

Ballots and Bullets: The Politics of Antietam and Chickamauga

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Figure 1: Antietam National Cemetery. Photograph by the author

The cemetery at Antietam is one of the most powerful places to go for thinking about the meaning of the Civil War. Here lie thousands of soldiers, casualties of America's deadliest combat day. I would not call it one of my favorite places, exactly, though I have returned there many times. Rather, it is a compelling place whose attractions are those that drew the Romantic writers: a place on the boundary edge between life and death, where you stand among the living and think about those who are not living and contemplate the relationships between the two. It is a place for reflecting upon the power of humans to shift the course of human events, or perhaps to acknowledge the limits of human reason and agency against the inexorable forces of nature and time. As John Greenleaf Whittier wrote in his poem "The Battle Autumn of 1862":

Ah! eyes may well be full of tears
And hearts with hate are hot;
But even-paced come round the years
And Nature changes not.

If these soldiers were restored to life in the pastoral nature that is the battlefield park, I often wonder what they would say. What would they say was important in that battle, about their experiences, and about the meaning of their sacrifices? How would they explain the battle to their communities back home, and to us who have received their legacy? What would they say about what mattered in what they did? Was there something of consequence that happened on this battlefield? Did the trauma that they and their comrades and their families experienced change America for the better? Would they say it was worth the cost?¹

Antietam has drawn much scholarly attention. Writing after Antietam's centennial, historian James Rawley chose the battle as one of his seven critical Civil War turning points. Likewise, preeminent Civil War scholar James McPherson labeled Antietam the conflict's defining moment. It thwarted Confederate invasion plans, it turned emancipation into a primary war aim, it removed any practical chance for the Confederacy's international recognition, and it provided Lincoln the political cover needed for sacking a host of lackluster generals. Antietam's outcomes appear to have mattered. As one public speaker exclaimed a few months after the battle, the valor of Antietam's dead had made them "martyrs to human rights."²

The contrast with assessments about the Battle of Chickamauga is striking. Fought exactly a year after Antietam, in Georgia, it was the war's deadliest two day battle. For all the carnage, however, historians have attached little consequence to its costs. In McPherson's judgment, for example, although Chickamauga was "a tactical triumph" for the Confederacy it proved "barren of strategic results." Chickamauga's leading chronicler, Steven Woodworth, describes the battle as indecisive and its effects on both armies demoralizing. These opinions echo those made by contemporaries. After visiting the battlefield, Confederate President Jefferson Davis called it a "glorious victory," but tempered his judgment in later years, concluding that its outcomes "could not console us for the lives they cost."³

This essay seeks to assess these interpretations by connecting the costs of battle to political behavior. How did ordinary people back home respond to casualties on the field? How did these reactions affect their support for wartime policies? How did casualties change the thinking and doing of voters and families at the community level? As battles fought just weeks before fall elections, Antietam and Chickamauga give unique insight into public reactions. This proximity in time allows us to connect casualties to community reactions in ways not possible for most other battles. Individual companies from Civil War regiments were typically recruited from clusters of adjacent communities. Soldiers who enlisted would fight alongside friends, neighbors, and kin from their own town, county, or congressional districts. The 69th Pennsylvania Infantry, for example, drew most of its soldiers from Philadelphia, while the 125th Pennsylvania Infantry drew most of its soldiers from Huntingdon and Blair counties. Deaths on the field quite literally came home to these communities, and they responded to them at the ballot box.⁴

Until recently, however, it has been difficult for historians to link these. When regiments such as the 125th Pennsylvania were raised in multiple communities, the soldier's county of residence was subsumed in the overall regimental identity. Tracking the thousands of soldiers in the service records, casualty reports, headstones, census records, and regimental histories was a monumental task. Fortunately, the emergence of new digital genealogical research databases, civil war soldier records, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping tools has eased the task. This project is a first effort in applying these resources to explore the implications of wartime casualties.⁵

It is useful to begin by considering the concept of turning points or decisive moments in war, an idea that had wide currency in the 1860s. What does it mean for a moment in history to be decisive? Just as importantly, what did people at the community level in the 1860s think the concept meant? How did this notion of decisive battles shape their expectations of war, their planning, and their reactions to events? The vocabulary of wartime turning points was commonplace. Indeed, one of the era's best-sellers was the English historian Edward Creasy's book *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo*. Like any good Victorian Romantic, Creasy celebrated the intuitive, intangible, and emotional appeal of these battles, what he called their "fear and wonder." Reflecting the era's conventions, Creasy acknowledged the appeal of these battles in epitomizing courage, honor, daring, and coolness under fire. His descriptions of leadership intellect and genius were deeply influenced by "great man" theorist Thomas Carlyle, whose work he cited. Yet Creasy declared his book's organizing principle to be not these intuitive elements, but rather a more Enlightenment-based classificatory ranking project. Battles should be judged, in his words, by their "practical influence on our own social and political condition." These were to be framed with likely counterfactual alternatives in mind. His work was directed to an audience of well-educated men in leadership positions: the kinds who ran businesses, led military units, or guided politics. Their strategies were shaped by the concept of breakthrough moments, where skill, intellect, and force of character combined to change the direction of history. Creasy's inclusion of Saratoga, with the Franco-American alliance it provoked, was a story that greatly influenced the Confederate leaders in the Antietam campaign.⁶

Following Creasy, it is helpful to begin with a look at how the generals at Antietam understood the link between tactics and politics. First, Robert E. Lee. One historian, Thomas Connelly, described Lee as a "Marble Man," a person whose character and accomplishments are widely known, but whose image, crafted by postwar guardians of memory and nostalgia, can prevent us from understanding complexities of the persona behind that mythology. In the legend, Lee was studiously apolitical. This was in sharp contrast to his mentor, patron, and fellow Virginian, General Winfield Scott. Scott was an ambitious Whig party politico who hoped that service as commander of U.S. forces during the Mexican-American War would serve as springboard to the presidency. The current president, James Polk, was a Democrat

and wary of Scott's political influence. So Polk cordoned off his rival by appointing nine Democratic generals as subordinates. Lee, who served in Mexico as one of Scott's staff officers, concluded that a studious non-partisanship would be to his own advantage and dignity. But he admired the political ideals of Scott's Whig Party, which stressed social order, an active but responsible role for governments and sober propertied interests in economic policy, a secure financial system, and a stance of deliberate moderation on slavery and territorial expansion. Lee, in short, shared the Whig vision of social order but avoided active partisanship.⁷

Lee's legendary status also obscures how new to command he was in September 1862. Lee's career during the first year of war gave little hint of future glory. An undistinguished performance in western Virginia in fall 1861 led to his reassignment to coastal fortification duty. In early 1862, Confederate president Jefferson Davis asked Lee to serve as his military advisor. While Lee was in Richmond, it took a quirk of fate to put him in charge of the Army of Northern Virginia. His predecessor, Joseph Johnston, was wounded outside Richmond in May 1862. As the highest ranking general nearby, Lee was thrust into command of the Confederacy's most visible army, facing U.S. forces at the gates of his capital. His soldiers did not know him, did not yet trust him, and even called him derisive nicknames like "Granny Lee." Yet a bare fifteen weeks later, Lee had gone from man without a command, besieged in Richmond, to leading a victorious army to the outskirts of Washington, D.C. and then Antietam, fighting in this span one of the most successful campaigns in the Confederacy's history. In spring 1862 the Confederacy had been in desperation. By September, Lee had put the Union at risk.⁸

Lee's decision to turn north rather than wintering his exhausted army was as much political as military. Maryland beckoned. Lee had grown up in Alexandria, in sight of Maryland and D.C. His Maryland was a land of slaveholding tobacco planters and of strongly pro-southern common folk. This was the Maryland of Lincoln's political repression, of suspended *habeas corpus*, and of *Ex Parte Merriman*. This was the Maryland whose 1861 state song, *Maryland, My Maryland*, lamented that "the despot's heel is on thy shore" while boasting that the state "spurns the Northern scum." Lee's "Proclamation to the People of Maryland" declared that his army was there to "aid you in throwing off this foreign yoke, to enable you again to enjoy the inalienable rights of freemen and restore independence and sovereignty to your State." This was a consummately political objective, and one deeply rooted in Lee's own preconceptions about Maryland. He had every reason to think that breaking Union occupation would push Maryland into the Confederacy. The Maryland Lee understood, however, was not the same as the one his soldiers entered. Western Maryland was its own culture, and one hardly aligned with that of the state's planters or urban laborers.⁹

The North's fall elections also factored in. Starting in October, voters across the region would elect local, state, and congressional candidates. Lee's Northern campaign promised to give the

Confederacy leverage in the push for independence. In his words, the “proposal of peace would enable the people of the United States to determine at their coming elections whether they will support those who favor a prolongation of the war, or those who wish to bring it to a termination, which can be productive of good to both parties without affecting the honor of either.” Lee’s objective was the ballot box.¹⁰

Lee’s counterpart, General George McClellan, was a study in contrasts. Although beloved by his soldiers and an advocate of sectional reconciliation, he has never approached Lee’s mythological status. While scholars once asserted that McClellan was Lee’s strategic superior, more recent biographers have stressed McClellan’s weaknesses or called him controversial. The consensus view is that McClellan was hesitant to provoke battle, was brash, arrogant, and insubordinate, was prone to messianic self-delusions, and never failed to overestimate his opponents—notably at Antietam.¹¹

McClellan’s politics were more complicated than Lee’s. Born into an elite Philadelphia family, McClellan had gone straight from West Point to the Mexican-American War, including a stint under Lee. Like Lee, McClellan had become alienated by the partisan scheming of Scott and Polk. While Lee turned his ideology inward, however, McClellan expressed his frustrations about inexperienced generals and civilian interference to whomever would listen. Decrying the politics of partisan generals, McClellan appealed regularly and without conscious irony to the nation’s politicians to fix military problems. Like Lee, McClellan was influenced by Scott’s Whig politics, but left the party for the Democracy after Scott’s defeat in 1852. In the mid-1850s, McClellan was mentored under the patronage of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis. As sectional tensions heightened, however, he sought more moderate ground, becoming, in his own account, “a strong Democrat of the Stephen A. Douglas school.”¹²

McClellan extracted another precept from his Mexican experiences: an army seeking postwar stability should seek to treat civilians with dignity. Reacting to a disciplinary breakdown at the war’s beginning that had prevented an early peace settlement, Scott had issued a general order placing everyone in Mexico under martial law, including those American militia regiments that had proven so disruptive to the initial negotiations. (That Scott would soon order a scorched earth anti-insurgency campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City was less well-remembered by McClellan, of course.) To his credit, McClellan realized that while wars themselves are often short, the challenges of postwar peace are enduring. Placed in charge of the Army of the Potomac in late 1861, McClellan rejected what came to be called the “hard war” strategy of “directed severity.” As Mexico had shown, to win campaigns might not win the peace. McClellan’s strategy, then, was based on the goals of minimizing civilian suffering and of reducing the “useless effusion of blood” among soldiers. While McClellan believed that the Confederacy’s actions required them to accept, in his words, “the logical consequences of the stern laws of war,” he thought that the U.S. should do “nothing likely to render ultimate reconciliation and harmony impossible, unless such a course were imperative to secure military success.” Although denying any political ambitions beyond

