Whitman
and Melville
Write the
Civil War

"THIS MIGHTY CONVULSION"

Edited by CHRISTOPHER STEN & TYLER HOFFMAN

"This Mighty Convulsion"

"This Mighty Convulsion"

WHITMAN AND MELVILLE

WRITE THE CIVIL WAR

CHRISTOPHER STEN & TYLER HOFFMAN,

editors

To our families

Contents

Acknowledgments

"This Mighty Convulsion"

"THIS MIGHTY CONVULSION":
WALT WHITMAN AND HERMAN MELVILLE
WRITE THE CIVIL WAR

CHRISTOPHER STEN & TYLER HOFFMAN

One hundred and fifty years after the most convulsive event in American history, the nation—and the scholarly community in particular—is finally able to claim not one but two major poets of the Civil War: Walt Whitman and Herman Melville. While Whitman's *Drum-Taps* (1865) and Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866) both received considerable recognition at the time of their publication, they were little appreciated or understood.

Whitman's collection met with early resistance because of his practice of writing free verse and his reputation as a poet of sexually suggestive subject matter, but Whitman also had his champions, particularly William O'Connor and John Burroughs, who helped promote his work during his lifetime and after. As a consequence, his reputation as a Civil War poet took root early and grew until, in the 1920s when attitudes about free verse and the human body changed, he began to be widely recognized as America's Civil War poet.

By contrast, Melville had to overcome his reputation as a writer of fiction and travel narratives as well as a deep skepticism about whether, with "his disregard of the laws of verse," he was even capable of writing poetry.[1] Despite the Melville revival of the 1920s, scholarly attention continued to focus on his fiction and avoid his poetry. It is only in the past quarter-century that his poetry—and his Civil War poetry in particular—has received anything like the critical and popular attention enjoyed by Whitman in earlier generations. Thanks to a new appreciation for the complexity of his project and his quirky sophistication as a poet, Melville has finally begun to share the spotlight, in scholarly circles and in the classroom, as one of the two most

important poets of the Civil War. Whitman remains the more popular poet in public circles and in our schools, but Melville the Civil War poet is now better known and his poetry is more widely anthologized and taught in colleges and universities than ever before, if not quite with the same regularity as Whitman's.

As editors of this collection, we believe this is a good time, following the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and the 2013 conference—"Melville and Whitman in Washington: The Civil War Years and After"—in Washington, D.C., honoring the two poets, to consider their Civil War verse side by side and assess their contributions to our understanding of this devastating conflict and the contemporary poetic responses to it. It is our hope that the essays brought together here will add significantly to recent critical appreciation of the skill and sophistication of these poets, growing recognition of the complexity of their views of the war, and heightened appreciation for the anxieties they harbored about its aftermath. At the same time, we believe that these essays will add to critical understanding of the distinctive qualities of these two poets and of their converging and diverging views of the war and its aftermath. While several essays treating the Civil War poetry of the two writers together have appeared in scholarly journals over the past few decades, this is the first book-length study devoted to the poetry of the two authors together.

As nearly exact contemporaries with roots in New York City—both men were born there in 1819—Herman Melville and Walt Whitman lived through the same events leading up to the Civil War, the war itself, and its aftermath. For both of them, these events were not distant memories but freshly felt and informed by newspapers, journals, and other publications like G. P. Putnam's *The Rebellion Record*. While for the most part both wrote retrospectively, the period of retrospection was typically brief, a matter of days or months, though sometimes longer—a year or two. Whitman published his *Drum-Taps*, which originally included fifty-three poems, in 1865, then published eighteen more poems in its *Sequel* (1865–66) for a total of seventy-one poems.[2] Melville, who is rumored to have written most of his poems—a nearly identical number of seventy-two—near the end of the war or immediately after it, published *Battle-Pieces* in 1866. Both men had close-up views of the war; both saw wartime Washington and the Virginia countryside near the bloody ground.

Whitman had already published three editions of *Leaves of Grass* when he published his first Civil War poem, "Beat! Beat! Drums!," a mobilization effort, on September 28, 1861.[3] He probably wrote a few others as well before he headed south to Fredericksburg in late 1862 to look for his brother, George, reported to have been wounded in the battle there. Immediately after, he moved to Washington, where he took on the role of a volunteer day nurse, visiting the camps and hospitals in and around the city while ministering "as sustainer of spirit and body," according to his own estimate, to the needs of "80,000 to 100,000 of the wounded and sick" between 1862 and 1865.[4] Many of the poems Whitman wrote while in residence in Washington, such as "Cavalry Crossing a Ford" and "Bivouac on a Mountain Side," are based on newspaper reports of military activities, while others, such as "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night" and "A Sight in Camp in the Day-break Grey and Dim," adopt a sympathetic, firsthand view that might be imagined or formed as an amalgam of his personal experiences.[5] Still others, such as "Come Up from the Fields Father" and "The Artilleryman's Vision," are clearly the product of an imagined scenario, though in some cases they are also based on stories Whitman heard from sick or injured soldiers while making his rounds in the hospitals.

By contrast, Melville, whose exposure to the war and to wartime Washington was much briefer, came to the city in April 1864, the last year of the war. Hoping to visit troops in the field, he made the trip from New York with his brother Allan and was issued a pass, by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, to "visit the Army of the Potomac" in the area known as the Wilderness, near Culpeper, Virginia.[6] But first he traveled to the Virginia countryside near Vienna with a small scouting party, where he met with young Colonel Charles Russell Lowell (James's nephew) and his young wife, Josephine, who had joined him there (Josephine was the sister of Robert Gould Shaw, the late leader of the famous African American 54th Regiment from Massachusetts). Melville accompanied Charles Lowell and others in an unsuccessful overnight effort to capture the elusive rebel John S. Mosby, an event reported in Melville's lengthy ballad "The Scout toward Aldie." According to Elizabeth Shaw Melville, his wife, he had a face-to-face talk with Ulysses S. Grant, commander of the Northern Army, then headquartered near the Army of the Potomac not far from Culpeper Sta-

tion; their meeting is suggested in the poem "Chattanooga (November 1863)" and a brief appended note. While Melville wrote several other poems for *Battle-Pieces* that drew upon the experience of his 1864 trip to Washington, three in particular—"The Conflict of Convictions," "The Scout toward Aldie," and "Lee in the Capitol"—rely on the imagery of the city, the symbolic center of the War between the States. As close as both men got to the war and its aftereffects, neither one saw any battles firsthand.

As far as we know, the two men never met in Washington, and although they both traveled to Culpeper in the winter of 1863–64, they missed each other there by about three months. They knew of one another by reputation, and as Ed Folsom argues in his essay for this volume, there is some evidence that they were familiar with one another's Civil War poetry. Whitman clearly had prior knowledge of Melville, having reviewed *Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847) when they first appeared, while evidence of Melville's knowledge of Whitman does not appear in the record until very late in Melville's life in correspondence with James Billson, E. C. Stedman, and possibly J. W. Barrs.[7] Both wrote their Civil War poems as Northerners, of course, but Melville was a conservative Democrat and Whitman was a Free Soiler who later identified as a Lincoln Republican.[8] Moreover, despite efforts to treat the North and the South with a semblance of balance, they both opposed secession and favored the Union cause—especially Whitman, for whom the Union was almost a mystical conception. Still, while Whitman was more aggressively pro-Union in the early stages, his views became tempered by his experience caring for both Confederate and Union soldiers in the hospitals ("the very center, circumference, umbilicus, of my whole career," he said).[9] And Melville's fear of the long-term consequences of the North's arrogant domination of the South after the war's end and the need for reconciliation tempered his views toward the South considerably and seem also to have quieted the advocacy of racial tolerance and equality evident in his earlier narratives.

In Whitman's view, as he explained in *Specimen Days*, the "agonistic and lurid" years of the Civil War, especially "1863—'64—'65," were "the real parturition years (more than 1776–'83)" of the nation, this "henceforth homogeneous Union"—a hugely transformative event "best described," he said, by the "word *convulsiveness*" but issuing in

something he wanted to believe would be permanent.[10] Invoking this same term for the national spasm, Whitman echoed Lincoln's remark in an 1864 letter citing God's providential design: "Surely He intends some great good to follow this mighty convulsion, which no mortal could make, and no mortal could stay."[11]

For Whitman the poet and his poetry, the war was transformative as well: "Without those three or four years and the experiences they gave," he wrote, "'Leaves of Grass' would not now be existing."[12] For Melville, too, the war was a cataclysmic occurrence, a monumental national tragedy, but not an isolated event, and it remained to be seen just how transformative it might prove to be. More than anything, Melville continued to worry that the divisions between North and South would continue long after the war. As a student of history, ancient and modern, Melville saw war as part of a recurring, possibly endless, naturalistic cycle of "convulsions," as he suggested in "The Apparition," breaking through the "crust" of time from the "core of fire below." While both writers were anxious to achieve reconciliation between enemies North and South, to use Whitman's term in a poem of that title, Melville was more focused on the practical and emotional challenges of such an achievement in the long term, after the war was over, in the reconciliation of ideologies and cultures North and South, and in the incorporation of the formerly enslaved population into the body politic of the United States. While Whitman wrote just two poems on the subject—"Reconciliation" and the more oblique "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod"—Melville made a concerted effort to treat the two sides in a balanced way throughout his collection. In at least a few poems, such as "Stonewall Jackson (Ascribed to a Virginian)," "Rebel Color-bearers at Shiloh," and "On the Home Guards, who perished in the Defense of Lexington, Missouri," he gave significant attention to the men who fought for the South, and he argued for the North to show forbearance rather than vengeance toward the South after its defeat, particularly in "Lee in the Capitol" and his seven-page prose "Supplement" to *Battle-Pieces*.

In other ways, too, Melville attempted to take the long view of the war in writing about how it had transformed the nation, forcing the "Founder's dream" to flee and becoming a powerful empire, as symbolized by the new "Iron Dome" of the Capitol, then casting "her huge shadow athwart the main," in "The Conflict of Convictions." Like

Whitman, who through his whole career had strived to be the national poet, one who "contained multitudes" and reconciled all differences, all conflicts, within himself, Melville, too, tried to be such a unifier, a poet for the whole nation, in *Battle-Pieces*, but one who was particularly sensitive to the fragility of the peace and the future effects of the divisions that had led to the Civil War in the first place. Still, unlike Whitman, who continued to hone his persona as a national poet in the editions of *Leaves of Grass* published after the war, Melville seems to have abandoned any conscious effort to write as a national poet after the publication of *Battle-Pieces*, though he continued to write poetry—*Clarel*, *John Marr and Other Sailors*, and *Timoleon Etc.*—for the next two and a half decades.

While both poets opposed slavery, what is surprising as well as disappointing for many readers today is the fact that neither one gave much attention to the issue in their collection. Whitman's only poem on the subject is "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," a fifteen-line poem that he wrote two years after the war was over, while in *Battle-Pieces* there is only the still-shorter "'Formerly a Slave,'" identified by Melville in the subtitle as "An idealized Portrait, by E. Vedder, in the Spring Exhibition of the National Academy, 1865," and the less explicit "The Swamp Angel," ostensibly a reference to the "great Parrott gun" employed in the Union Army's bombardment of Charleston, as he explained in a footnote, but symbolically referring to the author's view of the slave as America's "black Angel of Doom."[13] The usual explanation for such relative neglect is that both writers felt preserving the Union, rather than the abolition of slavery, was the principal objective of the North, as it was for the Great Emancipator, Lincoln himself, in the early years of the war. Even Whitman's well-known elegy for Lincoln, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (not included in *Drum-Taps* initially but added to the *Sequel*), makes no mention of the president's achievement in freeing America's enslaved people from bondage, and neither does Melville's lesser-known "The Martyr," which explicitly aims to capture "the people's" response to Lincoln's assassination rather than that of the author himself (Melville, it should be noted, had in fact favored George McClellan over Lincoln in the presidential campaign of 1864).[14]

The poems in Whitman's collection were typically more personal, impressionistic, spontaneous, transparent, and free of standard

poetic devices, while Melville's tended to be more public-minded (as in "The Martyr"), even as they were also typically more philosophical and eccentric in language and prosody. The poet Robert Penn Warren, in an important assessment of the two books dating from the early 1950s, observed that Whitman's poetry is "synthetic" or representational, whereas Melville's is "analytic" and for that reason among others more demanding intellectually.[15] Generally, Whitman's poems fall into categories that take an immediate view of the subject: recruitment and marching songs ("Song of the Banner at Day-Break," "City of Ships"), unnamed or anonymous military scenes ("An Army Corps on the March," "By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame"), death and suffering ("Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," "Dirge for Two Veterans"), and manly affection ("Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice," "Adieu to a Soldier"). Melville's poems, by contrast, take a more distant, retrospective view and focus on actual historical events and personalities: battles ("The March into Virginia, Ending in the First Manassas," "Donelson," "A Utilitarian View of the Monitor's Fight," "Shiloh: A Requiem," "Gettysburg," "Look-out Mountain"), the aftermath of events ("Rebel Color-bearers at Shiloh," "A Grave Near Petersburg, Virginia," "The Apparition"), military officers, North and South (Nathaniel Lyon, McClellan, Stonewall Jackson, Winfield Scott Hancock, James B. McPherson, Mosby), and "Verses Inscriptive and Memorial" (the final section of nineteen poems).

