One-man preservation machine: When Bud Hall realized development threatened Brandy Station in the 1980s, he became the battlefield's passionate, determined preservation voice.

Rambling: His Place His Passion

By John Banks JUNE 2019 • Civil WAR TIMES MAGAZINE

A day with preservationist Clark 'Bud' Hall at his beloved Brandy Station

To understand Clark "Bud" Hall's passion for Brandy Station, where the war's biggest cavalry battle was fought, you have to explore his battlefield with him. "Brandy" is a living thing for the 74-year-old former Marine and ex-FBI agent—a fragile place worth vigorously defending, nurturing, documenting, and, yes, loving.

"I have spent more time there," Hall tells me, "than I have anywhere else in the world."

Early on a late-fall morning, before we closely examine his beloved 1863 battleground, Hall and I visit several other Civil War sites in Culpeper County, Va., in his gray truck. "Semper Fidelis," his license plate holder reads—"Always Faithful," the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps. One of the country's leading battlefield preservationists, Hall rents a house in the town of Culpeper, allowing the Mississippi native easy access to the area's rich Civil War history. "He is one of those rare people that when he drives and travels, he sees in his mind's eye constantly a landscape that is gone," says historian John Hennessy, a longtime friend of Hall. "He sees 1863."

As we drive on Culpeper County's back roads, an early morning rain finally yields to deep-blue sky and scattered clouds. Hall seems to know the location of the remains of every Civil War gun pit; the importance of every ford; the story of every wartime house.

"See that high ground?" Hall says, gesturing to a ridge near Clark Mountain, the Army of Northern Virginia's nerve center from November 1863-May 1864. "That's where the Confederate camps were." As we ascend a bumpy, narrow road to the top of the unspoiled mountain, Hall identifies traces of wartime roads peeking through leaves. The view from the 1,082-foot summit is spectacular. A Confederate signal station once stood on this land, now privately owned.

We share a collective responsibility to secure and save these sacred fields

On a clear day, you can see Harpers Ferry Gap, roughly 70 miles north in West Virginia. In the near distance, Cedar Mountain looms over the site of the August 1862 battle.

Near the Rapidan River to the east sits a beautiful white house well out of view. It was Powhatan Robinson's home, "Struan," used by Union Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren as a headquarters and by the Army of the Potomac as a hospital in the aftermath of the Battle of Morton Ford's in early February 1864. Hall knows the 1840 house and its owner well; its expansive porch is a

perfect place for a man with a full flask and an active imagination.

Miles away, we see Stony Point, where the "Nutmeggers" of the 14th Connecticut camped before the regiment suffered severe casualties at Morton's Ford. In all, 18 Civil War battlefields in Virginia's Piedmont can be seen from the awe-inspiring summit of Clark Mountain. "He stands on top of that mountain," says Hennessy, "and sees everything that matters to him."

What matters most to Hall, of course, lies 15 miles north as the crow flies.

Their last fight: Lt. Col. Virgil Broderick of the 1st New Jersey Cavalry died on Brandy Station's Fleetwood Hill and is buried in nearby Culpeper. (Courtesy of Clark Hall)

Bud Hall's love affair with "Brandy" began in 1984. He was then unit chief of the FBI's Organized Crime section in Washington, D.C. On weekends, he visited the region's many Civil War sites. Picturesque, pristine, and largely unmarked, Brandy Station—little more than an hour's drive southwest of Washington—became his favorite. Hall wanted to know everything about the Battle of Brandy Station, fought on June 9, 1863, and the battlefield's rolling fields and hollows, so he plunged into its history.

Yes, Hall obsesses over his battleground and other hallowed ground in Culpeper County. But who could argue against his explanation for why these places are important? "Young Americans fought, bled, and died on our Civil War battlefields," the Vietnam veteran told me, "and I profoundly believe we share a collective responsibility to secure and save these sacred fields."

As Hall and I stand by ourselves on Fleetwood Hill, viciously contested during the 1863 battle, he says it's impossible to imagine the killing, screaming, and dying. More than 18,000 horsemen fought at "Brandy," making it the largest cavalry battle in American history. On a large hill in the distance, we can see "Beauregard," the fabulous, circa-1840s brick mansion of Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell's adjutant, James Barbour.

Teenager George Henry Williams served in the 12th Virginia Cavalry and was killed

while securing his prisoner. His brother and fellow soldier James lamented that "Death so often marks for its own the noble and generous…." (Library Of Congress)

"More men fought and died here at Brandy Station," Hall says, "than anywhere else in war-torn Culpeper County." Busy traffic on nearby James Madison Highway drones on as he talks about two of them: Private George Henry Williams of the 12th Virginia Cavalry and Lt. Col. Virgil Broderick of the 1st New Jersey Cavalry. For Hall, who's been researching and writing a book-length, detailed tactical narrative about Brandy Station since 1990, the soldiers' stories are especially meaningful. Many of his ancestors served the Confederacy, "a futile, misguided cause," Hall says. He has a deep respect, however, for men in blue and gray.

In 1861, 17-year-old Williams pleaded with his widowed mother to grant him permission to join the Confederate Army. He enlisted as a private in the 10th Virginia Infantry; later, he transferred to the cavalry. Like many soldiers, George desperately missed his family. "You don't know what pleasure it gives me," he wrote in a letter, "to hear from home." Three days before the Battle of Brandy Station, Williams wrote to his sister: "We will have work to do in a few days," he said, adding, "the Yanks are just across the river."

When the Federals threatened to seize Fleetwood Hill that late-spring day in 1863, the 12th Virginia Cavalry was thrust into the fray by Hall's hero, Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart. Arriving on the northern slope of Fleetwood, Williams quickly knocked a Union trooper from his horse in a sword fight, capturing him. As he marched his captive to the rear at the point of his saber, the prisoner suddenly pulled out a small pistol and shot the teenager between the eyes, killing him instantly.

After the battle, George's body was identified by his grief-stricken brother, James, a lieutenant in Stuart's Horse Artillery. Williams was initially buried on Fleetwood Hill, then removed two months later by his brother and reburied in a cemetery in Woodstock, Va.

Broderick, a farmer in civilian life, charged up Fleetwood Hill with the 1st New Jersey, and Confederates quickly surrounded him and ordered his surrender. The 30-year-old lieutenant colonel refused and the Rebels killed him. He is buried at Culpeper National Cemetery. Hall often visits his grave.

Today, the ground where Williams, Broderick, and so many others fought and died is an open, rolling field. Impressive markers note the significance of the site. It wasn't always so. An ugly, modern mansion once dominated the crest of Fleetwood Hill. When the private property was put up for sale, Hall, the American Battlefield Trust, and other preservationists lay in wait to buy it. When the eyesore was finally torn down in 2014, Hall was given the mansion's front-door lock as a well-earned trophy of his war to save hallowed ground.

Addition by subtraction: Hall, the American Battlefield Trust, and other preservationists

fought to tear down the "McMansion" that once dominated Fleetwood Hill. Hall was given the home's lock as a token of victory. (John Banks)

As we cut across the battlefield to another stop, Hall spots something suspicious about a half-mile away. "What is that figure?" he asks. "Is it moving?" No, it wasn't human, certainly not a relic hunter, an anathema to Hall. He visits his battlefield every day he's in the area, just to make sure "Brandy" is OK. "I am the Brandy Station police force, a force of one," he says, chuckling. "The pay is not real great."

We drive down Beverly's Ford Road, leaving a gust of leaves in our wake. At a quiet dead end, we find one of Hall's favorite spots on the battlefield, a place he has visited "hundreds and hundreds of times," almost always alone. Here at 4:30 a.m. on June 9, 1863, Lieutenant Henry Cutler of the 8th New York Cavalry charged up the ford road across an open plain at the head of his men. He soon fell mortally wounded, the first of 55,000 casualties in what became the Gettysburg Campaign.

At Cutler's funeral days later in Avon, N.Y., a "deep solemnity" was "stamped on every brow." The lieutenant, described as a "young man of great promise," was 26. When Hall first saw Cutler's gravesite in New York, it was badly eroded, the tombstone severely neglected. He was the catalyst for getting it fixed.

At the crest of Buford's Knoll, the prettiest site on the battlefield, no modern intrusions mar the view. Perhaps that's why Hall often comes here to sit and to think. Sometimes it's difficult for him to leave. No wonder. Hall was the driving force in saving this ground, once targeted by a developer for an auto racing track. "I'd rather be out here," he says, "than eat."

Before Hall and I complete our tour of his battlefield, we must visit "Farley," a beautifully restored mansion that served as VI Corps commander John Sedgwick's headquarters during the Army of the Potomac's winter encampment here in 1863-64. Perhaps no home at Brandy Station has as much meaning to Hall as the privately owned property. He proposed at Farley to the love of his life, Deborah Whittier Fitts. A longtime journalist with a passion for the Civil War, she died of breast cancer in 2008, a wound that remains unhealed for Hall.

"Deb loved this place," he says.

She undoubtedly would be pleased, then, that Hall's work preserving their beloved "Brandy," and other Civil War sites in Culpeper County, does not go unnoticed. Hennessy ticks off land Hall was instrumental in saving, hundreds of acres under easement from Kelly's Ford to Morton's Ford. "He has given us," he says, "one of the most remarkable preservation accomplishments of our generation."

"It is," Hennessy adds with great admiration, "a gift to the world." ✯

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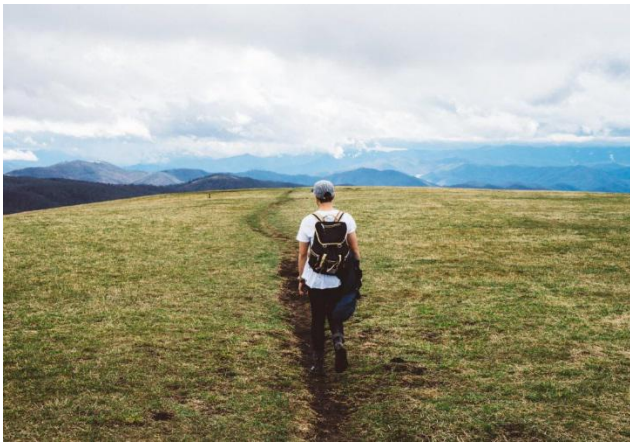
American Battlefield Trust Now Accepting Applications For Youth Leadership Team

American battlefield Trust
Jim Campi & Nicole

April 10, 2019 (Washington, D.C.) — The American Battlefield Trust today announced the launch of its Youth Leadership Team (YLT), an innovative initiative to directly engage with the next generation of battlefield preservationists. The YLT will unite 10 highly-motivated high school students, selected from a nationwide applicant pool, who will serve as national advocates for America's hallowed grounds.