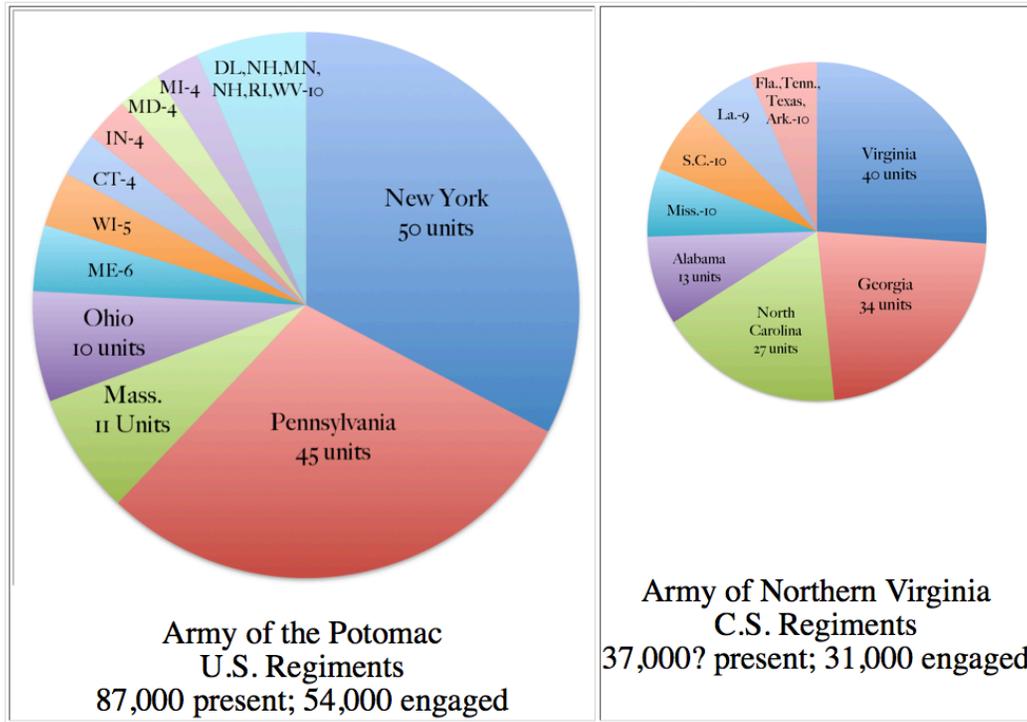
saving the Union, his dispatches to superiors were replete with political advice. A prime example of this is his July 1862 letter to Lincoln drafted at the end of the Peninsular campaign, right as Congress was debating the confiscation of Confederate slave property and the enlistment of African-Americans as U.S. soldiers. With an eye to Congress he lectured Lincoln that the war ought to be “conducted upon the highest principles known to Christian Civilization,” with neither abolition of slavery, nor military detention of civilians, nor territorial reorganization of states of the sort which created West Virginia, as war aims, and with compensation to any slaveholder whose slave captives became “contraband of war.” These views in favor of limited war aims were widely shared among McClellan’s War Democratic friends and among many potential swing voters across the North. The outcome of the Antietam campaign became potentially quite consequential.¹³

Before turning to the soldiers of Antietam and their communities, a quick look at the ebb and flow of interest in the two men is worth reviewing. Google Books, as part of its effort to analyze the language in millions of digitized volumes, developed the *Ngram Viewer* (<http://books.google.com/ngrams/>) for tracking word usage over time. It provides the equivalent of a popularity chart or a stock-ticker of writer interest. The comparison of the keywords “General Lee” and “General McClellan” is revealing. McClellan’s peak came in 1864, the year he ran for president. Lee’s peak came in 1866, a year when contemporary observers published the first war histories and Lee’s overall importance to the war was evident *in toto*. Interest in Lee surged again following his death in 1870, again in the 1880s when the series *Battles and Leaders* provoked firestorms over Lee’s historical memory, in the 1890s when the first national battlefields were dedicated, and in later years with various war anniversaries. At no time after 1866 did McClellan surpass Lee, even after McClellan’s death in 1885.¹⁴

What about the ordinary soldiers? Although an element in the era’s culture of Romanticism focused on heroic leadership and the role of “great men,” the movement had another side which celebrated the authenticity of common folk. Among wartime commentators, the decisions and values of ordinary soldiers were closely examined and praised. “Manly coolness under fire” and acts of heroic courage by ordinary individuals in sacrifice to a larger cause were ideals admired in soldiers of all ranks. Commentators counterpointed these with the many examples of panic, desertion, and shirking also common in the ranks. In the 1970s, one of the pioneering historians of military conflict, John Keegan, underscored this point by comparing the narratives written by Caesar, emphasizing top-down command and automaton-like obedience of soldiers, with the accounts of the Greek historian Thucydides, whose descriptions of combat were filled with the fog of battle and soldier-level indecisiveness, with confusion and fear, but also surges of hope and excitement, the drug of combat, and the thrill of cohesive coordinated action among combat comrades. As Keegan showed, when considering the decision-making

processes of battle, what line-level soldiers did was as critical to the outcome as the orders of their commanders. At every moment, soldiers decided for themselves whether or not to stand in the ranks and fight (or not) and to support a cause (or not). Soldiers voted with their feet.¹⁵

Figure 2: State Origins of Antietam Regiments



Who were these ordinary soldiers whose combat decisions mattered so much, and what does this say about the politics of Antietam? Let us start with regimental background and community. Figure 2 shows the state origins of all regimental units at Antietam. In the Army of the Potomac, more than half came from two states, New York and Pennsylvania. Along with Massachusetts and Ohio, these four states accounted for more than three-fourths of all units in McClellan’s force. His army was consummately northeastern, a fact which had many political and historiographical implications. These four states were home to a disproportionate number of the daily newspapers whose editors set the political agenda for contemporary politics and of the publishing houses whose editors set the tone for how the story of the Civil War would be told after 1862. These narratives, written by and for a northeastern audience, would give greater weight to decisive battles fought by their soldiers than to battles such as Chickamauga fought by midwestern armies. Interpretation of battle decisiveness became linked to the interests of the communities and states where the soldiers had originated. State politics helped define military history.¹⁶

Politics pervaded the soldier’s world. More than a third of the soldiers in McClellan’s army had been old enough to vote in the 1860 election. Back home, elections provoked high turnout among voters

and close attention from non-voters (though historians debate how deeply political ideologies affected popular values). Elections were closely contested in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and other northern states. Parties traded victories. In the 1850s, four different parties had controlled the governor's office in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, including the Whigs, Democrats, Know-Nothings, and Republicans. In Ohio and New York, three different parties had held the governor's chair in prewar decade. The congressional majority in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio had also shifted at least twice in this period. At the presidential level, the movement of Pennsylvania from the Southern-friendly Democratic party of Pierce and Buchanan into the Republican column helped Lincoln win in 1860. Beyond that, Americans got most of their news and opinion from party-controlled newspapers. Although the Sumter attack caused a surge of patriotic unity across all parties, the hard realities of war soon reopened conflicts. Questions of leadership, funding, strategy, war aims, race, civil rights, and treatment of enemy persons and property increasingly divided partisans in the months before Antietam. In several northern states (including Pennsylvania) these policy questions were complicated by a debate over whether soldiers should be allowed to vote. That a series of military defeats in summer 1862 caused enlistments to decline was a troubling sign of rupture between the cause fought by the soldiers in the field and the devotion of people at home.¹⁷

The story of Antietam itself can be briefly told. As a demoralized Army of the Potomac fell back into the Washington, D.C., defense perimeter in late August 1862, the bulk of Lee's army began crossing into Maryland. Although McClellan was not sure where the Confederates were, and although he still thought that his troops were outnumbered, he began moving several corps toward Lee's army, near Frederick. A few days later, an officer took Lee's plans for the march, wrapped them around three cigars, and handed them to a courier, who then accidentally dropped them, only to have them discovered by a lowly corporal from the 27th Indiana regiment. Lee's plans were now revealed, including disposition of forces and plans for attacking Harper's Ferry. McClellan at first presumed that the orders were fake. Such tricks were common, and McClellan had been fooled often by Confederate tricks. But the contents were eventually confirmed. McClellan ordered an advance. Determined to capture Harper's Ferry, Lee ordered one wing of his army to hold the mountain passes west of Frederick. This put most of his army on the Maryland side of the Potomac River, swollen by late summer rains. Lee's forces were defeated at the Battle of South Mountain on 14 September. However, Harper's Ferry fell to the Confederates on 15 September, leaving the massive task of paroling 12,000 prisoners and processing a mountain of supplies. Lee's army dwindled. Of the 70,000 Confederates who entered Maryland, under 40,000 were available at Antietam. In Lee's words, "The arduous service in which our troops had been engaged, their great privations of rest and food, and the long marches without shoes over mountain roads, had greatly reduced our ranks before the action began. These causes had compelled thousands of brave men to absent

themselves, and many more had done so from unworthy motives.” These forces faced some eighty-seven thousand U.S. soldiers, though these opponents, too, had been exhausted by hard campaigning. One element of McClellan’s army, the Fifth Corps, had done more than their share of fighting and dying in 1862. Held in reserve, these twenty thousand soldiers (a number more than half the size of Lee’s whole army) never fought at Antietam. Characteristically, McClellan set aside this reserve in the belief his army was outnumbered.¹⁸

Antietam’s uniquely open and pastoral landscape helped soldiers fight and later visitors visualize the course of battle. As a writer from the Pittsburgh *Gazette* noted at the time, this was one of the first battles where the commanders had panoramic views of the field, and where troops could be deployed “according to the tactics of a more scientific system” typical of European armies and West Point training. The open landscape was also a fine shooting gallery, however, as the battle’s casualties clearly testified.¹⁹

McClellan’s army stretched in a seven mile arc along the east bank of Antietam Creek and north of the village of Sharpsburg, Maryland. Lee deployed his army in a more compact four mile front along a series of north-south ridges. The near flood-stage Potomac River lay at their back, to the west. On the other bank was (West) Virginia and safety. Lee’s formation gave his army the advantage of what tacticians called “interior lines.” As the battle progressed, Lee rapidly shifted units from one area to another. Through mobility a smaller number of troops did greater work. This nullified McClellan’s numerical advantage.²⁰

Antietam’s first phase opened on the north of the battlefield. Some ten thousand soldiers of the U.S. First Corps advanced before dawn, moving across open fields toward the Confederate left. Awaiting them were three Confederate divisions clustered in the West Woods and near the soon-to-be-famous Dunker Church. An initial attack of some nine thousand Union troops was met by around seven thousand Confederates. Nearly equal in numbers, regiments on both sides traded ground in places like the Cornfield and the Hagerstown Pike, surging forward only to lose cohesion and cede the territory so dearly won. For nearly two hours the First Corps fought without help. The mid-morning addition of seven thousand fresh troops from the Twelfth Corps temporarily shifted momentum, but the arrival of five thousand reinforcements from Gen. D.H. Hill’s division equalized numbers and gave the Confederates the initiative. These new units battled each other for another hour. The first phase of the battle ended when General John Sedgwick’s five thousand strong division drove the Confederates back into the shelter of their original positions in the West Woods, where Confederate forces regrouped to send Sedgwick’s forces back in disarray.²¹

