lessons* 9). Instead, Northern children

were fed stories of optimism, believing that their support would free the slaves into lives similar to

their own.

There were attempts by other authors to dispel the optimistic images of freemen's lives

and make children aware of the needs of freed slaves and their families. Some publishers

attempted to bring a sense of reality to the lives of children. G.N. Coan wrote "Dear Pilgrim" which

appeared in the June 1984 edition of *The Little Pilgrim*. The first paragraph in the article, cited

below, attempts to incite a sense of empathy toward slaves:

> I was much pleased when you visited me, last month, way down in
>
> this secesh city, and thought I should write you a letter immediately;
>
> but I have so much to occupy my time that it seemed as if I could

not spare any for you; and yet I want to tell you something about

these little colored children we have come down here to teach. But

first let me tell you that many of these children are as white as any

of you are, with blue eyes and straight hair, or pretty auburn

ringlets. It is not their color that has made them these dear

children, but it is because they have African blood in their veins.

So these dear children, as bright and fair as you, have been slaves,

put up on the auction block to be sold far away from their mothers.

And this has been done for many years; mothers and children

torn assunder by their cruel masters, never to see each other's

face again. Oh! the horror of slavery, who can tell? God alone,

who has heard the groans and cries of these oppressed ones for

so many years, can fathom it. But the day of deliverance has come,

and the children enjoy their freedom far more than you can imagine,

for you have never been deprived of this precious boon. (Marten,

Lessons 10)

Similarity between white and African-American children was illustrated to establish a bond

between them. By creating this common ground, an author could more likely appeal to the

sympathies of white children. The sameness was more literal than visual; master/slave incest

created generations of "white" African-Americans. Authors were careful when addressing subjects

such as master/slave sexual relations, but they made references to the physical features of slaves

that were clearly Caucasian traits. By establishing that white children had features in common with

African American children, authors hoped to appeal to their sense of justice and sway them to the

Northerners way of thinking. This "sameness" created a sense of community with all Northern

readers of children's magazines; thereby creating a sense of sociological cohesion.

Southerners also appealed to the emotions of children through magazines, but their

themes were different. Because Southern children often saw the war firsthand, authors

encouraged them to support the soldiers and comfort orphaned children. They relied heavily upon

religion to give children strength to deal with the impending loss of fathers and brothers. This

article, "Early Fruit," was published on page 26 of *The Children's Friend*, February 1863:

> My heart swells with sympathy and love, when I think of the dear
>
> children. I wish every effort to promote their good greatest
>
> success. May ten thousand, thousand blessings go with "The
>
> Children's Friend"! With this feeling I write the following for
>
> publication in its little columns. It will show how a very young
>
> child may love Jesus, and receive, through faith in his dear
>
> name, the sweetest gifts of the Holy Ghost. This account is
>
> literally true.
>
> Not long ago, little L's father came home from the army
>
> to spend a few days in the enjoyment of his dear happy home.
>
> One night after his children were undressed, and had offered
>
> the evening incense of their prayers to the great and loving God,
>
> her father went to the bedside of L. to kiss and bid her good-night.
>
> She at once threw her slender arms about his neck, and bursting
>
> into tears, said to him, "Oh, papa, when will you come home to
>
> stay with us? It is so hard for you to be away from us." He soothed

her grief by telling her it was the will of Jesus that they should be

separated while the war lasted; that He would stop the war just

as soon as it was best to do so; and, as long as He called us to

suffer, it was very wrong in us to complain; that she especially

had no reason to do so; for, while others had lost their fathers

and brothers, her father had been kindly spared. She then

clasped him the more closely, exclaiming, "Oh, papa, what

would become of me if you were killed,--I know it would kill

me too." He told her that was wrong; for if he were killed,

Jesus, her Saviour, would take him to a happy and peaceful

home in heaven, where, in good time, she might meet him, and

be with him forever.--This comforted her somewhat.

She then asked, "Papa, will we know each other in heaven?"

"Yes," he replied, "I believe it certain we shall know and love each

other in heaven with a peculiar love, such as I now feel for you? I

Know we will love every body there, but will I love you with this

same love?" He told her he had no doubt whatever on that

point; that God bound us to one another in this world, with

special ties, for a good purpose, and that these ties would

not be broken in the eternal world, but we would there love

each other with even a stronger, and purer, and happier love

than was ever felt on earth. "Oh," said she, "how delightful

that will be!" (Marten, *Lessons* 210-11)

While the war forced many churches to close, religion continued to influence writing. The above article is meant to comfort children but in a sense, it negated their fears. By telling children that it was wrong to complain, it forced children to deal with their fears independently. Perhaps this message suggests why so many children felt guilty when fathers and brothers perished in the war; they were often told that their actions influenced life or death on the battlefield. If their actions were this powerful, would their thoughts have similar influence?

Southern authors were quick to turn soldiers and their families into martyrs for the cause. "War," an article published in the September 1862 issue of *The Child's Index*, reported that soldiers suffer by "standing guard in all kinds of weather, both by day and night, but they suffer much from long and rapid marches, and from poor food, and sometimes because they have no food" (Marten, *Lessons* 208). War torn soldiers were the subject of many magazine articles, and their deaths created another subject of writing--orphans. "The Soldier's Orphans" was published in the February 1865 issue of *Child's Banner*, and it is an example of how Southern authors martyred their readers. It began, "While I am preparing this paper, I remember that many little boys and girls will read it whose fathers have died or been slain in this bloody war. Perhaps your father fell on the field of battle, or died in the hospital, or far away in a distant Northern prison, and was buried there without you and your mother having the privilege of seeing him again or even visiting his grave" (Marten, *Lessons* 209).