"It is absolutely critical that we pass the torch of knowledge onto future generations of Americans," said James Lighthizer, Trust president. "Every hour of every day, we fight to preserve our nation's storied hallowed grounds. Encouraging our nation's youth to understand what happened at these places, and how it has shaped us into the country we are today, is important for our future. The Trust is excited to work with our Youth Leadership Team participants, both to learn from them and to help others learn through them."

The YLT will be comprised of history enthusiasts, aged 13-18, who support and embody the Trust's mission to protect our nation's hallowed battlegrounds and educate the public about their importance in our national story. YLT members will participate in key Trust events, including the Annual Conference and a youth Capitol Hill event, in addition to planning and undertaking a battlefield project in their own communities.

"Working with our nation's youth is the only way to truly ensure that love and appreciation for our shared history is carried forward," remarked Connor Townsend, YLT coordinator. "By not only teaching but involving youth in hands-on preservation efforts, we hope to create ambassadors for our mission who stay with us as they mature."

YLT participants will be positioned to speak about the importance of battlefield land preservation and, through a special hometown battlefield project, connect history to our modern world. Applications for the inaugural YLT class are now live on the Trust website through May 31, and all interested high school students between the ages of 13 and 18 are encouraged to apply.

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 50,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War. Learn more at *www.battlefields.org.*

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Brothers In Valor: Living Medal Of Honor Heroes Walk In The Footsteps Of Their Civil War Counterparts

The American Battlefield Trust joins three living Medal of Honor recipients as they visit Medal of Honor battlefields of the Civil War

Jim Campi & Nicole Ryan

March 14, 2019

Sergeant First Class Melvin Morris, Green Berets, standing near Fort Wagner on Morris Island, where two Medals of Honor were awarded and the Trust has saved 118 acres. Like William Carney during the Civil War assault on Fort Wagner, Morris was wounded several times but pressed forward to complete his mission.
Charles Harris

(Washington, D.C.) — Earlier this month, the American Battlefield Trust debuted "Brothers in Valor," a multi-faceted project recognizing past and present recipients of our nation's highest military decoration for heroism: the Medal of Honor. The project features three living Medal of Honor recipients who traveled to Civil War battlefields to walk in the footsteps of Civil War Medal of Honor awardees. They explain in a moving series of interviews their own experiences on the battlefield, while relating the stories of Medal of Honor recipients who fought at Gettysburg, Pa., Fredericksburg, Va., and Morris Island, S.C.

"Too often, we feel removed from the events of the past, forgetting that those who lived through earlier eras were individuals just like us, with hopes, dreams and fears," said Trust president James Lighthizer. "Brothers in Valor reminds us of that fundamental truth in dramatic fashion. There is an incredible spirit that unites these heroes, past and present, and our hallowed grounds play an important role in honoring them."

Brothers in Valor highlights three living Medal of Honor recipients: Hershel "Woody" Williams, the last living Medal of Honor recipient from Iwo Jima in World War II; Vietnam War recipient Melvin Morris; and Britt Slabinski, who fought in the War in Afghanistan. Reflecting on their own service, as well as the heroism of a Civil War soldier who fought in circumstances similar to their own, these American heroes discussed the importance of battlefield preservation and the role hallowed grounds play in our understanding the sacrifices made to forge the nation we are today.

U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Hershel "Woody" Williams, standing at Gettysburg National Military Park, where 64 Medals of Honor were awarded and the Trust has saved 1,040 acres. Like the members of the Mears Party during the Civil War, Williams volunteered to go forward and clear a concealed enemy position that was threatening his unit. William Hereford

"Being at a battlefield where you know that individuals sacrificed their lives is a profound experience," Hershel "Woody" Williams said. "We need these places to keep reminding us of those who gave more than any of us."

Brothers in Valor was unveiled at a special event on Capitol Hill on March 5. The debut was attended by two Medal of Honor recipients, "Woody" Williams and Brian Thacker, a veteran of combat during the Vietnam War who served in the 92nd Field Artillery Regiment and whose heroic efforts assisted in his base's defense. Speakers included Reps. Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.) and Ron Kind (D-Wis.), chair of the Congressional Battlefield Caucus.

Among the project's offerings are inspirational videos of all three featured living Medal of Honor recipients, produced by Kansas City-based studio Wide Awake Films. The Trust has also launched a digital database that brings together biographical information on all 1,522 Civil War-era recipients of the Medal of Honor in a searchable format for the first time. Finally, a special edition of the Trust's *Hallowed Ground* magazine outlines the medal's design evolution, the process for issuing each citation as well as background on the Badge of Military Merit — prelude to the modern Purple Heart created by George Washington during the Revolutionary War. This issue of *Hallowed Ground* also includes an essay by Jack Jacobs, Medal of Honor and Purple Heart recipient for actions above and beyond the call of duty during the Vietnam War.

Master Chief Special Warfare Operator Britt Slabinski, U.S. Navy Seals, at the Slaughter Pen Farm, where five Medals of Honor were awarded and the Trust has saved 208 acres of its 248 acres across the Fredericksburg Battlefield in Virginia. Like George Maynard at Fredericksburg, Slabinski chose to return to an active battlefield at great personal risk in search of a wounded comrade. Robert Maxwell

"The stories of the brave men — and one woman — who have been awarded the Medal of Honor should be a source of inspiration for all Americans," said Lighthizer. "Preserving our hallowed grounds is one small, yet incredibly powerful, way to honor their profound courage and recognize the lives of countless American soldiers."

This exciting project was made possible through the invaluable partnership of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the nonprofit organization that supports and represents living recipients of the medal and honors the memory of those who have passed. The decoration was created in 1862 and has been awarded some 3,520 times since.

The Medal of Honor recipients featured in Brothers in Valor are:

- **Hershel "Woody" Williams, World War II,** who explored the Valley of Death on the Gettysburg Battlefield, an area where six members of the Sixth Pennsylvania Reserves volunteered to clear a sniper's nest. Like the members of the Mears Party, Williams put himself at considerable risk in order to clear a path forward for his comrades.
- **Melvin Morris, Vietnam War,** who traveled to Morris Island, S.C., where the 54th Massachusetts — an African American regiment — attacked Fort Wagner against incredible odds. Like Civil War recipient William Carney, Morris was severely wounded, but pressed forward to continue his mission.
- **Britt Slabinski, War in Afghanistan,** who visited the Trust's Slaughter Pen Farm property on the Fredericksburg Battlefield, a 208-acre site where five Medals of Honor were earned. Like Civil War recipient George Maynard, Slabinski chose to return to an active battlefield to seek out and recover a wounded comrades.

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 50,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War. Learn more at www.battlefields.org.

The War List: Czars of the Pentagon

By Eliot A. Cohen
Spring 2013 • MHQ Magazine

America's Five Best and Worst War Czars

John Armstrong, Secretary of War, 1812–1814
Weak, inept, and petulant

John Armstrong got his start in the military during the American Revolution, serving as an aide first to General Hugh Mercer and then to the scheming Major General Horatio Gates. After drafting the near-mutinous postwar Newburgh addresses threatening Congress with a military coup if it did not meet the army's pay demands, he embarked on a career in politics.

As secretary of war he often knew what needed to be done—including invading Canada by Lake Champlain rather than via the less promising Niagara frontier route—but lacked the will to follow the better course. Irascible and petulant, he tolerated the gross incompetence of fools and knaves such as Major General James Wilkinson, defeated by a force a scarcely a third the size of his own at the Battle of Crysler's Farm in November 1813. Armstrong feuded with Secretary of State James Monroe, and after his ineptitude led to the British burning of Washington, D.C., quit just before he was fired.

John B. Floyd, Secretary of War, 1857–1860
Traitor to his country

The self-righteous, slave-owning Virginia lawyer and politician first made his mark via nepotism (a questionable deal between the

army and his wife's cousin) and maladministration of the War Department. As the crisis of the Civil War came to a head, he argued against sending reinforcements to the beleaguered Fort Sumter and was accused of shipping arms to the seceding states.

He quit and left town, embarking on a dubious military career with the Confederacy, his biggest claim to fame coming in 1862 when he scampered away from the Union siege of Fort Donelson, leaving 13,000 of his men to surrender. Confederate president Jefferson Davis dismissed him shortly afterward.

Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, 1862–1868
Master of organizing for war

This contemptuous legal rival and inveterate political opponent of Abraham Lincoln became his staunch lieutenant. To his energy, rectitude, and determination the cause of the Union owed an incalculable debt: Without him it is hard to imagine the vast, well-equipped, and abundntly supplied armies that crushed the rebellion. Not least among his services were his persecution of crooked contractors, the mobilization of freed blacks, and his merciless hounding of weak, incompetent, or timid commanders—notably George McClellan.

Elihu Root Secretary of War, 1899–1904
The great modernizer

Over the stubborn opposition of the politically connected Nelson Miles, then commanding general of the army, Root thoroughly reformed that institution. Among his improvements were expanding the army from 28,000 to well over 60,000 men, extending its control over the National Guard, insisting that officers rotate between staff and line duties and be promoted largely by merit, creating the Army War College and expanding West Point, and replacing the antiquated and inadequate autonomous bureaus with a modern General Staff system.

Melvin Laird, Secretary of Defense, 1969–1973
The man who kept it together

Laird had to hold the Department of Defense together amid a war gone sour in Vietnam, racial turmoil, a military drug-use epidemic, and political crisis. He oversaw the turn away from conscription and development of technology, such as cruise missiles, and restored a sense of civilian-military harmony in the Pentagon, where the joint chiefs had been at daggers with his predecessors. By Henry Kissinger's grudging admission, Laird was the only man to beat him in bureaucratic knife fights, as when he snatched a potentially dangerous analytic operation (the legendary Office of Net Assessment) from the White House, and brought it to the Pentagon.

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Company Clerk: There is little visual record for Albert Jennings, and this is the only known photograph of him. It is undated, but it is more than likely a postwar image as he was only 24 when he enlisted.