Writing home a few days later, Captain Robert Gould Shaw of the 2d Massachusetts captured the paradoxes of emotion and doubt experienced by many Antietam soldiers. Describing his own regiment’s advance as “the prettiest thing we have ever done,” and hailing Sedgwick’s advance as “a grand sight,”

Shaw captured the euphoria of combat. “I never felt, before, the excitement which makes a man want to rush into the fight, but I did that day,” he reported, while adding that “every battle makes me wish more and more that the war was over.” Noting that the Confederates had large numbers of old men and boys in their ranks, he questioned their motivations. To Shaw it seemed “hardly possible that they can have come of their own accord to fight us,” implying that compulsion rather than ideology motivated their service. But he was equally circumspect about his own side’s motivations, commenting that “it seems almost as if nothing could justify a battle like that of the 17th, and the horrors inseparable from it.” While his unit had suffered just twelve deaths, the three corps involved had seen more than a thousand U.S. soldiers die. On the Confederate side at least eight hundred men had been killed in the first phase alone. With the battle less than half over, almost as many soldiers had been killed as the Americans would lose at Normandy.²²

As the fighting tapered down in the north, a second phase opened along the Confederate center. Here more than ten thousand soldiers of the U.S. Second Corps faced off against the now depleted regiments of Hill and the fresh division of General R.H. Anderson, together amounting to perhaps seven thousand Southerners in various states of readiness. With Confederates entrenched in the soon-to-be famous Sunken Road, a multi-hour slug-fest ensued. Union forces advanced uphill and without cover. At least five hundred of them died in repeated assaults. For Second Lieutenant Charles B. Tanner and his comrades of the 1st Delaware Infantry, this was the first taste of battle. Having lost the regimental colors in a pullback after the “sudden and terrible fire” of Rodes’s Alabama Brigade, Tanner recalled being “maddened” by the thought that the enemy would capture their flag. Volunteering to retrieve the colors, he was shot once as he grabbed the staff and then twice more as he ran back to his comrades. For Tanner the flag became a sacred symbol of his companions, their cause, and the sacrifices they had endured. Hill’s and Anderson’s Confederates stood firm until a mistaken order and command chain breakdowns disrupted their front. This allowed U.S. troops to fire down the length of the Sunken Road. The slaughter on both sides was overwhelming, perhaps even iconic.²³

The final phase erupted on the battlefield’s southern end. Here the terrain differed; instead of open fields, Antietam creek ran by a steep bluff topped by rolling wooded hills. The creek narrowed here. With the recent rains it was impossible to cross except a mile above and a mile below the Confederate flank, or over one narrow arched bridge. In contrast to the rest of the battlefield, the woods and slopes on the east side of the creek challenged communication and unit organization. The twelve thousand U.S. soldiers of General Ambrose Burnside’s Corps outnumbered the Confederates four to one, yet his troops were relatively inexperienced. Most had less than eleven months service, and only a third had been in more than ten engagements. It took four hours to force the bridge crossing. Just three Georgia regiments occupying protected positions on the high bluffs were able to block the crossing. Not until late afternoon were Burnside’s forces across the creek and organized along the first line of hills. As the sun fell, the

Ninth Corps ran into two thousand Confederates from the division of General A.P. Hill, arriving after a brutal march from Harper's Ferry. The Union advance was stopped, but the fighting was otherwise inconclusive. Four hundred dead from Burnside's Corps covered the ground alongside some two hundred Confederates. By dusk the Confederate right flank had stabilized on the ridges just south of Sharpsburg. Soldiers expected to renew battle in the morning but the arrival of Hill's division and delays in his own reinforcements convinced McClellan to delay his attack. Lee kept his army on the field but had no capacity to initiate battle. Yet he waited, in part to allow his soldiers to bury their dead and thus prevent desecration by the enemy. This was critical to the forging of the trust and reverence that framed his legend. His troops crossed the Potomac late on 18 September. McClellan failed to pursue Lee despite repeated and insistent pleas from Lincoln. There would be no more battles between the two armies until December.²⁴



Figure 3: Dunker Church, Library of Congress

We can get a better sense of how people came to understand Antietam by looking at some of its most important images. As the first major battlefield in American history to be photographed, Antietam shaped the nation's sense of the Civil War. Hearing about the battle, pioneering photographic entrepreneur Matthew Brady sent a team to Antietam under his deputy Alexander Gardner. Since Antietam was the first major eastern battlefield to remain in Union hands, this was their first chance to

photograph the aftermath. Arriving two days after the battle, Gardner's team took nearly one hundred images. The resulting exhibit, entitled "The Dead of Antietam," drew huge audiences in New York and other eastern cities. The public was hardly shocked by the graphic displays because the images reached a culture already fascinated with death. This, after all, was the age of Frankenstein, of Poe mysteries, and of Spiritualist movements which embraced the permeability of the boundary between life and death. Audiences found these photographs more comforting than shocking. Although the new battlefield photography enhanced the technical nature of how the public experienced war, the photographs themselves were also deeply embedded in the era's artistic conventions. Their familiarity as well as their novelty helped the public cope. This photograph of the Dunker Church (Figure 3), taken by Gardner's team, has become one of the most widely reproduced images of the Civil War, an iconic image in American history textbooks, on websites, in videos, and even on souvenirs. It is at this location, incidentally, that the 125th Pennsylvania Infantry, recruited in Huntingdon and Blair Counties, did some of its fiercest fighting.²⁵



Figure 4: James Hope, *Panorama of Bloody Lane* (National Park Service)

This painting of Bloody Lane (Figure 4) offers a different medium but a compatible visualization. One of five panoramic battle images, it was created in the 1890s by artist James Hope. He had served a captain with the 2d Vermont Infantry. The painting is thus an eyewitness representation of a soldier's memory. Although nearly destroyed in a 1930s flood and out of view for decades, his paintings are now a centerpiece at the Antietam visitor center. Unlike the Gardner images, Hope's work shows the U.S. as well as Confederate casualties. Here, too, we see the era's cultural influences. Many participants in the battle contrasted the din and destruction of combat with the strange calm afterward, echoing Whittier's lines on the triumph of nature over humanity. Hope's image starkly combines the verdant landscape of fields, pastures, and the Blue Ridge with the results of combat violence. Reflecting on this image in his

history of the 108th New York Infantry, Bloody Lane combatant George Washburn described it as “the most terrible slaughter seen during the war.” Hope’s combination of realism and romanticism shows the complexity of the interpretive frameworks which guided people’s understandings of Antietam’s casualties.²⁶

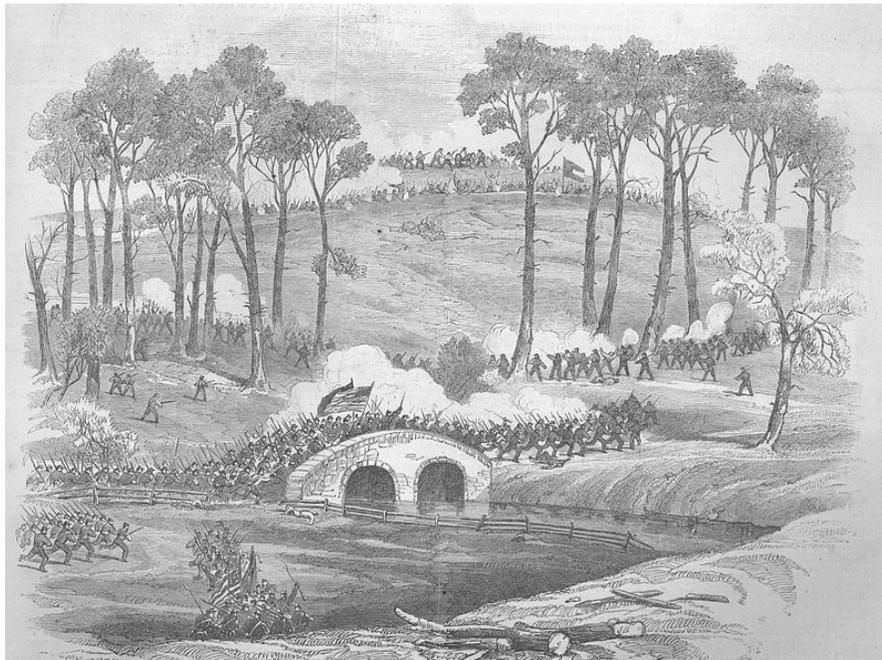


Figure 5: *Antietam Bridge*, Woodcut from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, October 1862

This image (Figure 5), from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, depicts U.S. forces crossing Burnside's bridge against Confederates on the bluff. Illustrated newspapers were also a new invention in this period. Techniques for photographic printing would not emerge for another two decades. So newspaper publishers sent artists into the field and then converted their sketches into printed woodcut engravings. These images, typically printed two or three weeks after the action, were the war visualizations most commonly seen at home. Unlike the photographs, these illustrations could show live combat action. In contrast to Hope's paintings and the Gardner photographs, however, woodcuts rarely depicted bodies of dead or wounded soldiers and tended to portray live soldiers in unrealistic stock parade-ground poses. Yet for all these artistic conventions, this image is intrinsically appealing. The surge of the troops across the arch, the scale of the action, and the gothic solemnity of the creek, hills, and trees are compelling. The popularity of this image may have as much to do with its aesthetics as its news content.²⁷



Figure 6: “Viewing the Dead,” *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly*, October 1862

The appeal of the macabre is also evident in this woodcut (Figure 6), published in the same issue. While Antietam would become sacred ground, immediately after the battle it attracted hosts of spectators, explorers, gawkers, and souvenir scavengers. As a Philadelphia correspondent reported, “the battle-field of Wednesday [17 September] is daily trampled by a small army of curiosity-seekers from the West, North, and East.” These pilgrims intuited the significance of the event, seeking memories, relics, and talismans of its power. Their acts were at once collection, recollection, desecration, and consecration. The presence of the small child on horseback is especially striking and puzzling. Was this a family looking for relatives? Were they just curious? The grotesque faces of the dead and the artist’s depiction of the viewers leaning in suggest as much voyeurism as horror or sentimentality. The presence of burial parties in the background and the flurry of carrion birds across the sky reinforce the image’s blend of sacred and profane. War has often been a spectator event. The illustrated newspapers confirmed the public’s fascination with destruction. Some scholars have suggested that these images blurred the boundaries between field and homefront “combat.” The fighting was in print as well as on foot. By not whitewashing the war’s consequences, such images may have made this vicarious experience more “true” and authentic.²⁸



