

Loyalty and Sacrifice

[In battle] men stand up from one motive or another—simple manhood, force of discipline, pride, love, or bond of comradeship—“Here is Bill; I will go or stay where he does.”
—Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain,
The Passing of the Armies

JAMES MONROE RICH LEFT HIS WIFE AND HIS TRADE FOR the low and irregular pay of a Union army soldier in the Civil War. He marched through heat and dust, through torrential thunderstorms and deep mud. He marched with gear weighing 45 to 50 pounds—guns, cartridges and cartridges boxes, woolen and rubber blankets, two shirts and two pairs of drawers, canteens full of water, rations, and trinkets from home. He marched with his comrades even when they “were falling on every side” in a failed frontal assault where “the lead and iron filled the air as the snowflakes in an angry driving storm.”¹ James was lucky. He survived the war. Over one-quarter of the men in his company did not.

Unlike James, George Farrell was well paid to enlist and take the place of another man who had been called

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up. He joined a company that had been re-formed with new men and saw no comrades die. Unlike James, he deserted twice, the second time successfully. Why did James stand up for his comrades while George did not?

War and its aftermath provide the ideal laboratory for exploring the conditions that lead to sacrifice, to cooperation, and to teamwork. Life under pressure brings men's worst or best characteristics to the fore. Choices matter. They determine one's own risk of death and that of one's comrades. The contrasts between decisions become starker once they are removed from the wide array of choices offered in normal, civilian life. Men either stand up or fall back. They can no longer pick which community they will stand up for; their comrades become their community. And when soldiers return home, their wartime choices and experiences continue to shape their lives.

If we want to study men's choices under wartime duress and their outcomes after the war, which soldiers should we look at? More than 42 million men and women have served in our nation's wars.² Which soldiers of the more than 42 million should we look at? We should seek soldiers from a war that drew men from all walks of life, so that our soldiers will be a microcosm of the nation. We need a war in which we can easily distinguish the heroes from the cowards and where the stakes were high if a soldier did not do his duty. We also seek a war that allows us to freely examine men's military records and follow them after the war. Only one war meets all these criteria, the American Civil War.

More than 2 million white men and almost 200,000 black men, more than three-quarters of whom were slaves, served in the Union army in the Civil War. Almost two-thirds of all white men of military age served, and in the

North an even greater proportion of blacks served. With the exception of World War II, during which the fraction of men in uniform was even greater, the proportion of military age men in uniform has never been more than one-third.³

The Civil War was the deadliest war in U.S. history. Sixteen out of every one hundred Union and twenty-four out of every hundred Confederate soldiers and sailors died in service. By Election Day in November 1864, the number of Union men who had died in combat in three years of war was greater than the number of U.S. servicemen who died in battle in 11 years in Vietnam. The total number of Union deaths from disease almost equaled the number of combat deaths in World War II. The number of Union soldiers imprisoned as POWs was greater than the total number of U.S. soldiers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2001 and 2006.⁴

This book is about the heroes and cowards of the Civil War. It is about tests of adversity on the battlefield and on long marches and in the POW camps where so many soldiers died. It tells of glory and shame after the war, and of how former slaves made the transition to being free men. What do stories of deserters, POWs, returning veterans, and men throwing off the bonds of slavery have in common? While seemingly unrelated, these stories are connected by a common thread: how men interacted with their comrades, and how these interactions affected their decisions and their outcomes.

Among economists, there is a growing recognition that people are not motivated just by the pursuit of income but that our social environment influences our choices and life outcomes. People care not just about their material well-being but also about their social status in their family,

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their circle of friends, and their community. People value respect and fair treatment and will punish those who behave unfairly, even at a high cost to themselves. They are willing to sacrifice for family and friends. Parents sacrifice to improve their children's and grandchildren's lives. Spouses care for each other during times of sickness. Some people may try to gain status by purchasing expensive products (such as Rolex watches or fur coats), but others take actions that elicit admiration and respect. It is difficult to sort through all the motives that lead firefighters, for example, to risk their lives extinguishing fires in the homes of strangers. Perhaps they enjoy the challenge. Perhaps they enjoy helping others. Perhaps they feel it is their duty. Perhaps they derive status from standing out as heroes. Willingness to sacrifice for the community explains why towns worry that rising home prices will lead firefighters and policemen to live elsewhere, attenuating the ties that bind them to the community where they work.

