SARAH TRYPHENA PHILLIPS LECTURE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Reconstructing the National Body: Masculinity, Disability and Race in the American Civil War[1]

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What man has nerve to do, man has not nerve to hear. (Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*)

It was winter soon and already soldiers were beginning to come back—the stragglers, not all of them tramps, ruffians, but men who had risked and lost everything, suffered beyond endurance and had returned now to a ruined land, not the same men who had marched away but transformed . . . We were afraid. We fed them; we gave them what and all we had and would have assumed their wounds and left them whole again if we could. But we were afraid of them. (William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*)

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PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR, it was once observed, the 'mass of Americans read [history] not for truth so much as for confirmation'. The point bears repeating, not least because of who made it: the man who conceived and

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inaugurated this lecture series, Carl Bode, in his study of *The Anatomy of American Popular Culture*. The antebellum American public, Bode argued, 'patently appreciated only the books that conformed to its image of America'. The same might be said, however, of the modern-day reader interested in America's most brutal conflict to date. Works on the Civil War are hardly in short supply. ABC-CLIO estimates some 50,000 books on the subject exist so far, or, to put it another way, at least one a day since Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. In the absence of any sign of war weariness among either scholars or the American general public, the Civil War will be a safe bet for publishers for many years to come and with the sesquicentennial of the war approaching we can expect the rate of output to increase. The centrality of the Civil War to America's national story seems assured, but numbers, in this case, may not be telling us everything. Familiarity with the subject may not have bred contempt but, as leading Civil War scholar Edward Ayers recently suggested, it may have bred complacency. 'It may be', he has argued, 'that we like the current story too much to challenge it very deeply and that we foreclose questions by repeating familiar formulas. The risk of our apparent consensus is that we paper over the complicated moral issues raised by a war that left hundreds of thousands of people dead. The risk is that we no longer worry about the Civil War.'[2]

In raising this point, it is notable that Ayers, in common with many Civil War scholars, references the number of dead. Prominent Civil War historians are rarely called upon to defend their subject but, on the occasions when they do feel prompted to explain its significance, it is the dead to whom they turn. So C. Vann Woodward, in his introduction to the *Oxford History of the United States* volume on the Civil War, James M. McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom*, highlights the 'simple and eloquent measurement' of the war's magnitude that the casualty figures provide. By casualties, however, he means the mortally wounded, and quotes the author's reckoning that American 'casualties at Antietam numbered four times the total suffered by American soldiers at the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944', before observing—as so many have and still do—that 'American lives lost in the Civil War exceed the total of those lost in all

[2] Carl Bode, *Antebellum Culture* (originally published in 1959 as *The Anatomy of American Popular Culture, 1841–1860* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL, 1970)), p. 249; figures for number of works published given in David Stephen Heidler *et al*. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (New York and London, 2002); Edward L. Ayers, 'Worrying about the Civil War', in Karen Halttunen and Lewis Perry (eds.), *Moral Problems in American Life: New Perspectives on Cultural History* (New York, 1999), pp. 144–65.

the other wars the country has fought added together, world wars included.'[3]

The significance of the Civil War dead, of course, should not be, and has not been, underestimated. Specifically, the role of the dead in the construction both of Northern/Union nationalism and the Southern 'civic religion' that was the Lost Cause has been examined at length in studies that explore, from various angles, the American variant of the 'cult of the fallen soldier', a cult through which, David Blight has observed, the 'nineteenth-century manly ideal of heroism was redefined for coming generations' and within which 'the Union dead—and soon the Confederate dead with them—served as saviours and founders, the agents of the death of an old social order and the birth of a new one'.[4]

Certainly the Civil War had brought home to the American public, in the North and South, the most extreme physical consequence of war; both Southerners proximate to the battlefields and Northerners who visited Matthew Brady's photographic exhibition of 1862, 'The Dead of Antietam', could hardly avoid looking death, and the war that produced it, in the face (Fig. 1). Commenting on Brady's exhibition, the *New York*

[3] C. Vann Woodward, Editor's Introduction to James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York and Oxford, 1988), pp. xviii–xix; in fact, the total of the Civil War dead exceeded that of all other American wars up to Vietnam. On this point, see Maris A. Vinovskis, 'Have social historians lost the Civil War? Some preliminary demographic speculations', in Vinovskis (ed.), *Toward a Social History of the American Civil War: Exploratory Essays* (New York, 1990), pp. 4–9; Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the American Civil War*, new edn. (Ramsbury, Wiltshire, 1996), pp. 19–20; and Susan-Mary Grant, 'Patriot Graves: American national identity and the Civil War dead', *American Nineteenth Century History*, 5:3 (Fall 2004), 74–100, esp. 77–8.

[4] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), p. 72; the amount of work on the Civil War dead specifically and war memorialising generally is vast, but see, among others: William Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865–1914* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); Drew Gilpin Faust, *'A Riddle of Death': Mortality and Meaning in the American Civil War* (Pennsylvania, 1995); and, most recently, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York, 2008); Susan-Mary Grant, 'Patriot Graves' and 'Raising the dead: war, memory and American national identity', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2:4 (Oct. 2005), 509–29; Robert Pogue Harrison, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago, IL, and London, 2003); Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and their Battlefields* (Urbana and Chicago, IL, 1991); Monro MacCloskey, *Hallowed Ground: Our National Cemeteries* (New York, 1968); Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (New York and Cambridge, 1999); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence, 2005); Michael Sledge, *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, & Honor Our Military Fallen* (New York, 2005); Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America* (New York, 1992); and Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin, TX, 1997).

Figure 1. Antietam, MD, bodies of Confederate dead gathered for burial. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-DIG.cwpb-01093.)

Times famously observed that if the photographer had 'not brought bodies and laid them in our door-yards and along the streets, he has done something very like it', and in the process brought 'home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war'. Such disturbing representations of war and the physical destruction it wrought on men's bodies, it has been argued, 'symbolized the righteousness of the Union cause—the large numbers of young northern soldiers slaughtered on the fields of battle became evidence of Union patriotism and virtue'.[5]

Towards the end of the conflict, Northern preachers had already established the terms through which Union sacrifice, at least, would be contextualised, stressing the 'new birth of freedom' that Abraham Lincoln had invoked at Gettysburg, a freedom purchased at the price of some 600,000 lives. So Congregationalist theologian Horace Bushnell, in his 1865 oration to the alumni of Yale who had served in the war, chose to stress 'Our Obligations to the Dead' who were, he declared, 'the purchase money of our redemption'. It 'is the ammunition spent that gains the battle', he advised his audience—survivors, we must recall, of the battles concerned—and it was that ammunition, their terminal 'shedding of blood' that had 'cemented and sanctified' the unity of the nation. The establishment of the nation was Bushnell's main point in this funeral oration, in which the Civil War was deemed to have accomplished what the Revolution had failed to achieve: 'The sacrifices in the fields of the Revolution united us but imperfectly. We had not bled enough to merge our colonial distinctions . . . and make us a proper nation. And so, what argument could not accomplish, sacrifice has achieved', Bushnell declaimed, and 'now a new and stupendous chapter of national history' awaited the American people.[6]

[5] *New York Times* review of Matthew Brady's Broadway exhibition, 'The Dead of Antietam', *New York Times*, 20 Oct. 1862; Gary Laderman, *The Sacred Remains: American Attitudes Toward Death, 1799–1883* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1996), p. 98; on reactions to Civil War photographs, see also Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Matthew Brady to Walker Evans* (1989, repr. New York, 1990), pp. 74–5; and Lisa A. Long, '"The corporeity of heaven": rehabilitating the Civil War body in *The Gates Ajar*', *American Literature*, 69:4 (Dec. 1997), 781–811, esp. 791.

[6] Horace Bushnell, 'Our obligations to the dead' (1865) in Mary Bushnell Cheney, *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell* (New York, 1905), pp. 485–6. As Laderman has argued, 'In many ways for Bushnell . . . the organic life of the nation required the destruction of human life; the spiritual bonds of nationhood relied on the real, material blood of individual soldier-martyrs', but Bushnell was not unique in promulgating this interpretation of the war, which was a common theme both during and for long after the conflict. See Laderman, *The Sacred Remains*, p. 129.

The notion of redemptive sacrifice is hardly unique to the American Civil War, yet in an internecine conflict that had, by its end, taken on the obligation of a 'new birth of freedom' in the emancipation of some four million slaves, it acquired a particular resonance. As leading African-American spokesman Frederick Douglass had put it, the 'mission' of the Civil War was nothing less than 'National regeneration'. The problem for many historians, however, is that this ambition was never realised, or imperfectly realised at best. For African-Americans, in particular, the new social order bore disturbing resemblances to the old, and so one of the most dominant elements of the 'current story' of the Civil War—and it is far from a positive one—is represented by what might be termed the historiography of betrayal, of hopes raised and dashed, opportunities glimpsed but unattained, a mirage of equality that faded as northern and southern whites moved closer to that significant handshake across the stonewall at Gettysburg in 1913 that symbolised the final cessation of hostilities (Fig. 2). This was the ultimate compromise reached between former Union and Confederate foes at the expense of African-American hopes for equality. The story, so eloquently and comprehensively traced by Blight, is of the 'emancipationist vision' of the war giving way, over time, to the 'reconciliationist vision', of 'sentimental remembrance' winning over 'ideological memory'. In short, it is a story of opportunity missed, of the triumph of ethnic/exclusive over civic/inclusive nationalism, of a backward step taken at a time when, by all accounts, Americans had established firm sacred ground, sanctified by the bodies of the fallen, for a forward-looking future promising equality for all. Here, too, the dead play a central role. 'The most immediate legacy of the war', Blight asserts, 'was its slaughter and how to remember it', and it was in the name of the dead, to a great extent, that the South's 'white supremacist vision' came to dominate.[7]

Yet, to return to numbers for a moment, slaughter was not the war's only legacy; the scale of death in the Civil War was almost matched by the scale of non-fatal casualties—some half a million—among those who

[7] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, pp. 2–4; 64; Douglass quoted, p. 18. Other studies that focus on the process of reconciliation between North and South and the betrayal of African-American hopes for equality include: Paul Buck, *The Road to Reunion, 1865–1900* (Boston, 1937); Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1993); Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton, NJ, 1999); and Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865–1898* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2005).