Figure 7: "Captured African Americans," *Harper's Weekly*, October 1862

People at home witnessed another compelling visualization of the campaign's trauma: images of African Americans being driven into slavery by Confederates. Newspapers such as the Richmond, Virginia, *Enquirer* had boasted that the victory at Harper's Ferry had included the capture of some "600 Negroes," later revising the count to above two thousand. In the Confederate version, African Americans had been "stolen or seduced from their homes" by the Yankees but would now be "restored to their masters again." According to Virginia statute these captives were presumed to be runaway property, and any U.S. soldiers involved in their escape would be subject to capital punishment. In the North, a report from a correspondent of the New York *Tribune* describing efforts of Confederate troops to hunt down every black person in Harper's Ferry was widely republished and may have provided an inspiration for this illustration. In a region already predisposed by *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, "bleeding Kansas," the rhetoric of the slave power conspiracy, and lurid stories from the war itself to view Southerners as violent, this image resonated with deep preconceptions. In the image, the Confederate men were shown as cruel, unkempt, and uncontrolled. Among the captives, women and children featured prominently; the one male captive showing resistance was wrestled by one soldier while being sabre-whipped by another. The lash got central placement. Such symbols were familiar to anyone who had seen abolitionist illustrations of the slave trade. Situated among illustrations of combat, the inference of a war of civilization against barbarism was clear.²⁹



Figure 8: Thomas Nast, *Emancipation*, 1865, Library of Congress

These slave captives were just one sign of the change in war purposes in fall 1862. Since the military outcomes of Antietam were ambiguous, claims about its decisiveness often rest on the Emancipation Proclamation, announced by Lincoln a few days after the battle. In patriotic rhetoric we often celebrate the military's role in winning freedom. If so, then Antietam's function in spurring the Emancipation Proclamation makes it a primary example of the military's freedom role. Tens of thousands of Americans who were unfree before the battle would now, a few days after Antietam, become free, at least on paper. Yet historians debate how much the Emancipation Proclamation changed things. Congress had already passed the first emancipation acts in April 1862, which emancipated the District of Columbia and the territories while establishing a compensated emancipation fund for any state (including the Confederate states) which ended slavery. Lincoln's measure was preliminary, giving the seceded states a deadline (and an opportunity) for accepting compensated emancipation before the final policy would go into effect. This 1865 print (Figure 8), crafted by renowned cartoonist Thomas Nast, captures the middle class family ideals many northerners envisioned in contrasting slavery and freedom. In this view slavery was wrong because it harmed families, failed to reward work, prevented self-improvement, and denied upward mobility. Nast echoed many of the previous illustration's themes. Shaggy and savage slaveholders set the dogs of Hell to work in hunting slaves, corrupted the marketplace by trafficking in the human flesh of disrupted families, and cruelly applied the lash to the naked flesh of mothers and children. Through the transformative redemption of Lady Liberty, Abraham Lincoln and the clean-cut U.S. military, however, family would be restored, education cherished, and honest work rewarded. These

contrasts and values resonated strongly with families in the North and with their own sense of the Union's higher purposes and America's mission in the world.³⁰

But how would this ideology matter at election time? Even as the first casualty reports appeared in the newspapers, voters across the North marched to the ballot box. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Minnesota were first, with state elections on 14 October. The remaining states voted on 4 November. The casualties from Antietam and Lincoln's proclamation further complicated an already rich array of voter concerns. Political leaders from all parties viewed these elections as a referendum on the war. Like Lee, they recognized that the results could reshape war aims, war funding, and war strategy. And as the results came in there was no overwhelming endorsement of the war. Rather, contemporaries and historians alike interpreted it as a setback for the Lincoln administration, though perhaps not a devastating one. As the pro-Lincoln Boston *Daily Advertiser* lamented in November, the Republican Party's 1860 congressional majority had "melted away," resulting in "a decisive opposition vote in several of the most important States of the Union." Republicans lost thirty-two seats in the federal House, including the seat of Pennsylvanian and radical Republican Speaker of the House Galusha Grow. In the pivotal New York governor's election, anti-administration Democrat Horatio Seymour solidly defeated Freesoil Republican and Union General James Wadsworth. Seymour himself claimed that his victory was "due largely to the letters of soldiers who had written home, entreating their friends to support the Democracy." In Pennsylvania the state House returned to Democratic control for the first time since 1857, though the Senate remained in Republican hands. Republicans took an especially bad drubbing in Indiana and Illinois. Yet Republicans still managed to retain control of Congress and actually added two Republicans to the Senate. Lincoln had spent each election night sitting in the telegraph office. He was shaken by the results, but did infer enough support to sack General McClellan and his western counterpart Don Carlos Buell.³¹

These elections raise questions that their geography can help us explore. In particular, how did the horrific casualties from Antietam shape the election and how did communities interpret emancipation in light of these sacrifices? The election maps also help examine the question of whether the sacrifices on the field were reinforced by the ballot box at home, or if civilian voting behavior gives evidence of alienation between soldiers and civilians. Together these give us a more detailed map of whether or not Antietam was "decisive."

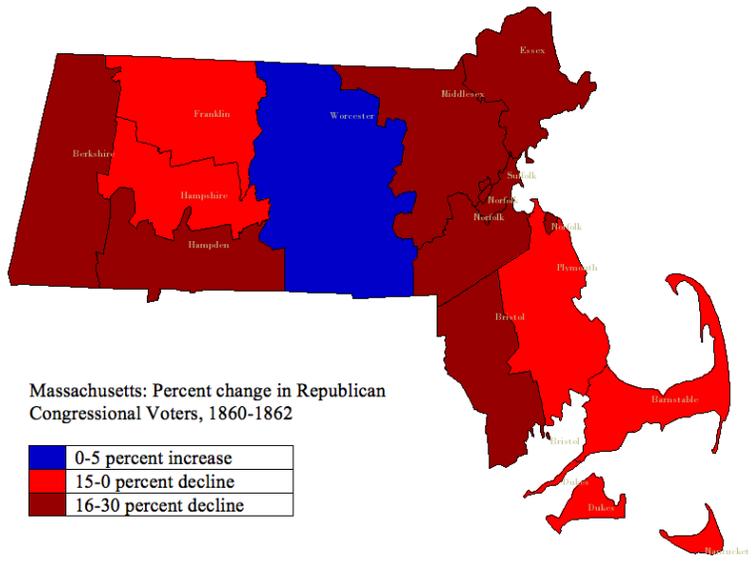
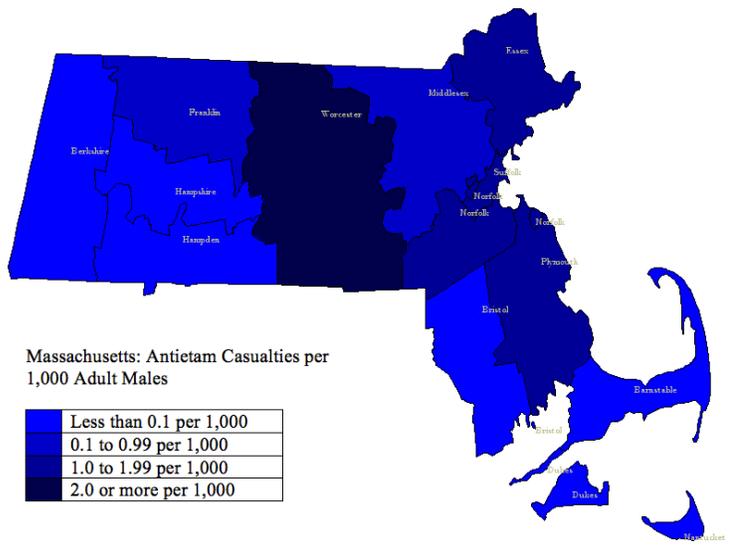
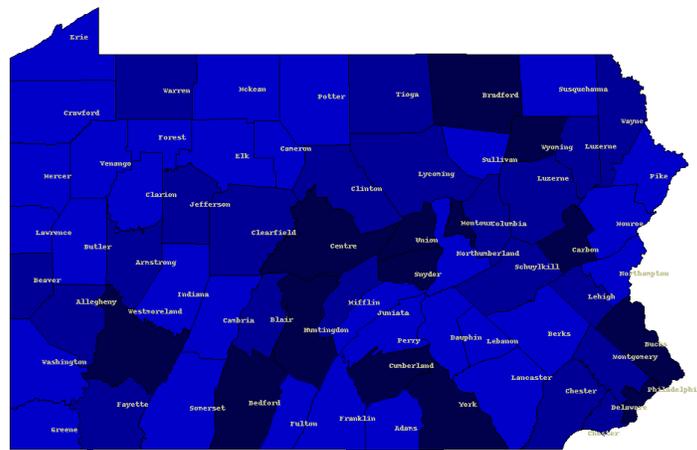


Figure 9: Casualties and Voting Shifts, Massachusetts, 1862

We begin by examining the results from Massachusetts (Figure 9). These illustrate how paradoxical the responses to Antietam’s casualties could be among different communities. The first map shows the number of Antietam deaths for every thousand of male adults. Hardest hit was Worcester County, with 2.5 deaths per thousand, or about one death for every four hundred families. A majority of

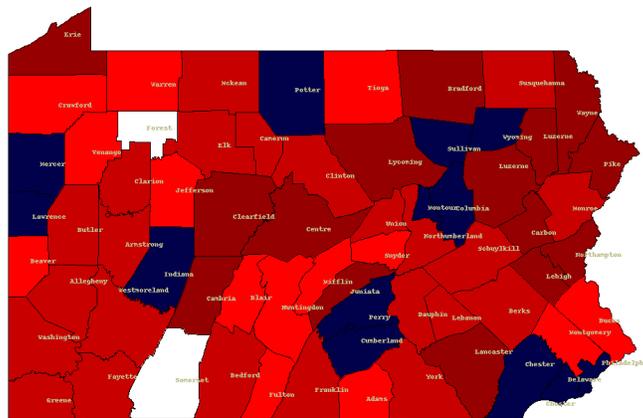
these dead from Worcester were shoemakers and other working class artisans, almost all in their twenties, most of whom had enlisted in the early months of the war. This region's early commitment to the war is suggested by resolutions issued by enlistees of the 15th Massachusetts Infantry at a town meeting in May 1861 declaring that "in this irrepressible conflict between freedom and slavery, every pulsation of our hearts is for freedom, and her sacred cause we are ready to give battle." As one of the leading centers of abolitionism, Worcester had come earlier than most to fighting an anti-slavery war. Quoting English poet William Cowper, Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner explicitly linked battlefield sacrifices to emancipation, saying that "a Patriot's blood, well spent in such strife, may earn, indeed, and for a time insure for his loved land, the sweets of Liberty and Equal Laws." They were joined by war Democrats such as historian George Bancroft, who sat out his party's campaign by saying that he would not "consent to send our sons and brothers to the battlefield and then betray them at the polls." In Worcester, particularly, casualties served to intensify war support among those already committed to the cause.³²