Where do altruism, a sense of group identity, and a willingness to sacrifice for the greater good come from? Are these traits hard-wired, or can they be built up between strangers? Sociobiologists have argued that altruism is an evolutionary adaptation to ensure the survival of the species and that it is a behavior that has been passed down across the generations through a gene or combination of genes. Psychologists focus more on the environment, emphasizing that firms, communities, and military units can build altruism and a sense of identification within the group. If firms treat their workers well, then the workers start to care about the firm and become part of the team. If soldiers go through arduous basic training

together, they are more likely to care for each other when the going gets rough. Anthropologists and experimental economists have emphasized the role of various emotions among both individuals and community members in inducing sacrifice. Those who betray a community feel shame. Anger leads community members to punish traitors and reward those who are loyal.

Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone*, published in 2000, ignited widespread interest in the causes and consequences of vibrant community and popularized the phrase "social capital"—our "stock" of personal bonds and fellowships. A wide range of social scientists, including sociologists, political scientists, and psychologists, have studied PTAs, neighborhood get-togethers, Bible study classes, and bowling leagues to identify the determinants of a "good community" and the consequences of participating in a vibrant community. Economists and other social scientists have investigated what determines social capital by turning to survey data to see who volunteers, to laboratory experiments to see who trusts each other, and to spending data to see which communities invest more in education and welfare.

When are men willing to sacrifice for the common good? We answer this question by examining why men fought in the Civil War. During this war most soldiers stood by their comrades even though a rational soldier would have deserted. Punishments were too rare and insufficiently severe to deter men from deserting. What, then, motivated these men to stand their ground? Was it their commitment to the cause, having the "right stuff," high morale, officers, or comrades? After examining all these explanations, we find that loyalty to comrades

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trumped cause, morale, and leadership. But loyalty to comrades extended only to men like themselves—in ethnicity, social status, and age.

Sacrifices for the common good are costly. Standing by their comrades raised men's chances of dying. What, then, are the benefits to men of friendship? We can reply by looking at who survived the extreme conditions of Civil War POW camps. We can see the effects of age, social status, rank, camp population, and the presence of one's own officers on survival. We can also see that the fellowship of their comrades helped soldiers survive POW camps, and the deeper the strength of ties between men, the greater the probability of survival. Ties between kin and ties between comrades of the same ethnicity were stronger than ties between other men from the same company.

If loyalty toward one's own kind is admirable, how do communities deal with betrayal? In the Civil War, companies were raised locally, and hometowns were well aware of who was a coward and who was a hero during the war. Some towns were pro-war and others were antiwar. Men who betrayed their pro-war neighbors by deserting moved away, driven out by shame and ostracism. Community codes of conduct are reinforced not just by loyalty but also by punishments.

By examining men's lives during the war, we will see that more diverse communities are less cohesive. Their members are less willing to sacrifice and derive fewer benefits from being part of the community. Are there any benefits to being in a diverse community? When we look at the lives of black soldiers after the Civil War, the tensions between the short-run costs of diversity and its long-run benefits become apparent. Men did not like to

serve with those who were different from them, so much so that they were more likely to desert, but in the long run the ex-slaves who joined the Union army learned the most from being in units with men who were different from themselves.

Whether diversity fosters understanding or encourages distrust is a longstanding question in the social sciences that has become particularly timely with rising immigration rates and growing income inequality. The classic study of World War II soldiers, *The American Soldier*, found that white soldiers who had never been assigned to units with blacks opposed the idea of having black soldiers serving in the same platoon with them.⁵ But white soldiers who had been assigned to units with black soldiers were much less likely to oppose this arrangement. In the famous Robbers Cave experiment,⁶ researchers brought 12-year-old boys to an isolated camp site and divided them into two groups that had no contact with each other. Each group developed its own identity. When the two groups were later brought into contact with each other in competitive situations, the boys became even more attached to their own groups and developed a hearty dislike of all members of the competing group. When researchers subsequently put the two groups into situations in which they had to cooperate to achieve a common goal, tensions between the two groups declined.