Figure 2. Gettysburg Fiftieth Reunion, 1913. Courtesy of the Pennsylvania State Archives.

returned home.[8] Along with commemorating the dead, the most pressing, and surely even more immediate, legacy of the war was how to reincorporate into civil society men who had not made the ultimate sacrifice, yet who had suffered, and who would continue to suffer in many cases, in the process of establishing the American nation. This aspect of the conflict's legacy is not yet part of the 'current story' of the Civil War, and its absence is revealing, perhaps even worrying, since the issue of how to respond to, and heal, the wounded war veteran remains of contemporary concern.

The figure of the wounded veteran is a discomfiting one to contemplate; a stark reminder of the cost of war, the violence that attends the birth of many nations, the veteran exists on the margins of the 'current story' of the Civil War, at least as historians tell it. The literary image of the veteran is, of course, rather different. The figure of the mentally or physically scarred veteran weaves through the Western canon. Examples as diverse as Sophocles' account of 'Poor Philoctetes, Poeas' wretched son', and Pat Barker's novel *Regeneration*, a fictional version of the time First World War poet Siegfried Sassoon spent at Craiglockhart Hospital, reveal how literature has portrayed the tragedy of war through the struggles of its living victims to come to terms with both conflict and, more crucially, peace. In the American case, the examples range from Civil War veteran Ambrose Bierce's disturbing tale, 'A Resumed Identity', of a soldier whose mind remained forever fixed in the time and place of the war, through Walt Whitman's prose and poetry in which the physical effects of conflict are quite graphically presented, the Native American Second World War veteran Tayo in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, and, beyond that, to the outpouring of personal accounts of social disengagement and dislocation produced in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.[9] With few exceptions, however, this literary fascination with the reintegration of the soldier and society in war's immediate aftermath has not been shared either by American historians or nationalism scholars, who seem more interested in the development of Civil War battlefields and their

[8] Figures from Lisa A. Long, *Rehabilitating Bodies; Health, History, and the American Civil War* (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 67; on this topic, see also Frank R. Freemon, *Gangrene and Glory: Medical Care During the American Civil War* (Cranbury, NJ, 1998).

[9] Sophocles' play is available in many editions, but a version is available at: <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/mirror/classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/philoct.html> (accessed 10 Oct. 2006); Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (1991, repr. London, 1992); Ambrose Bierce, 'A resumed identity', in *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians and Other Stories* (1892, repr. New York, 2000), pp. 143–8; Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977, repr. New York, 1986).

evolution into what Jay Winter identified, in a different context, as 'sites of memory, sites of mourning'. The physical landscape of the battlefield, the 'sacred patriotic space where memories of the transformative power of war and the sacrificial heroism of the warrior are preserved', takes precedence, in large part, over the living physical survivors of war.[10]

The scholarly, and public, preference for the sacrificial dead over the living veteran as far as war memorialisation is concerned may be understandable, even as it has been condemned as 'fundamentally dishonest. By materialising memory in statues and parks', Seth Koven has charged, 'we satisfy our sentimental and nationalist cravings and allow ourselves to displace bodily pain and ignore the presence of the tens of thousands of disabled victims of war.'[11] Koven's point was made in the context of the First World War, but it is equally applicable to the American Civil War. In 1944, the imminent demobilisation of American forces from the Second World War prompted Dixon Wecter to contemplate some of the issues and problems that arise when 'Johnny Comes Marching Home', but there has been little development of his findings since. No more did David Donald's 1975 edition of the diary of Alfred Bellard, wounded at Chancellorsville and mustered into the Invalid Corps, produce any upsurge of interest in the role of the disabled soldier, either during or after the war. With the notable exceptions of Eric Dean's *Shook Over Hell* and Fred Pelka's work on another member of the Invalid Corps, Charles F. Johnson, only a handful of articles to date have explored the physical and mental impact of the Civil War on the soldiers who fought it. The most important study to date of the Union veterans' organisation, the Grand Army of the Republic, does not engage directly with the disabled veteran, in whose name and for whose benefit so much GAR activity was undertaken. An implicit presence rather than the explicit subject, the veterans who populate studies of the soldier's homes constructed either under the auspices of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS) or by individual states in the South in the war's aftermath remain shadowy

[10] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (1995, repr. Cambridge, 2003); Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, p. 3.

[11] Seth Koven, 'Remembering and dismemberment: crippled children, wounded soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain', *The American Historical Review*, 99:4 (Oct. 1994), 1167–1202, quotation at 1169. On this point, see also: Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York and Oxford, 1985, repr. 1987), pp. 64, 80; Fred Pelka (ed.), *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Charles E. Johnson, Invalid Corps* (Amherst and Boston, MA, 2004), p. 203; and Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York, 1997), p. 6.

figures, gathered together in grainy photographs taken in their old age, their younger selves rendered invisible; in visual terms, Civil War veterans are plucked from the past into modern memory most notably on commemorative occasions, such as the fiftieth reunion of the Battle of Gettysburg, but only as a form of living tableaux, representing that part of American history that was the Civil War. The image of the Civil War veteran with which we are most familiar, and with which we may be most comfortable, is that of a man disabled not by conflict, but by age; a warrior no longer capable of waging war.[12]

The Civil War veteran, however, is the key not only to understanding how Americans in the mid-nineteenth-century resolved what Lisa Herschbach has described as 'the paradoxes of a conflict in which the preservation of national unity required the mutual destruction of its citizen-soldiery' but why the form that national unity eventually took became as exclusive as it did.[13] By exploring the broader military, medical, social and cultural contexts within which Americans conceptualised and came to terms with the extreme physical and mental destruction that the conflict had wrought on the bodies and minds of the fighting troops one

[12] Dixon Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* (Boston, 1944); Dabid Herbert Donald (ed.), *Gone For a Soldier: The Civil War Memoirs of Private Alfred Bellard* (Boston, 1975); Eric T. Dean, *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War* (1997, repr. Cambridge, MA, 1999); Fred Pelka (ed.), *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Charles E. Johnson, Invalid Corps* (Amherst and Boston, MA, 2004); Frances Clarke, '"Honorable Scars": Northern amputees and the meaning of Civil War injuries', in Paul A. Cimbala and Randall M. Miller (eds.), *Union Soldiers and the Northern Homes Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments* (New York, 2002), pp. 361–94; William Etter, 'Cripple, soldier, crippled soldier: Alfred Bellard's Civil War memoir', *Prose Studies*, 27:1 & 2 (April–August 2005), 80–92; R. B. Rosenburg, '"Empty sleeves and wooden pegs": disabled Confederate Veterans in image and reality', in David A. Gerber (ed.), *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, 2000), pp. 204–28; John D. Blaisdell, 'The wounded, the sick, and the scared': an examination of disabled Maine Veterans from the Civil War', *Maine History*, 41:1 (July 2004), 67–92; Ansley Herring Wegner, 'Phantom pain: Civil War amputation and North Carolina's maimed Veterans', *North Carolina Historical Review*, 75:3 (1998), 277–96; James Marten, 'Nomads in blue: disabled Veterans and alcohol at the National Home', in Gerber, *Disabled Veterans*, pp. 275–94; Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: the Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA, 1992); Stuart McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: the Grand Army of the Republic, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 1992); Patrick J. Kelly, *Creating a National Home: Building the Veterans' Welfare State, 1860–1900* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1997); Larry M. Logue, 'Union Veterans and their government: the effects of public policies on private lives', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 22:3 (1992), 411–34; R. B. Rosenburg, *Living Monuments: Confederate Soldiers' Homes in the New South* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 1993).

[13] Lisa Herschbach, '"True clinical fictions": medical and literary narratives from the Civil War Hospital', *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 19:2 (1995), 183–205, quotation at 196.

can better understand the form and function, and limitations, of the new national body that emerged from the Civil War.

Context: a symbol, and a story

The Civil War is frequently seen and described as a watershed in America's development. In historiographical terms, however, it too often functions as a formidable barrier to understanding since only infrequently do persistent trends come into focus. The tendency to compartmentalise history in general exacerbates this situation; in mid-nineteenth-century America we have the antebellum era, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, and although they are clearly linked they are too often seen as separate entities. The role of the veteran in American society is a case in point. Space does not permit a detailed examination of America's war veterans from the colonial era onwards, but two early examples of how war and its survivors were conceptualised before the Civil War may suffice.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln was faced with the pressing, and far from theoretical, issue of the perpetuation of America's political institutions, a topic that was of perennial interest to him. In 1838, he gave an address on the subject to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, in which he touched on subjects that, in future years, he certainly had cause to contemplate afresh. He began by assuring his audience of America's geographic inviolability; no foreign armies could ever threaten the nation's safety, nor 'take a drink from the Ohio' by force. The only danger to America, Lincoln asserted, came from within: 'If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.' Lincoln scholars are primarily interested in this speech because of the insight it provides into the future president's political thinking, his belief in the importance of law, his sly digs at the Democrats. Of less interest to them is the influence that Lincoln identified as important in the maintenance of those political institutions; what counteracted 'the jealousy, envy, and avarice, incident to our nature' and 'the deep rooted principles of *hate*' that Americans could so readily turn on each other was 'the powerful influence which the interesting scenes of the revolution had upon the *passions* of the people as distinguished from their judgment'.[14]

[14] Abraham Lincoln, 'Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois', 27 Jan. 1838, in Roy P. Basler (ed.), *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, NJ,

If the Revolution provided the emotional glue that held the nation together, it was through its living survivors that the message was conveyed, the lesson learned, and the memory kept alive. The revolutionary war's veterans had functioned as '*living history*' in this respect and, as Lincoln pointed out, 'every family' had,

> in the form of a husband, a father, a son or a brother . . . a history bearing the indubitable testimonies of its own authenticity, in the limbs mangled, in the scars of wounds received . . . a history . . . that could be read and understood alike by all, the wise and the ignorant, the learned and the unlearned.

Yet Lincoln recognised that the national sentiment produced by the Revolution, what he termed 'this state of feeling *must fade*, *is fading*, *has faded*, with the circumstances that produced it'. As the veterans died off, the histories they represented '*can* be read no more . . . They were a fortress of strength', Lincoln asserted;

> but what invading foemen could *never* do, the silent artillery of time *has done* . . . They are gone. They *were* a forest of giant oaks; but the all-resistless hurricane has swept over them, and left only, here and there, a lonely trunk, despoiled of its verdure, shorn of its foliage; unshading and unshaded, to murmer in a few more gentle breezes, and to combat with its mutilated limbs, a few more ruder storms, then to sink, and be no more.