But other Massachusetts voters disagreed. Because Republicans had dominated the state since the 1850s, Democratic leaders in 1862 sought a coalition with conservative former Whigs that they dubbed the "People's Ticket." To show support for the war itself they selected Union general and former Whig Charles Devens to lead their ticket. Instead of attacking the war itself they criticized Republican conduct and policy. They attacked emancipation as a radical betrayal of the war's aims, denounced Lincoln's compensation plan as an assault on taxpayers, and blamed the war's horrific casualties on the Republican Party's political meddling in military affairs and failure to negotiate with the South. The appeal's effect was telling. In five of the counties with the highest Antietam casualties, Republican turnout dropped by fifteen percent or more. In Boston and Suffolk County where Antietam casualties were highest, Republican turnout dropped thirty percent. The connections were close. One funeral for a group of soldiers of the 35th Massachusetts Infantry was held just a few days before the election, reported in the same newspaper columns with news of political meetings held just blocks away from the funeral location. In Suffolk the People's ticket won a majority of the gubernatorial vote and barely lost the congressional contest. For these communities the losses at Antietam and other battlefields came to be seen as an unnecessary sacrifice caused by inept leadership. Statewide, then, Antietam's effect was paradoxical. Casualties polarized the Massachusetts electorate, intensifying commitments both for and against Lincoln's war.³³



Pennsylvania: Antietam Casualties per 1,000 Adult Males

Less than 0.27 per 1,000	32 counties
0.27 to 0.74 per 1,000	20 counties
0.75 to 5.5 per 1,000	14 counties



Pennsylvania: Change in Republican Congressional Turnout, 1860-1862

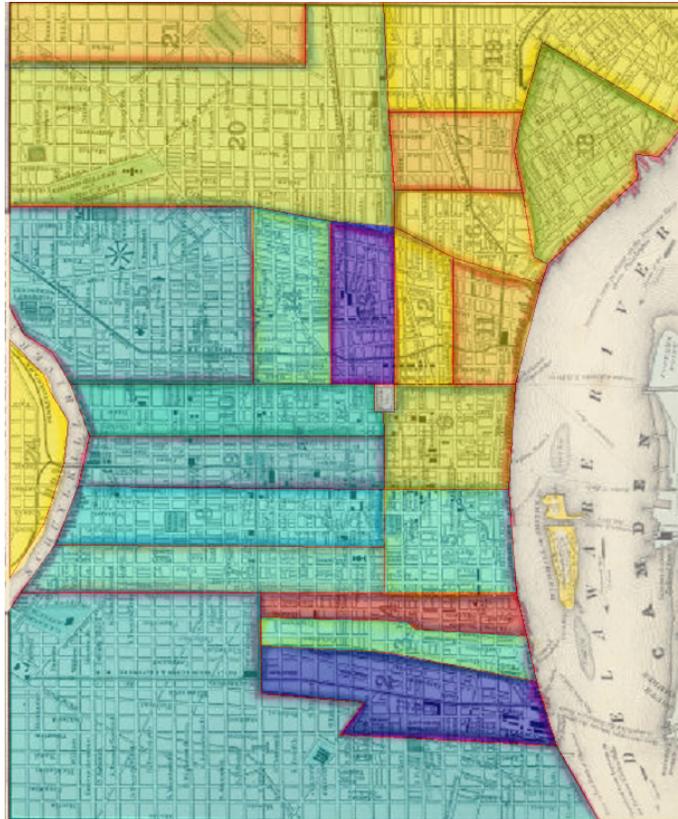
No vote returns	2 counties
0.0 to 27 percent increase	14 counties
-0.1 to -5.0 percent decline	23 counties
-5.1 to -10.0 percent decline	14 counties
-10.1 to -43.0 percent decline	13 counties

Figure 10: Casualties and Voting Shifts, Pennsylvania, 1862

The Pennsylvania maps (Figure 10) are equally revealing, showing other elements in how communities made sense of Antietam. As we have seen, to influence Pennsylvania’s elections had been a key Confederate objective. As the Harrisburg *Telegraph* reported, a captured rebel at Antietam had “confidently boasted that ‘our friends will beat you in Pennsylvania this fall, and we will come out all

right.” With so many Pennsylvania regiments in the Antietam fight the state had paid a high price to thwart these plans. Some four hundred of the state’s soldiers had given their lives on the field. For their part, Republican leaders closely linked the Republican campaign to the sacrifices of war. As the Pittsburgh *Gazette* argued, “there is a battle to be fought which concerns us at home — concerns especially the brave men who are now baring their bosoms and perilling their young lives in our defense, as much as the material results of the murderous conflict which is deluging so many fields with best and bravest blood of the state.” Pennsylvania’s Republicans interpreted the war in terms of a transcendent duty to national defense, a duty that the *Gazette’s* editors thought superseded the normal “social relations and individual interests” of community-level politics. They give special criticism to Pennsylvania Democratic leader Francis Hughes, since Hughes had broken ranks from Northern Democrats to support Southern Democrat John Breckinridge in the 1860 presidential race and then allegedly proposed adding Pennsylvania into the Confederacy.³⁴

As in Massachusetts, most Pennsylvania Democrats insisted that they backed the war effort itself but not the conduct or shifting war aims of the Republicans. As the editors of the Chambersburg *Valley Spirit* proclaimed on the eve of the election, “Whilst the army of the Republic is crushing out Secessionism in the field, do not forget that you have a duty to perform by voting down Abolitionism at the Polls.” Had the Democrats won in 1860, they claimed, “our neighbors and friends would not now be wreathed in the habiliments of lamentation and woe.” The ethical cloud over Pennsylvania Republican and disgraced Secretary of War Simon Cameron proved especially useful in allowing Democrats to charge Republicans with war corruption without criticizing the war itself. Moreover, since the preliminary emancipation proclamation included an expensive slaveholder compensation plan, Democrats trumpeted its high taxpayer cost. Freed slaves, they warned, would “overrun the North and enter into competition with the white laboring masses, thus degrading and insulting their manhood by placing them on an equality with Negroes in their occupations.” Yet the Democratic coalition had its own problems, notably the infighting between the pro-Southern loyalists of the Buchanan wing and those who had supported Douglas. In addition, the state had important anti-war and dissenter constituencies whose effects were especially complex for Democrats.³⁵



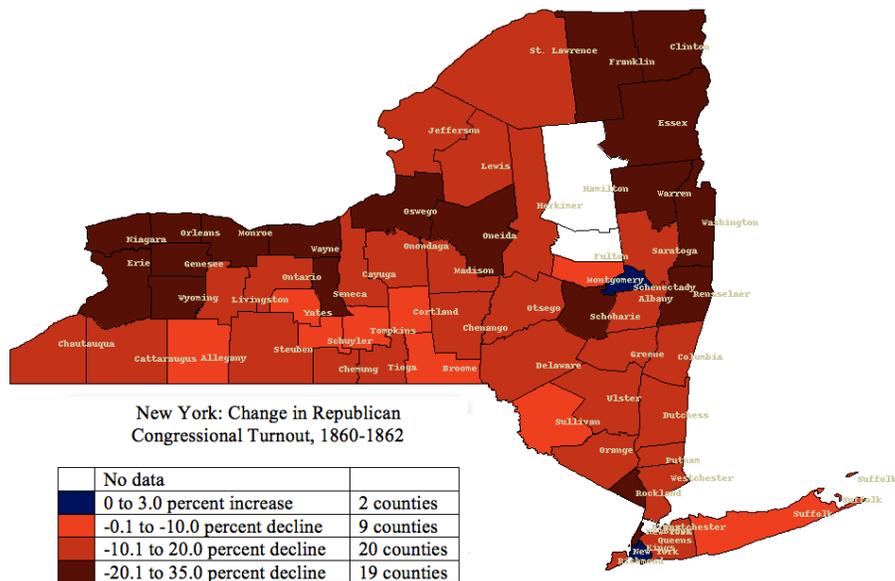
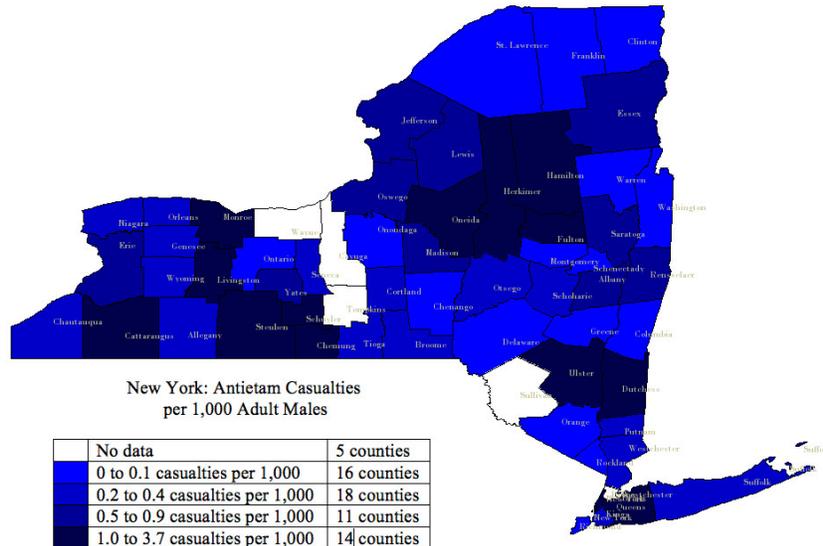
Philadelphia: Change in Republican Congressional Vote Percentage, 1860-1862

No data	2 wards
5.0 to 6.2 percent increase	2 wards
0 to 4.9 percent increase	11 wards
-0.1 to -4.9 percent decline	10 wards
-5.0 to -12.7 percent decline	1 ward

Figure 11: Voting Shifts, Philadelphia, 1862

The range of results in the election reflected this diversity. Above all, Lincoln's party took severe losses. In 1860, Republican congressmen had carried forty-one of the state's sixty-five counties and fifteen of twenty-four wards in Philadelphia. In the state legislature the Republicans had previously swept the house seventy-one to twenty-nine and the senate twenty-seven to six. Two years later they carried just thirty-three counties and only eleven of twenty-five of the Philadelphia wards in the congressional election and lost control of the state house, forty-five to fifty-five. In contrast to Massachusetts, however, the effect of Antietam casualties was less clear-cut. Of the five counties where Republican turnout improved the most (Sullivan, Perry, Columbia, Cumberland, and Lawrence), only one, Cumberland, had lost many of its sons at Antietam. Likewise, in the eight counties where Republican turnout dropped fifteen percent or more, just three had experienced disproportionate casualties, and had lost no soldiers. At the county level, then, there is less evidence of the polarization so visible in Massachusetts. Among

Philadelphia’s wards, however, there is some sign of intensification. Democratic wards in 1860 became more Democratic in 1862, while Republican wards became more Republican. Taken as a whole, Pennsylvania’s vote showed that the effect of Antietam casualties was modest and situational. More than in Massachusetts, however, voters were alienated from the Lincoln administration’s war policies.³⁶