The War In Their Words: I Am The Colonel's Orderly

A. Welker and Jeffrey Fortais
JUNE 2019 • Civil War Times

A soldier's diary preserves the only known text of an Emory Upton speech

An entry in the 121st New York's regimental books describes Private Albert N. Jennings as a "good soldier but lacks constitution," which doesn't quite seem to suit a man who served the Union cause throughout the war and survived wounding at the Battle of the Wilderness. Born October 15, 1837, the only son of Samuel and Catherine Jennings in the tiny hamlet of Salisbury, N.Y., he left at age 24 to join the Army, perhaps inspired by a desire to impress 18-year-old Martha "Mattie" Woolever, a local girl to whom he had taken a shine.

The regiment mustered in on August 23, 1862, for three-years service with 946 men and 36 officers. Recruited mainly from Otsego and Herkimer Counties in Upstate New York by Richard Franchot, who became the 121st's first colonel, the regiment left for Washington City after only one week of drill.

Arriving at Fort Lincoln in Washington's northwest defenses on September 3, the men finally received English-made Enfield rifle muskets and began learning the manual of arms. Only four days later, the regiment left Fort Lincoln in the middle of the night without most of its equipment, expecting to return after a brief skirmish. The regiment never made it back to the fort or recovered its original gear, a disaster the men blamed on their green commander, Colonel Franchot.

Joining Maj. Gen. William B. Franklin's 6th Corps—assigned to Maj. Gen. Henry Slocum's 1st Division and Colonel Joseph Bartlett's 3rd Brigade—the 121st chased General Robert E. Lee's Confederate army into Maryland, witnessing but not participating in the Battles of South Mountain and Antietam. The 121st men nevertheless suffered for weeks with nothing but their uniforms to shield them from the night's chills and drenching rains, a condition that fostered growing resentment of their leader.

Perhaps knowing he was in over his head, Colonel Franchot resigned his commission after only one month. Determined to leave his regiment in the capable hands of a professional officer, Franchot used his friendship with General Slocum to ensure his hand-picked replacement was Captain Emory Upton, who would prove to be one of the most remarkable young commanders of the war.

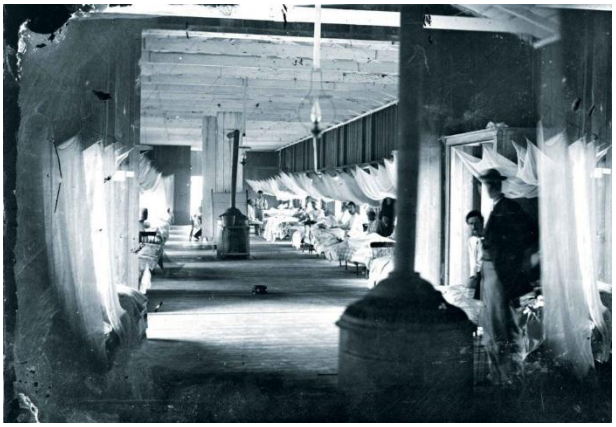
Upton took command of the 121st on October 25, 1862, and immediately began to transform the volunteers into a crack fighting unit. He established Regular Army routines and established certification tests for officers. Upton forbade spitting, demanded attention during formations, and instituted new hygiene and medical practices to repair the physical toll from the Maryland Campaign. Other regiments in Bartlett's brigade began referring to the 121st New York as "Upton's Regulars."

Jennings, however, missed some of that transformation when he found himself at Harewood General Hospital outside

Washington, D.C., rather than in the 121st's winter camp at White Oak Church near Fredericksburg, Va. By early 1863, Albert reported to Alexandria's Camp Distribution, where men were processed returning to their various units in the field. Once there, Albert for the first time served as Company H's clerk, and said he "wrote some for the captain."

In early May, Jennings' regiment participated in Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker's Chancellorsville Campaign. The 121st, part of Brig. Gen. William Brooks' 1st Division, waited with the 6th Corps in the Union rear, guarding the Rappahannock River crossings while the rest of the Army of the Potomac fought at Chancellorsville.

On the evening of May 2, Hooker ordered Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick, then commanding the 6th Corps, to reinforce his battered army at Chancellorsville. After successfully driving Confederate defenders from Marye's Heights, the 121st ran headlong into a Southern defensive line near Salem Church. In 20 minutes, the regiment lost 137 men killed or wounded, and retreated across the Rappahannock. Jennings' diary entries track the advance of his regiment.



A Place To Get Well: This photograph shows recuperating Union soldiers in one of Harewood Hospital's well-kept and airy wards. Jennings spent time in this Washington, D.C., hospital during the winter of 1862-63. (Library of Congress)

1863

APRIL 28: Across the Rappahannock. We crossed the river this morning and drove the Rebs back from the river and I have been out on picket today. The Rebs are in plain sight. We crossed [in] pontoon boats. The Rebs fired on the first boats that come over and we had three or four killed.
May 1: Today we laid on [our arms] in line of battle and there is a little skirmishing along the front….

May 2 [Battle of Chancellorsville]: Today we had some shells come over from the Reb batteries and we dug rifle pits to screen us. There is a good deal of skirmishing on our front.

May 3 [Battle of Salem Church]: Today we advanced on the Rebs. We marched through Fredericksburg and out the road toward Gordonsville. We took the heights above Fredericksburg….We drove the Rebs a few rods and had to fall back. We rallied and drove them back again and held our position. We lost almost half our number.

May 4: Today we have been under fire but have not been engaged. To night we retreated across the river. The Rebs came near flanking us. We were the rear guard and covered our army's retreat.

Following the Chancellorsville debacle, the 121st New York pursued the Army of Northern Virginia as it headed north. Arriving at Gettysburg, Pa., in the midafternoon on July 2 after a brutal 30-mile nighttime march from Manchester, Md., Bartlett's brigade deployed on the northern shoulder of Little Round Top to support the

5th Corps (which Jennings mistakenly calls the 12th Corps). On July 3, the 121st remained in reserve and witnessed Pickett's Charge. Jennings recorded the experience in his diaries, referring often to Martha as "M."

June 26: Today we got up at 3 AM. Broke camp and marched till 4 o'clock P.M. [W]ere rear guard tonight; went and got some cherries & milked some cows….We came through Gainesville, Loudon Co. Va.

June 27: Today we marched to near Poolesville Md. We crossed the river at Edwards Ferry. We passed though a fine section of country. It is now rather damp. We are now in Montgomery Co. Md.

Battle Detritus: Andrew Russell took this photograph of Confederate casualties on Marye's Heights in Fredericksburg, Va., on May 3, 1863, after the Union 6th Corps overran the position. (Library of Congress)

June 28: Today we marched through Poolesville. It is cool and good marching….We come round Sugar Loaf [Mountain] and we marched about 26 miles through a fine section of country….

June 29: Today we broke camp and marched 26 miles. We come through the village of Monroeville, New Market, & Ridgeville and Simons Creek. It was rather damp, so we had a hard march.

June 30: Today we marched about fifteen miles through the village of Westminster, which is quite a nice little village in Carrol Co. Md. I stood the march much better today than I did yesterday.

July 1: [Battle of Gettysburg]: Today we have lain in camp all day and have only been after water and sent three letters, one to…M….We marched again tonight. It is quite warm and was about used up.

July 2: Today we marched till four o'clock P.M. After marching all night, I was obliged to fall out but caught up soon after they stopped. We marched through Littlestown [Pa]. We came into Penn. in the forenoon. I had just caught up with the Regt. and had to go and support the 12th Corps that was engaged with the Rebs but did not get into the fight & lay on our arms all night but was not disturbed.

July 3: Today we have laid under arms all day and fired at the Rebs, there has been heavy fighting since before noon but none of us are injured. We have thrown up breastworks but have not used it….

July 4: Today we have been out in front but did not get into a fight and we lay where we did yesterday. There has only been a little picket firing. I have written to my Father & M. We had a heavy rainstorm this afternoon.

July 5: Today we followed up the Rebs, who are retreating. They left their wounded all in our possession. We overtook them about sundown and shelled them some and took two wagons. It is very wet and muddy marching….

After chasing Lee's army back into Virginia, the 121st settled into camp at New Baltimore, and Jennings found himself serving as Colonel Upton's orderly. By early October, the 121st was on the move again in the Bristoe Station Campaign. On November 7, the regiment played a central role in the Second Battle of Rappahannock Station, Colonel Upton's first opportunity to command a brigade in battle and in which the 121st helped capture the only Confederate crossing of the Rappahannock. This often-overlooked Union victory became a point of pride for the 121st.

Panorama: Union 6th Corps skirmishers advance toward Confederate redoubts along the Rappahannock River during the November 7, 1863, Battle of Rapphannock Station. The Union victory took away General Robert E. Lee's last bridgehead to the river's north bank. (Library of Congress)

August 10: Today I am the colonel's orderly and it is very hot. I received two letters tonight, one from L.J. & one from A. E. Cough, Kingsboro….

October 15: We marched about ¼ of a mile and built some rifle pits and we are now waiting for the enemy to make their appearance….Today I am 26 Yrs. Old.

November 7: [Battle of Rappahannock Station]: Today we have broke camp and marched to the Rappahannock Station and where we charged a post and took 308 prisoners and 4 stands of colors….

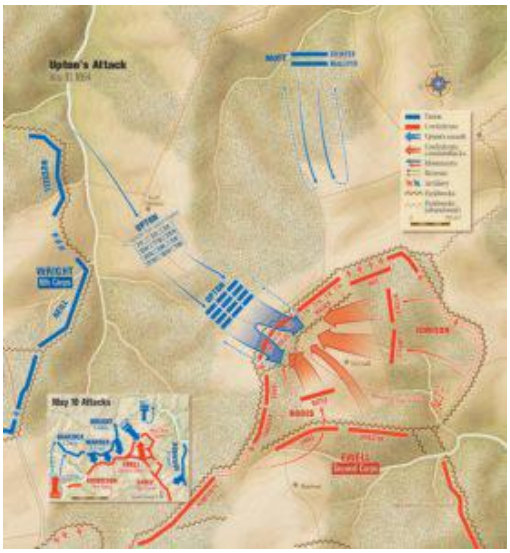
The 121st spent the winter of 1863-64 near Brandy Station, Va., and in the spring learned that Colonel Upton had received command of the 2nd Brigade. On May 4, the regiment moved south to open Lt. Gen. Ulysses Grant's Overland Campaign, and fought at the Battle of the Wilderness. Early in the battle, Albert was shot in the right arm—becoming one of the regiment's 73 Wilderness casualties.

1864

May 4: We broke camp at daylight and crossed the Rapidan at Jacobs ford at little after noon….