The revolutionary war's veterans represented, for Lincoln, the 'pillars of the temple of liberty; and now, that they have crumbled away, that temple must fall, unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason'.[15]

That Lincoln should identify not just veterans but visibly wounded veterans as the 'pillars of the temple of liberty' privileges the physical and physiological evidence of war over the oral or written narrative; the Revolution is quite literally written on the bodies of its former soldiers. Lincoln also privileges age over youth: the veterans he invoked were not the youthful 'citizen-soldiers' of America's revolutionary past—which might have been a more resonant image to employ—but those men in later maturity, and damaged maturity at that. Perhaps the intimidating 'masculinity of disorder and unruliness' of the colonial and revolutionary-era militias, identified by Stefan Dudink and Karen Hagemann, made the youthful warrior too unsettling a figure to reference for Lincoln's pur-

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1953), 1. 108–15, quotations at 109, 114. For a brief discussion of this speech see, for example, Allen C. Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge, 1999), pp. 90–1.

[15] Lincoln, 'Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield', p. 115.

poses, given that his main concern in this speech was the rise of what he termed 'this mobocratic spirit . . . now abroad in the land'. Lincoln's visible veterans were certainly long past posing a threat; crippled both by war and by age, the purpose they served was ruminative rather than revolutionary; their mangled limbs were proof of the nation's 'authenticity'. Through the destruction of many individual bodies, Lincoln suggested, the national body's existence was both validated and protected.[16]

The year after Lincoln delivered his Lyceum Address, a very different image of the war veteran was presented to the American public. In 1839, Edgar Allan Poe published one of his most challenging short stories, 'The Man That Was Used Up'. In this story, the narrator meets a veteran—Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith—whom he describes as in every respect 'remarkable'. Much attention is devoted to the General's physical attributes: his hair is described as glossy and 'jetty black', his whiskers—which the narrator cannot speak of 'without enthusiasm'—were 'the handsomest pair of whiskers under the sun', and his teeth 'the most brilliantly white of all conceivable teeth' while his shoulders, and indeed most of his body, 'would have called up a blush of conscious inferiority into the countenance of the marble Apollo'. At the same time, the narrator detects 'a primness, not to say stiffness, in his carriage—a degree of measured . . . of rectangular precision, attending his every movement', which puzzles him. His interest is further aroused by the (over-)insistence of several of his companions that the General 'was a *remarkable* man—a *very* remarkable man—indeed one of the *most* remarkable men of the age', and by the General's, and just about everyone else he meets, frequent references to 'the rapid march of mechanical invention' in America. His curiosity aroused, the narrator determines to visit the General, but at first the famous war hero appears not to be at home. On being shown into the General's bedroom, he observes 'a large and exceedingly odd-looking bundle of something which lay close by my feet on the floor', which he kicks out of the way.[17]

[16] Lincoln, 'Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield', pp. 115, 111; Stefan Dudink and Karen Hagemann, 'Masculinity in politics and war in the age of democratic revolutions, 1750–1850', in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and John Tosh (eds.), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 3–21, quotation at 9.

[17] Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Man That Was Used Up: A Tale of the Late Bugaboo and Kickapoo Campaign', first appeared in 1839 in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, has been reprinted in several collections of Poe's short stories and is available on-line via several sites: this paper used the version available at: <http://www.web-books.com/Classics/Poe/Stories/Man_Used_1.htm> (accessed 10 Sept. 2007).

The bundle on the floor, however, turns out to be the General, not so much in a state of undress as one of complete corporeal dismemberment. As the narrator looks on in horror, the General, aided by his black servant, proceeds to put himself together, pulling on his legs, screwing on his arms, and all the time conducting a running commentary both on the battles that had reduced him—literally and rather dramatically—to his current (non-)physical state and on the relative merits of the makers of the many prosthetic devices that he is in the process of fitting. Finally the narrator, as he concludes, had 'a perfect understanding of the true state of affairs . . . a full comprehension of the mystery which had troubled me so long. It was evident. It was a clear case. Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith was the man—was *the man that was used up.*'[18]

Clearly, Poe's fantastical tale is not supposed to represent in any accurate way the image of the war veteran in Jacksonian America. Literary critics tend to read it as a satire on 'the nationalist ideology of American exceptionalism', composed in response to the Seminole War and subsequent forced removal of the Cherokee to Oklahoma conducted by General Winfield Scott, who may be the figure represented by General Smith. Specifically, the destruction of the General's body by Native Americans and its reconstruction by his black valet is understood as a commentary on the racial exclusiveness of the nation. The General, it has been suggested, was 'dismembered by his own racial hatred', and Poe's story was designed to highlight 'the prosthetic nature of the national narrative in its concealment of inglorious acts and unjust cruelties'. In its representation of a man who is, in effect, a cyborg, Poe's tale prefigures aspects of the fiction—and, indeed, real inventions—of the later nineteenth-century; in its representation of the veteran as a symbol of racial injustice it adds an unsettling dimension, and possibly even a challenge, to Lincoln's representation of the veteran as the emotive symbol of American nationalism. If the wounded veteran was, for Lincoln, a blasted oak, for Poe he is a mechanical man whose wounds, so far from being visible and therefore 'authenticating', are disguised, and so the man himself is deemed inauthentic. In both cases, however, it is through the physical body of a veteran that the nation—in both a positive and negative sense—is figured. In a nation where the body itself had clearly understood political connotations, these early—and contradictory—representations of

[18] <http://www.web-books.com/Classics/Poe/Stories/Man_Used_4.htm> (accessed 10 Sept. 2007).

the veteran must be factored in to our understanding of the conflict that began in 1861.[19]

Dismembering the nation

Prior to the Civil War, the American nation itself was frequently conceptualised in corporeal terms, a physical and spiritual body politic. In their desire to secede from the Union, Southerners, according to New York lawyer George Templeton Strong, were in danger of 'dismembering the country'. Secession, Strong believed, 'would do fatal mischief to one section or another and great mischief to both. Amputation weakens the body', he argued, 'and the amputated limb decomposes and perishes. Is our vital center North or South?', he inquired, 'Which is Body and which is Member? We may have to settle that question by experiment. We are not a polypoid organism that can be converted into two organisms by mere bisection.' Approached in this context, the Civil War itself took on medical connotations; war, announced surgeon and author Oliver Wendell Holmes 'is the surgery of crime . . . the disease of our nation was organic, not functional, calling for the knife, and not for washes and anodynes'.[20]

The utilisation of medical metaphors involving disease and dismemberment was a common trope of the time. Strong perceived the growing sectional crisis in relatively straightforward terms as posing a risk to the national body, and during the war itself 'the metaphor of the injured body politic' was, as Elizabeth Young has shown, a fairly typical 'rhetorical strategy' employed by both Union politicians in particular and northern elites in general as a means of condemning secession. Others, such as Holmes, believed that the national body was already diseased, and that secession was simply the logical presentation of an illness that had been attacking the nation's vital organs for many decades. His solution was

[19] J. Gerald Kennedy, '"A mania for composition": Poe's Annus Mirabilis and the violence of nation-building', *American Literary History*, 17:1 (Spring 2005), 1–35, quotations at 8 and 9; on this aspect of the story, see also David Haven Blake, '"The Man That Was Used Up": Edgar Allan Poe and the ends of captivity', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 57:3 (Dec. 2002), 323–49, esp. 346.

[20] George Templeton Strong, diary entries 20 Nov. and 31 Oct. 1860, in Allan Nevins and Milton Halsey Thomas (eds.), *The Diary of George Templeton Strong* (4 vols.), 3, *The Civil War* (New York, 1952), pp. 64, 56; Oliver Wendell Holmes, 'Doings of the sunbeam', *Atlantic Monthly*, 12:69 (July 1863), 1–16, quotation at 12.

perhaps a touch terminal, relying as it did on death: 'through such martyrdom must come our redemption', he wrote, having viewed Brady's photographs from Antietam, and it must be remembered that this was a man who had, in desperation, tramped that very battlefield in search of his missing son. Holmes hardly needed Brady's photographs to bring home to him the realities of a war that had its origins, as he perceived it, in a national sickness; slavery.[21]

Slavery, indeed, was the subject most likely to call forth the metaphor of disease, and a concomitant radical surgical solution. On Thanksgiving Day, 1860, Henry Ward Beecher, one of the North's most popular and influential preachers, delivered a sermon in the course of which he described slavery as like 'an ulcer, this evil eats deeper every day. Unless soon cauterized or excised, it will touch the vitals, and then the patient dies.'[22] The patient, in Beecher's view, was, crucially, not the South, but the nation, a significant point in light both of the war to come and its aftermath. In this context Lincoln, too, was prone to employ the medical metaphor in discussing the national crisis, and no more forcibly than when he was defending the Emancipation Proclamation. Writing to Albert Hodges in 1864, Lincoln traced his thinking on slavery, and in particular his reasons for taking a step—the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation—that he had once believed to be unconstitutional. 'By general law', he explained, 'life *and* limb must be protected; yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the constitution, through the preservation of the nation.' On another occasion he explained:

> I have sometimes used the illustration . . . of a man with a diseased limb, and his surgeon. So long as there is a chance of the patient's restoration, the surgeon is solemnly bound to try and save both life *and* limb, but when the crisis comes, and the limb must be sacrificed as the only chance of saving the life, no honest man will hesitate.[23]

[21] Elizabeth Young, *Disarming the Nation: Women's Writing and the American Civil War* (Chicago, IL, 1999), pp. 88; Holmes, 'Doings of the sunbeam', 12; Holmes published his account of his (successful) search for his son—the future Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.—in 'My hunt after "The Captain,"' *Atlantic Monthly*, 10:62 (Dec. 1862), 738–64.

[22] Henry Ward Beecher, 'Against a compromise of principle' (1860), repr. in Beecher, *Freedom and War: Discourses on Topics Suggested by the Times* (Boston, 1863), p. 53.

[23] Abraham Lincoln to Albert G. Hodges, 4 April 1864, in Basler (ed.), *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 7. 281; Lincoln quoted in Francis Bicknell Carpenter, *The Inner Life of*

It is important to bear in mind that, in 1861, these rhetorical flourishes were all-too brutally made flesh, that, for many Civil War troops, metaphorical national amputation translated into their personal dismemberment. The full impact of this physical mutilation on both the individual soldier and the nation has been downplayed, however, in part because we lack a full appreciation of the processes involved, in part because of the quite natural reluctance to disseminate widely the most disturbing images from the war, and in part, too, because of the historiographical positioning of America's Civil War as a conflict apart.