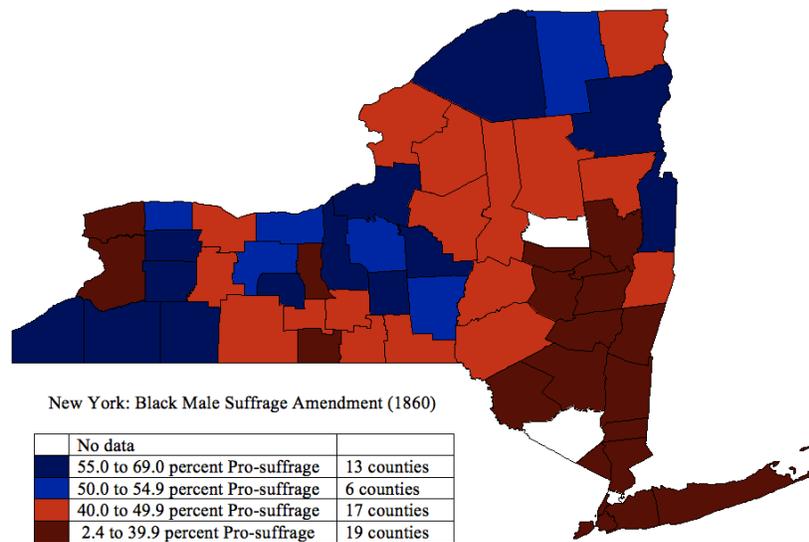


Figure 12: Antietam Deaths, Voting Shifts, and Black Suffrage, New York

The results from New York (Figure 12) allow us to compare the impact of casualties with the consequences of racial policy. Since the 1820s, New York had allowed African American males to vote if they posted a \$500 bond. In 1860 the state voted on an amendment to end bond requirements, thus giving black and white men identical voting rights. Although the amendment failed, the contest was close. The results provide a geography of racial attitudes which can be analyzed alongside Antietam casualties. Figure 12 shows equal suffrage getting its strongest support in the so-called “Burned-over District” of western New York. This area, along the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, had witnessed intense religious revival in the 1820s and a flourishing of antislavery in the following decades. Among its residents were Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Opposition was strongest in the Hudson River Valley and in the urban concentrations of Buffalo, Albany, and New York City. In these areas religious conflicts, urban growing pains, class tensions, and debates over immigration, temperance, and family governance contributed to make black equality particularly controversial. In 1862, however, support for suffrage did not seem to translate into support for the party of emancipation. In central New York around Syracuse, Auburn, and Watertown, and in the Southern Tier around Chautauqua County, Republicans saw little erosion of support. Yet in most other pro-suffrage counties, notably in Rochester and Genesee County, Republican voters stayed home. Indeed, Republican turnout in 1862 was slightly lower in the pro-suffrage counties than in the anti-suffrage counties. Unlike in Massachusetts, Lincoln’s turn to emancipation seems not to have intensified the enthusiasm of Republican and abolition communities.³⁷

The impact of Antietam casualties, however, was noticeable. In the fifteen counties with the highest casualties, the Republican congressional vote declined less than four percent, a drop not unusual for midterm elections. Meanwhile, in the nineteen lowest casualty counties the Republican vote decline was over six percent. For governor the Republicans ran Union general and pro-proclamationist James Wadsworth. In his nomination speech, given just days after Antietam, he reminded the audience that “we have moistened a hundred battle-fields with the blood of our sons.” Remarking that “almost every household in the North is filled with gloom and weeping for some beloved member,” he insisted that relentless prosecution of the war was necessary to honor these sacrifices, including the defeat of what he labeled an insolent slaveholding aristocracy. For their part, most Democratic candidates also claimed to support the war -- as long as it did not disrupt the traditional “constitutional rights” to property in slaves. Although New York Mayor Fernando Wood ran as a Peace Democrat, most Democratic candidates were conservatives who supported a war of reunification. Among these were a former Whig, two Union officers, and three who would soon switch to the Republican-Union coalition. Where casualties were highest Republicans generally benefitted the most. Although Republicans lost the governorship and the congressional delegation to the Democrats, they split control of the Assembly and retained the Senate. Though not decisive, the casualties at Antietam may have stanchd Republican losses in the state.³⁸

In concluding this look at how casualties affected political attitudes a comparison to Chickamauga is instructive. East Tennessee was strategically and politically essential, both sides agreed. As Lincoln himself remarked after Chickamauga, “if we can hold Chattanooga and East Tennessee, I think the Rebellion must dwindle and die.” Chattanooga was strategically critical because of its junction between the Confederacy’s main east-west railway and the north-south Tennessee to Virginia railroad, and its location on the Tennessee River. Beyond this, East Tennessee was a hotbed of Unionism whose oppression symbolized to the Lincolnites the worst excesses of Confederate authority. Both sides considered Tennessee a prime recruiting ground for new soldiers.³⁹

Since fall 1862 the U.S. commander in East Tennessee had been General William Rosecrans. An Ohioan and West Pointer with impressive engineering talents and a knack for invention, Rosecrans was a dogged fighter and a creative tactician. In 1861 he had played a key role in blocking Lee’s efforts to control western Virginia. At the Battle of Stones River on New Years’ 1863 his personal bravery and standing ground rather than conceding apparent defeat had earned deep loyalty from his troops while salvaging a rare U.S. victory. The only complaint from the Union leadership was that he lacked the aggressiveness of his rival general, U.S. Grant. On the other side, Rosecrans’s Confederate counterpart, General Braxton Bragg, was less well-respected. Bragg was a harsh disciplinarian whose soldiers endured rather than admired him. Bragg’s running quarrels with rivals and insubordination from officers under his command had discombobulated strategy in the fall 1862 Kentucky campaign and had converted victory to

failure at Stones River. Elaborate political intrigues by subordinates had failed to remove him from leadership, however, and although Jefferson Davis, too, had collided with Bragg, now the president kept him in command despite all criticism.⁴⁰

Electoral as well as organizational politics surrounded these armies in 1863. Rosecrans's army was overwhelmingly midwestern, drawing two-thirds of its units from the swing states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Among these, the governor's election in Ohio attracted the most widespread attention. In June 1863, even as Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland began to march, Ohio Democrats nominated controversial Peace Democrat Clement Vallandigham to be their gubernatorial candidate. Vallandigham was a congressman in 1861 who became one of Lincoln's earliest and loudest "Copperhead" critics. In May 1863 his uncompromising attacks on the war had even landed him in front of a military tribunal. Lincoln's solution was to exile him to the Confederacy. Within weeks Vallandigham was in Windsor, Canada, just across the border from Detroit and Ohio. As the embodied symbol of Lincoln's repressions, Democrats at the state convention overwhelmingly endorsed him. A few days later a joint convention of Republicans and War Democrats operating as the "Union Party" nominated railroad president and erstwhile Democrat John Brough to lead the pro-administration ticket. Within the army, Ohio General James Garfield, recently elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress, provided another direct link between the battlefield and the ballot box. As summer moved forward the campaign on the front and the campaign for governor would closely track each other.⁴¹

While Lee advanced toward Gettysburg and Grant surrounded Vicksburg, Rosecrans began a patient move toward Chattanooga, capturing it in late summer. His advance, the Tullahoma campaign, is as little-known today as it was crucial then for gaining control over Tennessee. Rosecrans himself noted the irony, insisting that the War Department "not overlook so great an event because it is not written in letters of blood." By 5 September Rosecrans's army had crossed the Tennessee River into Alabama and threatened Bragg's supply lines. Confederates retreated into North Georgia. But then momentum shifted. Lee ordered two divisions under Longstreet to join Bragg, thus giving the Confederates a rare numerical edge. Rosecrans's tactical deceptions were brilliantly effective but had scattered his army piecemeal across a fifty-mile front. Bragg took advantage of concentration, striking Rosecrans's right flank along Chickamauga Creek, ten miles south of Chattanooga. Both armies fully engaged on 19 September, fighting ferociously and continuously for two days. Tangled forests, reluctant commanders, and stubborn resistance by veteran U.S. units resulted in only modest Confederate advances during the first day. Most of Longstreet's forces arrived late that first night. On the second day a mistaken order opened a gap in Union lines and Longstreet's forces poured through. Most of the U.S. forces, including Rosecrans himself, hastily retreated toward Chattanooga. Only a small force under General George Thomas (soon dubbed "the Rock of Chickamauga") stood to cover Rosecrans's escape. As night fell, the last federal

forces departed to the sound of Confederate jeers and yells. In the words of then-lieutenant Ambrose Bierce, “It was the ugliest sound that any mortal ever heard, even a mortal exhausted and unnerved by two days of hard fighting, without sleep, without rest, without food, and without hope.... We finally retired, in profound silence and dejection, unmolested.” The death toll exacted by these two veteran armies was staggering. Some sixteen hundred U.S. soldiers were killed and another ten thousand wounded. For Confederates this nominal victory was even more devastating. Approximately twenty-three hundred of Bragg’s soldiers died on the field, and some fifteen thousand were wounded. It was the second deadliest battle of the war, behind only the slaughter pens of Gettysburg. Bottled up in Chattanooga, Rosecrans lost the confidence of the administration and was replaced by General Thomas and then Grant. Bragg, in turn, weakened by casualties, conflicts, and defeat at Grant’s hands, would also be replaced.⁴²

Ohioans voted a mere three weeks later. With a state ban on military voting now lifted, many Chickamauga veterans actively participated. Letters home gave unequivocal endorsement of the war effort. One missive, from Major Durbin Ward of the 17th Ohio, was typical: “I hear that some people effect to doubt how I will vote,” he wrote. “You can tell them that I shall vote for Brough. I am still a Democrat, and unalterably attached to the ancient faith of that party. But I am a War — a National — a Union — a Douglass — a Brough Democrat; not a Peace — a Sectional — a Secession — a Breckinridge — a Vallandigham Democrat. The Rubicon is crossed, and while the sinister banner and stars of rebellion float defiantly on the breeze, war means Union and peace means dissolution.” On their side, Vallandigham’s supporters labeled Republicans “negrophilistic fanatics” whose recklessness had precipitated the war and caused, in Vallandigham’s words, “the enslavement of the white race by debt and taxes and arbitrary power.” The drama of Vallandigham’s prosecution and Chickamauga’s dreadful toll invigorated both parties. Democratic turnout surged a remarkable 22 percent, but the Republican-Union surge, at an even more impressive 33 percent, gave the victory to Brough. He carried the civilian vote solidly enough to win with their ballots alone. Among the soldiers, though, Brough got eighteen votes for every one vote Vallandigham captured. Garfield gave an especially striking account of the results, recalling that “at midnight of the 13th of October, when the telegraphic news was flashed down to us, and it was announced to the army that the Union had sixty thousand majority in Ohio, there arose a shout from every tent along the line on that rainy midnight, which rent the sky with jubilees, and sent despair to the heart of those who were waiting and watching across the border.... And from that hour, but not till that hour, the army felt safe from the enemy behind it.” While most soldiers had originally fought only to restore the Union, Garfield thought, seeing slavery’s effects had converted them into emancipationists. This transformation is confirmed in post-war soldier’s memoirs. The defeat of the Peace Democrats in 1863 represented a turn in favor of emancipation. In a Democracy now deeply fractured over future strategy the pro-war wing took decided advantage. Although Lincoln, too, would face intra-party

insurgencies, Vallyandigham's defeat and the growing perception that emancipation aided military success contributed incrementally to ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. By this measure, Chickamauga's neutralization of the Peace Democrats was arguably as important to emancipation as Antietam had been.⁴³



Figure 13: Antietam Cemetery and Chickamauga Monuments. Photographs by the author