The optimistic view of human interactions when brought into contact with the other is belied by studies from many different settings. Researchers have played trust games on college campuses and in developing countries. They bring two players together so that they can observe each one, and then separate the players. For example, in one situation they offer player A money. Player

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A can then give player B a certain amount of the money, with both knowing that the researcher will double the amount of money that is passed from A to B, giving this extra money to B. Player B can then pass money back to A. Because the game is played only once, player B should pass nothing back to A and therefore A should pass nothing to B. However, players do pass money to each other, and they are more likely to pass money when they are similar to each other.⁷

Studies outside the laboratory also find that diversity produces distrust. In the United States, people living in more diverse communities are less likely to report that they trust both members of other races and members of their own race. This distrust of others is associated with withdrawal from civic life and social isolation.⁸ Within firms, turnover is lower and productivity is higher when workers are of the same age, race, and sex.⁹

A drawback of most survey data, firm studies, and laboratory experiments is that they examine only a point in time, even though short-run and long-run effects could be very different. Diversity may facilitate learning and information transfers. To take an example from business, while in the short run workers who resemble each other might be more likely to get the job done, in the long run the more diverse a workforce is, the more likely workers are to learn from each other and to learn about different segments of the market. Bowen and Bok report¹⁰ that alumni from elite schools pointed to their interactions in college as helping them to relate to members of different racial groups later in life. Our data enable us to examine both the short-run and long-run effects of having been in a diverse environment.

There is a long tradition of looking to the military to

understand social interactions. Stouffer and colleagues' *The American Soldier* examined soldier's combat motivations through questionnaires, spurring the growth of a sociology of the military and influencing the development of organizational theories of the firm. We study social interactions by turning to the records of about 35,000 white and 6,000 black Union army soldiers. We trace their lives from their youth to their death using their army and pension records and census records. Much has been written about the Civil War, and a distinguishing feature of our work is that we are able to tell the stories of men who did not leave a written record and those who preferred to cover up or forget their war records. Almost one-quarter of the letters of enlisted men studied by McPherson¹¹ were written by professionals and proprietors and less than 5 percent were written by laborers. But, in the army and in our sample of soldiers, less than 10 percent of enlisted men were professionals and proprietors and roughly one-fifth were laborers. Our analytical approach, like that of the authors of *The American Soldier*, is statistical. An advantage of this approach is that it permits us to weigh the relative importance of different motives in men's decisions.

We begin with the stories of nine men who fought in the Civil War. They were ordinary men. They merit no mention in history books. But despite their anonymity, we can reconstruct their lives and the lives of their comrades from administrative and other official records. Their lives can suggest why some communities work while others do not, and why the distinction matters.

The stories of these nine men are referenced repeatedly throughout the book. Some of the men were heroes, remaining with their comrades on long marches and

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under enemy fire. Others were cowards who deserted. Others were POW camp survivors, and others lost their lives in the camps. Among the former slaves, some returned to tilling the soil and others moved to the growing cities. These men differed in important ways, ways that determined whether they deserted or stood their ground, whether they survived POW camps, and whether they forged a freeman's identity.

NINE MEN

The Heroes

In the darkness, the Thirty-sixth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers moved quietly into a line of deserted entrenchments, one man at a time.¹² The trees were dripping with moisture, and every drop sounded like a foot-fall. The enemy on the other side of the line of rifle pits fired at any sound. The assault was set for daybreak, but in the stormy night the tired men could not sleep. For 12 days they had marched late into the night and fought during the day. In the past month they had suffered heavy losses at the battles of the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania, and their numbers had been depleted by disease. Fewer than 200 men out of the roughly 1,000 who had joined in August 1862 awaited the dawn on June 3, 1864.

Sergeant Adams E. French of Company D would carry the national colors, as he had in all previous battles. A mechanic (a shaper of wood or metal), he had enlisted at age 34, leaving a wife and 12-year-old son in Winchendon. Also from Winchendon in Company D was Private James Monroe Rich. Married only two years before, he had enlisted at age 21 with his 54-year-old father, Robert, after his younger brother Jerome had already left the house-

hold to enlist at age 19 in the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers. All three Riches were mechanics, and over the last 10 years Robert had accumulated enough money to buy land.