The Civil War was part of their childhood experience, and children became involved in its politics. Young journalists published their own papers and distributed them amongst their peers, and this small press gave them the outlet they needed to have their say about the current events of their day. They needed this intellectual outlet to make them feel as if they had some control in shaping the views of their nation, even if on a small level. This political rhetoric helped them

explore their own thinking and provided a well-rounded collection of ideas from other children. Self-published magazines helped children connect emotionally with each other, while providing a cathartic outlet for their confusion, fears, and patriotism.

Children overwhelmed by the bloodshed and fatality rate of war often found less threatening outlets to express their feelings. In their attempts to ease their fears, Northern children viewed the war in more entertaining ways in order to ease the trauma of it. By ignoring the casualty lists and sorting out which newspaper reports were factual and which were inaccurate, they diverted their attentions to less threatening realities. This diversion gave them an obtainable distraction from the confusion and depression they felt. Many publishers specifically targeted children as consumers, playing upon their wartime intrigue, and marketed games as a source of patriotic images. These games, intended to instill "the virtues of hard work or moral improvement" (Marten, *Children's* 16), were often marketed toward children as realistic approaches to war, although many games were intended for purely entertainment. Games were the vehicles publishers used to influence young Americans. If publishers could "hook" children on their games, then perhaps they would adopt the values of the role play. Not all games were intended to shape the minds of children. The game, *Visit to Camp*, took a less serious approach to the Civil War. The players in the games were caricatures: "a rather foppish captain; a hard-drinking sutler; a zouave; a bewhiskered colonel; a surgeon (shown taking the pulse of a rather worried patient); a cross-eyed, fat musician; and a vivandier (in a feminized zouave uniform)" (Marten, *Children's* 16). *Visit to Camp* was a humorous distraction to the serious political themes that other games focused upon. Also, politically oriented jigsaw puzzles became popular, as well as a sand toy which depicted Abraham Lincoln as an organ grinder with a monkey playing the fiddle. Not by accident, the monkey resembled Gideon Welles, the secretary of the Navy. Politics took a humorous,

though no less subtle, turn in the form of children's war games. Whether games were intended to

distract children from the depressive elements of war or to influence political thinking of

youngsters, publishers in the Civil War earned profits by "cashing in" on the conflict. The Civil War,

in essence, had its own product line.

Intriguing the interests of both Northern and Southern children, theatrical gimmicks also

entertained children. Popular Northern productions were *Banvard's Painting of the Mississippi and*

the Historical Section of the War on Its Banks; Clapp, Stemley and Company's Diorama and

Polopticomarama of the War; and *The Mirror of the Rebellion*, to name a few. Southern children

enjoyed free admission to Philadelphia's *Grand Panorama of War*. Lee Mallory's

Pantechnoptemon became popular in the South, as well as Burton's *Southern Moving Dioramic*

Panorama. Families needed these distractions to feel that life as usual was happening, and by

dramatizing war events, children became less focused about the impending threat around them.

Dramatizing war made it more of a form of entertainment until they were met with the reality of it.

Civil War magazines, whether edited by Northern or Southern authors, maintained their

readership by developing a kinship among their readers. Whether publishers focused upon false

optimism or the realities of war, these magazines provided children with messages that inspired

loyalty and patriotism in their attitudes about their family, their country, and the war. It also

reinforced the roles of children while simultaneously causing them to rebel against tradition. A

blanket of cognitive dissonance fell over childhood during the Civil War. They became reactionary

instead of rational at times. Yet to the contrary, some children were forced to deal with the war by

suppressing their personal thoughts and feelings. With so many mixed messages coming from

their family, their friends, and the literature they read, children felt compelled to make sense of all

the contradictions of war. The quest for this complex truth influenced children as they experienced

the war and as they grew into adults after it ended.

Chapter Four

The Protocol of War: Neighbor Against Neighbor

The psychological and sociological shifts were dramatic during the American Civil War. While antebellum attitudes about slavery created unrest among Northerners and Southerners, many Americans experienced a shift in power once the war began. Southerners, who inflicted feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness toward their Negro slaves, became victims of similar plights at the hands of their Northern neighbors. Sacrifice came immediately as the family structure changed during the 1860s. As fathers and sons left for battle, women and children no longer felt safe in their homes; they had to assume the roles of protectors, although the existing ideology did not really allow for that role reversal. Often their enemies were the very soldiers who were sworn to protect them. While many passing armies marched by houses without incident, others invaded homes and terrorized women and their families. Many Northern and Southern soldiers--otherwise law-abiding citizens under normal circumstances--lost their inhibitions and instigated violence beyond the usual warfare. Although this assertion is not a sweeping generalization of the behavior of all soldiers, a good number of men adopted the mob mentality of battle and inflicted injury well beyond military protocol. This violence sometimes reached outside military boundaries and innocent men, women, and children unknowingly became targets for displaced aggression.

The Civil War had an even darker side--physical and sexual aggression against civilian women and children. Although many children did not discuss this level of violence publicly, privately these experiences created an inner turmoil that would haunt them through the postbellum years. Because someone set fire to the Confederate Army court-martial records around the time of Lee' surrender (Lowry 123), it is difficult to determine the number of Confederate rapists that

perpetrated violence during the war. This makes it difficult to accurately tell this aspect of the Civil

War, but records clearly the incidence of sexual assault. This kind of inflicted terror upon innocent

citizens is a common denominator, even in contemporary wars. In war, violence against people is

perceived as an assertion of power against the enemy. In this context, the innocence of childhood

is displaced, and the incident of the assault is often kept secret by both the perpetrator and the

child. Because nineteenth century conventions encouraged silence about personal matters, it is

difficult to speculate the percentage of children that were raped. Nevertheless, attacks against

children could be quite malicious. Historically, the implied powerlessness of a child exacerbates

the aggressor's desire to commit acts of terror more voraciously, particularly in instances of war.