The fact that American Civil War soldiers were more likely to succumb to disease than die on the battlefield is a well-known and, as with the scale of death, frequently cited aspect of that conflict. The surgeon general's office estimated 53.4 disease-induced deaths per 1,000—yellow fever, smallpox, malaria and diarrhoea were the main culprits—but in the context of nineteenth-century wars this was not a particularly high percentage. Thomas Livermore offered overall figures—which remain accepted currency today—of 110,000 Union battlefield fatalities, but 250,000 deaths from disease; for the Confederacy, the figures were 94,000 and 164,000 respectively. 'Compared with male civilians of military age', Richard Shryock concluded, 'servicemen were five times as likely to become ill and experienced a mortality which was five times as high as that of those who remained at home.'[24]

Less well understood is the relative—to other conflicts—scale of amputations during the Civil War resulting from either direct wounding, disease or, often, a combination of the two. It has been asserted, for example, that the 'First World War led to amputations on a scale never seen before, or since', with over 41,000 men losing one or more limbs. This 'unusually high proportion of amputations', it has further been argued, 'was due to the fact that the mutilations in this war tended to be more severe than they had been in previous wars. This was partially due to the use of more effective instruments of dismemberment, such as

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Abraham Lincoln: Six Months at the White House (1866, repr. Lincoln, NE, and London, 1995), pp. 76–7.

[24] See Michael A. Flannery, 'Another house divided: Union medical service and sectarians during the Civil War', *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 54 (1999), 473–510, figs. 479; Charles Smart, 'On the medical statistics of the war', in *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, 3 vols. (Washington, DC, 1870–88), 3. 1–33; Freemon, *Gangrene and Glory*; Thomas G. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War: 1861–1865* (New York, 1901), pp. 5–8; Richard H. Shryock, 'A medical perspective on the Civil War', *American Quarterly*, 14:2:1 (Summer 1962), 161–73, quotation at 164.

artillery fire, hand grenades and small firearms.'[25] Yet this conclusion does not bear scrutiny, indeed is flatly contradicted by the figures from the American Civil War which, according to Laurann Figg and Jane Farrell-Beck, far exceed 41,000. 'Approximately 60,000 amputations were performed during the Civil War', they assert, a figure representing '[t]hree-quarters of all operations' performed during that conflict. Indeed, a greater number of Civil War troops—45,000—survived the experience of amputation than First World War troops, apparently, underwent it.[26]

Physical mutilation, of course, hardly tells the whole story of the Civil War's impact on its soldiery, but even simply exploring that dimension reveals that the Civil War, no less than the First World War, utilised weaponry capable of inflicting a range of injuries on the human body that resulted in the need for amputation. In the case of the Civil War, the most common cause of battlefield wounds was the minié ball, an expansive bullet used in the rifled muskets of the period. Devised by Captain Claude Etienne Minié for the French army, this was a conical projectile with a hollow base that, being narrower than the gun's barrel, was easily loaded, but expanded on firing to engage with the rifling producing both a faster and more accurate trajectory. Not only did such bullets penetrate flesh to produce fracturing of bone but they blunted on impact, frequently causing a shattering of bone and subsequent damage over a wider area and, often, carried both 'skin and clothing into the wound'. In any case, the nineteenth-century bullet, unlike modern variants, did not travel fast enough to be sterilised by the air; even had they not introduced alien matter into the body on impact, the bullet itself could cause corporeal contamination, as well as producing wounds that 'were large, ugly, and gaping'. Bullets from unrifled muskets, although less accurate, could result in even larger wounds since their trajectory was less stable, and artillery fire

[25] Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp. 33–4.

[26] Laurann Figg and Jane Farrell-Beck, 'Amputation in the Civil War: physical and social dimensions', *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 48 (1993), 454–75, figs. 454, 458–60. Figg and Farrell-Beck acknowledge the difficulty in stating a definite number of amputations North and South. They cite the *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, by General Joseph Barnes, which gave a figure of 29,980 Union amputations which Barnes had noted was a minimum; their estimate of a similar number for the Confederacy is supported by Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, p. 209; I have not found the figure of 60,000 contradicted, and have found it repeated, in, for example, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *JAMA*, 281:5 (4 Aug. 1999), 491. On this point see also Shryock, 'Medical perspective', 161–2; and Jennifer Davis McCaid, 'With lame legs and no money: Virginia's disabled Confederate Veterans', *Virginia Cavalcade* (Winter 1998), 14–25, esp. 16.

similarly produced extensive wounds often resulting in the loss of limbs, as these contemporary surgical photographs reveal (Fig. 3).[27]

The sheer scale of the Civil War produced its own problems when it came to the treatment available for the wounded, and 'the inefficiency of

Figure 3. Surgical Photographs. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-DIG-ppmsca-10105u.)

[27] Figg and Farrell-Beck, 'Amputation in the Civil War', 455; Blaisdell, 'The wounded, the sick, and the scared', 81; Frank R. Freemon, *Gangrene and Glory: Medical Care during the American Civil War* (1998, repr. Urbana and Chicago, IL, 2001), pp. 48–9.

the Medical Bureau' was condemned at the war's outset by George Templeton Strong as nothing short of 'criminal and scandalous. Its superannuated officials are paralyzed by the routine habits acquired in long dealing with an army of ten or fifteen thousand', he averred, 'and utterly unequal to their present work.'[28] Given the speed with which armies on both sides were raised this shortage of professional physicians and surgeons with battlefield experience of the kind called for by the Civil War is unsurprising. Of the 115 regular Army staff surgeons available in 1861, twenty-four left to join the Confederacy and three refused to be involved at all. Support staff and facilities were also lacking, and in the absence of ambulance services and field hospitals—a situation that only began to be rectified on the Union side toward the end of 1862—many troops suffered and died unnecessarily. As Civil War surgeon John Lewis recalled: 'Although attempts were made as early as the summer of 1861 to organize and drill an ambulance corps, yet I never saw any effective service from it until a year or more had elapsed.'[29]

Civilian volunteer organisations, of course, most notably the United States Sanitary Commission (USSC) but also the Christian Commission and the Western Sanitary Commission, provided additional aid and, in the case of the USSC, a wealth of advice—not all of it welcome—for both the individual soldier and those responsible for treating him. The USSC, in particular, valued uniformity and organisation above all else but, given that medical care in the Civil War era lacked both 'unanimity in theory and practice', this was impossible to achieve. The consequences for the soldier of the unsettled state of American medical practice in the mid-nineteenth-century were not uniformly negative, but the care troops received was 'provided in a complex environment of therapeutic contention and professional animosity, much of which rested upon positions of political power and authority rather than on issues of scientific standing and credibility'. This proved especially critical as far as surgical procedures were concerned; the allopathic opposition to sectarian physicians, and the virtual exclusion of the latter from the battlefield, amounted to, in Michael Flannery's phrase, 'rank partisanship' which ultimately 'worked to the detriment of the average soldier's health care'.[30]

[28] Strong, *Diary*, 3. 181.
[29] Figures for US Army surgeons, Flannery, 'Another house divided', 483; Shryock, 'Medical perspective', 161; John B. Lewis in Stanley B. Weld and David A. Soskis (eds.), 'The reminiscences of a Civil War surgeon, John B. Lewis', *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 21 (1966), 47–58, quotation at 51.
[30] Flannery, 'Another house divided', 510, 509.

Amputation was, of course, a dramatic—the word most commonly used at the time was 'heroic'—surgical procedure, and not a first resort response to wounding. The USSC certainly advised amputation as a suitable procedure for both compound fractures and serious laceration, but with a few over-enthusiastic exceptions most surgeons—allopathic and sectarian—were committed to 'conservative surgery' and sought alternative treatments in the first instance, even for serious wounds. This was not necessarily a good thing; in recalling his war experience, surgeon William Keen acknowledged the 'popular opinion that the surgeons did a large amount of unnecessary amputating', but had 'no hesitation in saying that far more lives were lost from a refusal to amputate than by amputation'. Nevertheless, amputation was at the time, and has remained since the symbolic wound of the war, highlighted by historians but mainly by literary critics as expressive both of the damage to the national/masculine body done by the war and, crucially, of the reconstruction of the nation after it.[31]

Reconstructing the human body

'The limbs of our friends and countrymen are a part of the melancholy harvest which War is sweeping down with Dahlgren's mowing-machine and the patent reapers of Springfield and Hartford', observed Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1863. 'It is not two years since the sight of a person who had lost one of his lower limbs was an infrequent occurrence. Now, alas! there are few of us who have not a cripple among our friends, if not in our own families' (Fig. 4). Those historians who have explored directly the reactions of Civil War amputees to their injuries and the concomitant response of the wider society to disabled veterans present, by and large, a positive image of the disabled Civil War combatant, even a positive image of amputation. 'If the war's legacy of crippled men was a burden of unprecedented magnitude', Herschbach suggests, 'it was seen by some as an opportunity.' Mostly, it was seen as an opportunity by the manufacturers of prosthetic devices, as Holmes recognised: 'A mechanical art which provided for an occasional and exceptional want has become a great and active branch of industry', he observed: 'War

[31] Figg and Farrell-Beck, 'Amputation in the Civil War', 455; William Williams Keen, 'Surgical reminiscences of the Civil War' (1905), quoted in Flannery, 'Another house divided', 508.

Figure 4. Winslow Homer, 'Our Watering Places—The Empty Sleeve,' *Harper's Weekly*, 26 August 1865.

unmakes legs, and human skill must supply their places as it best may' (Fig. 5).[32]

Human skill was quick to oblige: almost 150 patents for prosthetics were issued between 1861 and 1873, which 'represented nearly a 300 per cent increase over the previous twelve years' (Fig. 6). 'For the nascent industries of rehabilitative medicine', Herschbach has shown, 'the destruction of the soldier's body held new opportunities for rehabilitation—of body, soul and society—along improved lines that could wed techno-scientific knowledge with humanistic visions of reform and progress.' Yet it went further than this, Herschbach argues, since 'the logic of prosthesis in the nineteenth century reaffirmed Northern ideologies of free labour and industrial manufacture'. She suggests that Southern veterans were less inclined to hide their wounds via the use of artificial limbs. 'If the prosthetically reconstructed worker was the symbolic repository of Northern ideologies of industry, progress and social mobility', she argues, 'the visibly disabled veteran was likewise an important symbolic repository of Southern identity, one framed as much by defiance as defeat.'[33]

It was not such a straightforward sectional divide, however. In 1862, the Federal government had provided for Union veterans who required prostheses; seventy-five dollars for a leg and fifty for an arm were the amounts allocated. However, towards the war's end and in its immediate aftermath the Confederacy sought to match this programme, initially via the Association to Purchase Artificial Limbs for Maimed Soldiers, established in 1864. What is remarkable, indeed, is the effort expended by many Southern states, including North and South Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi, to supply prostheses to former Confederate soldiers. In 1866, for example, North Carolina passed a resolution to aid amputees 'with the common funds of the State to procure necessary limbs, and thus to restore them, as far as is practicable, to the comfortable use of their persons, to the enjoyment of life and to the ability to earn a subsistence'. Initially only legs were provided, but in 1867 artificial arms, too, were made available. In the same year, the state of South Carolina set aside $20,000—a considerable sum given the post-war economic position of that state—for the same purpose, although it restricted the available

[32] Oliver Wendell Holmes, 'The human wheel, its spokes and felloes', *Atlantic Monthly*, 11:61 (May 1863), 567–80, quotations at 567–8, 574; Lisa Herschbach, 'Prosthetic reconstructions, making the industry, re-making the body, modelling the nation', *History Workshop Journal*, 44 (1997), 25.
[33] Herschbach, 'Prosthetic reconstructions', 48.