Adams, Robert, and James joined a company where brothers served with brothers and fathers with sons. Half of the men in Company D were fellow mechanics and another 17 percent were artisans. The rest were mainly farmers. The men of Company D came primarily from the towns of Royalston, Templeton, and Winchendon in northern Worcester County, and most of them had been born in the county. Worcester County was the northern stronghold of an antislavery movement touched by evangelical fire and the vision of a republican society of equal and independent households. Only by keeping the western territories free from slavery could laboring men like Adams French and James Monroe Rich expect to do business on their own account and acquire just enough wealth to buy land and build a house on it. When these men enlisted, the news from the front was discouraging. The Union army had been defeated near the Chickahominy River, in an unfamiliar terrain of small streams, low ridges, swamps, ravines, and narrow, winding roads. Now the Thirty-sixth was by the banks of the Chickahominy River.

Before dawn, the Thirty-sixth Regiment was taken from the woods and sent to construct a new line of breastworks. Then, weary, hungry, and cold, the men joined the brigade forming for a frontal assault on the entrenched Confederates. The thin line of Union soldiers stretched for six miles; the line of Confederates was even longer. Richmond was five miles beyond the Confederate line.

The brigade crossed the field. As they approached the

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woods, the enemy's heavy skirmish line, posted at the edge of the forest, opened fire. The brigade continued to advance under heavy fire. Close to the woods Sergeant Adams E. French fell, wounded. Corporal Stevens of Company K caught the flag from his hands, and the brigade continued to press forward under fire. The Union men drove the enemy across a creek, through a swampy morass, over a ridge, and into their strong entrenchments. The brigade then charged the entrenchments just below the crest and, in front of the enemy's works, received its heaviest losses. To the right, the brigade could not overcome the artillery, and to the left, where the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers were deployed, the brigade faced fire from the enemy's entrenched line and cross fire on their exposed flank from the Confederates' longer line. With no support, the regiment could neither advance nor retire. Ordered not to give an inch of ground, and having exhausted their supply of ammunition, they emptied the cartridge boxes of their killed and wounded companions. Men crawled to the rear, and, rolling fallen trees and logs to the top of the crest where the firing was fiercest, they loosened the soil with their bayonets and scooped up the earth with tin cups and plates to form their own entrenchments. Fighting continued until nightfall, but the Confederate forces had successfully repulsed the assault along the whole line.

At the end of June 3, 1864, at the battle of Cold Harbor, Company D sustained the heaviest losses in the regiment. Nine of its men were wounded, four of them severely. Sergeant Adams E. French was pierced by a minie ball in the groin. He survived the jolting wagon drive to a hospital in Washington, D.C., but died there on June 19

of septicemia. James Monroe Rich was wounded in the right elbow.

Both James and his father marched with their regiment in the May 1865 victory parade in Washington and in the June parade in the city of Worcester, where they had enlisted. James and his father returned to Winchendon, and James's daughter Ella was born in 1867. By 1880 James had moved to the city of Worcester, a major manufacturing center and the second largest city in Massachusetts. Factories replaced independent artisans and immigrants displaced the Yankees. Robert worked as a laborer and at his death in Winchendon in 1895 left his widow destitute. James earned a living as a woodworker but was never successful enough to become a home owner. He died in Worcester in 1917 of a stroke.

The Civil War was remembered in Worcester County. Civil War veterans marched in the annual Fourth of July parades. The cities of Winchendon and Worcester built their monuments to the fallen. The Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Regiment held annual reunions in the city of Worcester, commemorating their deeds and recalling the spirit of fraternity and good will that pervaded the regiment. They published a regimental history in which they described themselves as a "compact and homogeneous body of men." The men of Company D could point with pride to their war record: not a single man in their company had dishonored his comrades by deserting.