In the essay "Who Takes Care of the Caretakers," Yael Danieli writes, "The innocence,

helplessness, and vulnerability of children may evoke sadism and abuse of power in the adult, as

in the case of police freely killing street children in Rio de Janeiro, or armies recruiting children who

become cannon fodder" (qtd. in Apfel and Simon 194). At times soldiers in the American Civil War

inflicted the same kind of senseless aggression.   Women and children became the targets or

witnesses of forced violence and rape:

> Since historians have usually focused on other aspects of the Civil
>
> War, it may seem strange to think of rapists in blue and gray, but the
>
> record speaks for itself. Confederate rapists are somewhat harder
>
> to locate than Union ones, since unknown persons set fire to the
>
> Confederate army court-martial records about the time of Lee's
>
> surrender, but a survey of less than 5 percent of the Federal
>
> court-martial records, preserved in the National Archives, have
>
> yielded more than thirty trials for rape. (Lowry 123)

Soldiers, trying to gain physical, psychological, and political dominance, personalized their violence when they involved women and children. Firing a rifle into the enemy's company meant killing or wounding an anonymous figure in a regiment, but one-on-one violence against another person brought men face-to-face with their victims. For some, this aggression fueled their need to feel in control of the enemy. They were able to exert their power over weaker targets, and this intensified their sense of victory. Gavin de Becker, author of *The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals That Protect Us From Violence*, writes that the context of a violent attack determines the likelihood of committing violence toward another individual: "Before resorting to force, people weigh the likely consequences, even if unconsciously or very quickly. . . . Context can change that, as with the person who is normally passive but becomes violent in a crowd or mob" (95). Furthermore, DeBecker adds that violence can be tolerated when supported or encouraged by others.

To understand the repercussions of rape and violence directed toward children during the Civil War, it is important to differentiate between the act of rape during peacetime in contrast to wartime rape. While sexual assault is an act of power over an individual, the sociological impact of rape during war becomes a regulation of power between the competitors. The rape of Confederate children sent a powerful message to the South: Northerners had total control over every aspect of the Southern culture. Furthermore the victimization of children strengthened the North's power and increased the South's helplessness. According to the essay "Sexual Violence in Wartime. Psycho-Sociocultural Wounds and Healing Processes: the Example of the Former Yugoslavia," author Annemiek Richters elaborates on these differences: "These differences can be found in (i) the motivation for rape; (ii) the execution of the rape; (iii) the consumation of the rape by the offender; and (iv) the consequences of the rape for the victim" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 116). Although it is not known whether there has been a systematic study about the

differences in rape, some researchers have identified a variety of meanings and functions of rape

during war and rape as a crime toward an individual. According to contemporary historians,

psychologists, and sociologists, there are some common factors involved in rape: rape as

misogyny, rape as reward, rape as terror, rape as the messenger of defeat, rape to boost morale,

rape as cultural warfare, and rape as propaganda. If rape is to "destroy the political system of the

enemy and its leaders" (qtd. in Bracken and Petty 117), we must look beyond the obvious brutality

of the act and clarify its psychological and sociological impact:

      1. Orgies of rape originate in a culturally ingrained hatred of women

      that is acted out in extreme situations (rape as misogyny).

      2. Rapes have always been part of the "rules of the game of war."

      It is a right mainly conceded to the victors (rape as reward).

      3. In military conflicts the abuse of women is part of male

      communication. What counts is not the suffering of women, but

      the effect it has on men (rape as terror).

      4. Rape can be considered the final symbolic expression of the

      humiliation of the male opponents who are not able to protect

      "their" women (rape as the messenger of defeat).

      5. Rape is also a result of the construction of masculinity that

      armies offer their soldiers, and of the idolization of masculinity

      that is a concomitant of war in Western cultures. In wars men

      graduate to manhood. Rape is used as a tool for initiation and

      social bonding (rape to boost morale).

      6. Rapes committed in war are aimed at destroying the adversary's

culture. Because of women's cultural position and their important

role within the family structure they are a principal target if one

intends to destroy a culture and community (rape as cultural

warfare).

7. Rape is used in war propaganda to underline the bestial nature

of the enemy. This kind of propaganda is used by the power-holders

to stir up hatred of the enemy and thereby get support for their war

from their own people (rape as propaganda). (qtd. In Bracken and Perry,

116-17)

If the purpose of a civil war is to destroy its people, rape provides an immediate insult.

Furthermore, this type of attack against children exacerbates the vulnerability of the enemy under

attack. Because of risks of pregnancy and venereal diseases, the act of rape itself perpetuated

the Civil War goal--to destroy the culture, the identity, and the future of the south. The records

indicate that rape victims during the American Civil War were both Caucasian and

African-American, but some soldiers selected their victims on the basis of race. Not only women,

but children were ravaged, and slaves became pawns in a psycho-sexual warring between the

states. Ironically, black women were raped not only by Ku Klux Klan members during the war, but

from soldiers on both sides of the conflict:

> While Yankee soldiers raped some Southern white women, their
>
> major victims were black women. The psychology seemed a
>
> mixture of forbearance toward whites plus a wish to prove to
>
> both blacks and whites that the white masters (and mistresses)
>
> could not protect their property. Such a crime against black

> women was most potent in the presence of Southern white
>
> mistresses. The forces of emancipation raping the
>
> beneficiaries of this charity--the irony is hard to miss.
>
> (Lowry 130)

Although there is evidence that there was less sexual assault during the American Civil War than other similar wars, it occurred frequently and is well documented. Ironically, however, both black and white soldiers were guilty of such crimes, and children had to emotionally process not only what they experienced, but what mothers and slaves endured. Although rape was a crime against all victims regardless of race, Caucasian women regarded the act of interracial rape with mixed feelings; some were horrified by it, others clapped and cheered as black women were violated. African-American women and their children were, in essence, victimized by their enemies, their race, and their gender.