The poems of both poets are notably pictorial, Whitman's often seeming like photographs or simply snapshots, Melville's remindful of sketches or crude paintings, as suggested in the analogy provided by his collection's title, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*. Whitman's poems, with some exceptions (such as "Come Up from the Fields Father"), are mostly the product of a single point of view; Melville's, by contrast, are often polyvocal, reflecting several points of view and a broader effort to speak for the nation as a whole—North and South, officers and enlisted men, military and civilian, young and old, hopeful and pessimistic.[16] Hennig Cohen, who edited an important early publication of *Battle-Pieces* in 1963, was the first to observe that each of the seventy-two poems in Melville's collection was written using a different verse form, "none of which is used more than once."[17] In addition, Melville—who had been reading extensively in the English and European poetic tradition in the decade before writing the poems

in this collection (and in another collection of poetry that was never published and is now lost)—evidently wanted his poetry to reflect that tradition, too, in its mix of forms, references, and subjects.[18] But, as he said self-consciously in the opening lines of "A Utilitarian View of the Monitor's Fight," contrary to his readers' expectations he had no intention of writing conventionally melodic poetry in these poems: "Plain be the phrase, yet apt the verse, / More ponderous than nimble; / For since grimed War here laid aside / His Orient pomp, 'twould ill befit / Overmuch to ply / The rhyme's barbaric cymbal."

Still, despite the fact of Melville's lifelong interest in poetry, *Battle-Pieces* and half a dozen poems published separately (five of them in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine)* seemed to appear out of the blue in 1866.[19] One, the very brief "Inscription for the Dead at Fredericksburg," was published in 1864 in *Autograph Leaves of Our Country's Authors*, a volume intended to raise funds for the U.S. Sanitary Commission in support of the work of Union hospitals; it was not included in *Battle-Pieces*.[20] Most, if not all, of the poems in *Battle-Pieces* appear to date from the last months of the war. In his preface, Melville claimed that "with few exceptions, the Pieces in this volume originated in an impulse imparted by the fall of Richmond" on April 3, 1865. Supporting that assertion, Hershel Parker argues that "there is no hard evidence that Melville wrote any of his Civil War poems in 1861, 1862, or 1863," though he speculates that he may have started writing some of them, particularly some of the inscriptions that "memorialize the slain and battlefields of 1861–63," earlier in the war. In any case, by April 1864 Melville, along with his brother Allan, was in Washington seeking a pass "to visit their cousin Henry Gansevoort in camp in Virginia" on the grounds that "a literary man" like Melville "should have opportunities to see that they may describe." Presumably "by Dec 1865 or Jan 1866 Melville had enough poems in hand for him to arrange for their publication in a book." Looking closely at the dates of the events described in the poems, Parker concludes that they were written between April 1865 and April 1866, the date assigned to "Lee in the Capitol," the last poem in the collection, treating a fictitious event that Melville imagined as happening after Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox, Virginia.[21] All the available evidence, then, suggests that the poems were written over a relatively short period of several months.

Melville claimed in his preface not to have composed or placed his poems with any overall plan or "collective arrangement" in mind but simply intended to offer a subjective account of "a few themes" taken from the "events and incidents of the conflict" as a whole. Working "instinctively," in response to "moods variable, and at times widely at variance" and "unmindful, without purposing to be, of consistency," he claimed that "I seem, in most of these verses, to have but placed a harp in a window, and noted the contrasted airs which wayward winds have played upon the strings." The sequencing of poems in *Battle-Pieces* does have an improvisatory air, but they do follow the chronology of the war while capturing what Hennig Cohen has called a "spatial range" of topics—"North and South, land and sea, soldiers from Maine dying in Louisiana"—that suggests Melville's effort to "encompass and unify the geographical totality of the war" as well as a similarly broad "sociological range" that treats officers and enlisted men from the Union and Confederate armies, "with Negroes and whites, with civilians as well as soldiers, and with both men and women."[22]

Other critics have argued for other sorts of unity in the collection. For Robert Penn Warren, it is an attitude, "the necessity for action in the face of the difficulty of knowing truth"; for William Shurr, it is the ongoing conflict between the "cycle of law" and the "cycle of evil"; for Robert Milder, it is the "reader's shared experience of the war" as an unfolding "national myth" that leads "toward an understanding of history and experience."[23] To be sure, there is an overall narrative trajectory as well, which begins in doubt, anxiety, and foreboding at the start of the war in "The Portent" and "Misgivings," moves through almost four dozen poems detailing the chronology of the conflict, and then reveals the dream of Mother "America" as she looks over the past and into the future before concluding with nineteen poems—sixteen under "Verses Inscriptive and Memorial" plus the long ballad "The Scout toward Aldie," "Lee in the Capitol," and "A Meditation"—and then ending with Melville's carefully argued plea for "forbearance" toward the South in the prose "Supplement."

While his dedication "to the Memory of the Three Hundred Thousand Who in the War for the Maintenance of the Union Fell Devotedly Under the Flag of Their Fathers" clearly shows him as favoring the North and the Union cause, Melville went out of his way in his "Supplement" to emphasize just how important it was for the coun-

try to achieve a lasting resolution to the conflict, now that the fighting had ended, and not attempt to portray Northerners as the sole patriots. Like Whitman, Melville wanted to be a poet for the entire nation; he wanted to contribute to the healing and help bring about a lasting reconciliation. Unlike Whitman, however, he made it clear such reconciliation could happen only if the North adopted a position of true "forbearance" toward the South, white and black: "Let us be Christians toward our fellow-whites, as well as philanthropists toward the blacks, our fellow-men." While his views of the war may have changed between his writing of the dedication (whenever that occurred) and his writing of the "Supplement," they probably did not change much, given the relatively brief period in which he composed the poems and the fact that his intended audience was made up almost entirely of Northerners.

By contrast, Whitman's poems were written over a longer period, from early in the war (or earlier, in the case of certain fragments or poems drafted before the war) to immediately after it, and his views and attitudes clearly changed during that time. His earliest poems, "Beat! Beat! Drums!" (first published in 1861), with its martial rhythms and energetic call to arms, and "Eighteen Sixty-One," celebrating the "robust" start of the conflict and the strength and masculinity of the men heading off to war, enthusiastically promoted the war effort while acknowledging the painful personal sacrifices of volunteer soldiers. However, once he started spending time with wounded soldiers in the hospitals and camps in and around Washington, he tempered his usual rousing style and adopted a more restrained, tender, and intimate tone in poems featuring domestic scenes, as in "By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame," "Come Up from the Fields Father," and "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night."

Whitman occasionally adopted other approaches as well, writing brief imagistic poems, such as "Cavalry Crossing a Ford," "Bivouac on a Mountain Side," and "An Army Corps on the March," that seem inspired by the Civil War photographs of Mathew Brady or Alexander Gardner, and somewhat longer lyrical pieces where he takes on the persona of another, as in "The Wound-Dresser," "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," and "The Artilleryman's Vision." Finally, there are poems, such as "Reconciliation," "Spirit Whose Work Is Done," and "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod," all published in the

Sequel of 1865–66, that reflect on the painful aftermath of the war and the challenge—and promise—of restoring peace to the nation.

Despite its popularity today, Whitman's *Drum-Taps* had an inauspicious start. Although the poems he intended to include in the collection had been mostly finished by mid-1864, Whitman had trouble finding a reputable commercial publisher because of the unsavory nature of his previous work, particularly the poems in "Children of Adam" and "Calamus," with their explicit treatment of sexual matters. Determined to see his most recent collection into print, he told his friend William O'Connor that "I shall probably try to bring it out myself, stereotype it, & print an edition of 500," then sell them on his own in Brooklyn and New York. After some delay, he secured a contract for *Drum-Taps* (with its original fifty-three poems) with the New York printer Peter Eckler on April 1, 1865. Just a few days later, President Lincoln was assassinated. Immediately after that, Whitman began composing his great elegy, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which appeared for the first time in October 1865 in the combined *Drum-Taps and Sequel to Drum-Taps* along with seventeen more poems.

Ironically, it was the addition of "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" that received the most appreciative response from early reviewers and helped carry what limited popularity the collection enjoyed in the early years after the Civil War poems appeared. Otherwise, the early reviews—including ones by William Dean Howells and Henry James—were few in number and far from enthusiastic. Howells branded *Drum-Taps* "inartistic" and therefore a "failure," flowing from a method that did not ennoble its subject matter. Similarly, James took no delight in his reading of the book, calling it a "melancholy task" and finding that it "exhibits the effort of an essentially prosaic mind to lift itself, by a prolonged muscular strain, into poetry." He, too, believed that Whitman did not properly take the full spiritual measure of the war, dwelling instead on its superficial side, and like Howells he felt that the poetry's form was flawed. The "volume is an offense against art," he declared flatly.[24] Of course, Whitman eschewed rhyme and standard meters blatantly in his war poetry and was aware of his own defamiliarizing style, snapping at the reader, in "Did You Ask Dulcet Rhymes from Me?" (later renamed "To a Certain Civilian") in *Drum-Taps*, to "go lull yourself with what you can understand."

In 1866, however, William O'Connor published a popular pamphlet, *The Good Gray Poet: A Vindication*, which made a strong case for the value of Whitman's poetry and his selfless hospital work while condemning Whitman's critics, Interior Secretary James Harlan in particular, for firing Whitman from his job at the time in the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the grounds that he had written an immoral book. Though according to Justin Kaplan it "never lived up to O'Connor's hopes" of advancing "freedom of expression" more generally, *The Good Gray Poet* provided a turning point for Whitman's reputation and helped promote a more sizable following in the late decades of the century, in the United States and England, than he had ever enjoyed before the war.[25] That following, in turn, was further fostered by the poet's Washington friend and admirer John Burroughs, whose 1866 "Walt Whitman and His 'Drum-Taps'" was one of the earliest and most appreciative reviews, along with his more extensive *Notes on Walt Whitman, as Poet and Person* in 1867. In England and America readers were given impetus, in a relatively sanitized form, by William Michael Rossetti's 1868 expurgated British edition of *Poems of Walt Whitman*, containing a new selection and arrangement of the *Drum-Taps* poems that helped the poet construct his own cluster of poems called "Drum-Taps," which appeared in two different forms in the 1870–71 and 1881 editions of *Leaves of Grass*.[26]

The publication of *Battle-Pieces* prompted more than twenty reviews, about half of them showing some appreciation of the poems for being "bold" or "original" but also disparaging them for being rough, discordant, or unmelodious. The reviewer for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* wrote that the collection contained "some" of the "most stirring lyrics of the war," a view shared by writers for the *New York Evening Post* ("These war-lyrics are full of martial fire, and sometimes are really artistic in form"), the *Philadelphia Inquirer* ("they possess considerable merit, and deserve a permanent place in our war literature"), and the *New York Times* ("They all display marked poetic ability," before adding, "although the unusual meters now and then selected give a stiffness to the movement which might have been avoided").[27] Many reviewers, however, including writers for the *American Literary Gazette*, the *Nation*, the *Providence Journal*, and the *Atlantic Monthly* (which contained the Howells review mentioned), found the collection "uncouth in form" and lacking in knowledge of poetic technique,

particularly meter and rhyme.[28] As with Whitman's collection, there were those who also quarreled with the author's knowledge or treatment of his subject, as did the reviewer for the *Springfield Republican*, who claimed that the collection showed a limited "grasp of the causes, purposes and results of the great struggle."[29]

Finally, at least two reviewers found Melville's explicit call, in the "Supplement," for restrained, nonvindictive treatment of the South and his willingness not to insist on "impartial suffrage" for former slaves as a precedent for the Southern states' readmission to the Union to be unacceptable—lacking in appreciation for "absolute justice"—and even "treasonable." The *New York Times* review—by the paper's editor, Henry Raymond, who shared Melville's view and was clearly sympathetic toward the poetry—openly predicted that the Radical Republicans, who controlled Congress, would "pitch . . . the book out of the window" in the unlikely event they happened to read it. Raymond clearly recognized that the reception of Melville's collection was bound to be hostile, particularly in the North.[30] Sales of the book over the twenty years from 1866 to 1886 totaled just 471 copies, "only about 200 more than the number of review copies sent out, leaving the publisher with over 500 copies on hand," according to Hershel Parker.[31]