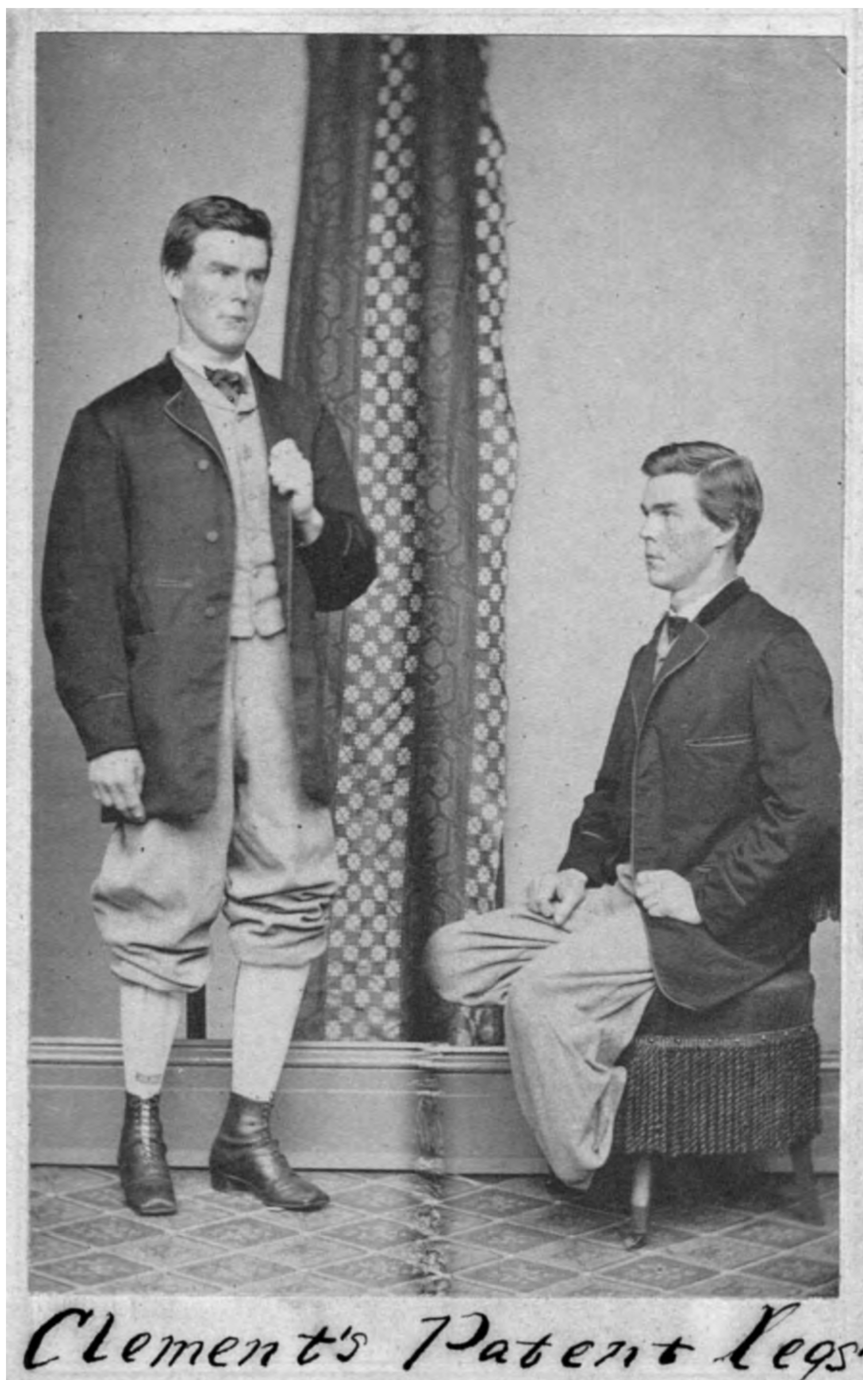


Figure 5. Clement Patent Leg Advert (prosthesis). Image courtesy of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Figure 6. Advert for prosthetic leg. Image courtesy of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

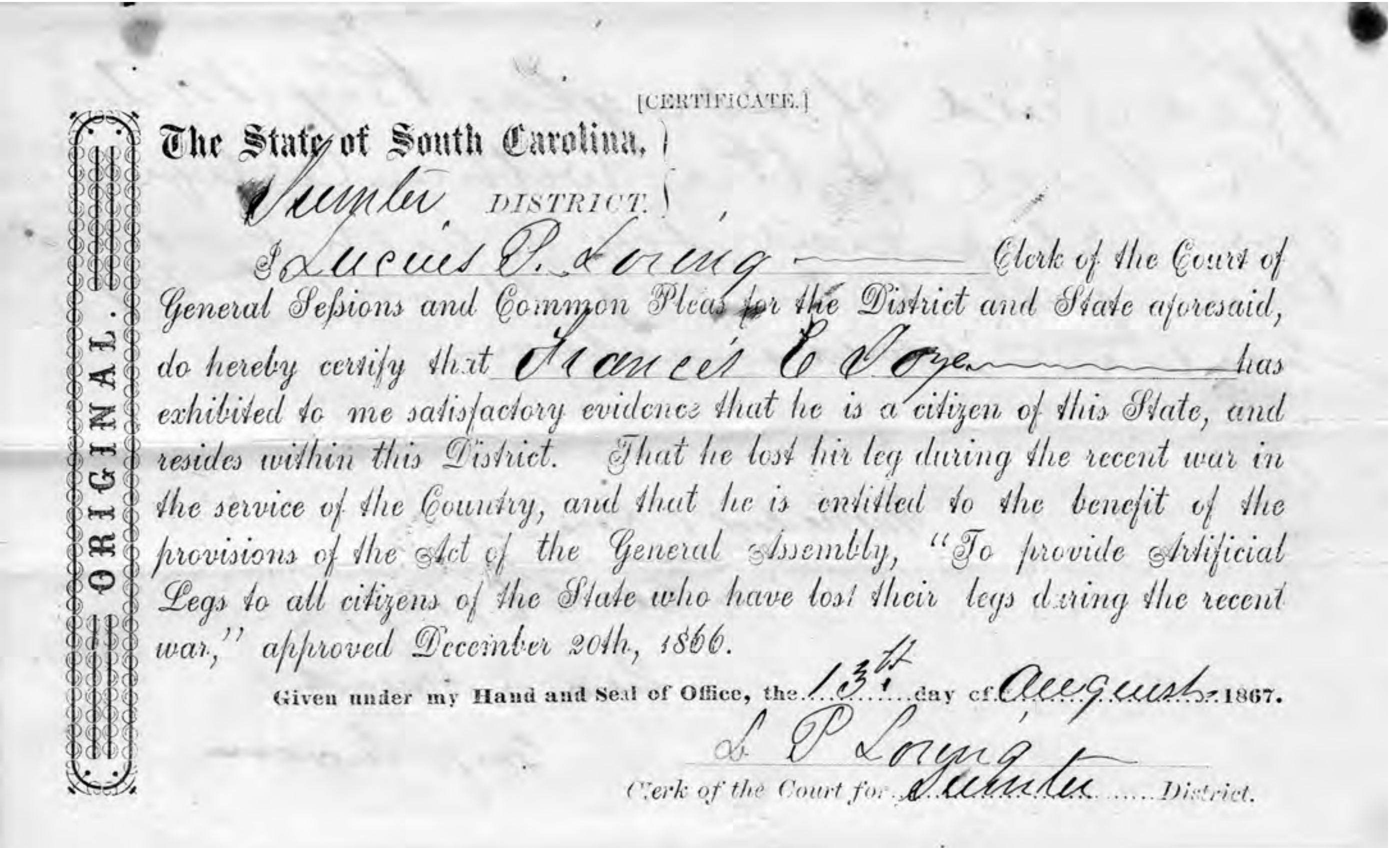
prostheses to legs (Fig. 7). South Carolina, too, as North Carolina and the Union did, arranged free rail transport for veterans who needed to travel for medical examination or to have their prostheses fitted. There was no obvious reluctance on the part of disabled veterans to accept such support, but rather a great deal of interest in the programmes.[34]

If Confederate veterans welcomed the opportunity to acquire prostheses—not, perhaps, to disguise a wound but simply to achieve greater mobility and, as many contemporary social commentators hoped, economic self-sufficiency—Union veterans sometimes rejected them. Frances Clarke, for example, has uncovered in the evidence provided by a left-handed writing competition for Union veterans that many of them considered their wounds as 'honorable scars', and had no desire to disguise them, nor 'improve' themselves via the use of prostheses. Charles Coleman, who lost an arm, was just one example of a veteran who declared himself gratified by the response of the government who 'paid my board, transportation, and for my arm, and is now paying me eight dollars per month'; Coleman concluded that 'the pleasure in all this consists in knowing that my feeble efforts for the benefit of our common country are remembered and appreciated and . . . I cannot but feel happy to think that I lost my arm in so good a cause and for so just a government.'[35]

Taking issue with scholars who 'anticipate the literature on post-World War I wounds, which interprets the loss of a limb as a mark of feminization or humiliation', Clarke proposes that Civil War veterans felt no such shame. Many northern veterans, she argues, rejected the use of artificial limbs, and instead responded to their loss as to the death of a family member, 'sacrificed to maintain the integrity of home and nation'. By personifying 'their limbs and rendering their loss in terms of a death scene', Union veterans were able 'to grieve without relating grief to a permanent condition, inherent in the nature of their injuries, for the mourning and melancholy associated with funerals were liminal states. In their portrayal of grief, writers often explicitly made this transition from initial sadness or revulsion to reconciliation and acceptance of their loss.' Above

[34] On 'the Association to Purchase Artificial Limbs for Maimed Soldiers' see the *Confederate States Medical and Surgical Journal* (April 1864), 59, and Wegner, 'Phantom pain', 289; Resolution of 23 Jan. 1866, General Assembly [North Carolina] Sessions Records, quoted in Wegner, 'Phantom pain', 290; Statutes at Large/No. 4829/20 Dec. 1866, *Acts of the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1866* (Columbia, SC: State Printer, 1866): p. 433. See Thomas J. Rills to Governor [James Lawrence] Orr, 8 Sept. 1867; Jasper J. Hiers to Orr, 24 May 1867; and J. P. Marco to Orr, 1 July 1867, all in Miscellaneous Papers, 1866–1908, State Archives, South Carolina.