Children were not immune from this intentional violence. Pedophile rapists preyed upon their weaknesses and inflicted harm upon them:

> At Waterloo Landing, Alabama, a court-martial was held for
>
> Pvt. Edward Hays, Company L, 4th Kentucky Cavalry, in
>
> February 1865. He was accused of taking twelve-year-old
>
> Nancy Short into the woods, lying on top of her to "see a little fun,"
>
> covering her mouth, and attempting to rape her. Hays was age fifty.
>
> He was given two years at hard labor. (Lowry 130)

There are no documented estimates of the number of children raped during the American Civil War, probably because many of the incidents went unreported. Because the fatalities of family members left many children abandoned or orphaned, they became even more vulnerable to such

attacks; thereby rendering it impossible to estimate the crime rate. It has been found that even children placed in orphanages do not report past sexual abuses, and the institutional setting exposes children to further discrimination and hostilities. A study conducted by Utting in 1997 found that institutionalized children were often at risk for further sexual assault by staff members. Because of the threat of expulsion, many perpetrators are never reported (Bracken and Petty 158). Certainly, the expansion of orphanages during the American Civil War made children vulnerable to further abuse because they had nowhere else to go.

The victimization did not end once the rape was completed. Venereal diseases were the result of many of these sexual assaults, but it is difficult to estimate how many women and children were infected. While casualties in the Civil War outnumber the casualties in any other American war, it also produced a ponderous medical report. There were 73,382 cases of syphilis and 109,397 cases of gonorrhea reported in the white troops, yet for black troops, the statistics were more positive--only 34 cases of syphilis and 44 cases of gonorrhea per 1,000 men were reported (Lowry 104). Chlamydia trachomatis was also prevalent. Still, it is difficult to ascertain the exact rate of disease since many infected men harbored more than one strain of bacterium. Because of the ignorance of Civil War physicians, treatments were experimental and ineffective. Many men continued to infect not only their victims, but their wives. Subsequently, these women and their newborn children were exposed to the contagion, and sexually transmitted diseases continued to manifest years after the battles ended. For many people, the side effects resulted in years of suffering and "a lingering and revolting death" (Lowry 108). While it is estimated that one-third of soldiers died from such diseases, it is unknown how many women and children endured similar fates.

Although women and even children who were sexually assaulted during the war became pregnant from their attackers, the exact number of such pregnancies is undocumented. Certainly, the repercussions of these violent attacks produced a generation of children born as a result of violence; however, because there was a marked decline in the birthrates between 1840-1870 due to intentional abortions (Lowry 97), it is unknown how many women and children terminated their pregnancies before they came to term.

Many soldiers, fearing legal repercussions and familial shame, did not confess their indiscretions with others. Since nineteenth-century mores deterred people from addressing such personal matters, it is unlikely that most children exposed their attackers. Furthermore, memoirists did not usually document these encounters in their diaries, and this lack of evidence makes it difficult to speculate about the frequency of crimes against children and the aftereffects that may have tormented them. Therefore, most of the conclusions I have drawn from reading authentic texts and more recent trauma stories add to the speculation of what might have happened to these children and the extent of their suffering. This mystery remains one of the darkest secrets of the American Civil War.

Chapter Five

Collective Memories, Contradicting Meanings

When I began my research, my original intention was to tell the Civil War from a child's perspective. What I found, however, was a historical treasure chest of their contributions, their memories, and an expansive range of interpretations about the events of the 1860s. While I do not presume to give a comprehensive picture of the children's Civil War, I have provided a closer look at the collective and contradicting meanings about their experiences. These children left extraordinary legacies and their stories deserve recognition. Although the Victorian values in the 1860s differed from those of the present day, the societal mores reflected similar attitudes about family values and the need to live in peace. Although they are a century removed from our society, their voices can guide us as we assist children who share similar experiences. They can still teach us.

These extraordinary children offer to us a collective history of the aftermath of war. Their legacies should not be buried deep within the historical artifacts, but should be seen and heard to provide guidance to others who share similar war experiences. The visions of these children were unique and their stories are compelling. In fact, the most poignant accounts of the American Civil War are embodied in the diaries and oral histories of children, the forgotten historians who took their first steps on war-torn battlefields or awoke to night alarms, and by those who sought refuge from invading troops and airborne ammunition by hiding in underground caves. These recollections are important because they are documented by eyewitnesses of the war. These accounts are poignant because they are not written by historians analyzing the events more than a century later, but by those who lived the real war and attempted to make sense of it.

As the war raged around them, many children documented their experiences as they lived them, while others wrote about the war years later in memoirs. The Civil War was a central event in their young lives, and it shaped their perspectives about morality, humanity, politics, and most crucially, their identities as Northerners and Southerners. Some children took pride in the fact that they survived the brutality of war, while others never recovered from the terror of it. Northerners especially took pride that they helped free the slaves, while Southerners mourned the loss of the Confederacy's standard of living with the inception of the Emancipation Proclamation. Thomas Asbury recollected fifty years after the war that slaves had been "free from care and responsibility...well fed, well clothed, well cared for in sickness and in old age" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 221. He regarded the subsequent hardships brought to them by emancipation as the effect of their "vice and Intemperance" and "bad temper and unruly disposition" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's* 221-2). Like the majority of Southern memoirists, much denial about the injustices of slavery still existed long after the war ended.