Although *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces* had their admirers in the earlier decades of the twentieth century, the two collections did not begin to receive serious scholarly and critical attention until the 1960s and early 1970s, after Americans had become preoccupied with the growing civil rights movement and another war, this one in Vietnam, that together were tearing the country apart once again. Though a few exceptions appeared earlier, three scholarly editions of the two collections saw publication at about this time: F. DeWolfe Miller's facsimile reproduction, *Walt Whitman's Drum-Taps and Sequel to Drum-Taps* (1959), Sydney Kaplan's facsimile reproduction of *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1960), and Hennig Cohen's *The Battle-Pieces of Herman Melville* (1963). These were followed by scholarly studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s that examined the two collections together or side by side: Robert Penn Warren's "Introduction" to his Random House edition of *Selected Poems of Herman Melville* (1970), David Hibler's "*Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*: Melville and Whitman on the Civil War" (1969), John McWilliams's "'Drum-Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*: The Blossom of War" (1971), Vaughan Hudson's "Melville's

Battle-Pieces and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*: A Comparison" (1973), and Daniel Aaron's *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War* (1973).[32]

Together, these seminal projects can be said to have initiated the modern revival of the two poets' Civil War writings. Then, two decades later, appeared two important cultural biographies, Stanton Garner's *The Civil War World of Herman Melville* (1993) and David Reynolds's *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* (1995), which carefully explored the poets' Civil War writings in the context of each one's life and times. In the case of Melville, Garner's study was a watershed in the history of scholarly investigation of *Battle-Pieces*. It was soon followed by two astute, probing studies of Melville's command of the Western poetry tradition and the inventive character of his prosody: Helen Vendler's "Melville and the Lyric of History" (1999) and the poet Rosanna Warren's "Dark Knowledge: Melville's Poems of the Civil War" (1999), both reprinted in Richard Cox and Paul Dowling's edition of *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems* (2001).

For Whitman, comparable turning points in the critical evaluation of *Drum-Taps* and its *Sequel* during this time include F. DeWolfe Miller's introduction to the 1959 facsimile edition of *Drum-Taps*; Walter Lowenfels's 1960 *Walt Whitman's Civil War*, which sets poems from *Drum-Taps* alongside other of Whitman's Civil War writings; and two critical essays—Edward Sullivan's "Thematic Unfolding in Whitman's *Drum-Taps*" and Sam Toperoff's "Reconciliation of Polarity in Whitman's *Drum-Taps*"—both of which appeared in 1963. A decade later, two scholarly essays weighed the personal and political factors in the book: John Snyder's "The Irony of National Union: Violence and Compassion in *Drum-Taps*" (1973) and Agnes Dicken Cannon's "Fervid Atmosphere and Typical Events: Autobiography in *Drum-Taps*" (1974).

In the 1980s, a number of book-length studies of Whitman took up in serious ways the poems of *Drum-Taps* as well as the various regroupings of those poems in *Leaves of Grass* beginning with the fourth edition in 1867, including M. Wynn Thomas's *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry* (1987), Betsy Erkkila's *Whitman the Political Poet* (1989), Timothy Sweet's *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union* (1990), and Michael Moon's *Disseminating*

Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in "Leaves of Grass" (1991). In addition, Joseph Cady's critical essay "*Drum-Taps* and Nineteenth-Century Male Homosexual Literature" (1985) offered a new reading of the poems that shed light on their charged sexual politics.

Other notable scholarly critiques in more recent years are Ted Genoways's "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*" (2006–7) and his *Walt Whitman and the Civil War: America's Poet during the Lost Years of 1860–1862* (2009), Michael Warner's "Civil War Religion and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*" (2008), Cristanne Miller's "*Drum-Taps*: Revisions and Reconciliation" (2009), and Cody Marrs's *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War* (2015). At issue in these and other twenty-first-century commentaries on *Drum-Taps* are matters of narrative structure, vision and revision, representation, and historical sensibility.

Another significant development in the history of critical interventions into *Drum-Taps* came in the form of Lawrence Kramer's *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition* (2015), with his introduction and notes. In this edition, Kramer argues forcefully for the integrity of the original book—before Whitman made reorderings and revisions to it—as he situates the poems in the context of the history of the war, its cultural politics, and its rhetorics.

In addition, in 2013, timed to coincide with the sesquicentennial of the war, the ninth international Melville conference—"Melville and Whitman in Washington: The Civil War Years and After"—brought the two war poets together for consideration. Several of the papers presented at the conference were expanded and revised for publication in 2015 in the Melville Society's *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* and, along with other pieces, in 2016 in the electronic Whitman studies journal *Mickle Street Review*.

The essays in this collection, prompted by the richness of the 2013 conference, treat a variety of topics on the Civil War verse of Whitman and Melville, using a number of different approaches, but all speak to the convulsiveness of the Civil War and its long and continuing aftermath. In the collection's opening section, "The Interplay of *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*," Ed Folsom argues that the instability of *Drum-Taps*, with poems constantly being revised and moved in and out of the collection, reflects Whitman's own unsettlement about the meaning of the war and his own final intentions. That instability

also creates difficulty for readers wanting to make "useful or compelling comparisons between Whitman's shifting work" and the more stable text of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*. Despite this difficulty, Folsom advocates for an "uncanny back-and-forth influence" between the two poets and shines a light on each poet's use of a particular phrase—"the foulest crime"—that at the time had cultural currency and that speaks to the complicated cultural and racial politics that continue to challenge us as a nation—a challenge that Whitman and Melville felt keenly. Vanessa Steinroetter addresses the affective power of the "thingness" of objects in a range of Whitman's and Melville's Civil War verse, pointing us to the dynamic of material culture in wartime as it helps manage the work of mourning. As she finds, relics and mementos are not always so straightforwardly consolatory and often have about them an uncontrollable element, exhibiting a tension between what they seem and what they mean, between signifier and signified. This tension or slippage between the object and our ascriptions of meaning to it points to the slippage that occurs between the human body and the object in wartime.

With attention also on material culture, Sarah Thwaites sees that photography provides an analogy for thinking through what she calls the aesthetic of aftermath. The ruin that lies in the wake of war is captured differently, she argues, by the two authors. Melville depicts juxtaposed points of view on war and enlists multiple conflicting voices, creating dialogic tensions that are fraught ethically and morally and resemble the tension between photographic image and caption in published books of photos commemorating the war. This ambivalence goes directly to the ethical confliction that the war produces: there are no easy answers, and, as Folsom also sees, the crimes are manifold. Conversely, Whitman's Civil War poems are not multiperspectival but, rather, take a more unified shot—a selfie, as it were—with the war framed around a central poet-persona, dissolving the tensions that Melville stages. Peter Bellis's comparative study asks why Whitman and Melville felt the need to end their collections with a sequel and a supplement, respectively, rather than with the cessation of the Civil War itself. Extending their collections into the aftermath of the war ran the risk of formally disrupting the narrative of the war and introducing new themes of reconciliation and recovery. Bellis observes that each author moves his text "toward closure but turns away

from it in different ways and for different reasons." Whitman hoped his *Sequel*, which turned "outward from the poetic consciousness into the physical space of the nation" and into the future, would help initiate the process of reunification missing from *Drum-Taps* itself. By contrast, for Melville, reconciliation was being "blocked by the politicized struggle of Reconstruction," which he viewed as "a continuation of the war in a different form."

Opening the next section, "Reimagining *Drum-Taps*," Kyle Barton inspects the smallest of linguistic units in his exploration of Whitman's sly deconstruction of the ideology of war. Arguing that a "violence" hovers over the "relationship between the human body and written language," he shows how Whitman resists what the theorist Elaine Scarry refers to as "redescription," the project of renaming the harsh realities of war and thereby eliding them: human injury and death. Through his careful and canny deployment of words and phonemic structures, Whitman is able to "reclaim the language of the body from the redefinitions imposed upon it by a militaristic culture," working against a conscripting Logos as he points up issues of agency, ideology, and the politics of representation. Adam Bradford dwells on the power of memorial objects in the work of mourning in Whitman by viewing *Drum-Taps* itself as such an object, one designed to help families grieve and find some point to their plight. He reveals the "affective connections" that such artifacts can generate, especially in wartime where closure is often impossible for the surviving loved ones, and the mediation of grief that those artifacts can accomplish. Ultimately, Bradford points to the ways in which Whitman enables "a collaborative process of mourning" through the dynamic of his Civil War poems, which have a wide cultural resonance, "sympathetically uniting individuals across political divides" as people are brought together in common suffering.

Also grappling with the relation of *Drum-Taps* to the difficulties of grief and grieving, Cody Marrs shows how Whitman represents the flux of war by invoking different timeframes in different poems, immersing "the reader in a stunning array of disparate temporalities." As he argues, this use of timeframes points to Whitman's view that the war upset any idea of political harmony and to the pull in many of the poems away from the war and its violence to secular temporalities that assuage and recuperate. He reads Whitman's poems of silent aston-

ishment in *Drum-Taps* as a resistance to contemporaneous statistical thinking about the war and the disorderliness of the poems as a recognition of the felt absence of a teleological history or of any sense of marked progress through the dizzying events between 1861 and 1865.

Reflecting the critical role played by religion in the Civil War, Jonathan Cook opens the third section of the collection, "Reimagining *Battle-Pieces*," by placing Melville's use of the rhetoric of holy war in the context of contemporary Civil War poetry that viewed the Judeo-Christian God as a divine warrior who supported one side in the War between the States or the other. However, unlike most other poets of his time, Melville did so not to suggest God's endorsement of one side over the other or to give voice to popular patriotism but to "emphasize the tragic cost of war in human suffering for the reunited nation as a whole," something Melville accomplished through "various forms of compression, disjunction, equivocation, and juxtaposition." Timothy Marr advances the view that over the course of his career Melville viewed the South as "a source of the noble gentility needed for the United States to prosper as a civilization." Beginning with Melville's lecturing and travels in the South and an examination of his imaginative engagement with the South, he argues that Melville was "honorably attempting to span with sympathetic creativity the most prominent and problematic political division of his lifetime," but that his ultimate failure exposed "both the tragic rupture" of American democracy and "the critical drama of the lost cause of his literary aspirations."

The evenhandedness and recognition of widespread suffering articulated in Cook's and Marr's essays are echoed in the "doubleness" that Christopher Ohge writes about in Melville's enigmatic "The House-top," one of the most frequently anthologized poems from *Battle-Pieces*. Ohge provides a detailed intertextual reading of this poem about the July 1863 Draft Riots in New York City that reveals how its many literary antecedents, allusions, and borrowed metaphors came together in the author's historical imagination to produce a "nuanced view" of the conflict between rioters and local authorities that seems free of partisanship but dwells instead on more profound issues underlying other examples of civil unrest—"the innate depravity of humanity and the lack of thought in the citizenry." The violent but strangely anonymous scene described in "The House-top"

is to be understood as but one "in a series of battles" that would continue to be fought in the years and decades after the Civil War, as proved to be the case not only in the era of Reconstruction and after but on through the civil rights movement and the Black Lives Matter movement in our own time.

Addressing North-South relations immediately after the war, Brian Yothers looks closely at Melville's exemplum of the Moorish maid in "Lee in the Capitol," the postwar poem based on the Confederate general's appearance before the U.S. Senate, an event Melville extended by adding a fictional address to the assembled body. While referencing also Melville's "Supplement," Yothers reads the poem as posing the question of how to deal responsibly with the brute reality of the Civil War and the fact that "potentially admirable men have betrayed the Union," a question Melville addresses by putting into Lee's mouth an anecdote about a Muslim girl in "Moorish lands" who is ordered by her captors to renounce her father and convert to Christianity. Yothers is quick to see the paradox whereby Melville's Lee justifies Southern white feelings with reference to an African model, presenting the "Moorish maid" anecdote as central to our understanding of the racial and religious politics of "Lee in the Capitol" and of *Battle-Pieces* more generally.

The final section, "*Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces* Brought Together," contains a single essay in which Ian Faith delves into the politics of canon formation as it relates to the inclusion and exclusion of Whitman and Melville in Civil War poetry anthologies constructed during, soon after, and long after the war; a list of these anthologies follows his essay. Reading the Civil War poetry anthology as a "political tool," he points up its evolving nature—all the way through the twenty-first century—and contends that the form has much to tell us about the critical tastes and appreciations of different historical periods and about the struggle to negotiate the war vis-à-vis an American identity. Although they approached the war and its effects differently and in markedly different tones, Faith demonstrates that both poets hailed the conflicting impulses behind that event and probed the gaps and fractures in a way that recognized the ongoing cultural work of reparation and healing across racial and regional lines.