May 5: We broke camp this morning at five o'clock A.M. and our skirmishers found the Johnnies and there was some heavy fighting all along the line.

May 6: [Battle of the Wilderness]: To day we put up some defenses and in the fore part of the evening we had a fight. They turned our right flank. I was wounded in the fore front part of the action, between the elbow and shoulder of the right arm. I came out of the fight and had the ball taken out and done at the 2nd Div's hospital.



New Tactic: Private Jennings' Wilderness wound caused him to miss the May 10, 1864, attack at Spotsylvania designed and spearheaded by Colonel Emory Upton. The attack consisted of 12 regiments aligned in a compact formation. The units advanced rapidly without firing before they struck a narrow section of the Confederate works. The human sledgehammer broke through, but the success was wasted when reinforcements failed to show up and help seal the victory. Nonetheless, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant was impressed and promoted Upton to brigadier general. (Map Graphics © DFL Group 2019)

Albert's wounding spared him some of the most costly fighting the 121st New York would endure. On May 10, the 121st formed part of Upton's innovative, concentrated attack on the Mule Shoe at Spotsylvania, which breached the enemy fortifications. A lack of reinforcements, however, undid the Union gains. Still, the assault earned Upton a promotion to brigadier general. On July 10, the regiment boarded steamers heading north toward Washington, D.C., to resist Jubal Early's advance on the Union capital following his victory at the Battle of Monocacy. The New Yorkers then joined Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley and participated in the fighting at Opequon, the Third Battle of Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek. The regiment eventually bid farewell to General Upton at Harpers Ferry that November when he was assigned a division in Maj. Gen. James Wilson's Western cavalry force. In early December, the 121st rejoined Grant's army at Petersburg. Albert Jennings returned to the 121st New York at Petersburg after a month-long furlough and five months at Washington's Emory Convalescent Hospital. Early February brought Jennings and the 121st a return to fighting at Hatcher's Run, as Grant moved left to overextend and thin Lee's lines guarding Petersburg. By the end of March, the regiment took part in repulsing Lee's last assault, at Fort Stedman, before advancing at long last into Petersburg.

1865

February 6: [Battle of Hatcher's Run]: We advanced about three miles and got engaged with the Johnnies. Just before sundown W Greggs was very severely wounded…..We were relieved by a portion of the 5 Corps….Received a letter from Mat.

March 22: Today we were reviewed by Genl. Meade, Wright, Wheaton, and Admiral Porter. It is very hot and pleasant….

March 25: [Battle of Fort Stedman]: The Johnnies attacked on our right and we had to go down, but it all was over with when we got there. We come back and went to the left and made a charge on the enemy's lines and drove them in and took some 400 prisoners. I am feeling well. We only had a few men killed and wounded in our regt. I blistered my feet considerable in the march….

April 2: This morning at 1 o'clock we moved off to the left. We made a charge on

the enemy works and then took them and captured thirteen pieces of artillery and 500 prisoners. [We] had one man killed (J. Hendrix) and a few wounded….Were relieved by the 24th Corps and went down to the right. Near the 9th Corps, [the] 24th Corps and our Brigade were sent down to the left to support the 9th Corps. We were under a pretty sharp fire….We remained in the enemy works until four o'clock and then advanced on Petersburg, where we arrived and entered the city at day light. Marched through some of the principal streets and were then sent out to patrol the city for prisoners. We stayed until near noon and then returned to our old camp for our knapsacks and remained there one hour and again marched off to the left. We marched until seven o'clock and went into camp for the night—having marched about 10 miles from Petersburg. I am feeling well but rather sore about the feet.

Lee and his army abandoned Richmond, and the 121st New York joined in pursuing the Confederates. During the Battle of Sailor's Creek, the 121st accepted the surrender of General Lee's oldest son, Custis Lee, and General Richard Ewell and his corps. By April 9, the 121st arrived at Appomattox Court House, where the New Yorkers witnessed the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Born Leader: Emory Upton's professionalism and genius still inspire American military leaders. (National Archives)

Emory Upton: Military Visionary

The real gem of Albert Jennings' diary is his transcript of Emory Upton's farewell address to the 121st New York, given at Harpers Ferry in late November 1864. Jennings was in the hospital at the time and did not hear the address in person, but might have seen the text while working as the regiment's clerk, which he then copied into his journal. Here is his version of Upton's words, published for the first time.

Genl. Upton's Farewell Address to the 121st Regt NY Vols

In talking of the gallant regt. which I have had the honor so long to command, I cannot refrain from expressing the affection and regard I feel for those brave officers & men with whom I have been so long & pleasantly associated. I thank you everyone for the kindness and courtesy which has ever shown me, and the alacrity with which my orders have been obeyed. Your record is one of honor, and I shall ever with pride claim association with the 121st Regt. The

distinguished past—borne by you in the battles of Salem Heights, Rappahannock Station, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, Winchester, Fisher's Hill, Cedar Creek and many others—has made for you a history second to no regt. in the Army. But above all that is the present satisfaction of having voluntarily periled your lives in the defense of the noblest governments on earth and by your valor helped to place its flag first among nations. Many of you cannot reap the immediate reward of your service but the time is fast approaching when to have participated in your glorious battles will entitle you to the highest respect among men. Let your future rival them in valor and devotion. I leave you in brave hands and part from you with sincere regret.

Brigadier Gen E. Upton

Upton was born on August 27, 1839, in Batavia, N.Y., to a family of Methodist reformers. He was an ardent abolitionist long before entering Oberlin College and, in 1856, West Point. Graduating eighth in the Class of 1861, he rose quickly through the ranks, first with the 4th and then the 5th U.S. Artillery, before landing a post on Brig. Gen. Daniel Tyler's staff. In this capacity, Upton was wounded during the Battle of Blackburn's Ford—the day before the First Battle of Bull Run. Returning to the 5th U.S. Battery, Upton led it through the Peninsula Campaign and rose yet again to command the 6th Corps' 1st Division artillery brigade during the Maryland Campaign, a position that introduced Upton to the 121st's Colonel Franchot.

After the war, Upton returned to West Point as commandant from 1870-1875, and advocated for the Army reforms his personal study and Civil War experience suggested the United States needed. He favored abandoning line formations in favor of small unit assaults based in part on the operations of Civil War skirmishers—outlined in his 1867 manual Infantry Tactics.

After conducting a detailed survey of military forces around the world in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War, he wrote The Armies of Europe and Asia. This work argued for a larger, permanent standing U.S. Army and introduced the first moves toward professionalizing the Army—advocating regular performance reviews and examination-based promotions—as well as proposing creating a Prussian-style General Staff and establishing service-specific military schools. Upton expanded on these ideas in his draft work The Military Policy of the United States from 1775, which was published after his death. Tragically, Upton had for years suffered from tremendous headaches—probably the result of a tumor—which may have caused the 41-year-old to end his life on March 15, 1881.

April 4: To day we broke camp at half past three o'clock A.M. and moved out at five o'clock. We marched about 8 miles and went into camp for the night at a little after dark….

From The Attic: This small box, owned by a Jennings relative, contains his veteran ribbons. Aside from his diary, they are the

only known mementoes of his military service. (Courtesy of Rose Button)

April 6 [Battle of Sailor's Creek]: …We broke camp at daylight and moved off by the left flank. We got into a fight before night. G. Lampshear was killed and J. Morris. We had several killed in the Regt. and 14 wounded. We captured Gen Ewell and Gen Lee's son.

April 9: Today we broke camp at day light and…overtook the second Corps. It is pleasant but there is some cannonading in front. 2 pm the Rebel Army was surrendered by Genl Lee. There was considerable noise made in honor of it among the soldiers. There was two hundred guns fired in honor….

The war was over for Albert Jennings and his comrades in the 121st New York. After participating in the Grand Review of the Army of the Potomac in Washington, D.C., on May 23, the regiment mustered out on June 25, 1865.

Jennings returned home to New York, completed high school, and married Martha Woolever on April 19, 1866. Jennings and his wife moved to nearby Dodgeville, where Albert worked as a carpenter in the Albert Dodge Piano and Felt Factory, until moving to Lloyd sometime before 1900. Jennings suffered a heart attack while attending a G.A.R. encampment in Saratoga Springs, and passed away on September 13, 1907.

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Chapeaux Iconic: The Model 1858 dress hat was the distinctive headware of the Midwesterners in the Iron Brigade. A 2nd Wisconsin soldier customized this hat with ventilating grommets.

The War In Their Words: 'Our Rifles Spoke"

By Keith Bohannon
APRIL 2019 • CIVIL WAR TIMES MAGAZINE

An Iron Brigade soldier recounts his baptism of fire at the battles of Brawner's Farm and Second Bull Run

Confederate Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's report of the August 28, 1862, Battle of Brawner's Farm during the Second Bull Run Campaign noted that the Federal regiments his men faced "maintained their ground with obstinate determination." Four of the six Union regiments battling Jackson's troops that day comprised a brigade commanded by Brig.

Gen. John Gibbon in Maj. Gen. Irvin McDowell's 3rd Corps of the Army of Virginia. Just weeks after their baptism of fire at Brawner's Farm, sometimes referred to as Gainesville, those regiments from Wisconsin and Indiana that opposed Jackson became known as the Iron Brigade.

William W. Hutchins fought in one of Gibbon's regiments at Brawner's Farm. Hutchins, a native of Brandon, Vt., moved before the war to Prescott, Wis., where he worked as a commission merchant. Hutchins enlisted in the "Prescott Guards," Company B, 6th Wisconsin Infantry, at Camp Randall in Madison on July 16, 1861, at the age of 27. By Brawner's Farm, he was a corporal.

THE RETREAT OVER THE STONE BRIDGE, SATURDAY EVENING, AUGUST 30.

Same Battlefield, Same Result: Dispirited Union soldiers retreat after the August 29-30, 1862, Second Battle of Bull Run. Despite the Federal defeat, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's brigade won great respect during the campaign. (North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo)

Portions of a letter about Second Bull Run written by "Willie" Hutchins to his brother appeared in their hometown newspaper, the Brandon (Vt.) *Monitor*, on October 10, 1862. The letter begins with Hutchins describing the 2nd Wisconsin and 19th Indiana of Gibbon's brigade advancing north of the Warrenton Turnpike late in the day on August 28 to capture what they thought was a Confederate cavalry battery. Instead, the green Federals encountered the battle-hardened Stonewall Brigade. While the 6th Wisconsin remained under artillery fire in the Warrenton Turnpike, Gibbon's other regiments engaged in a fierce contest with growing numbers of Confederate infantry.