Although children living in the early 1860s shared the commonality of the Civil War experience, each individual interpreted the war differently: "Being a child of war was an honor for some, a burden for others" (Marten, *Children's* 242). Whether children witnessed battle from their homes or joined the Army, they sacrificed as much--and sometimes more than--adults. Some lost their innocence; others lost their families. As more children achieved developmental milestones in orphanages, orphans and half-orphans became symbols of the war; they remained the living examples of the nation's unfortunate plight. Whether these children lost one or both parents, the nation embraced them as potent symbols of the costs of war (Marten, *Lessons 102)*. We may never realize the full extent of their sacrifices.

As adults, Civil War children developed a deep sentiment of loyalty about their country and fashioned social, racial, and political paradigms based upon their childhood experiences. Yankee and Rebel children wanted to create a sense of order in their lives, and this search for order continued well into their adulthoods; however, it was difficult to achieve. Years after the war, Southerners and Northerners still felt opposing tensions. Although the North won the war, the costs of human suffering would continue well into the postbellum years, as emancipated slaves found it difficult to support themselves, and families tried to regain their lives that existed prior to the war.

Although many families held fast to religious values during the 1860s, the prolonged exposure to violence and death taught Civil War children not to rely upon man or God for protection. Although there were many child casualties due to violence, contagious diseases and hunger were the biggest killers of children. For the survivors, life was their reward in the face of a powerless existence. For those who lost their families, death may have been preferable to the long-term abuses they suffered from homelessness. The war gave new life to the nation, but not before it had taken life away.

Young eyewitnesses in the 1860s never forgot the real war. The events of the 1860s caused them to "create their own meanings for the triumphs and tragedies of war" (Marten, *Children's* 211):

> Even though their venues differed, the crucial thing to remember is that
>
> Civil War children felt compelled to explain the war....Like twentieth-
>
> century Americans whose childhoods were permanently shaped by
>
> the Great Depression, by the Second World War, or by the youthful
>
> rebellion of the 1960s, Civil War children insisted on testing the events

of their adult lives against what the war had taught them. For some

this meant replaying old themes in tedious novels and idealized

celebrations; for others it meant inventing hideous racial codes or

progressive government policies; for still others it meant quietly

reflecting on the meanings of the great events they had experienced

in their youths....they left as their legacy the history of a

generation whose unique experiences led them to insist that the

circumstances of their collective childhood meant something to

them and to the nation. (Marten, *Children's* 241-242)

Children learned that survival depended upon their resilience against seemingly insurmountable

odds, and it was this determination during the war that led to their future determination to shape

the course of the country their way.

The effects of parental deaths and subsequent bereavements spawned a generation of

sociological and psychological problems for their children. Surviving children, plagued by the

aftermath of war, developed emotional disturbances that continued, for some, throughout

adulthood. Sleeping and eating disorders escalated among youngsters, and gender roles were

redefined; some girls exaggerated femininity and some boys wanted to avenge the deaths from

the war while other boys acted less masculine. Many children became introverted and developed a

strong sense of dependence upon others. Those who were affected most traumatically became

suicidal or even psychotic (Marten, *Children's* 207). With childhoods lost, both boys and girls alike

resented the loss of normal childhood pleasures as well as the drudgeries of war. Feeling like de

facto adults, many children evolved from war feeling deprived of their childhoods. As they

matured, many Caucasian men felt like they needed to regain their roles as men:

> Some grew beards, frequented billiard parlors and saloons, went
>
> to gyms, and took up outdoor sports. Others found more profound
>
> way of regaining their self-images. Southerners demonstrated
>
> their courage and character and resurrected their role as masculine
>
> protectors through racial vigilantism--lynching, disfranchisement,
>
> and other forms of racial control. (Marten, *Children's* 241)

A generation of boys who grew up during the Civil War felt the need to live up to the reputations of

their fathers and uncles and to "demonstrate 'manly' virtues in acceptable ways" (Marten,

Children's 240. This need to redefine manhood was complicated by the fact that women and

African-Americans were fighting for equal rights in society. War had become more than a political

memoir; it resulted in long-lasting gender and race quests for equality. If Civil War children learned

anything, it was that their attitudes were the products of war. The war became a central event in

shaping the course of their lives and the country.

As adults, child survivors had mixed emotions about their nation. Some developed an

optimistic outlook about the future, while others felt discouraged. Certainly, political platforms felt

the reverberating effects of the war in the postbellum years. Thomas R. Marshall, Democratic

governor of Indiana and Woodrow Wilson's vice president, learned political tolerance as a child

during the war. Theodore Roosevelt's combative nature may have resulted from his childhood war

experiences. He felt that "waging war could be a form of individual as well as national cleansing"

(Marten, *Children's* 254). Roosevelt's belief that renewing the wartime spirit could carry out

progressive policies was evident in his career. Henry Cabot Lodge, although he "clearly drank

deeply from the cup of war" (Marten, *Children's* 235), felt that the death grip of war made people

appreciate their country. "The feeling about the country of those to whom the Civil War is not mere

history, but a living memory, is, I am certain, a little different from that of any others" (Marten, *Children's* 235-6). Children as survivors of war, whether past or present, share a common thread: they perceive shared humanity more clearly than adults. Or, as Werner says, "Close up, from a height of four or five feet, the enemy looks like another human being, not like an anonymous blip on a radar screen" (157).