The Interplay
of *Drum-Taps* and
Battle-Pieces

{ 1 }

"THE FOULEST CRIME":

WHITMAN, MELVILLE, AND THE

CULTURAL LIFE OF A PHRASE

ED FOLSOM

I n the spring of 1865, Walt Whitman published *Drum-Taps*. Or rather the book had, by the beginning of May, been printed. And then he had some copies bound. And then, unsatisfied with the brief and flawed little poem he had quickly written to acknowledge Abraham Lincoln's assassination in April (which he had squeezed into the volume after it had been set in type), he stopped the binding and decided to add a supplement, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, which he then had printed in October and bound in with the still-unbound sheets of *Drum-Taps*.[1] In the introduction to his 2015 sesquicentennial edition of *Drum-Taps*, Lawrence Kramer, in a bit of hyperbole, claims that "*Drum-Taps* has essentially disappeared as a literary work," that "there has been no modern edition of the book," and that "Whitman changed his mind about the importance of the book," "took *Drum-Taps* in hand and tore it apart." "Most of the texts displaced from the original volumes are still 'there,' somewhere in *Leaves*," Kramer writes, "but they have been housed in artificial contexts that obscure their real import."[2]

Arguments like Kramer's are familiar to those of us who have worked with Whitman's mania for revision; a number of critics want to believe that whatever Whitman did *first* was *best*, so the 1855 *Leaves* (so the arguments go) is better than any edition that followed, or "Sun-Down Poem" is somehow attenuated by "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." But such arguments are problematic for any number of reasons. For one thing, Whitman's still-overlooked manuscripts reveal just how many versions preceded the first publication of any of his poems. And Whitman's first intention is almost always impossible to track beneath the mass of scrawled revisions on his manuscript pages. Furthermore,

his restlessness made him almost immediately begin tinkering with anything that he had set in type, as he did with *Drum-Taps*, altering it while it was being typeset, shuffling poems to make them better fit on the expensive paper he had to purchase when paper prices were at their height, having the plates altered at the last minute to include the poem about Lincoln's death.[3]

So, when critics like Kramer fetishize the "original" text, they miss the important fact that Whitman's works are *always* a moving target. This is what makes reading Whitman criticism from more than twenty years ago (and some much more recent criticism as well) so frustrating: critics talk about *Drum-Taps* as if it's a single instantiated work, when in fact it's a dynamic process of incessant change, multiple instances of *Drum-Taps* (or "Drum-Taps") over a twenty-year transformation, from the time he began writing and organizing it in the early 1860s to its final appearance as a cluster in the 1881 *Leaves of Grass*.

The dynamic nature of *Drum-Taps* is one reason why critics are still having trouble making useful or compelling comparisons between Whitman's shifting work and Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, which, unlike Whitman's self-published and malleable book, was published by Harper and Brothers in August 1866, more than a year after Whitman's first publication of *Drum-Taps*, and, once published, never changed. Like the iron that permeates Melville's poems, *Battle-Pieces* itself was, once in print, unbending in form and content. This fact makes comparing the two texts a very challenging task, because when we try to compare a rapidly changing text to an unaltering one, weird dynamics are generated. While we have no evidence that either author read the other's book, we do know that both authors were well aware of each other, and it seems unlikely—given the reviews of both books and given the fact that they quickly came to be thought of as the major poetic statements emerging from the war—that Whitman and Melville wouldn't have taken a look at their own book's main competition.

Since Whitman's book came out a year ahead of Melville's, it would seem that if one influenced the other, it would be Whitman influencing Melville. So it's feasible to argue that Whitman's "Year of Meteors (1859–60)," which appeared in the 1865 *Drum-Taps* and offered a haunting image of John Brown on "the scaffold in Virginia," might

have had something to do with Melville's decision to start *Battle-Pieces* with "The Portent," a poem he wrote sometime in 1865, which shares with Whitman's poem an ambivalence about this superpolarizing figure and ends by calling "Weird John Brown's" white beard "the meteor of the war."[4] And Whitman's title for his *Sequel*, *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd and Other Pieces*, may have sparked Melville's title, which, as Juana Celia Djelal has noted, plays on the evocative connotation of the term "pieces," which "refers to weaponry, but also to victims of war, its pawns, its fragments and remnants."[5] Similarly, Whitman's *Sequel to Drum-Taps* title page presents its title in figurative letters formed by broken sticks and staffs, with the suggestion that the poems are built out of what he would call, in "Lilacs," "the staffs all splinter'd and broken," "the debris and debris" of the endless war.[6]

However, since Whitman's collection was in continual flux for the sixteen years after it was first printed, there were plenty of opportunities for Melville's stable text to influence Whitman's variable one, as likely was the case with Whitman's "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," written a year after *Battle-Pieces* appeared and included, first, in the short-lived "Bathed in War's Perfume" cluster in the 1871 *Leaves*, then moved to the "Drum-Taps" cluster in 1881. Whitman's poem about an old enslaved woman is an uncharacteristically rhymed and oblique poem ("Who are you dusky woman, so ancient hardly human") that echoes in any number of ways Melville's rhymed and oblique "Formerly a Slave," about an old enslaved woman whose "dusky face" is "Sybiline" like that of Whitman's "dusky . . . fateful woman."[7] There are other examples of this uncanny back-and-forth influence between *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*, all of them together suggestive of a now-silenced and half-buried lost dialogue between Whitman and Melville, but I want here to focus on just one other very telling case.

Both books have been critiqued over the years and especially in recent decades for their reticence (or, in Whitman's case, virtual silence) on the key issue of slavery in the Civil War. Until Whitman's inclusion of "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," slavery was absent in all the versions of *Drum-Taps* but for a passing and bizarre notice of "all the masters with their slaves" as one of "Life's involv'd and varied pageants" in "Pioneers! O Pioneers!"[8] In *Battle-Pieces*, there are numerous references to the issue of race, though most are oddly muted or obscured,

as when in "The Swamp Angel" the giant Parrott rifle known by that name becomes an image of what Stanton Garner calls "black revenge": "A coal-black Angel / With a thick Afric lip."[9] The most direct comment on slavery in *Battle-Pieces*, however, seems for many readers to come at the end of "Misgivings," apparently one of the earliest poems Melville wrote for the book and one that captures the portents of the calamitous war to come. The first stanza ends with a resonant phrase: "The tempest bursting from the waste of Time / On the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime."[10]

This image of the United States as "the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime" has often been commented on in Melville criticism, where it is generally agreed that Melville means by "man's foulest crime" the sin of slavery. Some critics, like Merton Sealts, simply claim it: "in his later *Battle-Pieces* [Melville] would call human slavery 'man's foulest crime.'"[11] Edgar Dryden in his book *Monumental Melville* parses it this way: "For the phrase 'the world's fairest hope' conventionally links America's manifest destiny to Edenic promise, while 'man's foulest crime,' slavery, points to the repetition of that original sin that brings an end to the earthly paradise, . . . expos[ing] America's millennial hope as a misleading myth based on the evasion of the knowledge of slavery."[12] Aaron Kramer, in *Melville's Poetry*, makes a more restrained claim as he discusses the surprising absence of references to slavery in *Battle-Pieces* and notes "a not-quite-spelled-out reference to 'man's foulest crime.'"[13] Robert Milder, however, has made the case that "it is Unionism, not abolition, that *Battle-Pieces* presents as the Northern cause," and Stanton Garner, in his exhaustive account of Melville during the Civil War, follows Milder in reading "the foulest crime" as something quite removed from slavery. "To many modern readers," Garner says, "it has seemed that 'man's foulest crime' must have been slavery, but to a conservative such as Herman the disintegration of the union was the more foul, and he linked that disintegration to the worst crime of all, fratricide." He concludes that the hauntingly unspecific phrase indeed "refers not to slavery but to the fratricidal battle which threatened 'the Founders' dream.'"[14] Most recently, Brian Yothers has recognized the ongoing debate over the meaning of the phrase: "Is 'man's foulest crime' slavery, or secession?" Yothers tries to resolve the debate by arguing that Melville's prose "Supplement" to *Battle-Pieces* "suggests that this is a false choice. Se-

cession for Melville was the culmination of the rejection of equality embodied in slavery, so there was no reason to distinguish between the two in the description of 'man's foulest crime.' . . . The tension between Melville's Unionism and his anti-racism is a modern one, and not an inherent part of this poem."[15]

Five years after *Battle-Pieces* appeared, Whitman wrote a short poem, a kind of epitaph for Lincoln, called "This Dust Was Once the Man," a poem he published in his book *Passage to India*. That book, like *Drum-Taps*, was eventually redistributed and absorbed into *Leaves of Grass* in another remarkably messy and complex story of bibliographic volatility. The poem eventually ended up in the "Memories of President Lincoln" cluster, with Whitman's other poems on Lincoln, a cluster that is often erroneously conflated with the "Drum-Taps" cluster that precedes it (just as the October 1865 *Sequel to Drum-Taps* is usually conflated with the May 1865 *Drum-Taps*). One sign of just how unstable, complex, and confusing the continual reformation is of the varied groups of poems Whitman named "Drum-Taps" manifests itself in an uncharacteristic error in Harold Blodgett and Sculley Bradley's usually reliable notes in their *Comprehensive Reader's Edition* of *Leaves*, where they say that "This Dust" "remained unchanged when it was transferred to 'Drum-Taps' in 1881."[16] The poem, in fact, was never in "Drum-Taps" and is the only poem in "Memories of President Lincoln" that did not originally appear in the 1865 *Drum-Taps* and its 1865–66 *Sequel*.

But "This Dust" does show evidence that Whitman had read Melville's *Battle-Pieces*, because he borrows the resonant phrase "the foulest crime":

> This dust was once the man,
> Gentle, plain, just and resolute, under whose cautious hand,
> Against the foulest crime in history known in any land or age,
> Was saved the Union of these States.[17]

The phrase has received less attention in Whitman criticism than Melville's use of it has in Melville criticism. When it does get mentioned, however, it is almost always assumed that "the foulest crime" is, for Whitman, not slavery but either secession itself or the assassination of Lincoln. The phrase, says Edward Huffstetler in *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, refers, "of course, to the secession."[18]

Roy Morris, in his study of Whitman and the Civil War, reads "the foulest crime" as "a heartbreaking civil war that filled the hospitals of the capital with the ruined bodies of beautiful young soldiers."[19] George Anastaplo argues that Whitman was concerned only with the "dismemberment of the Union" and, unlike Lincoln, not with slavery issue at all, and that therefore "the foulest crime" in "This Dust" indicates "nothing explicitly about the slavery issue."[20] Muriel Rukeyser and, later, Vivian Pollak insist that "the foulest crime" is the assassination itself.[21] Martha Nussbaum, however, surprisingly contends that "the great political theme" of Whitman's Civil War and Reconstruction poetry is precisely "the overthrow of slavery," that "racial hatred is the central problem to which Whitman's new conception of love is addressed," and that his use of "the foulest crime" in "This Dust" "leaves no doubt of Whitman's intense feeling on this matter."[22] Helen Vendler makes an equally strong claim for understanding the phrase as referring to slavery in her detailed and ingenious reading of the poem:

> The very peculiar syntax of this epitaph reserves the main subject and verb of the subsidiary adjective clause—"The Union of these States was saved"—to the very end, and inverts the normal word order to "Was saved the Union of these States," thereby putting the Union in the climactic syntactic position of national value, placed even above the actions taken to save it. Tucked in between the presiding cautious hand and its salvific agents is the averted horror: the continuation of slavery. Slavery is here named by euphemism, as though its proper name should never again be uttered in human hearing. It becomes, superlatively, "the foulest crime," and it is placed in a cosmic spatio-temporal field: it is "the foulest crime known in any land or age."[23]

Mark Neely, however, rejects Vendler's reading and finds her claim that Whitman is naming slavery by euphemism to be specious. Rather, he says, "Not mentioning slavery specifically was a way to emphasize what was really important to Whitman and what is thunderously affirmed in the last line of the epitaph: saving the Union of these states. Indeed, can we really be certain that the 'foulest crime known in any land or age' … referred to slavery: Might it not have referred to secession and treason?"[24]

What can we do with this remarkable set of contradictory claims about what Melville and Whitman could have meant by the phrase that both employ at a key moment of summing up what the war was fought over? It's as if at the key moment of revelation, no one can agree on what the revelation means, even if everyone is individually quite sure he or she knows. Could it be that the ambiguity of the phrase was not created by Melville's and Whitman's vague contextualizing of it but, rather, was built into the cultural use of the phrase during the war and the years immediately following? If we look at the always illuminating (if somewhat unreliable) Google Ngram Viewer graph of the usage of "foulest crime" in the nineteenth century, we can see a precipitous increase in the 1850s and early 1860s, culminating in the year of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, followed by a precipitous decline.[25] And if we read through newspapers and magazines of the period, we find that the phrase does indeed have a bewildering array of referents, from murder to suicide to the Crucifixion to prostitution to piracy to anti-Irish violence to the Mexican-American War.