Distinctive: General Gibbon dressed his volunteer regiments with all the trappings of Regulars, including dress hats and coats. The white canvas leggings were disliked by most of his men. (Troiani, Don (B.1949)/Private Collection/Bridgeman Images)

The 6th, under Colonel Lysander Cutler, was the last of Gibbon's regiments committed to the battle. After moving through the cannons of Battery B, 4th U.S. Artillery, Cutler's men marched down a slope toward a dry creek bed in the gathering darkness. In short order, the 500 men of the 6th encountered Confederate Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble's Brigade. The two sides exchanged volleys at a distance until Stonewall ordered an advance along the Southern lines. Trimble's Rebels charged to within 30 yards of the 6th, but Cutler's men held their ground. After two hours of

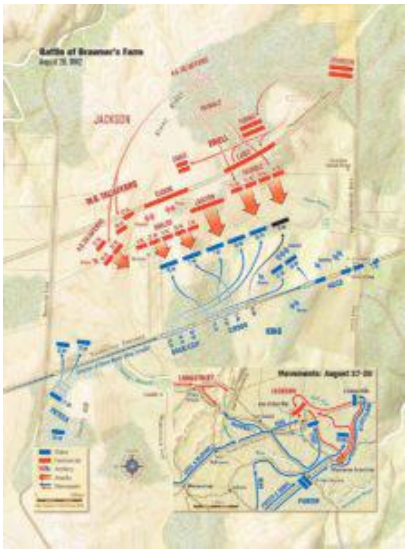
fighting, darkness and exhaustion put an end to the contest.

The 6th Wisconsin lost 72 men in the battle, fewer than the other Western Federal regiments, in part because Cutler's men had the protection of low ground and the Confederates often overshot the blue ranks.

Gibbon's men marched that night to nearby Manassas Junction, remaining there until the afternoon of August 29 when they returned to the First Bull Run battlefield, taking position in a Union line on Dogan Ridge. On August 30, the 6th Wisconsin and Gibbon's brigade formed a supporting line of an attacking column under Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter hurled against Stonewall's Confederates occupying an unfinished railroad bed.

Hutchins describes the retreat of Union regiments in the front lines of Porter's attack after they had been decimated in close fighting along the Railroad Cut. The 6th Wisconsin formed part of the rear guard following Porter's failed attack. The Badgers' division commander, Brig. Gen. Abner Doubleday, claimed that the regiment was the "very last to retire," marching "slowly and steadily to the rear." Gibbon's brigade retreated that evening from the battlefield with the balance of Maj. Gen. John Pope's defeated Army of Virginia. "Stars for the Yankees were few" at Second Manassas, writes John Hennessy in his superb study Return to Bull Run, but among those commanders and units that performed well were John Gibbon and his Iron Brigade. Paragraph breaks have been added to Hutchins' account to enhance readability.

***Brandon Monitor*, October 10, 1862**



Stand-up Battle: The Battle of Brawner's Farm on August 28, 1862, pitted ranks of opposing infantry standing no more than 75 yards apart. General Gibbon recalled that, "The most terrific musketry fire I have ever listened to rolled along those two lines of battle…neither side yielding a foot." Gibbon's brigade lost 133 killed, 539 wounded, and 79 missing out of a total of 1,800 men. (Map Graphics © DFL Group 2018)

Below we have some extracts from a letter received in this village from Willie W. Hutchins, formerly of this town, now a member of the 6th Wisconsin Regiment. Though old, they are full of interest. After describing several sharp skirmishes he had engaged in (under McDowell) and which he mentions as "the harmless operation of a game of ball," he says:

Retreating before [Stonewall] Jackson's whole force we arrived on the 28th of August at Gain[e]sville, where signs of rebels were apparent. McDowell ordered the 2d Wisconsin and 19th Indiana forward to take a battery, our regiment and the 7th

lying in the road as reserve. While here the artillery on both sides opened, and for the first time we felt the REAL thunder of battle. Shell and solid shot fell all around us or burst in the air over our heads. My own feelings were hard to express. It was the grandest sight I ever saw. Soon the rattle of musketry was heard, and the cheers of the men. Word soon came for us to go to the support of the 2d and 19th. Over the fence we sprang, and on a double quick we went in.

It was now dark, but a perfect sheet of fire could be seen from both our lines and those of the rebels. Riderless horses dashed by. Wounded men passed us, but still on we went until only a few yards intervened between us, when the rebels opened the ball with two pieces of artillery, throwing grape and canister, and our ranks commenced thinning. Our rifles spoke, and gradually their fire slackened. Pretty soon we heard the order given by the rebel officers 'Charge bayonet– forward– double quick– march.' We withheld (as if by instinct) our fire for a few seconds, and then gave them one volley. They had started yelling like demons, but our boys gave yell for yell, and they broke.

After that we held our ground and gave them a perfect shower of bullets for some time and retired (taking our killed and wounded with us) to the timber, a short distance in our rear, where we laid down for an hour or two, and started for Manassas, which place we reached by day-light the next day. McDowell complimented us highly for our good conduct, saying that considering the great disparity of forces engaged, it was the hardest fought engagement of the war. We fought one hour and ten minutes, and our Brigade lost nearly or quite 800 men. The 56th Pa. and 76th N.Y. regiments fought with us, and their loss was about 200 men, making the whole loss about 1000 men.

One of the 6th Wisconsin's national flags survives at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. (Courtesy of The Wisconsin Veterans Museum)

A rebel Captain who was taken prisoner asserted that they lost 1500 or 2000 men; and also said that we were opposed to the old Stonewall Brigade that never before shown their backs to the enemy. The fight, unproductive of results as it may seem; was really our salvation, as had it not occurred we should have been ignorant of the presence of so large a force of the enemy, and should inevitably have been cut off. However that may be, it taught us how to fight, and in the battles of the 29th and 30th we were shining lights. On the 29th we laid on our arms supporting a battery and dodging shell and solid shot. We supported it till noon of the 30th.

Our Division was ordered into the timber on the center for the purpose of clearing it and forcing the rebels back, and driving them from the R.R. track, behind which they had taken refuge, and poured into us a perfect hail storm of bullets. Here the N.Y. Regiments of our Division, or some of them (they all deny the soft impeachment, one N.Y. regiment laying it on another from the

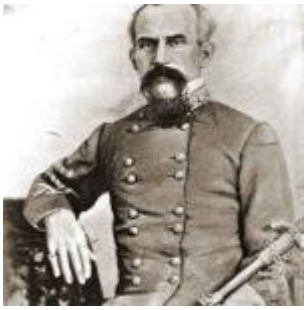
same State) broke and skedaddled, crying out our regiment is cut to hell, we are cut to pieces, etc. Our General who was with us ordered us to shoot the first one who attempted to break through our ranks, and even strode amongst them with a drawn sword and cocked pistol, swearing he would kill them if they did not face the music.

A few, to their credit be it spoken, fell into our ranks and stood up like men, while others contented themselves with lying down amongst us (we were lying down, while our skirmishers were feeling for the rebels) and when our attention was drawn off by another squad of cowards, they left. The skirmishers drove in the rebel sharpshooters on their reserves, and drove the reserve back on their main body, and then fell back. They reported the rebels in force behind the railroad, and in three lines (one lying down, on their knees, and one standing) of rebels waiting to receive us; and also reported the entire rout of N.Y. troops and the withdrawal of the balance of our Brigade. Our General Gibbon, who had staid [sic] with the 6th, then ordered us to fall back with our face to the enemy until we got out of the timber, and then about faced us, and we started home double-quick.

Antagonists: John Gibbon was born in Philadelphia but grew up in North Carolina. The West Point graduate, however, did not hesitate to remain loyal to the United States when the Civil War began. (Library of Congress)

Our General rode in front of us, and when we got out of the timber he turned round saying 'Good for the 6th. Boys, you never did better on drill,' and proposed three cheers, which were given with a will, the shot and shell whistling about our ears funny. Our ranks were never any straighter, and the men had step perfectly. All the order we heard occasionally was 'Guide colors,' and 'steady.' We had got not more than a quarter of a mile when two rebel regiments filed around the timber and deployed into the timber to nab the whole batch of us, but 'we wont thar.' When we reached our battery (B of 4th Art.) we were greeted with a perfect ovation in the shape of cheers and congratulations. We then fell into position in rear of the battery as a support, where we staid amidst a perfect shower of lead till the battle dried up. Our Regt's loss was about 50 killed and wounded, the most of which we left behind in the woods, having no means to carry them away with us.

While we were supporting the battery we laid in a splendid place to see the whole operation of the left wing of our army and the disgraceful cowardice of the N.Y. and Pa. troops. Men scared to death, fleeing in every direction, having thrown away their arms and accoutrements, and in some instances the officers throwed away their swords to expedite them in getting away. One or two lost their colors, and it got to be a common sight to see a set of colors coming out with not more than one or two men around them. As a contrast, one Brigade of Gen. [Jesse] Reno's Division went in and came out broken up. When they got to the edge of the field the color bearers waved their colors, and almost by magic a Brigade was formed (and a good sized one, too) and went in again, and the next time they came out they came out in order.

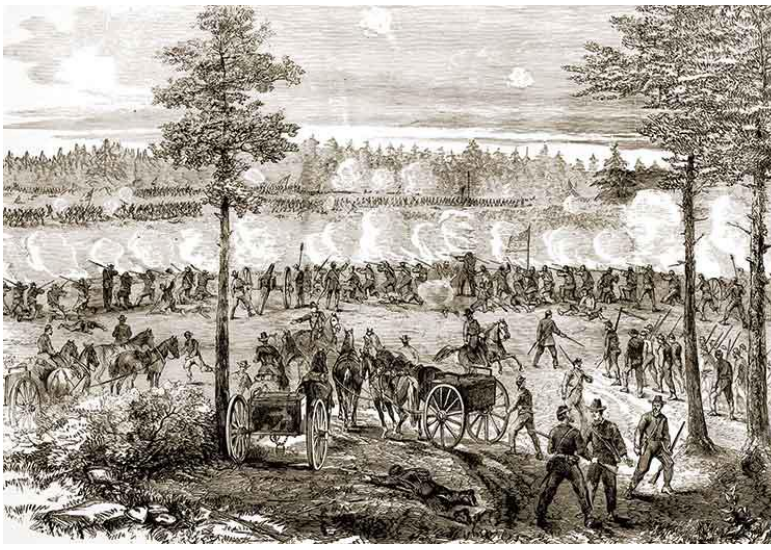


Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble was 60 at Brawner's Farm, one of the oldest generals in the Confederate Army. Trimble's Brigade faced off against Private William Hutchins' 6th Wisconsin. (Library of Congress)

Well, Charlie, I have been in battle and now know what a man's feelings are. I cannot describe it. At first there was a touch of anxiety as to the result, then an unnatural feeling. I don't know what, like to a man who has a long time thirsted for something and sees it within his reach. After that the sight of my comrades falling around me made me like to a perfect devil. Two of them were my tent mates, one shot through the head, probably mortally wounded; and the other a flesh wound in the leg. One poor fellow had his face stove up with a bullet, and two were shot through the left breast. Some in arms, and more in legs. I had one bullet go through my pants, and one landed on the bayonet of my gun. One passed between my legs and into another man's leg; one near my head and cut the whiskers off our Captain, and my right hand man had a ramrod knocked out of his hand. I don't thirst for more fight, although if there is to be one I am in.