During the forty years following Reconstruction, Civil War children redefined their perceptions of the world. Both Northerners and Southerners fashioned racial paradigms. With the increase in the wealth of the nation, an influx of immigrants resulted. The mean face of racial problems created a need for a solution-oriented society, and there was a sociological effort to create order:

> The startling increase and centralization of wealth, the alarming
>
> influx of immigrants, the rise of political machines in the cities,
>
> disillusionment with government after the debacle of
>
> Reconstructionalism, looming race problems, and periodic
>
> economic crises set American politicians and policy makers
>
> scrambling for solutions. Robert Wiebe calls their quest a
>
> "search for order," and that search is what unifies the
>
> northern and southern child-veterans of the Civil War. Former
>
> Yankee and Rebel children went about creating order in their
>
> worlds in somewhat different ways, but their response to the
>
> chaos they witnessed or feared during the war of their
>
> childhoods was a fervent desire to establish order in their lives
>
> and in their society as adults. (Marten, *Children's* 239-240)

Efforts to reform social ills sparked little agreement on the issues, but there was a willingness, at least politically, to restore virtue to the nation.

Memoirists, poets, journalists, and novelists replayed the war in books by digressing between the "real war" of Walt Whitman, the ironic cynicism of Ambrose Bierce, and the softer women's perspective from writers such as Louisa May Alcott and Susie King Taylor. Replaying old war themes through many perspectives was cathartic to a nation of postbellum survivors eager to explain the war. Regardless of their slant on the war, authors reiterated the value of life and challenged their readers to keep the spirit of the Civil War legacy alive by honoring those whose sacrifices paved the way to a nation of freedom. We must remember not only the casualties suffered in combat, but the words of those who never received Silver Stars or Purple Hearts: the children.

Grace King wrote in *Memories of a Southern Woman of Letters*, "Ah, the children who came through the war....There are no monuments raised to them, no medals struck in their honor" (qtd. in Marten, *Children's*). Their resilience and love of life coupled with their memories, gave them the determination to right the wrongs of our country's past:

> These are children speaking--in simple words--without rhetoric or
>
> resentment--telling us about human resilience and the capacity for
>
> compassion and decency that survives even when the world is
>
> awash in armed conflicts and hate. Perhaps, just perhaps, there
>
> is a lesson there that the grown-ups need to learn, and that's why
>
> the lesson is repeated by the children of war in each generation,
>
> century after century. We need only to listen to their voices....They
>
> were children who loved life. They were not bitter; they did not hate.

>The wars that shaped their lives were fought in the name of causes
>that adults believed in and were willing to kill for. Many children died
>as well. (Werner 158-9)

The children's Civil War is full of painful images. Scenes of children scavenging barnyards for food or of babies shot in their mother's arms are only small glimpses of how the "real war" really transpired. To the children, the experience was full of terror, pain, and a desperation for life to return to normal; although life was never the same after the war. Despite their losses, Civil War children grew into adults who continued to express patriotism and loyalty to their country. Despite their losses, life continued onward and they attempted to create a sense of order out of their shattered lives. Postbellum survivors embraced the notion that "Belief in a single common community interest was being replaced by belief that society was a clash of interests that could not be reconciled by virtuous participation in the public sphere. Politics could no longer control social differences" (qtd. in McPherson and Cooper 199).

Conclusion

The surviving children of the American Civil War persevered against insurmountable odds, and it is this commonality with other eyewitnesses to war that binds them together. Historically, war children hold fast to their religious faith to sustain them and practice Christian fellowship by sharing food and water, even when these commodities were scarce. Unlike children residing in the safety of their homes, war children are forced to tend to sick or wounded people and depend upon their survival wit to live. Civil War children were no different.

Are these children really that important? Definitely. We can learn from their muted voices from the past and use this knowledge to temper our resistance to "other" people who do not share our life experiences and to help them overcome the terrors that plague their young lives. In essence, as modern readers we must understand the truth behind the lessons that history taught us:

> ...those who survived and told us their tales left us a legacy--a quiet
> legacy of courage and determination that is not celebrated in speeches
> given at monuments honoring the dead, or at ceremonies awarding
> soldiers with Silver Stars or purple Hearts. These are children speaking--
> in simple words--without rhetoric or resentment--telling us about human
> resilience and the capacity for compassion and decency that survives
> even when the world is awash in armed conflicts and hate. Perhaps,
> just perhaps, there is a lesson there that the grown-ups need to learn,
> and that's why the lesson is repeated by the children of war in each
> generation, century after century. We need only to listen to their
> voices. (Werner 158)

We must embrace their legacies to help modern victims of war. By doing so, we can reach out and practice active compassion for those in need and develop trauma programs designed to ease their suffering. Furthermore, by focusing upon these extraordinary children from our past, we can apply their insights to trauma recovery programs and assist modern day and future survivors of war. Despite the devastating disruptions that wars produce in our lives, redirecting our focus on recovery can provide a sense of future security to survivors. This collective coming-together has been proven to facilitate healing. During the American Civil War, child war survivors who experienced small acts of kindness from strangers developed "a sense of belonging provided by their peers or by their religious faith" (Werner 157). We need to extend a humanitarian hand toward not only the children, but all people who are brutalized by war.

By studying the war from a social perspective, the range of its consequences becomes more clear. If we ignore the social history of these children, we lose the full significance of the true impact of the American Civil War and other similar conflicts. Although traumatic experiences left some children embittered about their pasts, others who survived the war walked away with a sense of hope. Despite the terror, fatalities, and loss of innocence, these children represent strength in human resilience. They are a very important part of our American history, and we should not forget them. The children of the Civil War may not receive the recognition they deserve, but their commitment toward peace and their tenacity for survival certainly shaped our nation. Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Civil War children were committed and they did, in fact, incite change.