It is as if the phrase, for a while, was in vogue as the idiom that best expressed ultimate opprobrium about anything. It was used to refer to the federal government's attack on states' rights as well as to refer to its opposite—secession.[26] It was invoked in the U.S. Congress to describe Lincoln's assassination.[27] And, of course, it was often used to refer to slavery, appearing frequently in such publications as *The Liberator* or invoked by Henry Wilson in his 1865 *History of the Antislavery Measures of the Thirty-Seventh and Thirty-Eighth United-States Congresses, 1861–65*, where Wilson excoriates both North and South as "guilty participators" in "human slavery," "the foulest crime that ever blackened the character of a nation."[28] Occasionally, the phrase was used in contexts that are every bit as ambiguous as Whitman's and Melville's poems, as when Frederick Douglass in his *Life and Times* recalled what Lincoln had endured and accomplished: "it was soon to be seen that he had conducted the affairs of the nation with singular wisdom, and with absolute fidelity to the great trust confided in him. A country, redeemed and regenerated from the foulest crime against human nature that ever saw the sun!"[29] Here we might assume that "the foulest crime" is slavery, but in context it is difficult not to hear secession as the referent, as the thing from which the country was redeemed and regenerated.

Google Ngram Viewer graph for appearances of
"foulest crime" in print, 1800–1900.

But the phrase was also marshaled by leading publications like the *New York Times* in ways that left no doubt about just what "the foulest crime" was. Reporting in April 1861 during the first weeks of the war, the *Times* laid out the way secession, not slavery, was "the foulest crime": "The attitude which the Government of the United States holds towards the traitorous combination that seeks its destruction is now thoroughly understood. It is the majesty of the Law dealing with the foulest crime in History. Nothing is now more obvious than that the question of Slavery is wholly detached from the issue." The article goes on to explain how Lincoln, by emphasizing how the Union will "avoid any destruction of or interference with the rights of property," has made it clear to "the great mass of people in the South that Slavery has nothing to do with this controversy—that it is no part of the purpose of the Government to interfere with it in any way, or to disturb the social relations of the Southern States."[30] Whitman, who would become a Civil War correspondent for the *Times*, may well have lifted his phrase "the foulest crime in history" directly from this article (as he indeed lifted many phrases from newspapers and magazines for a number of his Civil War and other poems) and drawn reinforcement for it from Melville's use of it in *Battle-Pieces*.

What the *Times* piece underscores is that for there to be a crime, there must first be a law that is violated. And this interaction and debate between the North and the South over which side was violating the law—and which law was being violated—form of course the political story of the Civil War. There were plenty of crimes on both sides, but what law had to be violated to create "the *foulest* crime"? Slaves

were property under the law, and property was protected under the law and the Constitution. So owning slaves was not against the law. The Constitution protected slavery, and Lincoln, until the Emancipation Proclamation (and even afterward), was willing to conclude the war without ending slavery. The foulest crime from the Union perspective was breaking the union that the Constitution created and protected. But, for many, there was a higher law than the Constitution, and many abolitionists thus attacked the Constitution, as did William Lloyd Garrison, who called it "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell."[31] For the antislavery forces, the *foulest* crime was slavery itself, a crime against humanity and freedom, a crime that demanded the violation of lower and corrupt constitutional, national, and state laws.

Deak Nabers, in his brilliant book *Victory of Law*, argues that John Bingham's writing of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was the great poetic act of the nineteenth century, because it managed to find a language that would balance and join the competing notions of law that had severed the nation. Bingham wrote an amendment that seemed at once to *restore* the nation and to *transform* it, an amendment that seemed both conservative and radical, one that used only the language of the Constitution in order to purge it of its slaveholding compacts and its autonomous states and to instill the higher law of the Bill of Rights as a national law that created a national citizenry that trumped states' abilities to constrict and control rights. Nabers points out that "while the Union's two chief war aims—unity and emancipation—can both be articulated in terms of a defense of the law, neither of the two actually makes very much sense in terms of the legal order that makes the defense of the other intelligible." When Melville defines the nation as "the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime," he articulates the paradox of the Civil War and law. If the South is guilty by being linked to the fair hope of the Union, then, Nabers says,

> . . . the crime of which the South seems guilty is not exactly the crime of treason, and the role the war plays in regard to this Union is not exactly to restore it. If we understand the South's "crime" to be the crime of secession, it is easy enough to see how the war could revolve around "union" and the constitutional law

that supports it. But as we begin to imagine that what separates the South from the North is the South's guilt with respect to the crime of slavery, rather than the crime of secession, it becomes increasingly hard to desire that the two halves be unified: why should we want to link man's fairest hope to his foulest crime?[32]

In 2015, Andrew Delbanco wrote in the *New York Review of Books* about "The Civil War Convulsion," and he quotes an intriguing phrase Whitman used in *Democratic Vistas*, as he recalled how during the war "the People" were "insolently attack'd by the secession-slave-power." Delbanco observes that "the compound phrase 'secession-slave-power' was a slippery one—as if [Whitman] couldn't decide whether the Civil War was about restoring the Union or destroying slavery, or, if it was some of both, what exactly [was] the relation between the two."[33] Here we see Whitman trying to coin a term for the way in which "the foulest crime" seemed a tentacular phrase, creeping across legal and moral borders and attaching itself to other foul crimes.

Whitman may have borrowed "the foulest crime" from Melville, though both could easily have tapped into the active cultural life that the phrase was experiencing during the years in which they wrote their poems. In the culture, as in Melville's and Whitman's poems, the phrase attached and reattached itself to different crimes that seemed, by the end of the war, to have coalesced into one crime: secession, it became increasingly clear, could not be repaired without expunging slavery. So, a century and a half later, we are beginning to realize that our critical confusion over Melville's and Whitman's use of the phrase is part of a much larger cultural confusion, and that all the critics who have glossed the phrase in Melville and Whitman have been both right and wrong, identifying one facet of the foul crime while missing the fact that it was only a facet of a crime so foul it would require amending the Constitution in a way that actually rewrote it. And today, in major court cases—including challenges to the Voting Rights Act— that work their way to the Supreme Court, as well as in the traumatic encounters of law, authority, and race we are confronted with in Baltimore, Ferguson, Cleveland, and elsewhere, the illuminating and troubling ambiguities of "the foulest crime" continue to resonate through these still tenuously united states.

{ 2 }

MATERIALITY IN THE
CIVIL WAR POETRY OF
MELVILLE AND WHITMAN

VANESSA STEINROETTER

From treasured mementos and keepsakes to souvenirs and trophies from the battlefield, Americans seized on material objects in their attempts to make sense of the carnage and disruptions of family and home life caused by the Civil War.[1] As Teresa Barnett explains in her study of relics in nineteenth-century American culture, "collecting Civil War artifacts quickly became a mass pastime in a way that no American relic collecting tradition has been before or since."[2] In addition to this collecting impulse, the need to retain emotional connections to far-flung loved ones drove Americans to turn to material objects such as letters, photographs, and locks of hair in search of consolation and a physical connection to the absent individual. Such objects brought the war home in a literal, physical sense.

Furthermore, during the war, the mass maiming and annihilation of human bodies drew attention not only to the materiality of the human body itself—with the shocking realization that it might simply be another thing—but also to the feelings of impotence and frailty engendered by the physical absence of loved ones whose living bodies or dead remains might never return. Tropes of voids and absence—the vacant chair, the empty sleeve, the unmarked grave, the missing body—fill the poems and short fiction of the Civil War, just as comparisons between soldiers and things (e.g., flags, letters, photographs) proliferated.[3] In such a cultural landscape marked by gaps and blankness, it is thus not surprising that readers and writers would turn to tangible objects in the hope of obtaining meaning. Among those writers intrigued by the deep resonance of the material object in a time of war were Herman Melville and Walt Whitman. By fore-

grounding the materiality of war-related objects such as flags, rifles, letters, and notebooks in their works, these two writers reflect carefully on their symbolic and affective powers.

This turn to the material object in Civil War America attests to a pervading sense of the weakness of words to capture the awful reality of the war.[4] In contrast to words, things were often presented as "mute but eloquent," a common trope that emphasized the "object's inert thingness" and its inability to "self-consciously represent the war in any codified expressive medium," but that also cast the material object as a more eloquent and evocative record of the war than verbal testimonies.[5] Such attitudes, however, coexisted with competing, more ambiguous or skeptical views of material objects as promising but ultimately falling short of providing stable meaning or emotional comfort. This spectrum of attitudes toward material culture, which provides key contexts for the Melville and Whitman poems discussed here, is illustrated vividly, for instance, in the autobiographical account of J. Howard Wert, a Civil War veteran who fought in a Pennsylvania militia unit at Gettysburg and collected artifacts left on the battlefield by the soldiers.

In his account, Wert describes writing down his recollections of the battlefield in a room containing material reminders of the war: "cartridge box and cap-box, bayonet and sword, canteen and canister, with a hundred other relics gleaned twenty-three years ago from the fields and woods." These objects "look mutely down upon the writer." However, instead of generating patriotic feelings, they "vividly recall the sorrowful appearance of the bloated and blackened dead that lay close beside."[6] These things, introduced into the domestic environment as relics or souvenirs, thus fail to channel the viewer's responses into neatly contained categories of appropriate sentimental response. Rather, they conjure images and memories of bloodshed, death, and decay. The meanings of the objects, then, stand, at least in part, in irreconcilable tension to the presumed intentions of the collector as well as to a sentimentalized domesticity.[7] Both Melville and Whitman similarly engaged with notions of the power of material objects to evoke strong emotions as well as with notions of the human attempt to control or contain this affective force through cognitive mastery.

To understand fully what drew Melville and Whitman as well as many other Americans to material objects during the Civil War, it is

helpful to enlist the terminology of recent scholarship on vital materi-alisms and object-oriented ontology. At the heart of Wert's impulse to collect souvenirs and trophies from the battlefield and underlying his response to the memories conjured up by these objects is a recog-nition of something akin to what Jane Bennett calls "thing-power": the idea that objects can "reveal themselves to be potentially forceful agents . . . vibrant things with a certain effectivity of their own, inde-penden[t] from the words, images, and feelings they provoke in us."[8] At the same time that nineteenth-century writers sensed this affec-tive power of the object, some also remained skeptical about humans' ability to enlist and fully control it. In such attitudes, which recog-nize the limitations of attempts at mastering, understanding, and representing material reality, we can detect traces of what Timothy Morton terms the material object's essential "withdrawnness" and what Graham Harman recognizes as "the relationless depth of ob-jects, incommensurable with any signs." What this means, as Harman explains, is that "objects resist all forms of causal or cognitive mas-tery." Therefore, "any attempt to translate this reality into masterable knowledge for logocentric purposes will fail, precisely because being is *deeper* than every logos."[9]

The particular objects highlighted in Melville's and Whitman's poems reveal the ways in which both authors clearly and deliberately invoke rhetorically the sentimental object, but in doing so they ques-tion the possibility of containing and controlling that object's great af-fective power in culturally prescribed forms. Indeed, the unruly emo-tions and memories evoked by the objects in these poems not only disrupt the neat boundaries between military and domestic spheres as imagined by popular sentimental literature and culture of the Civil War, but they also illustrate the limitations of material artifacts of the war to assist in processing its psychological and emotional toll. In other words, certain objects in their poems intrude their chaotic and uncontainable meanings upon the human actors and draw attention to the volatility of the mnemonic and affective powers typically as-cribed to them. The thingness of the material object, the "irreducibly strange dimension of matter" that Bennett identifies, means that it cannot be fully subsumed into sentimental forms that seek to chan-nel the viewer's affective response into culturally accepted forms of mourning or recuperation.[10]

While critics have noted Melville's interest in the inadequacy of lists or monuments to represent or honor the human individuals whose deaths they record, his engagement with material culture in *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866) has so far not received much scholarly attention.[11] Four poems in particular reveal Melville's sustained engagement with the symbolic and rhetorical functions of material objects from the war: "Presentation to the Authorities, by Privates, of Colors captured in Battles ending in the Surrender of Lee," which has its thematic counterpart in "Rebel Color-bearers at Shiloh," and "The Returned Volunteer to his Rifle," which pairs with "The Released Rebel Prisoner." In these poems, Melville explores the roles that objects play in battle and in the aftermath of war, as well as the question of how these things succeed or fall short in capturing the war's toll.