Your Brother, Willie.

On the last day of February 1864, Hutchins, now a sergeant, reenlisted as a veteran volunteer and enjoyed a furlough of 35 days in his Vermont hometown. By the spring, Hutchins had fought in nine battles. During some of those engagements, he could have been excused from fighting given his assignment as a clerk, but he still served on the battle line. By the end of May, Hutchins had fought in the bloody Overland Campaign and, although only a sergeant, had command of his company.



Last Fight: Willie Hutchins was an xemplary soldier. Even when he was detailed as a clerk, he would find a gun and join his comrades on the firing line. He died on August 19, 1864, fighting near the Weldon Railroad, pictured above, nearly two years after Brawner's Farm. (Niday Picture Library/Alamy Stock Photo)

Following actions at Petersburg in late June, Willie Hutchins received a promotion to captain on July 28, to replace Captain Rollin P. Converse, killed at the Wilderness. Rufus Dawes noted in his memoir Service With the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers that Hutchins went into battle below Petersburg in August "full of the satisfaction of his new commission." Tragically, Hutchins died in his first engagement as captain at the Weldon Railroad on August 19, 1864. A memorial inscription to Hutchins appears on the grave of Vermont Governor Ebenezer J. Ormsbee in Pine Hill Cemetery in Brandon, Vt.

Keith S. Bohannon is a professor of history at the University of West Georgia.

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*Opinion Piece from The New Yorker. (*The views *and opinions* expressed *in this article are those of the author and* do not *and do not reflect the opinions of the Baltimore Civil War Roundtable)*

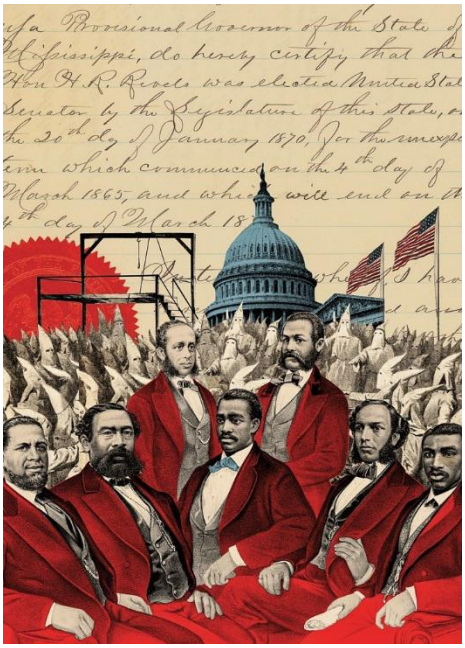
A Critic at Large

How the South Won the Civil War

During Reconstruction, true citizenship finally seemed in reach for black Americans. Then their dreams were dismantled.

By Adam Gopnik

April 1, 2019



Black political power during Reconstruction was short-lived—eclipsed, in significant part, by a campaign of terror.

Illustration by Cristiana Couceiro. Photographs: Hirarchivum Press / Alamy (Ku Klux Klan); Smith Collection / Gado / Getty (building); Universal History Archive / Getty (flags); Everett / Alamy (gallows)

Not so long ago, the Civil War was taken to be this country's central moral drama. Now we think that the aftermath—the confrontation not of blue and gray but of white and black, and the reimposition of apartheid through terror—is what has left the deepest mark on American history. Instead of arguing about whether the war could have turned out any other way, we argue about whether the postwar could have turned out any other way. Was there ever a fighting chance for full black citizenship, equality before the law, agrarian reform? Or did the combination of hostility and indifference among white Americans make the disaster inevitable?

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., in his new book, "Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow" (Penguin Press), rightly believes that this argument has special currency in the post-Obama, or mid-Trump, era. He compares the rosy confidence, in 2008, that the essential stain of American racism would fade through the elevation of a black President with the same kind of short-lived hopes found in 1865, when all the suffering of the war seemed sure to end with civil equality. Instead, the appearance of African-American empowerment seemed only to deepen the rage of a white majority. Then it brought forward Klan terrorism and Jim Crow in the South; now it has brought to power the most overtly racist President since Woodrow Wilson, openly catering to a white revanchist base. It's a depressing prospect, and Gates is properly depressed and depressing about it.

The broad outlines of the Reconstruction story have long been familiar, though the particular interpretive pressures put on particular moments have changed with every era. Toward the end of the war, Washington politicians debated what to do with the millions of newly freed black slaves. Lincoln, after foolishly toying with recolonization schemes, had settled on black suffrage, at least for black soldiers who had fought in the war. (It was a speech of Lincoln's to this effect that sealed his assassination: John Wilkes Booth, hearing it, said, "That means nigger citizenship. Now, by God, I'll put him through.")

After Lincoln's death, his hapless and ill-chosen Vice-President, Andrew Johnson, did as much as he could to slow the process of black emancipation in the South, while the "radical" core of the abolitionist Republicans in Congress tried to advance it, and, for a while, succeeded. Long dismissed as destructive fanatics, they now seem to be voices of simple human decency. Thaddeus Stevens, the abolitionist congressman from Pennsylvania, proposed shortly after the war's end, in his "Lancaster" speech, a simple policy: punish the rebel leaders; treat the secessionist states as territories to be supervised by Congress, thus protecting the new black citizens; take the confiscated plantations on which masters had worked slaves like animals, and break up those plantations into forty-acre lots for the ex-slaves to own (a form of the classic "forty acres and a mule"). That this minimally equitable plan was long regarded as "radical" says something about how bent toward injustice the conversation quickly became.

Freed slaves eagerly participated in the first elections after the war, and distinguished black leaders went to Congress. The 1872 lithograph of "The First Colored Senator and Representatives," by Currier & Ives, no less, shows seven black men given the full weight of mid-century Seriousness, including the first black senator from Mississippi, Hiram Rhodes Revels.

But white state governments steadily reconstituted themselves. By the eighteen-nineties, they were passing laws that, piece by piece, reclaimed the right to vote for whites alone. All of this was made worse by one of those essentially theological "constitutional" points which American professors and politicians love to belabor. Lincoln's argument was always that, since it was unconstitutional for states to secede on their own, the rebel states had never seceded. The rebels were not an enemy nation; they were just a mob with a flag waiting to be policed, and the Union Army was the policeman. The idea was to limit any well-meaning attempt at negotiation, and to discourage foreign powers from treating the Confederacy as a separate state. After the war, though, this same idea implied that, since the state governments had never gone out of existence, their reborn legislatures could instantly reclaim all the rights enjoyed by states, including deciding who could vote and when.

As Stevens pointed out, the reasoning that says that no states seceded because the Constitution won't allow it would also say that no man can ever commit murder because the law forbids it. "Black Codes" were put in place in most Southern states that, through various means, some overt and some insidious (anti-vagrancy statutes were a particular favorite), limited the rights of blacks to work and to relocate. The legislative reconquest was backed by violence: the Ku Klux Klan, formed as a terrorist organization by ex-Confederate officers, began murdering and maiming assertive black citizens. In 1877, after a

mere dozen years in which black suffrage and racial equality were at least grudgingly accepted national principles, the federal government pulled its last troops from the South and, in what could be called the Great Betrayal, an order of racial subjugation was restored.

It's a story with fewer pivotal three-day battles than the war fought over slavery, but its general shape is oddly similar: after a stunning series of victories and advances in the early years by the "rebels"—in this case, egalitarian forces—the armies of Reconstruction began to fall victim to the sheer numbers of the opposing side and to the exhaustion of their allies and reserves. Some battles, both real and rhetorical, do stand out. There were the arguments in Congress, pitting newly minted and almost impossibly eloquent black representatives against ex-Confederate politicians who a few years earlier had been sending hundreds of thousands of young men to their death in order to preserve the right to keep their new colleagues in perpetual servitude. There was the so-called Battle of Liberty Place, in New Orleans in 1874, a riot on behalf of the White League, a gang of ex-Confederate soldiers who sought to oust Louisiana's Republican governor and its black lieutenant governor. In a moment of extraordinary moral courage, as worthy of a film as any Civil War battle, James Longstreet, the most capable of General Lee's Confederate lieutenants, agreed to lead municipal police, including black officers, to put down the white riot and restore the elected government. He knew what it would cost him in status throughout the old Confederacy, but he did it anyway, because it was the right thing to do. Naturally, the city's monument to the attempted coup bore an inscription that conveyed the White League's point of view, and, sobering fact, it was scarcely two years ago that the racist memorial to the riot finally came down—with a police escort to protect the movers.

Gates emphasizes that Reconstruction was destroyed not by white terrorism alone but also by a fiendishly complicated series of ever more enervating legal and practical assaults. The Supreme Court played a crucial role in enabling the oppression of newly freed blacks, while pretending merely to be protecting the constitutional guarantee of states' rights—one more instance in which "calling balls and strikes" means refusing to see the chains on the feet of the batter. The overtly racist decision in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) arrived long after the worst was already done, but it sealed the earlier discrimination in place, and Jim Crow thrived for another half century. Meanwhile, at least some of those Northern liberal abolitionists—including the likes of Henry Adams and the well-meaning Horace Greeley—managed, in the way of high-minded reformers, to let their pieties get the better of their priorities: recoiling against the apparent improprieties of the pro-suffrage Grant Administration, they made common cause with the Democrats who were ending democracy in the South. "When, therefore, the conscience of the United States attacked corruption," W. E. B. Du Bois wrote in his classic 1935 study, "Black Reconstruction in America," in many ways the most astute account of the period ever produced, "it at the same time attacked in the Republican Party the only power that could support democracy in the South. It was a paradox too tragic to explain."