The Cowards

One out of ten Union army soldiers deserted, a total of roughly 200,000 men.¹³ They deserted before their regiments left their training camps. They deserted during

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marches, before major battles, and in the face of enemy fire. James Horrocks, who fled to the United States from England because of a paternity suit and enlisted as Andrew Ross in the Fifth Battalion New Jersey Volunteers, wrote that before his company left camp, “We have had fifty deserted out of this Company and only three of the number have been caught. Two of these escaped again and the other one has got his head shaved and put to hard labor for only a few months.”¹⁴ Most deserters were never caught. Out of the roughly 80,000 men who were caught, 147 were executed. James Horrocks, who intended to “fully desert if I don’t get good treatment,” could write home that “there have not been any shot except those who have deserted in the face of the enemy.”¹⁵

George Farrell and Daniel Mulholland were among the deserters who were never caught. Both men enlisted in Company B of the Forty-seventh New York Regiment Infantry, the “Washington Grays.” The regiment was originally formed in 1861 in New York City, but after three years the soldiers’ enlistment terms expired. Only nineteen members of the original Company B reenlisted, and the company was re-formed with new men. Like George Farrell and Daniel Mulholland, most of the men were substitutes, men paid to take the place of those who had been called up. By March 1863 the Conscription Act made all men between the ages of 20 and 35 and all unmarried men between 35 and 45 liable for the draft. Government agents procured a list of names through a laborious house-to-house enrollment. Then a lottery in each congressional district determined who would go to war. Men who either presented an acceptable substitute or paid \$300 were exempted. By the fall of 1863, men had formed draft insurance clubs, and factory owners and city politi-

cal machines either paid for substitutes or paid the commutation fee. New York City had a draft fund of \$885,000 by September 20, and on September 28 the county Substitute and Relief Committee announced that only two of the city's 1,093 conscripts had gone to war. The majority of its conscripts had furnished substitutes.

George Farrell enlisted in the Washington Grays in Auburn, the county seat of Cayuga in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. Born in Canada and a molder by trade, he was only 19 when he enlisted in February 1865. Army life did not agree with him. In March 1865 he was listed as a deserter during the occupation of Wilmington, North Carolina. Although his regiment advanced on Kinston and Goldsboro, he either advanced elsewhere or remained in a town crowded with refugees and ravaged by infectious disease. When he was found in May, after the surrender of Lee's and Johnson's armies, however, the military court accepted his claim that he had fallen out because of exhaustion. He was back in service but detached from the regiment, and at the end of June he deserted again, just two months before his regiment was mustered out.

Daniel Mulholland, an Irish-born laborer, enlisted in the Washington Grays in New York City in December 1864. He suffered through the bitter cold, chilly rains, and sheer monotony of the Wilmington campaign only to desert when the city had already surrendered, in March 1865. By mid-1863 the war was deeply unpopular in New York City, particularly among its Irish immigrants. McClellan, the peace candidate in the 1864 election, carried New York City by a more than two-to-one majority and in the heavily Irish Sixth Ward won more than 90 percent of the vote.

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After the war, deserters were dishonorably discharged with loss of pay, but there was no attempt to bring them to justice, and the few states that did have laws disenfranchising deserters did not enforce them. George Farrell moved west. He came from Cayuga County, where McClellan had won less than 40 percent of the vote. Daniel Mulholland returned to New York City, a strongly anti-war city, where he lived in an Irish neighborhood, married, and had children.

The POWs

Roughly 1,500 men were camped in Tennessee's Lookout Valley at Wauhatchie Station, a stop on the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad.¹⁶ The rest of the Union army, including the 141st New York Volunteer Infantry, was camped at Brown's Ferry, three miles away. The Union army aimed to establish a new supply line to Chattanooga, one that was shorter and freer from the raids of the Confederates who occupied Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain.

The moon was almost full on the night of October 28, 1863. At about 10:40 p.m., a patrol of 150 men from the 141st New York Volunteer Infantry ran into a skirmish line of the Forty-eighth Alabama, but quiet was soon restored. Shortly after midnight, the camp at Wauhatchie Station was attacked. Brigadier General John W. Geary's men were ready, having slept in the line of battle with their accouterments on and their weapons stacked close by. With clouds drifting over the moon, there was not enough light to see a body of men only 100 yards distant; only the flashes of firearms revealed the enemy's position.

The sound of gunfire roused the men at Brown's Ferry,

and the 141st New York was detached to march with skirmishers and flankers through wooded country and over muddy roads to Wauhatchie. By the time they arrived, at five o'clock in the morning, Geary's men had repulsed the Confederate attack.