In "Presentation to the Authorities," Melville addresses the theme of flags captured from the enemy as trophies, material objects that in Teresa Barnett's words "overtly assert their triumph or the humiliation of the enemy."[12] The "flags of armies overthrown" are laid before an "altar," here the captors' country, as trophies.[13] The flags thus function as surrogates for the soldiers, regiments, and armies that have been defeated in battles, which as the poem's title suggests were desperate last stands against the inevitable surrender of Robert E. Lee. In fact, this equation of flags and soldiers' bodies is developed further in the poem "Rebel Color-Bearers at Shiloh," where the battle flags of the Confederate soldiers blow about them as "living robes" that "fold them as in flame divine."[14] The boundaries between flags and bodies are blurred in both poems, as the individual identities of the soldiers are subsumed under the larger national causes represented by the flags. Read together, "Rebel Color-Bearers at Shiloh" and "Presentation to the Authorities" imply that the moment of laying down the battle flags, which signals and symbolizes the moment when the Confederate soldiers yield, can be read as a metaphorical divestment of the soldiers, rendering them vulnerable and stripping them of their pride and honor.

In "Presentation to the Authorities," the fate of the battle flags also metonymically represents the men fighting under them, with the banners of the Southern regiments falling "beneath the sovereign one." Now, captured by the opposing forces and presented to the "authori-

ties," these flags are laid before the representatives of the United States government, thereby functioning as tangible, visible markers of the much more abstract notion of victory and the end of the Confederacy. As the flags are presented, the speaker comments indirectly on the parallels between the captured flags and the fate of the soldiers fighting the war. Just as the flags are laid before the "altar" of the captors' country, so the speaker and his fellow citizens and soldiers could "lay [their] lives down" for their country's cause. Slightly later, the speaker also remarks on the physical absence of other "comrades," who now "lie low," thereby suggesting that while the captured objects can be presented as trophies and symbols of victory, there is a deeply felt material absence of human bodies. The captured flags, then, must serve as material markers of a triumphant "just cause" and as monuments, however inadequate, that draw attention to the sacrifice of soldiers' lives.[15]

The relationship of soldiers to material objects receives further scrutiny in another set of poems, "The Returned Volunteer to his Rifle" and "The Released Rebel Prisoner." In these, it is the rifle on which much of the attention focuses, as both poems explore how the war has changed or affected the soldiers' respective views of their homes and of their resumed identities as civilians. In "The Returned Volunteer," Melville depicts a celebratory scene of homecoming: a soldier who has been mustered out has returned to his parental home and places his rifle, which has served him well throughout his military career, above the fireplace in a symbolic renunciation of further violence and warfare. This scene was a common one in Northern homes after the war, as many soldiers returned with rifles, muskets, canteens, bayonets, and other accoutrements that had been used in battle. Many returned soldiers proudly displayed such objects at home, for instance by mounting their rifles above the hearth.[16] The act of retiring the rifle suggests the former soldier's reintegration into civilian life, and placing the rifle above the hearth, the conspicuous center of the ideal mid-nineteenth-century American home, conveys a sense of pride, with the rifle serving as a kind of trophy or souvenir. With the ceremonial hanging of the rifle over the hearth, the speaker marks the end of his service and introduces his memories of battle (in this case Gettysburg) and of war into the formerly idealized haven.

Such symbolic acts of closure seem even more poignant consider-

ing that many soldiers during the Civil War, especially although not exclusively in the South, were denied such an opportunity. This latter point is made by "The Released Rebel Prisoner," which focuses on a Southern soldier wandering a Northern city after the end of the war. Here the rifle is absent, a point that the poem emphasizes by juxtaposing the formerly imprisoned, disarmed, and thus symbolically emasculated rebel with the Northern soldiers whom he sees proudly bearing their own rifles home as war trophies: "He marks them bronzed, in soldier-trim, / The rifle proudly borne; / They bear it for an heirloom home, / And he—disarmed—jail-worn." Similarly, there is no home or hearth to which the prisoner can return: "Home, home—his heart is full of it; / But home he never shall see; / Even should he stand upon the spot: / 'Tis gone!—where his brothers be."[17] With no rifle or "heir-loom" and no home, the rebel prisoner is doubly denied a scene such as that described in "The Returned Volunteer to his Rifle." Given the rich symbolism attached to a soldier's ability to retain and display his rifle after the end of the war, it is unsurprising that hanging a rifle or other object over the hearth became a popular trope in Civil War literature and pictorial art, including Winslow Homer's *Thanksgiving Day—Hanging Up the Musket*, published December 23, 1865, in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

In Melville's poem, the sentimental attachment to the rifle displayed by the volunteer suggests that, as a thing, the firearm exerts a certain power over the soldier as he contemplates it. The rifle, which the speaker identifies as being "to patriot-memory dear," becomes a romanticized object associated with patriotism and victory. The aspect of the rifle, however, as a material object displayed above the hearth also triggers a series of memories and associations in the returned volunteer that circulate between the home front and the battlefront, thereby showing the impossibility of separating the two spheres. As he regards the rifle, the speaker muses, "Little at Gettysburg we thought / To find such haven; but God kept it green."[18] To the volunteer, the rifle not only embodies abstract or romanticized notions, such as patriotism and victory, but it also evokes very specific memories of battles in which the soldier relied on this very weapon for survival. Looking at the rifle now above his hearth, the soldier is cast back in his memories to the Battle of Gettysburg, far from the "banks of the Hudson," which functioned as an edenic image of home during the war. The act

THANKSGIVING DAY—HANGING UP THE MUSKET.

Winslow Homer, Thanksgiving Day—Hanging Up the Musket,
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, *December 23, 1865.*
Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.

of placing the rifle over the hearth, then, can be read as joining two aspects of the soldier's identity perceived as separate—geographically and emotionally—and formerly incompatible.

While the celebratory impulse with which the soldier mounts the rifle is an important theme of the poem, the meanings of the rifle as a material object within the poem exceed those of an heirloom or trophy. By bringing the rifle home, the returned volunteer has changed the aspect of the hearth itself. The rifle now brings back memories of the war that blur the perceived gap or boundary between home and battle-front. While he may have mounted the rifle as a symbolic gesture to mark the completion of his military service and the victorious outcome of the war, the object's power and effect on the soldier cannot be reduced to or contained by the human intentions behind its installation. There is an irreducible thing-power, to use Jane Bennett's term, that exists independent of human intentions and purposes, and Melville's poem gestures toward a recognition of this alterity in showing how the returned volunteer is thrown back in time and place through the involuntary and not always pleasant memories triggered by the rifle.

The idea of the rifle's agency or affect as a material object is further illustrated when the speaker apostrophizes the rifle. The speaker personifies the rifle in his memories, addressing it as a former companion and fellow soldier, whom "at last" he can greet in a space far removed from scenes of battle. While the use of the pronoun "we" here could alternately refer to the volunteer's fellow soldiers as well, the speaker's direct addresses to the rifle in lines such as "How oft I told thee of this scene" strongly imply that he views the rifle itself as a former fellow soldier. In fact, the rifle can be read as a metaphorical externalization of that part of the volunteer's identity that is tied to the military sphere, battle, and wartime deprivation. The physical proximity necessary for holding the rifle when aiming and firing further establishes an intimacy between soldier and object reminiscent of the relationship between flags and color-bearers in "Rebel Color-Bearers at Shiloh." Just as the flags wrap the soldiers in an intimate embrace as they are carried, the rifle is nestled firmly into the crevice of the soldier's arm and shoulder, rather than simply held in his hand.[19] This intimacy likewise raises the possibility that the flag or rifle becomes an extension of the soldier during battle and therefore can be treated or even addressed as a surrogate for the soldier.

Directly addressing the rifle in the poem, the narrator invites it to "Repose" and "Long rest!"[20] The rhetorical move of apostrophizing the material object of the rifle here further develops the theme of the changed relationships between human beings and certain material objects as a result of the war. Placing the rifle on an almost equal level with the soldier suggests either an elevation of the material object or a reduction of human importance vis-à-vis inanimate things. Thus, by drawing attention to the materiality of the rifle and its ambiguities as well as using personification and apostrophe to gesture toward the agency and affective power of the inanimate object, Melville captures the ideas both of the intimate and symbolic connections that the Civil War established between soldiers and things and of thing-power, the ability of the material object to affect or even stand in for human lives.

Whitman shared Melville's fascination with the affective powers of particular war-related objects. In the poem "Come Up from the Fields Father," first published in *Drum-Taps* in 1865, Whitman focuses extensively on the materiality and affective power of a sent letter. The poem dramatizes the traumatic experience of a family receiving news of their son's injury through that letter. Rather than the cherished last letter of a wounded soldier, the letter in "Come Up from the Fields Father" is an unwelcome missive written by a stranger. Still holding great affective power, the letter becomes a destabilizing agent that permanently alters the domestic space and blurs the imagined boundary between domestic and military spheres during the war.[21] As becomes evident in the poem's treatment of the subject, the affective power and ultimate meaning ascribed to the material object cannot be contained within prescribed sentimental forms. As in Melville's poem, the instability of the material object's meaning in Whitman's poem comes to mirror and thereby visualize the war's lasting psychological impact on the individual who is unable to fully process the experience of war and war-related suffering or pain, whether in the case of a soldier as in Melville's poem or a civilian as in Whitman's. Similarly, the meanings of the letter as material object remain, to use Bennett's words, in "excess of the human meanings, designs, or purposes they express or serve."[22]

"Come Up from the Fields Father" paints a pastoral scene of a family working on an Ohio farm in an autumnal setting, the mother and adult daughter situated within the domestic space and the father

"down in the fields." The tranquility of the scene is interrupted by the "daughter's call": "Come up from the fields, father, here's a letter from our Pete; / And come to the front door, mother—here's a letter from thy dear son." A letter has arrived from the son of the family, who enlisted in the army and now lies in a military hospital seriously wounded after a "*cavalry skirmish*." The first stanza immediately introduces not just the material object of the letter that will assume a central role in the poem but also the fact that the letter invades the domestic space of the farmhouse. It is not to the field that the letter is carried; rather, the father and the mother are called to the front door of the house—the father from outside, the mother from within. The scene of the letter being opened and read is repeatedly identified as being the threshold to the house, as the daughter calls her parents to come to the "front door" twice and to "the entry" once. Even after the mother has read the letter, she leans "by the jamb of a door," and the family is described as standing "at home at the door" in a later stanza that juxtaposes this domestic setting with the son's fate.[23]

The intrusion of the letter into the family's home marks not only a disruption of the peace of the pastoral scene sketched earlier but also, importantly, a deliberate shift in perspective from a panoramic view of villages, orchards, and the sky to a concentration on one small object, the letter. It is in this scene, too, that the reader realizes that even though the poem's title suggests a focus on the father, it is the mother who becomes the focal point once the letter is presented. The materiality of the letter and envelope is foregrounded in the poem as Whitman describes the mother's experience of receiving the envelope, opening it, and trying to read the message. Rather than presenting the reader with the content of the letter, the speaker emphasizes the characters' attempts to make meaning out of paratextual clues:

Open the envelope quickly;
O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is sign'd;
O a strange hand writes for our dear son—O stricken mother's
    soul![24]

The letter has been written in the name of the son but by a stranger. It is this "strange hand" that instantly conveys to the mother more meaning than the words she reads, which start to swim before her eyes. The shape and style of the handwriting convey this message to

her, not the words or the name signed at the end. The letter has carried its grim news into the home not merely or even primarily through words but through its physical appearance. Even though written in a "strange hand," the letter has not lost its power to conjure strong emotion in its reader; on the contrary, it takes on a terrible, powerful significance as the evocative power typically associated positively with the letter as keepsake is inverted and strikes the mother like a blow:

> All swims before her eyes—flashes with black—she catches the
>   main words only;
> Sentences broken—*gun-shot wound in the breast, cavalry*
>   *skirmish, taken to hospital,*
> *At present low, but will soon be better.*[25]

Notably, it is before the mother "catches the main words" that her emotional disturbance and shock are brought about. After seeing that the letter has been written by someone other than her son, her soul is "stricken" and "all swims before her eyes" and "flashes with black." The physical object of the letter has shattered the domestic peace, disrupting the mother's sensory perceptions and her ability to make sense of her surroundings, including the meaning of the words in the letter. The phrase "flashes with black" becomes symptomatic of the more general physical, emotional, and psychological disturbance caused by the arrival of the letter and indicates the increasing blurring of boundaries between the home front and the military settings in the poem. The "flashes of black" suggest the mother's figurative blacking out or sliding into unconsciousness, already prefigured by the detail that "all swims before her eyes." Her vision begins to fail her as a result of the shock she has received, and the "flashes of black" intruding upon her consciousness suggest a further decline. This fading of the mother's consciousness and senses parallels the son's physical decline in the hospital, perhaps even the moment of his dying.