Gates is one of the few academic historians who do not disdain the methods of the journalist, and his book (which accompanies a four-hour PBS series he has made on the subject) is flecked with incidental interviews with and inquiries of other scholars, including the great revisionist historian Eric

Foner. Though this gives the book a light, flexible, talking-out-loud texture, it is enraging to read—to realize how high those hopes were, how close to being realized, how rapidly eradicated. That Currier & Ives lithograph of the black legislators, which Gates reproduces, takes on almost unbearable pathos. The last black U.S. representative from North Carolina was forced out of office in 1901—and there would not be another until 1991. The eclipse of formal black political power happened, in significant part, by violence. The historian David Blight estimates that, between 1867 and 1868, something like ten per cent of the blacks who attended constitutional conventions in the South were attacked by the Klan.

Gates quickly moves beyond the immediate political context of black disenfranchisement to tell the sad story of how an ideology that justified racism as science, and bigotry as reason, grew and governed minds across the country. There's the pseudoscientific racism promulgated by Louis Agassiz, of Harvard, who sought to show that blacks belonged to a separate, inferior species; the repellent but pervasive popular cartoon spectre of the black defilement of white women; the larger ideology of shame that also assigned to black men a childlike place as grinning waiters and minstrels. When they weren't raping white women, they were clowning for white kids.

The historical literature that arose to defend white supremacy was soon accepted as a chronicle of truths, especially in the countless sober-seeming memoirs of the former leaders of the slave states, including Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy, who insisted that slavery was a side issue in a states'-rights war. The "Lost Cause" took on popular literary form in Thomas Dixon's novel "The Clansman," which became the basis for D. W. Griffith's 1915 "The Birth of a Nation," the first great American feature film. In Griffith's Reconstruction, blacks, many played by white actors in blackface, are either menaces or morons (black legislators of the kind depicted in that lithograph spend their time in the statehouse drinking and eating), and are, thankfully, routed by the Klan—shown dressing in sheets because they have grasped the primitive African fear of ghosts.

It is still difficult to credit how long the Lost Cause lie lasted. Writing in the left-wing *The Nation*, James Agee, the brilliant film critic and the author of the text for "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," could announce, in 1948, that "Griffith's absolute desire to be fair, and understandable, is written all over the picture; so are degrees of understanding, honesty, and compassion far beyond the capacity of his accusers. So, of course, are the salient facts of the so-called Reconstruction years." Even as late as the nineteen-sixties, the Harvard historian Samuel Eliot Morison, in what was then a standard "Oxford History of the American People," called for "ten thousand curses on the memory of that foulest of assassins, J. Wilkes Booth"—but for a surprising reason. "Not only did he kill a great and good President; he gave fresh life to the very forces of hate and vengeance which Lincoln himself was trying to kill," Morison wrote. "Had Lincoln lived, there is every likelihood that his magnanimous policy towards the South would have prevailed; for, even after his death, it almost went through despite the Radicals." The thought that the failure of Reconstruction had been its insufficient attention to the feelings and the interests of the white majority—like the thought that "The Birth of a Nation" should be considered to hold the "salient facts" of Reconstruction—strikes us now as astounding, but it was orthodox textbook

history and criticism for an unimaginably long time, and among people who believed themselves to be progressive.

A turn in the South has happened, though. Reading Richard White's volume "The Republic for Which It Stands," in the new Oxford History of the United States, we could not be further from an aggrieved account of how mean Reconstruction was to the South. White, writing with a microscopically attentive eye to the fine shadings of the period, gives a full picture of terror rampant, justice recumbent, and liberty repressed. Curiously, however, he uses the old vocabulary of disdain, designating pro-Reconstruction Southern whites as "scalawags" and pro-Reconstruction Northerners as "carpetbaggers," just as their enemies styled them. (What are the limits of appropriating a derogatory vocabulary? It is fine to call painters who had no desire to give us their impressions Impressionists, but it somehow feels unfair to use epithets that imply bad intentions where one can find purposes largely good.)

Could things have gone otherwise? Contingency counts and individuals matter. When it came to the exacting task of managing the postwar settlement, it's hard to imagine a worse successor than Andrew Johnson. Chosen in the good-enough-to-balance-the-ticket way that Vice-Presidents so often were, right up through Harry Truman, Johnson was openly racist, poorly educated, and bad-tempered. But President Grant followed President Johnson, and Grant, as Ron Chernow showed in his recent biography, tried very hard for a while to end the terror and to maintain what were already being called civil rights. His Attorney General, Amos Akerman, declared that the Ku Klux Klan was "the most atrocious organization that the civilized part of the world has ever known," and helped bring in more than eleven hundred convictions against it. In 1872, the year of that glorious lithograph, the Klan was, as Chernow says, "smashed in the South."

Yet even that hardly helped. One mistake the North made was to allow the Confederate leadership to escape essentially unscathed. Lincoln's plea for charity and against malice was admirable, but it left out the third term of the liberal equation: charity for all, malice to none, and political reform for the persecutors. The premise of postwar de-Nazification, in Germany, was a sound one: you had to root out the evil and make it clear that it was one, and only then would minds change. The gingerly treatment of the secessionists gave the impression—more, it created the reality—that treason in defense of slavery was a forgivable, even "honorable," difference of opinion. Despite various halfhearted and soon rescinded congressional measures to prevent ex-Confederate leaders from returning to power, many of them didn't just skip out but skipped right back into Congress.

One might at first find it inspiring to read the gallant and generous 1874 remarks of Robert Brown Elliott, a black congressman representing South Carolina, as he defended civil rights against Representative Alexander Stephens, of Georgia, the former Vice-President of the Confederacy. Elliott's voice is so ringing and defiant, and at the same time so uncannily courteous. "Let him put away entirely the false and fatal theories that have so greatly marred an otherwise enviable record," he declared, addressing Stephens. "Let him accept, in its fullness and beneficence, the great doctrine that American citizenship carries with it every civil and political right which manhood can confer." But then one recalls Abraham Lincoln's beseeching letters to Stephens in

1860, between his election and his Inauguration, seeking some possible compromise before war came. Stephens then made it plain that slavery was the only thing at issue, and its permanent perpetuation the only demand that could never be compromised. What the hell was he *doing* back there in Congress, one wonders, after all that death and suffering? He should have counted himself lucky not to have been hanged. But he was there and, soon enough, Elliott wasn't.

Surprisingly few in the educated classes in the South had the foresight to recognize that reform was needed for the South's own sake. Du Bois reproduces an 1866 speech from Governor Brownlow, of Andrew Johnson's own state of Tennessee, in which he stated bluntly, "I am an advocate of Negro suffrage, and impartial suffrage. I would rather associate with loyal Negroes than with disloyal white men. I would rather be buried in a Negro graveyard than in a rebel graveyard." Yet Robert E. Lee—subsequently ennobled for not actually leading a backwoods guerrilla campaign—never made a statement accepting the new order, never said, in the language of the time, something like: "A great struggle has gone on, and Providence has settled the question on the anti-slavery side. We must now accept these men as citizens and comrades, if not fully as brothers."

One Confederate general who did make the turn was Longstreet, a genuinely heroic figure. The only member of Lee's inner circle at Gettysburg who was smart enough to grasp that Lee's aggressive strategy, and thus Pickett's Charge, was doomed in advance, he was also smart enough to see that the strategy of permanent segregation was ultimately ill-fated. Yet the broader legacy of Pickett's Charge is part of the story, too. Fifty thousand casualties in three days at Gettysburg: for us, those are numbers; for their countrymen, it was fifty thousand fathers and sons and brothers wounded or dead. War weariness is essential to the shape of the postwar collapse. The hope that, in 1870, even a well-intended cohort of former abolitionists would focus properly on the denial of civil rights to blacks in the South was morally ambitious in a way that is not entirely realistic. Richard White, like many others, points to the retreat on the part of Northern liberals from aggressively advocating for black rights, while perhaps not sufficiently stressing one good reason for it: the unimaginable brutality many had experienced in fighting the war. In ways that Louis Menand explored in his book "The Metaphysical Club," it left a generation stripped of the appetite for more war-making and even (as Menand has argued) of any confidence in moral absolutism. The horror of the Civil War made it difficult to accept that more fighting might be necessary to secure its gains. Nothing is easier to spark than an appetite for war, and nothing harder to sustain than a continued appetite for war once a country learns what war is really like. War hunger and war hatred are parts of the same cycle of mass arousal and inhibition.

The other brutality lay in the strange demographics of race in America: basically, the black people were in the South, and their natural allies were in the North. Even today, African-Americans form a huge nation, almost forty-four million people—bigger than Australia or Canada—but they also represent only about thirteen per cent of the U.S. population, never large enough to act without allies. In the postwar period, clustered in the South, they found that their chief ethnic allies were far away. This demographic paradox—a population large enough to be terrifying to the majority population nearby but not large or

concentrated enough to claim its own national territory—was part of the tragedy, and increased the brutality by increasing the fear. The adjusted percentage of the Jewish population in Poland before the Holocaust was similar, and had similar implications: enough to loom large in the minds of their haters, not enough to be able to act without assistance in the face of an oppressor.

Gates goes on to illuminate the complex efforts of black intellectuals, in the face of the reimposition of white rule, to find a sane and safe position against it. The "New South" was met by the "New Negro," a phrase that arose in the eighteen-nineties. The emancipated, educated, fully literary black bourgeoisie would undeniably be a full citizen. This urge to "earn" full citizenship by effort instead of by claiming it as a birthright seems forlorn now, a product of minds exposed so long to toxic bigotry that some of it had seeped inside and curdled into self-hatred. But, as Gates shows, it was possible to be entirely committed to the rights of black people while still being convinced of the need for education to uplift them—indeed, while still voicing sympathy for the travails of the defeated South. Hiram Rhodes Revels, the black senator from Mississippi, who is on the left in that Currier & Ives lithograph, blamed Republican interlopers for bringing racial discord to the South, writing to Grant in 1875 that, "since Reconstruction, the masses of my people have been, as it were, enslaved in mind by unprincipled adventurers, who, caring nothing for country, were willing to stoop to anything, no matter how infamous, to secure power to themselves, and perpetuate it. . . . The bitterness and hate created by the late civil strife has, in my opinion, been obliterated in this state, except perhaps in some localities, and would have long since been entirely obliterated, were it not for some unprincipled men who would keep alive the bitterness of the past, and inculcate a hatred between the races, in order that they may aggrandize themselves by office." Revels himself left his Senate seat after a year and became the head of the newly formed Alcorn University, devoting the rest of his life to educational uplift.