Sometime in the confusion of the battlefield, Henry Havens of Company A of the 141st New York and five other men of his regiment were captured by the Confederates. Born in Hector in Schuyler County in 1836, Henry was a farmer. He had already buried a wife, Hannah, and when he enlisted in August 1862 he left behind a second wife, Sarah, and his and Hannah's son, Charles.

Henry was unlucky in the timing of his capture. Not equipped to deal with large numbers of prisoners, the two governments had traded prisoners at frequent intervals, but the system of exchange had stopped in July as the two sides wrangled over terms. Northerners wanted guarantees that black troops would not be enslaved and that their white commanding officers would not be executed as leaders of a slave insurrection.

After having their blankets and shoes appropriated by needy Confederate soldiers, prisoners were shipped by rail in tightly packed open boxcars. Henry was sent to Richmond, which in 1863 held the majority of prisoners. Prisoners of war were first brought to Libby Prison, a brick warehouse, which was so crowded that men had to sleep spoon fashion, head to toe in alternating rows along the floor. Men became covered with vermin shortly after arrival and by 1863 were subsisting on a daily ration of a couple of ounces of meat, a half-cup of bread, and a small cup of rice. After Libby Prison, men might be transferred either to Belle Isle, an island in the middle of the James

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River, or to Castle Thunder, formerly a brick factory. Castle Thunder became notorious for beating and robbing men upon arrival and for its punishments of suspending men by their thumbs, floggings of up to 100 lashes, the use of balls and chains, and branding for minor infractions such as insulting guards and for more serious ones such as attempting to escape. Belle Isle was an open compound with a few old, tattered tents for shelter. Because men were not allowed to use the latrines at night, the whole surface of the camp soon became saturated with excrement. The winter of 1863 was unusually cold. The men had no wood to keep warm, were on half rations, and suffered from frozen feet, ears, and hands. Diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid, pneumonia, and smallpox plagued all the Richmond prisons.

Prisoners were rapidly moved out of Richmond in February and March 1864 in response to prison escapes to nearby Union lines and to a (failed) Union raid to free prisoners. Henry Havens and the other men in his regiment were sent to Andersonville, an open stockade in southwest-central Georgia, along a railroad. Andersonville would become the most infamous of all POW camps. When Henry arrived, the emaciated and diseased POWs were left in an open stockade to build their own huts and tents from any scrap wood they could find and from blankets and rags. Few men had cooking utensils for the often uncooked meager rations, which might be reduced even further when attendance was incomplete during a roll call that took several hours as the sleeping, ill, and dead were accounted for.

Henry Havens watched the prison fill up. In May the camp exceeded its capacity of 10,000 men. Prisoners were

dying at the rate of twenty per day, their bodies piled up like cordwood in front of the gates to be taken outside in the morning. The attacks of the “Raiders” on their fellow prisoners to rob them of food and other valuables became increasingly brazen.

In May, Lehman Josephson, a German-born peddler who had immigrated only in 1860, entered Andersonville as a private from Company I of the Sixth New Hampshire Infantry. Most of the men of the Sixth New Hampshire regiment had reenlisted when their terms were up, and Lehman was one of the three to four hundred new recruits who were sent to fill up the ranks between December 1863 and March 1864. Lehman was captured in early May at the Battle of the Wilderness, where from the woods his regiment had formed their line of attack in a dense wood, unable to see the entrenched enemy on the opposite side of a swampy ravine. Lehman and his fellow soldiers charged three times at the enemy before the Confederate troops withdrew during the night, and during the retreats the Confederates were able to take quite a few prisoners.