As we close our own reflections on the war's meaning it is worth examining how people after the war reflected on these battles and gauged their significance. We turn first to George McClellan, speaking at Antietam's 1885 Decoration Day ceremony. To him the goals of soldierly commemoration and reconciliation were paramount. In characteristically McClellan style he staked his own distinct political ground by decrying the politicians he blamed for causing the war. As he told an audience comprised of soldiers from both sides:

We are here with a common purpose -- to testify our reverence for the valiant dead. So let us bury all animosity, all bitter recollections of the past, remembering only that on Antietam's hills brave men gave their lives for what they thought right...I shall not trench upon the causes of that war further than to say that it was brought about, and even made necessary by the extremists of the two sides. If the moderate men, north and south, could have controlled events the dread arbitrament of arms might have been avoided.⁴⁴

Union soldiers from Chickamauga were eventually buried at Chattanooga, in what became America's first national military cemetery. The impetus for this cemetery came from Union general George Thomas, whose own history greatly affected his thinking about the cemetery's commemorative politics. Thomas, like Lee, was a Virginian. But unlike Lee, he cast his lot with the North. As the plans

for the cemetery emerged in late 1863 he was asked if he wanted the soldiers to be buried by state as was done so recently at Gettysburg. He responded “No, No. Mix them up; Mix them up. I’m tired of state rights.” Soldiers were buried with simple markers, most identifying name and unit but not home town. Chickamauga’s dead would be defined by their comrades and their common democratic sacrifice rather than by their state or community identities. They would belong to the nation, not to any individual place.⁴⁵

Not everyone agreed that honoring soldierly valor should be decoupled from war causes and outcomes. At the dedication ceremonies for Chickamauga Battlefield in 1895, Illinois Governor John Altgeld asserted a purpose far different than McClellan’s. As a young man, Altgeld had lied about his age to enlist in an Ohio Infantry regiment, but sickness kept him from combat. Elected as a Progressive Democrat, Altgeld seized controversy by pardoning several of the Haymarket defendants. His speech at Chickamauga was equally controversial, expressing an unequivocal sense of purpose for the war and its commemoration:⁴⁶

Over a third of a century ago there raged across this continent the greatest conflict the world has ever seen. The primary question involved was, “Shall this Government be destroyed or preserved?” But this question itself grew out of the more fundamental question of slavery. Through dark centuries the cry of the oppressed had gone up toward heaven, filling the air with thunderbolts which finally exploded in one prolonged and bloody drama. More than a million of men in all came down from the North, shouting as they marched, “This Union forever and equal rights for all.” The world had never seen such a spectacle. Here were great armies fighting, not for aggrandizement, not for conquest, but for the integrity of the flag and the principle of universal freedom.⁴⁷

But Altgeld went beyond this, calling for the present generation to sanctify the examples of Chickamauga’s soldiers by living lives of “strong character” that would help “steer our country away from the shoals” and “keep it on the great oceans of justice and liberty.” It was an uncompromisingly progressive invocation, with sharp judgments against those who had fought to preserve slavery. In an audience which included nearly every living commander from both sides and tens of thousands of ordinary ex-Confederate soldiers, Altgeld’s message was received as provocative at best and ungentlemanly at worst. The criticism and support his explanation of the war’s meaning received were an outgrowth of the political debates of the war era itself, and in turn contribute to similar debates in our own time. Commemorative strategies continue to generate passionate debate.⁴⁸

The debate over the war’s meaning brings us back to Creasy’s concept of decisive battles and McPherson’s assertion of Antietam as the “crossroads of freedom.” The elections of 1862 and 1863 suggest a more incremental understanding. That Antietam intensified a move to emancipation already in process is evident in the voting. It led the war’s supporters to redouble their efforts and reinforced the commitment that battlefield sacrifices not be in vain. Yet the casualties gave Lincoln’s opponents equal impetus for opposing the war’s conduct, for attacking civilian interference with military affairs, and for highlighting the high economic and social cost of emancipation policies on white voters. Polarization and

paradox were part of the battle's outcomes. Viewed within the scope of the election of 1862, it was clear that the military and policy changes that Antietam initiated could still be reversed, delayed, or modified. Antietam was as much provisional as decisive, at least when it came to the ballot box. What the comparison with Chickamauga's politics shows us, however, is that the loss of comrades on the battlefield did have profound and enduring consequences for the soldiers themselves. That, as Garfield claimed, soldiers went into the war as Union Democrats and came out as patriotic emancipationists, seems confirmed by the strongly Republican turn soldier's votes in the Ohio elections. They were certainly ahead of the general public on emancipation as a tool of war. That many veterans would spend the rest of their days insuring that the general public not forget the sacrifices on the field, and that the general public was, in fact, far behind the soldiers in the intensity of their devotion to the flag (literally and figuratively) is also clear. The work of the union veteran's group known as the Grand Army of the Republic in institutionalizing Memorial Day and the Pledge of Allegiance was a sign of the gap, perhaps even the alienation, between soldier's and civilian's understandings of the war's meaning. The strong reaction against Altgeld's linkage of the war to political reform, however, suggests that this effort to convert the glorious struggle for past equality to contemporary reforms was far more controversial. Any claims for the decisiveness of Antietam, Chickamauga, or the Civil War as a whole, have to be viewed in light of ongoing differences among the battle's participants themselves in what the battles meant. As we revisit the cemetery at Antietam, we can imagine the soldiers there being amazed at the war's unexpected consequences, but not fully in consensus about their meaning.⁴⁹

NOTES

1. There is a burgeoning literature on death and commemoration in the Civil War era. See especially Mark Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 2008), Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners and their War for the Union* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 32-55, Edward Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and their Battlefields* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), and William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
2. James A. Rawley, *Turning Points of the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), James M. McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). Speech of Judge William Butler, July 1863, quoted in Robert M. Green, comp., *History of the One Hundred and Twenty Fourth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, in the War of the Rebellion* (Philadelphia, Ware Bros. Company, Printers, 1907), 51.
3. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 674. Stephen E. Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee: The Chickamauga and Chattanooga Campaigns* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 127-133. Jefferson Davis, "Speech at Wilmington, N.C., 5 November 1863, in Lynda Lasswell Crist, ed., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, (13

- vols., Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 10: 48-54. Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (2 vols., New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1881), II: 362.
4. The most thorough study of the relationship between combat deaths and political shifts at the ballot box is Jamie L. Carson, *et al.*, "The Impact of National Tides and District-Level Effects on Electoral Outcomes, The U.S. Congressional Elections of 1862-63," *American Journal of Political Science* 45 (October 2001), 887-898, but its analysis is limited to the coarse-grained geography of the congressional district. For regimental details of the 69th and 125th Pennsylvania regiments, see Fredrick H Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (3 vols: Des Moines: The Dyer Publishing Company, 1908).
 5. The subscription website Ancestry.com has a broad array of Civil War era and military records. The National Park Service maintains an open-access *Civil War Soldiers and Sailors* database (<http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>). The most comprehensive subscription-based tool for tracking soldier's residences is Historical Data Systems, *American Civil War Research Database* (<http://http://www.civilwardata.com>).
 6. Edward Shepherd Creasy, *The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1851), esp. iii-v, 305-27. The book is still in print. The influence of these ideals on expectations for war in popular culture and on soldiers' behavior during combat are considered in Charles Royster, *The Destructive War: William Tecumseh Sherman, Stonewall Jackson, and the Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993) and Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), among others.
 7. Thomas L. Connelly, *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and his Image in American Society* (New York: Knopf, 1977). See also Emory M. Thomas, *Robert E. Lee: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 79-80, 111-12, 140-41, and 255-65. Scott's career is detailed in Timothy D. Johnson, *Winfield Scott: The Quest for Military Glory* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).
 8. McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom*, 77-88; Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red with Blood: The Battle of Antietam* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1983), 49-63.
 9. *Ex Parte Merryman*, April 1861 Term Case No. 9,487, 17 F. Cas. 144; James Ryder Randall, "Maryland, My Maryland," both at Maryland State Archives online, (msa.maryland.gov). Gen. Robert E. Lee, "Proclamation to the People of Maryland," in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate armies.* (Washington, GPO, 1880-1901) Series 1: vol. 19, Part II, 601-602.
 10. Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, 8 September 1862, in *Official Records*, Ser. I, vol. 19, part II, 600.
 11. For the earlier laudatory arguments see James Havelock Campbell, *McClellan: A Vindication of the Military Career of General George B. McClellan* (New York: Neale Publishing Company, 1916). More recent accounts include Stephen W. Sears, *George B. McClellan: The Young Napoleon* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1988) and the dual biography by John C. Waugh, *Lincoln and McClellan: The Troubled Partnership between a President and his General* (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2010). For a dissenting view see Joseph L. Harsh, "On the McClellan-Go-Round," in John T. Hubbell, ed., *Battles Lost and Won: Essays from Civil War History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), 55-72.
 12. For McClellan's Mexican-American war politics, see Sears, *McClellan*, esp. pp. 14-15, 25-26. Quote from George B. McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers who Fought it, the Civilians who Directed it, and his Relations to it and to Them.* (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1887; Google Books ed.), 34.
 13. For Scott and McClellan as the era's leading military advocates of soft war strategies, see Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy Toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 23-35. Gen. Winfield Scott, "General Order number 20, February 19, 1847, Tampico, Mexico," text at Rice University Digital Archive (<http://scholarship.rice.edu/jsp/xml/1911/27562/3/aa00208tr.tei.html>). Stephen A. Carney, *The Occupation of Mexico, 1846-1848* (Washington, D.C., Department of Defense, Center for Military History, 2006), 26-38. Quote from McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story*, 35. George McClellan to Abraham Lincoln, 7 July 1862, *Official Records*, Ser. I, vol II, Part III, 364. The ideology of War Democrats in the North is examined by Jean H. Baker, *Affairs of Party: The Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the mid-nineteenth Century* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), esp. pp.327-44; Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The*