It is easy to regard leaders like Revels (including, later, the electorally reticent Booker T. Washington) as "Uncle Toms"—a term that, Gates notes, doesn't become pejorative until the next century. But their reading of the circumstance assumed, optimistically, that once blacks had earned equality they would be treated equally. They believed passionately that the ex-slave population, degraded by centuries of slavery, needed to be educated into the professions. The New Negro, as he emerged in the twentieth century, was so narrowly focussed on literary and scholarly accomplishment that he tended, Gates insists, to neglect the most astounding cultural achievement of his own country and kin. "There was, in fact, a genuine renaissance occurring during the Harlem literary renaissance, but it wasn't among the writers," Gates observes. "The renaissance was occurring among those great geniuses of black vernacular culture, the musicians who created the world's greatest art form in the twentieth century—jazz." The New Negroes were hardly alone among aspirational Americans in the pathos and dignity of their respectability; one sees the same attempt to outwit the oppressor by becoming like the oppressor among the lace-curtain Irish or the stained-glass Jews. Indeed, combining the New Negro emphasis on formal education with a more capacious understanding of the riches of black inheritance was a task that, Gates understands, had to be left for later generations, not least his own.

Revisionism always risks revising right out of existence not just the old, too rosy account but also the multi-hued reality. Here there are lessons we can take from Du Bois's extraordinary, prophetic history. For the curious thing is that Du Bois pays more attention to the enduring legacy of Reconstruction than have many of his revisionist successors. At a time when the era had been reduced to the D. W. Griffith fable of illiterate blacks conspiring with opportunistic whites, Du Bois wanted to assert the lasting value and significance of what *had* been achieved in the all too brief period of black political enfranchisement. We couldn't understand the enormity of the betrayal, Du Bois thought, if we didn't understand the magnitude of what was betrayed. So, along with the horrors of terrorism and the slow crawl of renascent white supremacy, Du Bois also registers the accomplishments that Reconstruction created in its brief moment: public-health departments were established where none had existed before; public education for blacks began—miserably underfunded, but, still, there were schools where less than a decade before it had been a crime for a slave to learn to read. This is a view that Foner shares as well. As he writes, "Although black schools and colleges remained woefully underfunded, education continued to be available to most African Americans. And the autonomous family and church, pillars of the black community that emerged during Reconstruction, remained vital forces in black life, and the springboard from which future challenges to racial injustice would emerge."

It's also why Frederick Douglass, in ways that seem puzzling to us now, was not so single-mindedly incensed about the Great Betrayal as one might have expected. Described by his detractors as simply having lost the appetite for the fight, in truth he must have had a clear enough memory of what chattel slavery had been like not to confuse it with subjection. The oppressed—blacks on their land, Jews in their shtetl—can build cultural fellowships that ease their burden and point a path out. The enslaved—blacks in the cabins, Jews in the camps—have no plausible path at all. It is at once not enough of a difference and all the difference in the world.

Du Bois tries strenuously to fit the story of the end of Reconstruction into a Marxist framework: the Southern capitalists were forcing serfdom upon their agricultural laborers in parallel to the way that the Northern ones were forcing it on their industrial workers. His effort is still echoed in some contemporary scholarship. But an agricultural class reduced to serfdom is exactly the kind of stagnant arrangement that capitalism chafes against. Sharecropping is not shareholding. When the entrepreneurial white South wanted to assert its departure from the antebellum order, it invoked a South emancipated from the planter classes and, in a slogan from the next century, now "too busy to hate." At the same time, the agrarian rhetoric of the restored South was always an anti-modernist rhetoric, antagonistic toward bourgeois free enterprise. (That the so-called "Southern Agrarian" school later assembled some of America's leading literary modernists is among the long-term ironies in the story.)

In truth, sharecropping, coupled with a cotton monoculture, was a terrible model for economic development, and, indeed, left the South long impoverished. Du Bois poises "property and privilege" against "race and culture" as causes that led to the reconquest of the South by white supremacy, and, though his Marxist training insists that it must somehow all be property and privilege, his experience as an American supplies a

corrective afterthought or two. The motives of the South were, as Du Bois eventually suggests, essentially ideological and tribal, rather than economic. He recognized that, in a still familiar pattern, poor whites "would rather have low wages upon which they could eke out an existence than see colored labor with a decent wage," and saw in "every advance of the Negroes a threat to their racial prerogatives." It is the same formula of feeling that makes the "white working class" angrier at the thought that Obamacare might be subsidizing shiftless people of color than receptive to the advantages of having medical coverage for itself. Du Bois called it a "psychological wage," but this is to give a Marxist-sounding name to a non-Marxist phenomenon: ethnic resentment and clan consciousness are social forces far more powerful than economic class. It reflects the permanent truth that all people, including poor people, follow their values, however perverted, rather than their interests, however plain.

There's no era in which thought is monolithic, and late-nineteenth-century America was probably as disputatious as any era has been. Gates charts the growth of Social Darwinism as well as the "biological" racism of Louis Agassiz—but it's worth emphasizing that Agassiz was a racist because he was fervently *anti*-Darwinian. His student William James, on a naturalist's expedition with him to Brazil, saw through his prejudices. There is no shortage of radical egalitarian thought at the time, coming from figures who were by no means marginalized. Thaddeus Stevens chose to be buried in an integrated cemetery, with the inscription on his stone reading "Finding other Cemeteries limited as to Race by Charter Rules, I have chosen this that I might illustrate in my death, the Principles which I advocated through a long life:

And then the most famous American text by the most famous American writer of the period was Mark Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," which, published in the eighteen-eighties and set half a century earlier, manages to take in all the stereotypes of the post-Reconstruction era (Jim is a type of the comic Negro) while complicating them in ways that remain stirring, and ending with an unequivocal gesture toward the equality of black and white, when Huck decides that he will go to Hell rather than betray a black friend. When the right side loses, it does not always mean that the truth has not been heard. We are too inclined to let what happens next determine the meaning of what happened before, and to suppose that the real meaning of Reconstruction was its repudiation. It's a style of thought that sees the true meaning of dinner as the next day's hunger and the real meaning of life as death. And yet yesterday's good deeds remain good even if today's bad ones occlude them.

There is plenty of cause to denounce the liberal institutions of the era, North and South and West, in the face of the reënslavement of the era's black people. But, even reading White's fiercely disabused history of the period, one can still be astonished by the degree to which liberal institutions worked to curb the worst social sadism that, until then, had been a commonplace of human history. It can be helpful to expand the historical scale just a tad. Although the failure of the Republic to sustain its ideals is appallingly self-evident, elections involving millions of people were held routinely, if imperfectly; venal bosses like Boss Tweed, instead of sending on power to his son, were tried and imprisoned; Jews worshipped freely; freethinkers flourished; immigrants settled; reformers raged against corruption, and, in a few key cases, won their battle; dissent, even radical

dissent, was aired and, though sporadically persecuted was, on the whole, heard and tolerated. No arrangement like it had ever been known before on so large a scale in human history. Compared with the system's ambitions and pretensions, it was as nothing. But, compared with the entirety of human history before, it was, in its way, quite something.

What is true and tragic is that the black population benefitted least of all from these institutions. Yet the same more than flawed institutions, in turn, enabled freed slaves, as Foner maintains, to build the social capital that would allow them to find ways around the supremacists. How did *that* happen? One turns back to Gates's best book, the incandescent memoir "Colored People," with its evocation of Piedmont, West Virginia, in the nineteen-fifties and sixties. Gates is clear-eyed about the patterns of bigotry that still obtained—only he would see that "Leave It to Beaver" was, above all, a television show about property—but he provides an intimate and affectionate sense of how all the richness of clan connection becomes cultural connection, of how the world of his childhood was illuminated by profound family relations and an enormously bountiful cultural heritage, in music, certainly, but in dance and literature and, yes, athleticism, too. (Athletics because it was the one place, he says, where blacks and whites directly butted heads, and blacks won.)

Accepting Gates's observation that jazz, and the popular music that flowed from it and through it, is the greatest of American inventions, we have to recognize both the bigotry that impeded it and the extraordinary self-emerging social institutions that empowered it. Every life of a great jazz musician shows us both—social sadism beyond belief to be endured, but also social networks of support, filled with intimately collaborative and competitive relationships, artists both supporting and outdoing one another—the creation of the great cutting contest that E. H. Gombrich long ago identified as the core engine of artistic progress. The most influential of American musicians, Louis Armstrong, suffered from bigotry in New Orleans, but there was the Colored Waif's home to teach him the cornet, a sympathetic Jewish émigré family with a thriving tailor shop to help him buy one, a talent contest at the Iroquois Theatre that a poor black boy could win, and even a saloon where he could go to hear, and later be hired by, the great King Oliver. In the town where the white mob had lynched blacks to end their freedom, the black victims had improvised institutions to enable it. Sustaining traditions were available, at a price.

The moral arc of the universe *is* long. Eight years of Obama may be followed by eight of Trump, but the second cannot annihilate the first. At one point in "Stony the Road," Gates writes wisely of images as weapons. Imagery can indeed have agency, but this takes actors—bad actors who weaponize the imagery. Anti-Semitic caricatures had persisted for centuries; *Der Stürmer's* anti-Semitic cartoons had to be weaponized by Hitler. Patterns of oppression can be held in place only by oppressive people.

This is why the greatest divide among historians is between the academics who tend to see people as points of compressed social forces and those popular historians, chiefly biographers, who see the actors as nearly the whole of the story. The academics study the tides of history, while the popular historians go out fishing to find (and tag) the big fish that presumably make the ocean worth watching. The tidalists have the tenure, but the fishermen sell all the books.

Gates, who is expert at both, catching fish while seeing tides, leaves us with a simple, implicit moral: a long fight for freedom, with too many losses along the way, can be sustained only by a rich and complicated culture. Resilience and resistance are the same activity, seen at different moments in the struggle. It's a good thought to hold on to now. ♦

An earlier version of this article misidentified the state that Thaddeus Stevens represented and the kind of cemetery he was buried in.

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