[35] Clarke, 'Honorable scars', pp. 363–4.



ORIGINAL.

[CERTIFICATE.]

The State of South Carolina,
Sumter DISTRICT.

I Lucius P. Loring Clerk of the Court of General Sessions and Common Pleas for the District and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that Francis E Doye has exhibited to me satisfactory evidence that he is a citizen of this State, and resides within this District. That he lost his leg during the recent war in the service of the Country, and that he is entitled to the benefit of the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly, "To provide Artificial Legs to all citizens of the State who have lost their legs during the recent war," approved December 20th, 1866.

Given under my Hand and Seal of Office, the 13th day of August 1867.

L P Loring
Clerk of the Court for Sumter District.

Figure 7. Surgeon's certificate, SC, for prosthetic leg. Image courtesy of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

all, they offered a narrative in which their personal dismemberment had held the nation together, and frequently approached their loss from a religious perspective that stressed the transient nature of life and of suffering and the belief that 'this body entire shall rise from the grave'.[36]

By establishing a link between their sacrifice and the nation's continued existence, Clarke's Civil War soldiers were writing in the context of the rhetoric of national sacrifice and redemption as expressed by northern preachers, in a way, perhaps, seeking to remind their audience—and they were absolutely clear that they were writing for an audience, and, incidentally, a substantial financial prize—that physical survival did not mean that there had been no physical sacrifice. Figg and Farrell-Beck also find that disabled veterans did not feel compelled to hide their disabilities. They find from their analysis of how amputees chose to present their injuries—either disguising these or highlighting them by visibly pinning empty sleeves—that those 'soldiers who returned from the war with amputations received such a positive response, first from the nurses and then from the civilian public, that they were not motivated to disguise their injuries'. Later in the century, by which time, they suggest, public interest in and support for the disabled veteran had diminished, it became both 'physically convenient and socially advantageous to men proud to show that they had given an arm or a leg in the war'.[37]

There certainly came a time when it was politically advantageous for veterans to remind the public of their sacrifices during the war, but the enthusiasm of Civil War nurses and the pride expressed by amputees themselves notwithstanding, the disabled veteran was an unsettling figure in the immediate post-war period as, indeed, he had been during the war itself. Veteran status was not something that was achieved only at the war's conclusion in 1865. In the context of the Civil War, 'veteran' was applied to anyone who had joined up in 1861, and a great many men, severely wounded in combat, became veterans between 1861 and 1865 but did not leave the army; instead they were assigned to the Invalid, or Veteran, Corps, established in 1863. By this stage in the war, desperate for any man it could get, the Union was offering generous financial inducements to those willing to join up or re-enlist. Only two groups were excluded from this largesse: the Invalid Corps, and the troops of the newly formed African-American regiments comprising the USCT. There was, as one contemporary report observed, 'inequality and injustice in

[36] Clarke, 'Honorable scars', pp. 389–90, 393.
[37] Figg and Farrell-Beck, 'Amputation in the Civil War', 468.

this distinction', but there is also a clue to the form that post-war American nationalism took; even as the Union fought for its very existence, it defined both black troops and disabled men as in significant ways separate from the nation that it was committed to saving. White soldiers' suspicion of African-American troops has been well-documented; less so their suspicion of and hostility toward their disabled comrades, black and white.[38]

The motivation behind the establishment of the Invalid Corps was, as for African-American regiments, far from straightforward, and highlighted the contradictory issues surrounding the disabled veteran, issues that in some respects are surprising although not unique to the American Civil War. During the Revolutionary War, disabled soldiers—those men who would mature into the 'pillars of the temple of liberty' according to Lincoln—were viewed with suspicion and some fear. Writing to William Shippen in 1777, George Washington had expressed his concern at wounded soldiers '[s]troling about the country at their own option, to the great detriment of the Services'. Washington's solution to what he described as 'this evil' was a Corps of Invalids to which such troops could be assigned, thereby securing much-needed support for the Continental Army but also, and crucially, saving society from whatever threat these disabled troops were deemed to pose. A similar attitude, reinforced by the mid-nineteenth century's general suspicion of the needy, can be detected in the reaction to the Invalid Corps. Seen as separate from the main body of the army—which in some senses they were—the troops of the Invalid Corps endured a degree of ridicule and suspicion both from their former comrades and from society at large.[39]

Negative attitudes toward veterans generally, but wounded veterans in particular, were most cogently—and repeatedly—expressed by the northern elite leaders of the USSC, but it was not specific to them; it found a resonance in wider society, North and South. President of the USSC, Henry Whitney Bellows, had been 'much exercised with the subject of the future of the disabled soldiers of this war' since 1862, but almost equally concerned by what he saw as 'a tide of another hundred thousand men,

[38] Report of J. W. De Forest, 30 Nov. 1865, *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion* (ORA), Series III, Vol. 5: 543–67, 543–4; see also, on preference for veteran regiments, ORA, III. 3: 1131–2; Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: the Common Soldier of the Union* (1952, repr. Baton Rouge, LA, and London, 1978), pp. 342–3.

[39] George Washington to William Shippen, Jr., 26 March 1777, in Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Washington Papers*: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html> (accessed 10 May 2007); for further elucidation of this point see Susan-Mary Grant, 'Reimagined communities: Union Veterans and the reconstruction of American nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 14(3): 498–519 (2008).

demoralized for civil life by military habits' threatening 'the order, industry, and security of society'. Returning soldiers, Bellows believed, would 'be not only physically but morally disabled, and will exhibit the injurious effects of camp life in a weakened power of self-guidance and self-restraint'.[40]

There is, of course, an obvious contradiction here as far as the relationship between men and war is concerned but, again, it is not one specific to the American Civil War. Within an American context, the Revolution has been identified as 'the first modern experiment in the creation of a form of masculinity peculiar to the modern nation-state, in which the citizen must carry within himself the qualities of a warrior, but the warrior must also remain the citizen he will become again at conflict's end'. For western warfare in general, Robert Nye has proposed, 'the business of mobilizing men to fight has been a greater challenge than putting the warrior genie back in the bottle at a war's end'. In the particular case of the American Civil War, however, the opposite was true; the Civil War, according to Eric Dean, had '"let the genie out of the bottle" as the violence of the war years spilled over into civilian life in the postwar era', a point supported by the observation that 'two-thirds of all commitments to state prisons were men who had seen service in the army or navy'. Some of these men, of course, would have seen prison with or without the war factoring in to the equation; however, contemporary accounts of veteran crime statistics lent weight to the warnings of men such as Bellows that the returning soldier was a little too far from the 'citizen-soldier' ideal for comfort.[41]

The American Civil War, indeed, challenged the 'citizen-soldier' ideal on several levels. The return from war of so many disabled men unsettled many of the assumptions on which this ideal was predicated. Even if Civil War soldiers did not regard their wounds as in any sense emasculating or feminising, nevertheless a great many of them had returned from the battlefield in rather a different corporeal form than they had approached it. Amputation was, too, only the most obvious alteration; for men such as Bellows, the suspicion that the soldier had undergone a significant psychological shift, one not obviously written on the body but rather

[40] Sanitary Commission Report, No. 49, 15 Aug. 1862; No. 90, 1865 (Henry Whitney Bellows).
[41] Robert A. Nye, 'Western masculinities in war and peace', *The American Historical Review*, 112:2 (April 2007), <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/112.2/nye.html> (accessed April 2007), 1, 3; Dean, *Shook Over Hell*, pp. 98–100; see also McConnell, *Glorious Contentment*, p. 20; and for contemporary crime figures see, for example, 'The reformation of prison discipline', *North American Review*, 105:217 (Oct. 1867), 556–91.

more insidiously hidden in the mind, was a far more unsettling thought. Equally unsettling for many veterans and non-combatants alike, however, was what the war had altered in terms of the national body. As Lisa Long has pointed out, by 1863 the war had effected what amounted to a role-reversal as far as masculinity was concerned; as African-American soldiers became 'able-bodied' as officially accepted combat troops, many white soldiers became disabled. This was a national corporeal shift too far, and one that no prosthetic device, however sophisticated, could disguise. The response was as brutal as it was simple; in reconstructing the national body, many whites simply left black troops out, and turned away, in emotional terms at least, from the reality of disabled veterans, black and white alike.[42]

Reconstructing the national body

For African-Americans, what worked against the rhetoric of equality was, ironically, the very route that they had taken to achieve it—military service—and the context in which they had done so; a civil war. Again, Long highlights one of the great difficulties facing Americans, especially northerners, seeking to come to terms with an internecine conflict 'ostensibly geared toward reuniting the estranged regions (at least on the North's part), the racial slurs, ethnic stereotypes, and general hate-mongering typical during foreign wars was not as attractive or effective as it might have been'. Also, and crucially, the outcome was almost irrelevant: whichever side was victorious, Americans had lost a war. In this climate, Long suggests, 'the rhetoric of race' became reanimated, in part through what she describes as 'the language of sanitation', the efforts on the part of the USSC to inculcate a stronger and more robust nationalism premised, in large part, on the experiences of the war. In this sense, the efforts of the USSC, their determination to impose order, their desire to measure and quantify not just supplies but men—indeed, Long argues that the USSC regarded these as virtually interchangeable—merged with the ambitions of the prosthetic limb manufacturers. Together they constructed a nationalist narrative that positioned both nation and person at the forefront of a brave new world of mass production, in which individuals, as well as goods, could be organised, rationalised and nationalised to produce a

[42] Long, *Rehabilitating Bodies*, p. 219.

new national body that emerged from the war stronger and better than what had gone before.[43]

Yet when one factors the Civil War's veterans, especially but not exclusively, its disabled veterans, into the equation, doubts arise as to either the popularity of such ideas or their acceptance by the mass of veterans and non-combatants, North and South. Without underestimating the influence that the nineteenth-century 'rhetoric of race' had, and without diminishing its insidious impact, historians need to probe more deeply the paradoxes involved in achieving national unity at the cost of so many lives and limbs. Not the least of these paradoxes involved the apparent failure of antebellum radicals, the strongest supporters of a new, inclusive American nationalism based not on ethnic signifiers but on civic precepts, to hold out for the 'emancipationist vision' for America that so many had given their lives to make real.