Historically, the American Civil War was a war between the states; socially, it became part of a storytelling culture whose orators attempted to find meaning in their experiences and share

those insights with future generations. While reading about the war will never provide a complete understanding about what it was actually like to experience it, close study can render a more personal focus, thereby teaching us from the mistakes in our past. This was what Walt Whitman meant when he said, "The real war will never get in the books." He was right. The real war will never be found in a textbook; yet statistics, coupled with the personal stories of the everyday people who experienced the conflict, will provide us with a more accurate representation of what the real war was like. The Civil War didn't end when the fighting stopped. The real war affected its participants years after life resumed "normalcy."

By studying the children's voices and the voices that spoke to and for the children, we can draw parallels to the experiences of young contemporary war victims. We can use this knowledge to assist modern day war survivors in their own recovery. History has shown that children who lived through the Civil War shared similar experiences to those of modern day victims of civil strife. Like most wars, the Civil War was more than just political propaganda; it was about the people who bore its effects. Children, its youngest victims, suffered deeply, and their stories illustrate the terrors of bloodshed.

Whether they fought in battle, became drummers for the troops, or experienced the civilian side of military strife, each child's experience became part of the psychological and sociological rebirth of our country. This is an important issue to explore not only because it documents the human side of battle, but also because it provides "a more diverse and complex and integrated conflict than anyone had imagined" (qtd. in McPherson and Cooper 200). To reduce their stories to dry facts and statistics is to invalidate their suffering. We are their descendants. I pay tribute to these silenced voices because our ancestral children are important; their stories are our own.

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Appendix

The following annotated bibliography is reproduced verbatim from James Marten's book,

Lessons of War: The Civil War in Children's Magazines (251-4). It is a listing of Civil War

periodicals written, edited, and directed toward children of the 1860s:

Children's Friend. Dayton, Ohio, 1860?-1863. Published semi-monthly by the Gospel Herald and

edited by J. Ellis. Promoted temperance, Sabbath schools, obedience, and preparing for

death; urged children to become self-reliant and independent. Letters from young readers

tended to celebrate the opening of Sunday schools or mourn their absence in remote regions.

Games and puzzles drew on biblical as well as more secular ideas for clues and answers.

Children's Friend. Richmond, Virginia, 1862-1915. Published monthly by the Presbyterian

Committee of Publication and edited by the Rev. William Brown as "an evangelical Sabbath

School journal." Four pages long, it was devoted exclusively to religious topics, with no

games, illustrations, or fiction. Articles related Bible stories, described missionary activities,

depicted obedient children, discussed appropriate reading material for Christian children, and

described positive Sabbath school experiences.

Child's Banner. Salisbury, North Carolina, 1865. Short-lived, four-page magazine published by

the Rev. A. W. Mangum as a Sunday school paper.

Child's Index. Macon, Georgia, 1863-1865. Published as a Baptist paper for children by the Rev.

Samuel Boyken, editor of the *Christian Index.* The four-page monthly included illustrations,

music, and some stories. Circulation reached at least four thousand. Authors included

fifteen-year-old Joel Chandler Harris, who wrote "Charlie Howard; or, Who Is the Good Boy?"

for the July 1863 issue.

Forrester's Playmate. Boston, 1854-1867? One of several magazines edited by Mark Forrester from the 1840s through the 1860s. Like the others--*The Youth's Casket and Playmate, The Boys' and Girls' Magazine and Fireside Companion, Forrester's Boys' and Girls' Magazine*--it presented fairly typical selections on nature, history, and biography, along with encouragement to live moral, hard-working lives. Forrester's monthly column--"Chats with Readers and Correspondents" was, perhaps, more extensive than similar sections of other magazines. Although war-related material appeared rather irregularly, the editor did urge former readers in the army to keep him informed of their experiences.

Little American. West Point, New York, 1862-1864. Published semimonthly by Susan Warner and edited by the author of "Wide, Wide World" and "Dollars and Cents," according to the masthead. It offered Bible stories, travelogues, natural history, and short stories reflecting Christian principles.

The Little Corporal. Chicago, 1865-1875. Published by Alfred L. Sewell and edited by Sewell and Emily Huntington Miller, a well-known author for children. Inspired by the devotion to duty and sacrifices of Union soldiers during the Civil War, Sewell conceived *The Little Corporal* as a way to sustain the wartime spirit exemplified by the children who had helped him raise $16,000 for Chicago's Northwestern Sanitary Fair in 1865. The monthly, which supposedly reached a circulation of 80,000 by the late 1860s, featured serialized fiction, success stories, poems, songs, "Indian stories," games, and letters from readers, all loosely devoted to the magazine's motto "Fighting against Wrong, and for the Good, the True, and the Beautiful." Somewhat inevitably, considering the Magazine's martial origins, the stories slanted toward male readers, as in Horace Greeley's late 1860s column, "Counsel to Boys."

The Little Pilgrim. Philadelphia, 1853-1868. Published by Leander K. Lippincott and edited by his

wife, Sara J.C. Lippincott, under the name Grace Greenwood. It was named as a juvenile

version of the title character in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and dedicated to promoting

a genteel Christianity and high moral purpose. Authors featured in the monthly included

Greenwood, Lucy Larcom, and other writers for children, but also John Greenleaf Whittier,

Hans Christian Andersen, and Charles Dickens. Selections included European stories, pious

obituaries of readers, "Anecdotes and Sayings of Children," morality tales, and, during the

Civil War, commentary on political events and the war's effects on society.