The phrase also refers to the psychological imprint left on the mother by the letter's words. Like "flashes" of black ink, the main words and "sentences broken" of the letter brand the mother's consciousness. By choosing the word "flashes" and identifying Pete's injury as a *"gun-shot wound"* in the following line, Whitman also directly connects the mother's emotional wounding and the psychologically traumatizing moment of receiving the letter to the physical wound-

ing of her son in battle. As literary historians of the Civil War have noted, this trope of a civilian at home being wounded vicariously by reading of the wounding or death of a beloved friend or relative on the battlefield was a common one in Civil War poetry and was even incorporated into illustrations, including Winslow Homer's *News from the War*.[26] In Homer's illustration, which spans two pages in the June 14, 1862, issue of *Harper's Weekly*, the viewer's gaze is immediately drawn to the figure of a woman sitting at a table with her head resting on her right hand and a letter held in her left hand. The darker shading of the image and its central placement serve to set it apart from the surrounding scenes focusing on soldiers. The caption, "Wounded," and the woman's defeated posture suggest not only that the woman has just received news of the wounding of a soldier but that she has herself been wounded and weakened by the letter in her hand. Just as Homer seized on the idea of civilian readers at home being wounded by news from the war, poets and other writers of the Civil War also focused on the symbolic potential of the letter as a war-related material artifact intruding into the domestic sphere.

Whitman's poem, however, differs markedly from other wartime poems on this topic in that it ends on the mother's unresolved emotional conflict rather than on notes of religious consolation or an appeal to the bereaved to channel their sorrow into useful work and patriotic support. Unable to eat and sleep, the mother directs her thoughts away from life, "to follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son." Thus, the intrusion of the war's reality into the domestic sphere in the form of a material object remains disruptive, unresolved, and unmitigated.

Through the experience of holding, opening, and reading the letter, these scenes of wounding on the home front and the battlefront seem to play out simultaneously in the poem. Whitman adds another wrinkle to its complexity when, three stanzas later, we read that "While they stand at home at the door, he is dead already; / The only son is dead."[27] Here it is revealed that the simultaneity offered by the letter, especially its promise of future improvement and recovery of the wounded soldier, is illusory due to the time lag involved in its delivery. The unidentified omniscient speaker reveals to the reader what the family in the poem cannot know: the present and the future described in the letter already lie in the past.

Detail from Winslow Homer, News from the War, Harper's Weekly,
June 14, 1862. Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society.

The reading of the letter, then, presents the pivotal moment in the
poem that precipitates a lasting disruption among past, present, and
future, temporarily collapses time and space as well as distinctions be-
tween domestic and military settings, and marks the transition from
the prosperity, vitality, and beauty of the first scene to the mother's
emotionally deadened existence and desire to "escape and withdraw"
from life. It is in the sixth stanza that the wounding of mother and
son is revealed through "flashes of black" and gunshots. Here the two
spheres of the domestic and the military briefly meet in an illusion
of simultaneity, and the evocative power ascribed to letters by both

Whitman himself and his contemporaries finds its fullest expression, albeit in an inversion of the functions typically ascribed to the letter as a means of connecting sender and addressee physically, emotionally, and even spiritually.[28]

Like Melville, Whitman uses the trope of a war-related object invading or entering the domestic sphere to highlight the power of the material object to destabilize the boundaries between home front and battlefront. Both attest to the great affective intensity and mnemonic power popularly ascribed to objects from the war, such as letters, heirlooms, and trophies, but they also emphasize the essentially volatile or uncontrollable nature of any affective associations evoked by them.

Whitman's belief in the power of a material object, such as a letter, to exert a strong influence over the humans seeing and touching it carried over into his personal experience of the war as he described it retrospectively. Even decades later, as his friend Horace Traubel records, Whitman described several wartime letters to him as preserving the authentic emotion with which they were written and calling forth vivid memories. Of one letter in particular that he had recently reread, Whitman observed: "it was a reminder—brought so many things back: the boys: most of them now gone—dead: scattered everywhere." And commenting on another letter, he said: "Sometimes I am myself almost afraid of myself—afraid to read such a letter over again: it carries me too painfully back into old days—into the fearful scenes of the war."[29] These Civil War letters, then, clearly retained their special emotional value long after the events that prompted them had passed and they had become material embodiments, in his eyes, of the persons and events associated with them. Whitman further explores this topic in *Memoranda During the War* (1875), where it is his wartime notebooks that he foregrounds as material objects with strong and uncontrollable affective and mnemonic qualities.

Memoranda opens with Whitman's introduction of what he calls "impromptu jottings" in about forty "little note-books" that he kept during the war and that then formed the basis for the memoranda that make up the book. As he continues in his introduction, he soon finds himself caught up in describing the emotional associations and memories that the original notebooks still hold for him even years after the war's end:

I wish I could convey to the reader the associations that attach to these soil'd and creas'd little livraisons, each composed of a sheet or two of paper, folded small to carry in the pocket, and fasten'd with a pin. I leave them just as I threw them by during the War, blotch'd here and there with more than one bloodstain, hurriedly written.... Even these days, at the lapse of many years, I can never turn their tiny leaves, or even take one in my hand, without the actual army sights and hot emotions of the time rushing like a river in full tide through me.... Out of them arise active and breathing forms. They summon up, even in this silent and vacant room as I write, not only the sinewy regiments and brigades, marching or in camp, but the countless phantoms of those who fell and were hastily buried by wholesale in the battle-pits, or whose dust and bones have been since removed to the National Cemeteries of the land, especially through Virginia and Tennessee.[30]

Whitman's description of these notebooks is striking in its emphasis on their materiality. Rather than mere vehicles for the words contained within, the notebooks are tangible objects that carry meaning in their material aspect. Some are even imbued with the blood of those whom Whitman tended in the hospitals of Washington. The material objects themselves, not the words written on them, become evocative signifiers and even come to resemble the bodies of the sick, dead, and dying soldiers with whose memory they are associated. So strong are the affective powers and mnemonic functions of these notebooks that in merely turning their pages and touching them with his hand, Whitman conjures up scenes and emotions from the past. The language with which he describes them is very similar to that used by contemporary writers in the context of the memento, a material object "that could foster ongoing memories and attachments" and, as understood by nineteenth-century Americans, "bring the remembered body into the user's space."[31] Whitman strikingly emphasizes this function of the material object in the passage from *Memoranda*, as he tries to put into words the power of these objects to "summon up" the memories not only of past events but especially of the "active and breathing forms" that populate his memories of the war. Here he

invokes the conventions of the memento in order to negotiate his own experience of the war and the lasting emotional and psychological impact it left on him.

These texts, in which Whitman engages with the themes of the wartime letter and notebook, are central to a discussion of his exploration of how human beings interact with material culture during times of great emotional distress and physical suffering. They should also, however, be viewed in connection with other poems in *Drum-Taps* that focus on a third war-related object, the banner or flag, as in "Song of the Banner at Day-Break" and "Flag of Stars, Thick-Sprinkled Bunting." After all, it is here, most notably in "Song of the Banner at Day-Break," that Whitman explicitly portrays the tension between the materiality of the object and the human urge to ascribe immaterial meanings to it. The poem, originally intended as the title piece of a collection to be published by Thayer and Eldridge as *Banner at Day-Break* but first published as the fourth poem of *Drum-Taps* in 1865, features a colloquy between four different voices or entities: poet, banner and pennant, child, and father.

The poet opens with a description of the scene, which features a banner flapping in the wind and a child and a father gazing up at it. Importantly, however, the poet also introduces an idea that becomes central to the poem's theme of viewing the banner as both a material object and an ideal. The poet suggests the weakness of words to render the full reality of the banner flapping in the wind when he exclaims, "Words! book-words! what are you? / Words no more, for hearken and see."[32] The sound and aspect of the banner's fabric, he implies, present a more significant key to the banner's meaning than mere words. Put differently, the poet draws attention to the sensory signals projected outward by the banner itself, rather than to the logocentric meanings usually attributed to the material object by human beings.

Throughout the course of the poem, the poet, child, and father all project ideas, feelings, associations, and ideals onto the banner in an effort to charge the material object with meaning and to define what that meaning might be. At first glance, the voice of the personified banner and pennant seems to follow this pattern of associating the material object with human meanings and ideals. For instance, the voice exclaims, "We can be terror and carnage also, and are so now." Notably, though, such exclamations are juxtaposed with lines draw-

ing attention to the materiality of the banner itself, such as, "For what are we, mere strips of cloth, profiting nothing, / Only flapping in the wind?"[33] These lines clearly define the banner and pennant by their material reality, making any nobler or immaterial meanings attached to them appear absurd or foolish, and they elaborate on the weakness of words to name or capture the meaning of the material object. As the human actors in the poem continue to describe and list the feelings and meanings that the banner evokes for them, the flapping of the "mere strips of cloth" fades into the background. The human urge to ascribe immaterial truths to material things, it seems, has triumphed, as the logocentric quest to express the banner's meaning in words and song becomes the focus of the second half of the poem. And yet, by returning to the flapping sound of the banner in the last line of the poem, Whitman returns our focus to the unresolved tension between the material existence of the object and the human attempts to describe or even own its meaning. Though the poet may sing the "song of the banner," it remains an enigmatic, nonhuman presence that attracts the human gaze but ultimately exists separately from all human thought or speech.

At the heart of the Civil War poems and prose works by Melville and Whitman discussed here, then, is the realization that the associations and meanings attached to the material reminders of war and violence intrude into human lives and force us as readers to reevaluate the relationship between human beings and things, especially in times of crisis. Their literary renderings of this theme, as well as the rhetorical moves they employ in crafting them, reflect the allure of the material object as a source of affective intensity as well as the haunting realization that the thing itself ultimately remains a mute, alien presence transcending all human attempts to contain its power and symbolic meaning. By invoking the rhetorical conventions and tropes of the sentimental object while highlighting the limitations of this view of the object, these poems by Melville and Whitman draw our attention not only to the mute eloquence of the object but also to its essential muteness, its irreducible withdrawnness, which represents an alterity that defies any attempts to ascribe a final, stable meaning to it.

{ 3 }

Battle-Pieces, Drum-Taps, AND

THE AESTHETIC OF AFTERMATH IN

CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

SARAH L. THWAITES

One of the first to realize the great potential for capturing images of the Civil War was the celebrated New York photographer Mathew Brady, whose genius it was to recognize the importance of making a contemporary record of the war as it unfolded. Brady's entrepreneurial spirit saw him invest in a number of rolling wagons with photographic setups in which his team of trailblazing war photographers set out into the battlefields. Arguably the most important collection of early documentary images was produced by one of Brady's ex-employees, Alexander Gardner, whose *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War* was published in 1866, the same year as Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* and a year following Walt Whitman's initial publication of *Drum-Taps*.[1]

Because printing techniques for the mass reproduction of photographs, such as the halftone process, were not possible at the time, Gardner's *Sketch Book*, as originally published, contains one hundred albumen prints that are all mounted positives. Each picture is supplemented with commentary written by Gardner. As Eleanor Jones Harvey surmises, Gardner was a "wordsmith at heart," having previously worked as a newspaper editor.[2] He designed the format of the *Sketch Book* album so that each photograph was coupled with a narrative description that foreran the picture. As such, he was able to construct the perception of every photograph. The production of the *Sketch Book* was elaborate and costly and Gardner's ambitions for it were not met commercially. His commemoration of the Civil War was both a haunting elegy and a visibly graphic eulogy, but his venture failed to capture the mood of the contemporaneous American public,

who in the Reconstruction period had no desire to recall in such vivid reality the horrors and tragedies of the recent war.

Photography came of age during the Civil War era. More than a million photographs pertaining to the war were made, comprising battle scenes and portraits—most popularly in the form of the *carte-de-visite*.[3] As photography became more affordable, there was a new surge of interest in portraits as soldiers proudly wore their uniforms with various props and paraphernalia to mark their part in the war, and many portraits were taken to be mailed home as keepsakes for loved ones. As the war progressed, there ensued a mass of stark photographic evidence available to the nineteenth-century consumer, providing what seemed to be unmediated witness to the terrible scenes of battle. Photographs such as Gardner's did not shy away from the ghastly reality of death in combat: many of the images in his text show twisted and distorted corpses lying bloodied and abandoned across mud-swamped battle sites. Often the faces of the dead were deliberately turned directly toward the camera, gaunt and ghostly, and the pictures were consumed as much with fascination as with repulsion.