When historians encounter, for example, a man such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a fervent abolitionist, an officer in an African-American regiment, and a strong advocate of equal rights, they struggle to understand what appears to be his post-war apostasy. The explanation for a man such as Higginson's apparent change of heart, Scott Poole has recently argued, lies in a 'profound cynicism among American radicals', not regarding their ideals, but 'about the possibility of fulfilling them within the American national experiment'. In 1865, however, when Union victory had been achieved, and the possibility for equality—a fully civic nationalism—was within reach, it is hard to see why, and with such speed, Americans let it slip past them, especially given the visual representations of the veteran that were produced in the immediate post-war period.[44]

Given the fact that some of the most sharply political cartoons and paintings of the day drew disability and the USCT together by portraying a disabled African-American veteran, it is clear that many northerners knew what was at stake. Thomas Nast's political cartoon that appeared in

[43] Long, *Rehabilitating Bodies*, pp. 154 and 88; Herschbach, 'Prosthetic reconstructions', passim. On the USSC, see also Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* (Lawrence, KS, 2002), p. 19 and George M. Fredrickson, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (1965, repr. New York and London, 1968), esp. pp. 98–112.

[44] W. Scott Poole, 'Memory and the Abolitionist heritage: Thomas Wentworth Higginson and the uncertain meaning of the Civil War', *Civil War History*, 60:2 (2005), 202–17; see also John Stauffer, *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race* (Cambridge, MA, 2002).

Harper's Weekly in August of 1865 represented an overt challenge to the nation to pay its debt, not just that owed to black troops but also to disabled veterans; a message reinforced in Thomas Waterman Wood's famous triptych, 'A Bit of War History' (Figs. 8–11).[45] Ultimately, the message was ignored, mainly due to the unwillingness on the part of Americans, North and South, to confront fully the true costs, and as a consequence fail to grasp with both hands the opportunities, of the Civil War, to turn away from the disabled veteran, and from the black soldier, and focus instead on the dead. Those who had made the ultimate sacrifice were deserving of commemoration, of course, but equally it cannot be overlooked that they represented the ideal citizen-soldier, raising no awkward questions about how to effect the (re)transformation of the soldier into the citizen, nor how to face the future with a disabled body. By that point, however, both black and disabled veterans were already beginning to be sidelined in favour of a different narrative, a different understanding of the war, a return, in effect, to antebellum understandings of the national body.

In the war's immediate aftermath, this narrative did not yet dominate. The prejudice experienced by both African-American and disabled troops was, initially at least, obscured by the rapturous welcome home that Union soldiers received in 1865. The parades and ceremonies marking the cessation of hostilities placed the veteran—wounded and whole, black and white—centre-stage, and established a precedent, in some respects, for future ceremonial state occasions, such as presidential inaugurations, that included an obvious veteran presence. The veteran involvement at the inauguration of William McKinley, himself a Civil War veteran, was even captured on one of the earliest newsreels of such events, but by the turn of the century the ceremonial role of the veteran was already working to obscure the immediate post-war reality of many veterans' lives.[46]

The reality was that the disabled veteran remained a controversial and unsettling figure, similar in many ways to that of the former slave. In fact, the two were more closely linked than has been appreciated, with many officers and men of the Invalid Corps—some 40 per cent—assigned duty in the Freedmen's Bureau. Both, too, were accorded symbolic roles in the pageantry that accompanied Union victory in the Civil

[45] For a discussion of Thomas Waterman Wood's work, see Franny Nudelman, *John Brown's Body: Slavery, Violence, and the Culture of War* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 2004), pp. 155–6.
[46] The McKinley Inaugural Parade (1901) can be viewed through the Library of Congress, at: <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?papr:18:./temp/~ammem_Kxgo> (accessed 3 April 2008).

Figure 8. 'Franchise. And not this man?/Th. Nast, *Harper's Weekly*, 1865 Aug.5'. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-102257.)

Figure 9. Thomas Waterman Wood, 'A Bit of War History: The Contraband'. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Charles Stewart Smith, 1884 (84.12a). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

Figure 10. Thomas Waterman Wood, 'A Bit of War History: The Recruit'. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Charles Stewart Smith, 1884 (84.12b). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

Figure 11. Thomas Waterman Wood, 'A Bit of War History: The Veteran'. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Charles Stewart Smith, 1884 (84.12c). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

War: African-American troops accompanied Lincoln on his visit to Richmond once the Confederate government had fled; members of the Invalid Corps were selected as the president's honour guard in the planned Grand Review (Lincoln was assassinated before it took place). Both wounded veterans and African-American troops were prominent in the president's funeral procession to the Capitol; the 22nd US Colored Infantry, indeed, were at the head of it, even if only by accident. If neither African-American regiments nor the Veterans' Corps took part in the Grand Review on 23 and 24 May 1865, it was partly because many remained in the South.[47]

Memorial Day, too, in both the North and South, provided an opportunity for veterans to gather, and for a more racially inclusive version of the war to be made prominent. In the war's immediate aftermath, it was by no means certain that black and white veterans be driven apart, nor that segregation become, in time, the norm even for the main Union veterans' organisation, the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). Wallace Davis made this point fifty years ago, and it has been reinforced many times since. Black GAR members were accorded prominent roles in Memorial Day and Lincoln Day parades in Southern cities such as Richmond and Savannah until the First World War, in itself 'an explicit refutation of racist interpretations of the Civil War's legacy' and a reminder that the symbolism of sacrifice, even in the Southern heartland, could convey a racially inclusive message.[48]

Developing this point, Andre Fleche has recently enhanced our understanding of the black–white veteran relationship by highlighting the ways in which in 'their memoirs, publications, and memorial celebrations, black and white Union veterans formulated a joint vision of the war at

[47] For details of Lincoln's funeral procession and the black role in this see Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead*, pp. 75–7.

[48] On Memorial Day, see Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South* (1987, repr. New York and Oxford, 1988), pp. 42–6, quotation at 43; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations of the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2008), pp. 62–3; William Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865–1914* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); and David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), pp. 64–97; Wallace E. Davies, 'The problem of race segregation in the Grand Army of the Republic', *Journal of Southern History*, 13:3 (Aug. 1947), 354–72; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, 'Race, memory, and masculinity: Black Veterans recall the Civil War', in Joan E. Cashin (ed.), *The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War* (Princeton, NJ, 2002), pp. 136–58, quotation at 145–6; see also Kathleen Ann Clark, *Defining Moments: African American Commemoration and Political Culture in the South, 1863–1913* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2005).

odds with the more reconciliationist, segregationist, and racist trends found in post-war society as whole'. Most Union veterans, he stressed, did 'not abet such trends by preferring reconciliation with ex-Confederates to recognition of the role blacks played in the war'. Yet in the context of commemorative events such as Memorial Day, the veteran's voice proved unable to rise above the 'rhetoric of race', since this found a more persistent expression beyond a single day. In some ways this is unsurprising; the emphasis of Memorial Day 'remained on the process of bereavement: the creation of cemeteries, the erection of funereal monuments, and the springtime decoration of the graves'. Although veterans were an obvious part of this ceremony, the link between memorialisation and the care of the disabled veteran, it has been argued, served only to 'delay' the implementation of programmes designed to support the returning soldier, certainly in the South. 'How voiceful the graves of those who died for freedom and country', declared former slaveholder Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. in 1880; but these voices from the tomb took precedence, to a large extent, over the conflict's living survivors in the immediate post-war period. Memorial Day certainly was an occasion when veterans were socially prominent, but they were there to bear witness; in the nineteenth-century Memorial Day, that most overt of American sacred ceremonies, belonged to the dead.[49]

Additional evidence for the complexity of this move away from civic and toward a reinvigorated ethnic nationalism lies not so much in how northern society, in particular, treated black veterans, but in what they did to white. In an attempt to deny, or at least avoid confronting, the sheer scale of destruction, some northerners attempted to make the Civil War veteran conform to Lincoln's image of the aged and safe Revolutionary exemplar. In effect, they avoided looking at what was before them, and instead gazed into a distant future. As early as 1867 the *New York Times* was already musing on the speed with which 'a heroic generation seems to be gathered away from life. It is the universal experience of history that almost before a nation has made ready to do justice to its heroes, the majority of them are gone, and it is the minority of survivors or another race of heroes who reap the benefits of the intended bounty'.[50] Civil War

[49] Andre Fleche, '"Shoulder to shoulder as comrades tried": Black and White Union Veterans and Civil War memory', *Civil War History*, 60:2 (2005), 175–201, quotations at 201, 177; on memorialisation and veterans' programmes, Wegner, 'Phantom pain', 289; Jones quoted in Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, p. 46.
[50] *New York Times*, 8 Dec. 1867.

troops, it seems, were barely out of uniform before being written into history, and out of the living nation.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Civil War veteran and one of the most famous justices of the United States Supreme Court, would not have been surprised by this apparent desire to fast-forward a soldier's life to its conclusion. In the course of what is perhaps his most famous speech on the war, delivered at Harvard in 1895, he admitted to his audience that when he 'went to the war [he] thought that soldiers were old men'. Of course, as Holmes had found out thirty years before, the Civil War soldier was far from old; indeed, in the first year of the war, the 'largest single age group' among both Union and Confederate troops was eighteen, the next largest twenty-one. As conscription in the Confederacy drew on a wider sample of the Southern population, and as the more mature troops in both armies grew older, the average age for the Civil War soldier rose over the course of the conflict, but even at its mid-point, 'three out of every four Yanks were under thirty years of age and less than half of them had celebrated their twenty-fifth birthday'. In light of this, it is perhaps surprising to read the description offered by Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll in 1862 of '[o]ld gray-haired veterans with lips whitening under the kiss of death'.[51]