Like most newcomers to the camp, Lehman probably first reacted to the stench of the camp by doubling over and vomiting. The bank of the creek had become a giant swamp, covered in feces. The men he saw were skeletal, ragged, filthy, and black from pinewood fires. In June, Josephson was joined by four other men from his company, captured at Mechanicsville and at Ashland, and by the end of the month the number of prisoners had swelled to more than 26,000. The bank of the creek undulated with maggots and lice. Flies buzzed everywhere, filling the mouths, ears, and eyes of the dead. They were even

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baked into the corn bread, which together with uncooked cornmeal had become the principal staple of the diet. Men gave up hope of ever seeing their homes again. Private Robert Sneden, a diarist, wrote “everyone was for himself regardless of consequences.”¹⁷

July brought oppressive heat and a prison population that swelled to almost 33,000 men, giving each man roughly the square footage of a grave. Henry Havens, who at six foot one was taller than the typical soldier, could endure no more and died of dysentery on July 23. Only two of the five other men in his regiment would survive Andersonville.

In August, hordes of mosquitoes descended. The prison population still numbered close to 33,000 men. Almost all had scurvy, which loosened their teeth, making the corn bread inedible, and caused their hamstrings to contract, making walking difficult, if not impossible. Scorbatic ulcers became gangrenous, as did any other slight wound, even a mosquito bite.

In September, when Sherman’s march through Georgia threatened to bring him close to Andersonville, the prisoners were moved out, first to Charleston or Savannah and then in mid-October to Millen, another open stockade in Georgia. By mid-November only 1,500 men were left at Andersonville. Lehman Josephson was probably in one of the first transports to Charleston. He was exchanged at Charleston in December 1864 and returned to his company at the end of February 1865. He married in 1883 at age 46 and had at least four children. He became a cigar dealer in New York City and died of a stroke in 1906. Two of his four comrades had died at Andersonville, and another had died shortly after leaving Savannah.

The Ex-Slaves

In the summer of 1862, two Union army generals, acting without War Department authorization, formed the first black regiments from fugitive and contraband slaves and from freedmen in Louisiana and the South Carolina Sea Islands.¹⁸ In 1863 the War Department authorized the recruitment of ex-slaves in areas of the South liberated by the Union army and the recruitment of free blacks in the North. By the end of 1865, 186,017 black men had fought for the Union army.

John Nelson Cumbash, born in Frederick County, Maryland, enlisted in his twenties in Company F of the First Regiment of the United States Colored Troops at Masons Island, an island in the Potomac River across from Georgetown, in Washington, D.C. He had been owned by David Best, a landowner in the Monocacy River Valley in Maryland, who had mortgaged him twice (once in 1842 and a second time in 1846) and then in 1860 had sold him and two of his siblings to a neighboring landowner, John Linn. John Cumbash's military service records provide no indication of how he left slavery or how he found himself in a regiment with a significant number of abolitionist officers and a black chaplain. The men in his company were mainly born in Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., but the regiment also included men born in Canada, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. More than 80 percent of the men were freed slaves.

John was with his regiment at the sieges of Petersburg and of Richmond and at the captures of Fort Fisher and of Wilmington in North Carolina. He sustained a gunshot wound to the right foot and suffered from frostbitten feet and dysentery while in the army. His success as a

soldier was mixed, though: he enlisted as a corporal and rose to the rank of sergeant, but was later reduced in rank to private. When the men were discharged in June 1865, Colonel Holman told them they had overthrown slavery and earned the right of citizenship. He warned them that they would face problems with southern whites, and reminded them that as soldiers they had learned industry and forbearance. They must now act as leaders in the black community and teach these qualities to other freedmen.

John returned to Frederick City, Maryland, and in October 1865 married Sarah Jane Hall in Baltimore. In 1870 he was working as a waiter in Baltimore and his wife was supplementing the family income by taking in washing while caring for four-year-old George Elias and six-month-old John. Another child, Emily Blanche, followed in 1874. Sarah died four years later, and in 1883 John married Mary Elizabeth Turner, also widowed. By that time he had moved to Philadelphia, which was experiencing an influx of freedmen, mainly from Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. Brickmakers, teamsters, asphalt workers, and common laborers arrived every spring, worked during the summer, and spent their winters in cheaper, and warmer, quarters in Maryland and Virginia. As a waiter, John was in an occupation commonly held by Philadelphia African Americans, but he was above the class of casual laborers. He learned to write. As the century came to an end, European immigrants increasingly shut blacks out of service occupations. By 1900 John and Mary had moved to Montgomery County, Maryland, and John was no longer working. In 1901 he died of pneumonia.