- Union Divided: Party Conflict in the Civil War North* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), and Adam I.P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), esp. pp. 37-48.
14. Some of the most influential recent works exploring Civil War memory and commemoration include David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2002); David R. Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), and Timothy B. Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890's and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008).
 15. For the ideals of heroic individualism and self-sacrifice, see Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress*, *op cit.*, and Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Manhood, Honor, and Violence in the Union Army* (New York: New York University Press, 2010). John Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo, and the Somme* (New York: Penguin, 1978), esp. pp. 61-77. For application to the Civil War era, see John Priest, *Antietam: The Soldier's Battle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Other important recent discussions include James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), Reid Mitchell, *The Vacant Chair: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), and Aaron C. Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family and Nation in Civil War Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).
 16. These four states had 135 of the nation's 372 daily newspapers in 1860. See Joseph C.G. Kennedy, *Preliminary Reports on the Eighth Census*, (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1862), 211. Of the 100 most influential books about the Civil War published between 1865 and 1885, 67 percent were published in these four states, which comprised only a third of the nation's population. (Calculated from Worldcat.org using the subject heading "United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865" and publication date range 1865-1885).
 17. For voter engagement, the formation of voter-level political affiliations, and political competitiveness, see Joel H. Silbey, *The American Political Nation, 1838-1893* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), esp. 141-75, but also Glenn Altschuler and Stuart M. Blumin, *Rude Republic: Americans and their Politics in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). For growing levels of political engagement among soldiers as the war progressed, see Joseph T. Glaathaar, *The March to the Sea and Beyond: Sherman's Troops in the Savannah and Carolinas Campaigns* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), 39-51. Partisan control and shifts are documented in Horace Greeley, ed., *The Whig Almanac and the Tribune Almanac*, (New York, Tribune Printing Office, 1851-1864); Kallenbach and Kallenbach, eds., *American State Governors, 1776-1976: Volume I: Electoral and Personal Data* (Dobbs Ferry: Oceana Publications, Inc, 1977), Senate Historical Office, *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress* (<http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>), and Walter Dean Burnham, ed., *State-Level Presidential Election Returns, 1824-1972* (Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Social and Political Research, 1972), 72; An elegant brief summary of changing community political and enlistment dynamics can be found in J. Matthew Gallman, *The North Fights the Civil War: The Home Front* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1994), 39-55.
 18. McClellan's official summary of the Antietam campaign can be found in the *Official Records*, Ser. 1, Vol. 19, Part 1, 24-33. Lee's version is detailed in a series of reports over the same period, *Ibid.*, 139-53. A nice synopsis of the lead-up to Antietam is in McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom*, 97-115.
 19. *Pittsburgh Gazette*, 23 September 1862.
 20. Antietam Battlefield Board, "Map of the battlefield of Antietam. No. 1," (Washington, D.C., Norris Peters Co., photo-litho., 1893), image from the Library of Congress, *American Memory* map collections, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3842a.cw0249000>. For the park design process, see Smith, *Battlefield Preservation*, 87-114, and Martha Temkin, "Freeze-Frame, September 17, 1862: A Preservation Battle at Antietam National Battlefield Park," in Paul A. Shackel, ed., *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 123-25.

21. For troop movements see Priest, *Antietam*, chapters 1-8, and Appendix A, Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of Antietam* (El Dorado Hills, Ca.: Savas Beatie, LLC., 2012), 130-185, and McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom*, 116-124.
22. Quotes from Robert Gould Shaw to Francis George Shaw, 21 September 1862, in Russell Duncan, ed., *Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune: The Civil War Letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1992), 240-242.
23. Tanner's account is in Walter F. Beyer and Oscar F. Keydel, comps., *Deeds of Valor: How America's Heroes Won the Medal of Honor* (2 vols., Detroit: The Perrien Keydel Company, 1901), I:84-85. The action at the sunken road and the eventual rout of the Confederates from that position is detailed in the report of Confederate General Daniel H. Hill, *Official Records*, ser. 1, vol. 19, part 1, 1018 - 1030, and U.S. Second Corps brigade commanders Caldwell, Meagher, Kimball, and Brooke, Ser. 1, vol. 19, part 1, 284-87, 293-95, 326-28, 407-9. See also Sears, *Landscape Turned Red*, 235-54.
24. For action on the southern portion of the battlefield see the report of General Ambrose Burnside, *Official Records*, Ser. 1, vol. 19, part 1, 418-422, and of Confederate Generals David R. Jones and A.P. Hill, *Ibid*, 886-7, 981.
25. See William A. Frassanito, *Antietam: The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day* (New York: Scribner, 1978), Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country*, esp. 191-95, and Jan Mieszkowski, *Watching War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), esp. 96-99.
26. "The Aftermath at Bloody Lane." *The Hope Paintings*, National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield [<http://www.nps.gov/anti/photosmultimedia/hopepaintings.htm>]. Quote from George H. Washburn, *A Complete Military History and Record of the 108th Regiment N.Y. Vols., From 1862 to 1894* (Rochester: Press of E.R. Andrews, 1894), 24.
27. For discussion of the changing aesthetics of woodcut artistry, see William F. Thompson, *The Image of War: The Pictorial Reporting of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1994).
28. Schantz. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, *North American and United States Gazette*, 24 September 1862.
29. Richmond, Virginia, *Enquirer*, 20 September 1862; Boston, Massachusetts, *Liberator*, 26 September 1862. See also James Epperson, "Lee's Slave-Makers," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 41 (Aug. 2002), 44-52. Northern preconceptions are skillfully explored in Michael Fellman, "Rehearsal for Civil War: Antislavery and Proslavery at the Fighting Point in Kansas, 1854-1856," in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, eds., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1979), 287-307.
30. For the role of Antietam in allowing Lincoln to announce the Emancipation Proclamation, see David H. Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 362-377. Emancipation is central to James McPherson's claim that Antietam was the "crossroads of freedom." His view is supported by Allan Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), esp. 170-173. Other scholars have been more restrained, viewing the proclamation as just one step, and a highly reversible one, in the emancipation process. See Michael Vorenberg, *Final Freedom: The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1-2, 27-8, 150. On the resonance of emancipation's perceived blessings in the North with middle class virtue, millennial redemption and the transcendent meaning of America itself, see Manning, *What this Cruel War was Over*, 39-51, Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress*, esp. 97-102, and Jim Cullen, *The American Dream: A Short History*, 44-9, 73-96.
31. Boston, Massachusetts, *Daily Advertiser*, 7 November 1862; *New York Times*, 10 November 1862. For election returns, see *Tribune Almanac of 1862*, 50-62. Republican gains and losses are interpreted in McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom*, 146-54, Bruce Tap, "Race, Rhetoric, and Emancipation: the Election of 1862 in Illinois," *Civil War History* 39 (1993), 101-25; Nicole Etcheson, "The War Democrats' Big Night," *New York Times*, 18 October 2012.
32. Resolutions from a meeting in the Town of Blackstone, 1 May 1861, quoted in Andrew Elmer Ford, *The Story of the Fifteenth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, 1861-1864* (Clinton, Mass.: Press of W.J. Coulter, 1898), 30. Charles Sumner, "The Proclamation of Emancipation: Its Policy and Necessity as a War Measure for the Suppression of the Rebellion," quoting William Cowper, "The Task," in *The Works of Charles Sumner* (15 vols: Boston, Lee and Shepard, 1873), 7: 191. George Bancroft, quoted in Lowell, Massachusetts, *Daily Citizen*, 23 October 1862.

33. Full analysis of the election can be found in Dale Baum, *The Civil War Party System: The Case of Massachusetts, 1848-1876* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 55-69. Data on GOP declines calculated from Inter-University Consortium of Social and Political Research, "United States Historical Election Returns, 1824-1968: Election Returns for Massachusetts, 1856-1895, and the *Tribune Almanac*. Casualty rates and soldier residences from the *American Civil War Research Database*, Massachusetts regimental casualty history reports for Antietam. "Funeral of Roxbury Soldiers," and "Third District People's Senatorial Convention," in *Boston Advertiser*, 28 October 1862.
34. Quotes from Harrisburg, *Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph*, 13 October 1862, and Pittsburgh *Gazette*, 26 September 1862. For charges that Hughes favored secession, see Philadelphia *Press*, 3 October 1862, and Arnold Shankman, "Francis W. Hughes and the 1862 Pennsylvania Election," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95 (July 1971), 383-93.
35. Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, *Valley Sprit*, 8 October 1862; Democratic Party campaign resolutions, reported in Philadelphia *Press*, 7 July 1862; Clearfield, Pennsylvania, *Democratic Banner*, 23 July 1862. On Cameron's ethical cloud, see *Ibid.*, 23 July 1862, and Mark Neely, Jr., *The Union Divided: Party Conflict in the Civil War North* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), esp. 50-55. Discussion of the state's anti-war and dissenting constituencies can be found in Grace Palladino, *Another Civil War: Labor, Capital, and the State in the Anthracite Regions of Pennsylvania, 1840-68* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), esp. 85-90, and Robert M. Sandow, *Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania Appalachians* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), esp. 61-75.
36. Election results from ICPSR, "Election Returns from Pennsylvania" and the *Tribune Almanac*.
37. Election results from ICPSR, "Election Returns from New York" and the *Tribune Almanac*, 1861 and 1863.
38. "Support arms and Advance," New York *Tribune*, 29 September 1862.
39. Lincoln quoted in John Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (10 vols: New York: Century Co., 1890) 8:115.
40. For Rosecrans and Bragg see Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, 3-10.
41. Details of Vallandigham's arrest and trial are summarized in *Ex Parte Vallandigham* 68 U.S. 243 (1863), and in Michael Kent Curtis, *Free Speech the "People's Darling Privilege: " Struggles for Freedom of Expression in American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 300-338.
42. Rosecrans to Edwin M. Stanton, 7 July 1863, in *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 23, part II, 518. The Tullahoma campaign and the Battle of Chickamauga are given accessible treatments in Woodworth, *Six Armies in Tennessee*, and Earl J. Hess, *The Civil War in the West: Victory and Defeat from the Appalachians to the Mississippi* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 178-93. Ambrose Bierce, "A Little of Chickamauga," (1898) reprinted in Russell Duncan and David J. Klooster, eds., *Phantoms of a Blood-Stained Period: The Complete Civil War Writings of Ambrose Bierce* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 199.
43. Cleveland *Daily Herald*, 12 October 1863. Vallandigham's views were widely circulated in book format. Quote from "The Great Civil War in America," Speech in Congress, 14 January 1863, in Clement Laird Vallandigham, *The Record of Hon. C.L. Vallandigham on Abolition, the Union and the Civil War* (Columbus: J. Walter & Co. 1863), 189. Vote returns from ICPSR, "Election Returns from Ohio," and *Tribune Almanac*, 1861 and 1863. Speech of James Garfield, "On the Confiscation of Property of Rebels," January 1864, Chicago *Tribune*, 18 February 1864. On the election, see Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 118-123. On memoirs, see Robert E. Hunt, *The Good Men Who Won the War: Army of the Cumberland Veterans and Emancipation Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010). On Vallandigham's divisive influence, the disloyalty issue and the political oscillations leading to abolition, see Vorenberg, *Final Freedom*, esp. 143, 167-171.
44. "Antietam: A Soldier's Tribute to a Soldier's Valor: General G.B. McClellan at Antietam," Baltimore *Sun*, reprinted in Atlanta *Constitution*, 17 June 1885.
45. General George Thomas, quoted in Thomas B. Van Horne, *The Life of Major General George H. Thomas* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 213. Van Horne was a chaplain with the 13th Ohio Infantry during the Chickamauga campaign and Chattanooga siege and played an active role in the cemetery's creation.

46. "John Peter Altgeld," *American National Biography*.
47. John P. Altgeld, "Speech on the Battlefield of Chickamauga, September 18, 1895" in H.V. Boynton, comp., *Dedication of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, September 18-20, 1895* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), 239-40.
48. The dedication ceremony and the strong reactions to Altgeld's speech are treated in Timothy B. Smith, *A Chickamauga Memorial: The Establishment of America's First Military Park* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), 58-59.
49. For the postwar commitment of veterans to patriotic and political instruction of the civilian public and the next generations, see Mary R. Dearing, *Veterans in Politics: The Story of the G.A.R.* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952) and Stuart C. McConnell, *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).