Yet Ingersoll's comment and the *New York Times*'s apparent impatience to age these young men who had given so much of their youth and health for the Union highlights the ambiguity attendant on the return of the citizen–soldier from war, an ambiguity rooted both in nineteenth-century understandings of masculinity and in the transformative impact of the conflict on the individual men and, beyond them, on the post-war nation. The controversy over veterans' pensions offers further elucidation of the ways in which this ambiguity was expressed. Despite elite suspicions of returning soldiers, Civil War veterans did not face the battle over pensions that Revolutionary soldiers had; in large part, the precedent had been established by the generation of '76. Through the General Pension Act of July 1862 the Union established the 'baseline' of pension legisla-

[51] Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., 'The Soldier's faith', An Address Delivered on Memorial Day, 30 May 1895, in Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., *The Essential Holmes: Selections from the Letters, Speeches, Judicial Opinions, and Other Writings of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.*, ed. Richard A. Posner (Chicago, IL, 1992), p. 81; figures for average age of troops are taken from Wiley, *Life of Billy Yank*, pp. 301–4; and *The Life of Johnny Reb: the Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (1943, repr. Baton Rouge, LA, 1978), pp. 330–2; Ingersoll quoted in Fredrickson, *Inner Civil War*, p. 86.

tion that lasted until 1890, providing support for disabled veterans and for war widows. Between 1861 and 1885, 555,038 individuals claimed pensions, of which 300,204 were granted. After 1890, an extension to pension provisions resulted in some 63 per cent of Union veterans receiving assistance from the state; a big jump from the 2 per cent that had received support in 1866. By 1893, veterans' benefits accounted for over 40 per cent of the federal budget.[52]

Yet federal generosity in the case of war pensions did not necessarily translate into a general acceptance of or support for the recipients of these very necessary funds. Indeed, as Civil War veterans aged, and as pension legislation expanded after 1890 to include compensation for infirmities that, whilst deriving from the war, only became a problem in old age, the costs of veteran support soared. With rising costs came increased concern over the financial impact of the Union veteran on the nation. Concerns over fraudulent claims—not entirely groundless—undermined the image of the Civil War veteran as deserving citizen-soldier of the republic.

Revealingly, negative cartoon images of the grasping veteran that appeared, for example, in *Puck* magazine in the 1880s and early 1890s did not portray the Civil War veterans as most of them were by that point, old men; somewhat bizarrely, yet revealingly, whilst during and after the war both individuals and the media had prematurely aged the young soldier/veteran, by the early 1880s the by then aging veteran got his youth back (Fig. 12). It was the young Union soldier, not the 'grey haired' veteran, who was presented as draining the Federal coffers in one contemporary cartoon. Simultaneous with what Stanley Hirshon described many years ago now as the 'Northern abandonment of the Negro' in the 1890s was the process of abandoning the Civil War veteran; not economically, entirely, as pension payments did not cease and even former Confederates became eligible, but emotionally. As African-American veterans began to disappear from the public memory of the war, if not yet entirely from commemorative ritual, so the wounded veteran gained a new political prominence; yet the contradictory image of the veteran persisted. Presented by turns as both aged exemplar and youthful threat, by the start of the new century it was clear that many of the paradoxes involved in national reconstruction had been resolved only at the expense of both black and disabled veterans; removing them from the 'story' of the Civil

[52] Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, pp. 106–9; Vinovskis, 'Have social historians lost the Civil War', pp. 21–2, 24, 27.

Figure 12. Cartoon of Union soldier, from the cover of *Puck* (New York) magazine, 20 December 1882.

War enabled a nation to heal, even as those who had fought in its name could not.[53]

Conclusion

It is fitting that, as the sesquicentennial of the Civil War approaches, a monument to America's disabled veterans is, finally, planned for 2010.

[53] Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, pp. 122–4; Stanley P. Hirshon, *Farewell to the Bloody Shirt Northern Republicans and the Southern Negro, 1877–1893* (1962, repr. Gloucester, MA, 1968), p. 255.

The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, which will be situated in Washington, DC, represents a rather more immediate response to and recognition of the some three million living disabled American veterans, but its impact may well resonate in the study of America's more distant past, and in particular the Civil War. Designed, in the words of the Executive Director of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial project, Victor Biggs, as 'a never-ending reminder to all of the human costs of war and conflict', its design incorporates—perhaps for the first time on any memorial—a representation of the human cost of war in the form of four bronze relief panels designed to render 'corporeal the challenges of life with physical and mental loss' (Fig. 13).[54] In the aftermath of the Civil War, a great many Americans had to face this challenge, but any overt, monumental recognition of that fact was not made tangible; the nationalist implications of Reconstruction, as much as the sentiment of the age, made such recognition impossible.

In the nineteenth century, the enthusiasm of America's prosthetic manufacturers notwithstanding, the reconstruction of the national body did not present a new, improved civic cyborg to the nation but, in the best tradition of the prosthetic limb industry, offered a new body that was virtually indistinguishable from the old; presented with the opportunity to make it better, more racially robust than before, imagination failed. Nineteenth-century Americans needed their war heroes, but the war heroes they needed were not the ones they had before them. The veterans they wanted were damaged, certainly, but time had removed the rawness from their wounds, and it was hard to say whether ammunition or age was the decisive factor in their infirmity. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, it certainly became advantageous for some veterans to remind the American public of the sacrifices of the Civil War generation: 'Many a Democratic candidate in the late nineteenth century called on his fellow southerners to stand with him now as he had stood with those at Gettysburg . . . If he could substantiate his claim by displaying an empty sleeve, his chances of victory improved', Gaines Foster observed, 'unless of course he campaigned against a one-legged veteran.' In the North, too, there was political capital to be made out of veteran status, and 'waving

[54] Victor Biggs quoted in 'A nation in support', the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial magazine, *Honor Earned*, Vol. 4 (Summer 2006) at: <http://www.avdlm.com/newsletter.php> (accessed 21 April 2008); second quotation from 'From design to destiny: building an American memorial', ibid.

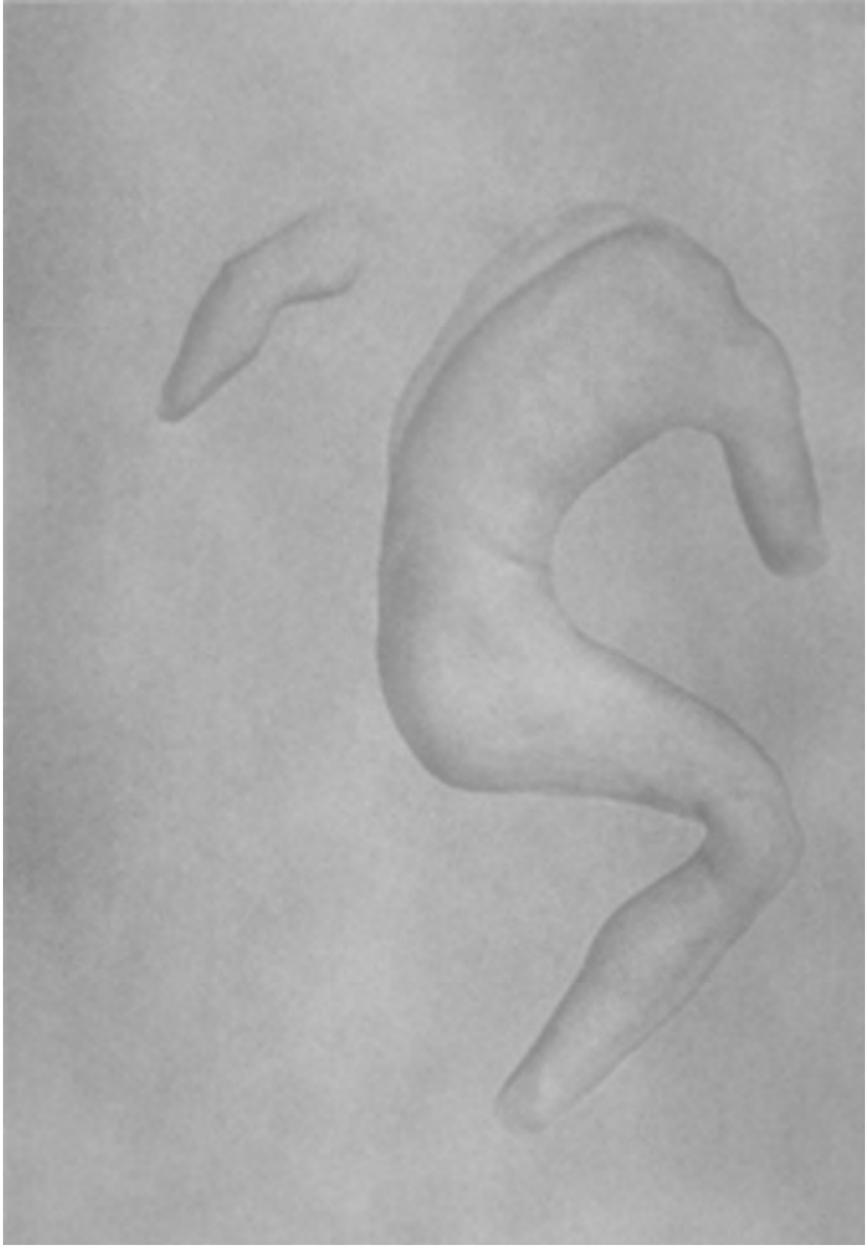


Figure 13. Bronze relief panel from American Disabled Veterans for Life Memorial. Image courtesy of the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation.

the bloody shirt' was a standard Republican tactic to remind voters who had been on the winning side in the Civil War.[55]

By the election of 1896, when cartoons of William McKinley in his Civil War uniform were juxtaposed with those depicting William Jennings Bryan in his cradle, 'the wartime memories used by bloody-shirt Republicans' had become 'as familiar as the scriptures'. By this point, however, the 'emancipationist vision' of the Civil War was already fading, although not yet quite invisible.[56] Working from the pattern established during the antebellum era and threatened, perhaps, by the implications of altering the colour of the nation's symbolic veteran, post-Civil War Americans effected their 'retreat from reconstruction', a process exemplified by their unwillingness to engage fully with the war wounded, to look beyond them, in effect, to a future that was, in its nationalist topography, bleakly familiar. In the end, in the aftermath of America's most (self-)destructive conflict to date, Americans indicated their preference for the safe and sanitary, aged and unthreatening image of the war veteran; in every sense, a man that had been used up.

[55] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, p. 195.
[56] Patrick J. Kelly, 'The election of 1896 and the restructuring of Civil War memory', *Civil War History*, 49:3 (2003), 254–80, quotations at 254.