Joseph Hall's wartime experience was very different. Born in North Carolina in 1821 and sent to Mississippi in 1840, Joseph had several owners. He somehow escaped

and enlisted in Grand Gulf, Mississippi, in 1863 in Company D of the Fifty-third United States Colored Troops, worked as a teamster for his regiment, and suffered no illnesses or wounds. His regiment saw some action but no battles, and when he was mustered out in March 1866, he went to Tensas Parish in Louisiana, where he married Melissa Thompson after a year.

Located along the Mississippi River in northeastern Louisiana, Tensas Parish was a land of cotton plantations owned by whites and farmed by African Americans. Joseph farmed rented land in 1870 and had accumulated \$250 in personal property, a good sum for an African-American farmer. He had a two-year-old son, Primus, and other children quickly followed. Their childhood, like that of most African-American children in southern farming communities, was spent working the family farm. Joseph died in 1913 in Tensas Parish, having worked land on several different plantations in the parish but never achieving farm ownership. He remained illiterate, and his children were illiterate as well.

OUR QUESTIONS

Why were Adams French, James Monroe Rich, and Robert Rich such loyal soldiers? Given the army's low and irregular pay and the high risk of death, why weren't more soldiers like George Farrell and Daniel Mulholland? Chapter 4 examines why men fought. George and Daniel may have been more mercenary; after all, they were substitutes. As immigrants they may not have felt the same sense of duty to fight in the nation's war. Daniel, coming from a community where the war was deeply unpopular, would have disappointed no one at home with his desertion. He

would, however, have disappointed the men in his regiment and company. Because regiments were not replenished with new men after losing men to death or desertion, the men in a smaller regiment would do double duty on the picket line and face the enemy with a thin line. But perhaps George and Daniel did not care about the men in their companies. Their fellow soldiers were not men from their social circles, and the immigrants had very little in common with them.

The risk of death that men faced in army camps or on the battlefield was swamped by the risks they faced as POWs, particularly once the prisoner exchanges stopped. Among those captured after mid-1863, twenty-seven out of one hundred died. Chapter 5 looks at why some survived and others did not. Did Henry Havens die at Andersonville and Lehman Josephson survive because Lehman entered with more friends and with closer friends? Or did Henry die because he arrived at Andersonville weakened by his time spent at Richmond? Perhaps Henry died because he was eight inches taller than Lehman but received the same daily ration. Perhaps Henry was just unlucky.

At the end of the war, 14 percent of Union army veterans were deserters. Ten percent of Union army soldiers had deserted, implying that the best way for a soldier to save his skin was to scarper. Chapter 6 investigates how such large numbers of men could be reintegrated into society when the deeds of the good soldiers were commemorated in magazines and newspapers, in generals' best-selling memoirs, in regimental histories, in annual parades, in songs, and in public monuments. Daniel Mulholland returned home to New York City, whereas George Farrell, who was from upstate New York, moved

west. Did George move because his neighbors, unlike Daniel's, would have looked askance at a deserter?

In May 1865, James and Robert Rich and Lehman Josephson marched in the two-day victory parade in Washington, D.C. Black regiments were not allowed to participate. Black veterans later participated in local Fourth of July parades in the North, bringing up the rear guard to remind everyone that blacks had fought for their freedom and sacrificed for the Union, earning the right to citizenship. Some former slaves had fought in units with free blacks. Some had fought in units with abolitionist officers, others had fought under officers indifferent to their welfare. Did the former slaves learn from the free blacks and benefit from having abolitionist officers? After enlisting near Washington, D.C, John Cumbash moved to Baltimore and then to Philadelphia, and learned to read. Joseph Hall, who enlisted in Mississippi, worked as a laborer and farmer in nearby Louisiana until his death and remained illiterate. Why did John move to a large city? Did John learn about Baltimore and Philadelphia from the men in his company who came from those cities? Chapter 7 examines how comrades shaped slaves' becoming freemen.

We can draw few conclusions from the stories of only nine men out of 41,000. Nine different men would have had other stories. The nine men we picked, however, illustrate the themes we uncovered in our analysis. We therefore turn now to the records of all our soldiers. But before we do so, we examine how, throughout history, individuals have interacted with their communities.