Our Young Folks: An Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls. Boston, 1865-1873. Published by

Ticknor and Fields, publisher of *The Atlantic Monthly* and *North American Review.* Edited

chiefly by Lucy Larcom. Perhaps the best and most popular of the enthusiastic reader—its

circulation reached upward 75,000 in the years following the war. Its sixty-four pages per

month offered a balanced menu of fiction; articles on nature, art, science, and geography;

and games. Less religious in its orientation than many earlier magazines, it nevertheless

focused on generosity, and hard work. During the Civil War, it featured a number of articles

and stories revolving around sympathetic African Americans; in other stories, Native

Americans and Jews are also portrayed. Authors included Louisa May Alcott, Harriet

Beecher Stowe, and Mayne Reid; drawings by Winslow Homer also appeared.

The Student and Schoolmate. Boston, 1855-1872. Created by the merger of *The Student and*

Tutor and *The Schoolmate.* Several publishers produced the magazine, but its dominant

editor was Oliver Optic (William T. Adams). Its subtitle, "A Monthly Reader for School and

Home Instruction," reflects its editor's didactic bent. Optic frequently espoused political and

moral causes from his column "The Teacher's Desk"; and, among all the editors of juvenile

magazines, he was the most vociferous supporter of the Union during the Civil War. Along

with typical fiction and nonfiction selections, *The Student and Schoolmate* offered patriotic

songs, declamations (speeches to be given in school or public settings), and dialogues (short

plays on patriotic subjects). Optic wrote a large portion of each month's issue, but he also

published pieces by other authors, including, on occasion, Horatio Alger.

OTHER CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES OF THE CIVIL WAR

The Child at Home. Boston, 1863-1873.

Children's Guide. Macon, Georgia, 1863-1865.

The Child's Paper. New York, 1852-1897

Child's World. Philadelphia, 1682-1871.

Clark's School Visitor. Philadelphia, 1857-1875.

Deaf Mute Casket. Raleigh, North Carolina, 1861-1865.

Little Joker. New York, 1863-1866.

Merry's Museum. New York, 1841-1872.

New Church Magazine for Children. Boston, 1862-?

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The Standard-Bearer: An Illustrated Magazine for the Young. New York, 1851-1863.

Sunday School Advocate. New York, 1841-1921.

Sunday School Times. Philadelphia, 1841-1921.

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Young Reaper. Philadelphia, 1857-1908.

Youth's Instructor. Rochester, New York, 1852-?

The Youth's Visitor. Boston, 1864-1872.

Youth Temperance Visitor. Rockland, Maine, 1863-1870?

This thesis would not be complete without photographs of some of the heroes and

heroines who braved the American Civil War. These are our ancestral children.

Fig. 2. Johnny Clem (courtesy of the National Archives); rpt. in Emmy E.

Werner, *Reluctant Witnesses: Children's Voices from the Civil War* (CO:
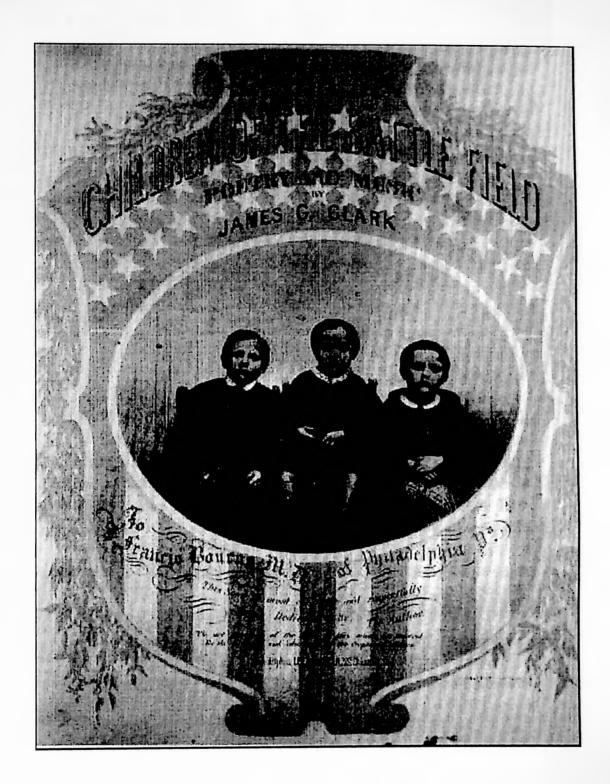
Westview Press, 1998) 27.

Fig. 3. "The Children of the Battlefield," inspired by the true story of a dead

soldier found clutching this photo of his children. rpt. in James Marten,

The Children's Civil War (NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998)

214.

Fig. 4. Contraband Jackson, a Servant in

the Confederate Army (courtesy of the

Massachusetts Commandery, Military

Order of the Loyal Legion and U.S. Army

Of the Loyal Legion and U.S. Army Military

Institute); rpt. in Emmy E. Werner, *Reluctant*

Witnesses: Children's Voices from the Civil
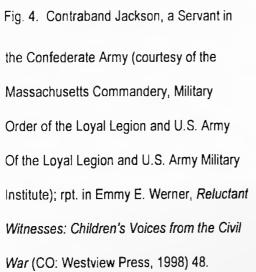
War (CO: Westview Press, 1998) 48.

Fig. 5. Drummer Jackson, Seventy-ninth U.S.

Colored Troops (courtesy of the Massachusetts

Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion

and the U.S. Army Military History Institute); rpt.

in Emmy E. Werner, *Reluctant Witnesses: Children's*

Voices form the Civil War (CO: Westview Press) 49.

Fig. 6. Lucy McRae (courtesy of Gordon Cotton, Vicksburg and Warren

County Historical Society); rpt. in Emmy E. Werner, *Reluctant Witnesses:*

Children's Voices of the Civil War (CO: Westview Press, 1998) 83.

Fig. 7. Powder-monkey of the Union Navy. rpt. in *Civil War Times* (PA: Historical

Times, Inc., Feb. 1980) 34.