Stereographic images gave an especially vivid version of reality in their three-dimensional representations. It is ironic that soon after the surrender at Appomattox in April 1865, the millions of glass plates used in the production of what were at the time hungered-for and newsworthy pictures came to be best employed by gardeners who needed the glass for greenhouses. It was an uncanny twist of fate that new shoots grew in earth protected by these discarded glass plates, which had so starkly recorded the war's destruction as the country fought over the possession of that same soil. Fittingly, just as the postbellum imagination seems to have needed to erase images of the war's death and obliteration from its mind, as Geoffrey Ward observes, "the sun slowly burned away the war from thousands of greenhouse panes."[4]

In terms of technology, photographic processes were still in their infancy when America's Civil War broke out. Although the slow and more cumbersome process of daguerreotypy was superseded by wet-plate processes during the period, photography still required the manual preparation of sensitized plates, a darkroom, and a two-man team to operate the equipment. It was a skilled and delicate business. The traveling photographers' wagons were, as E. F. Bleiler describes, "as carefully planned internally as a Pullman kitchen . . . ingenious,

efficient laboratories," and the process was indeed laborious.[5] Inside the wagoned darkroom, the glass wet-plate was chemically prepared, placed into a lightproof holder, and rushed to the camera, which was already in position. The plate was exposed there for about ten seconds and then hurried back to the undercover darkness of the wagon for developing. The whole sequence of events could take no longer than twenty minutes or the plate would be ruined.

Although sensitizing processes had improved by the 1860s, the camera's exposure time, even at a much-improved ten seconds, remained too slow for the photographer to take shots of moving subjects. As Geoffrey Ward notes: "The logistics of photography in the field was daunting . . . lenses were still incapable of stopping movement."[6] Although the delayed length of exposure time was restrictive, this labor-intensive process was a specific practice that formulated a particular type of aesthetic in the images produced. A clear and crisp image, devoid of any blurring, depended upon the subject remaining static for several seconds. In contrast to today's cameras, which can shoot as many as nine frames in one second and are thus capable of taking pictures that show the physical vitality of explosive or rapid action, the American Civil War photographer could capture only scenes that held still long enough to complete the task of exposure. Therefore, pictures that were both technologically possible *and* able to present something meaningful were, as Miles Orvell observes, pictures that conveyed "the ruins of war," and as such the photographer's subjects were "destroyed buildings, dead horses littering farmyards," or "corpses strewn across a battlefield."[7] The optimum environment for the technology available was one where the camera could focus on scenes of "action receded," where what remains *behind* is photographed and thus invested with significance. As such, the prevailing mode of aesthetics in Civil War photography is that of aftermath—where the image depicts that which is, in the wake of action, ruined or uncanny. The photographs reveal scenes that appear lifeless, empty, or obliterated by the effects of war and evoke messages and questions that require study and deliberation.[8]

The form of Gardner's *Sketch Book*, a two-volume work with each volume containing fifty captioned albumen print photographs, bears some important structural similarities to Melville's collected *Battle-Pieces*. As Lee Rust Brown argues in his introduction to the 1995 edi-

tion of *Battle-Pieces*, Melville "preferred to deny" his poetry "the authority of a central personal voice, presenting each of [the poems] instead as a splintered, conflicting 'aspect.'" Thus the collection is a series of views exploiting the interrelationship between the two definitions of the word—the visual and the perceptual—that reflect on the meanings and implications of war.[9] Consequently, the poems find synthesis through the idea of perspectivism.

Melville admits to the absence of planned structure in the volume: in his short preface to the poems, he describes how "in varied amplitude" the "few themes" that the text encounters are selected because they happened to "imprint themselves upon the mind."[10] Melville, according to Mustafa Jalal, "made himself a self-less medium" for juxtaposing the points of view of his contemporaries, and he concludes that in using a "multiplicity of voices" Melville "could detach himself from the scene."[11] Like the camera, Melville filters and documents aspects of the war that in turn suggest contrary interpretations and evoke disparate responses.[12] As such, his poems posit a series of ethical or moral perspectives that form a paradigm analogous to contemporaneous photography. Like Gardner's photographic project, Melville's poetical project is actively political. Melville's lifelong struggle with moral absolutes asserts its voice in *Battle-Pieces*, and the text's "inconsistencies and inconclusiveness" are, as John McWilliams observes, "the measure, not of Melville's failure, but of his profound awareness of complex, if not insoluble problems" with the politics of the Civil War.[13]

The specificity of photography during the Civil War era produced in its pictures the particular aesthetic of aftermath, which is also prevalent in *Battle-Pieces*. Megan Rowley Williams makes the case that *Battle-Pieces* is "aggressively verbal and literary" and "declares war on the poetic form." She argues that Melville's "chorus of individual voices" offers "inward images" that "approximate the experience of war and its aftermath in words."[14] As the term "aftermath" would suggest, it is that which finds its power in the ability to create meaning and interpretive value from past events. In terms of imagery—visual (in the photograph) and textual (in the poem)—the aesthetic of aftermath is predicated on its relationship to the past and its readiness to be brought back before the mind's eye for evaluations.

In contrast to Melville, Whitman's *Drum-Taps* addresses the subject of aftermath through imagery derived from the singular and con-

stant perception of the poet who speaks for the "common man." *Drum-Taps* gives voice to the hearts of the common men and women—who are indistinguishable as Northerners or Southerners—whose feelings and attitudes are openly affected by the Civil War. As America's conflict gathers pace, *Drum-Taps* embarks on a journey of emotions that explores themes of honor, loss, and grief first through anticipation and then through memory. The tone of the collection builds from that of measured excitement at the approaching action into one of deep reflection as the action passes and the war's cruel aftermath becomes apparent. The poems find unity through the varying sound images of drum-taps, the variance of which, as James Miller asserts, is mirrored by the "shifting mood and feeling of the hero."[15] Whitman's notion of aftermath is predicated on the individual whose overriding reaction is one of sorrow and grief and, consequently, *Drum-Taps* is a profound exploration of the psychology of war.[16] The reality of Whitman's "common man" experiences speaks for the universal and calls for the preservation of the United States, which Whitman claimed in *Leaves of Grass* to be the "greatest poem."[17] The message in *Drum-Taps* is one of restoration, where the democratic union is maintained for the good of every common individual.

Unlike Melville, who it is argued could "detach" himself from the scene, Whitman's poet "is a participating soldier and not a detached observer," and the prevailing use of the first- and second-person narrator throughout the collection marks out this pattern.[18] "By the Bivouac's Fitful Flame," fourth in the series of the fifty-three poems, illustrates the narrative as the real-time experience of the speaker:

> By the bivouac's fitful flame,
> A procession winding around me, solemn and sweet and slow;—
>   but first I note,
> The tents of the sleeping army, the fields' and woods' dim outline,
> The darkness, lit by spots of kindled fire—the silence;
> Like a phantom far or near an occasional figure moving;
> The shrubs and trees, (as I lift my eyes they seem to be stealthily
>   watching me;)....[19]

John McWilliams notes how Whitman's "concern for the representative individual continually suppresses political considerations," arguing that he "reverses Melville's priorities" by "dismissing politics al-

together." Whitman's are not partisan politics, whereas Melville makes an active investment in the Northerner's viewpoint, tending toward "idealization" of the Northern commanders' roles in the action. Whitman's poems do not directly explore the sides of the conflict, nor do they face its key political issues, such as slavery and economics, but his political affirmations are strong in their belief that the North and the South will ultimately be restored to unity. As McWilliams observes, although Whitman examines "various scenes of war" he never draws on "specific" historical battles and never pits North against South, preferring that "each scene is experienced by the whole nation as well as the narrator, and each becomes a universal occurrence happening to any soldier, any mother, any father."[20] *Drum-Taps* is hopeful in its belief that humankind's kinship will maintain democracy and, in that way, unity. This essay therefore argues that in Whitman's *Drum-Taps* the aesthetic of aftermath is formulated through the construct of memory, which is articulated by the poet with earnest empathy for the plight of others. For Melville, the aesthetic of aftermath underpins a persistent anxiety over the complex political aftereffects of the Civil War, which is articulated through a series of conflicting imagery.

By their nature, all images are embedded with the idea of aftermath because images record things to be examined at a later time. The image maker constructs them as powerful rhetoric to persuade, convince, and provoke an exploration of their meanings; in this sense, images are concerned with effects. There is perhaps no more poignant analogy for this idea than that which Melville provides at the end of *Moby-Dick*, where Ishmael, the lone survivor of the war with the whale, begins his journey of reflection after the trauma of the *Pequod*'s sinking and the crew's drowning. He survives to tell the story of *Moby-Dick* as he alone sees it. The final image of Ishmael serves to remind the reader of his lucky escape and, more importantly, his privileged position as sole recorder of events. In the epilogue to *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael recounts: "buoyed up by that coffin, for almost one day and night, I floated on a soft and dirge-like main. The unharming sharks, they glided by as if with padlocks on their mouths; the savage sea hawks sailed with sheathed beaks." The epitaph to this final page of the text is apt: "And I only am escaped alone to tell thee."[21] The text drives home its point: Ishmael's conversion from orphan to philosophizing image maker is complete. Correspondingly, photographic

images gain their power not by way of their subject matter alone but by their effects—in other words, their ability to make philosophers of those who endeavor to articulate and evaluate their effects.

Images of war have a particular resonance with the perpetuation of technological and scientific effects. This essay maintains that the aesthetic of war imagery is inseparable from the dynamic that evolves from the contemporaneous production of technologically generated pictures. Since the first photographs of war—which are purported to be those of the Mexican-American War—technologically created images have played a profound role in discourses about truth: the earliest photographs carried, as Miles Orvell notes, "the burden of truth" in their remarkable indexical relationship with the material world.[22] Since photography was first used to document the so-called reality of war in the mid-nineteenth century, images of war have increasingly become politicized, so much so that it is argued that the highly technically evolved images produced and proliferated by today's cyber-systems are themselves involved in the perpetuation of modern war. The character of today's digitized pictures—which have exceptional clarity, are immediately transferable and reproducible, and have the capacity to be widely disseminated—has initiated a new kind of war strategy: a war of images.

In *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, W. J. T. Mitchell makes the point that images have always possessed an "infectious character," a quality that makes them "difficult to contain or quarantine." He argues:

> If images are like viruses or bacteria, this has been a period of breakout, a global plague of images. And like any infectious disease, it has bred a host of antibodies in the form of counter-images. Our time has witnessed, not simply *more* images, but a *war* of images in which the real world stakes could not be higher. … [The] images [are] designed to replicate themselves endlessly and to infect the collective imaginary of global populations.[23]

A central factor in the power of war imagery is its inherent relationship with the idea of effect, and in the mid-nineteenth century these effects are played out under the aesthetic of aftermath. It is notable that in the period of the Civil War, the reflective moment that follows trauma—the aftermath—is seen so vividly by Melville's poetic

and is correspondingly imposed by the specific technology of mid-nineteenth-century photography. As Ian Finseth claims, "Melville sought to achieve a distinctive style that would create, within the space of a poem, an opportunity for autonomous contemplation, and for a liberating phenomenological release from the pressures of culture." He concludes that in *Battle-Pieces* "we find a struggle between individual ethicality and ideological structures."[24]

Battle-Pieces is arranged in two sections, the first of which is a sequence of poems that, as Lawrence Buell observes, place particular "emphasis on aftermath."[25] We might take as an example Melville's poem "The March to the Sea," which finds the theme of aftermath particularly fertile territory. The poem refers to the Savannah Campaign led by Major General William T. Sherman between November and December 1864. Otherwise known as Sherman's March to the Sea, the campaign was brutal, and many parts of the South were decimated. There were a huge number of casualties, and the poem captures the scale of the destruction witnessed in its wake. In the opening verse, the thudding marching rhythm of optimism is immediately undercut by a scene that images a pun on the idea of wake. The first stanza begins:

> NOT Kenesaw high-arching,
> > Nor Allatoona's glen—
> Though there the graves lie parching—
> > Stayed Sherman's miles of men;
> From charred Atlanta marching
> > They launched the sword again.[26]

In the wake of previous battle, which like a huge ungainly ship has left a churning swell of unquiet waters, Sherman's men also find another kind of wake—the ironic postfuneral party for the "parching" dead. In the final verse, the poem leaves its own wake, the aftermath of Sherman's army itself. The final stanza begins:

> For behind they left a wailing,
> > A terror and a ban,
> And blazing cinders sailing,
> > And houseless households wan,
> Wide zones of counties paling,
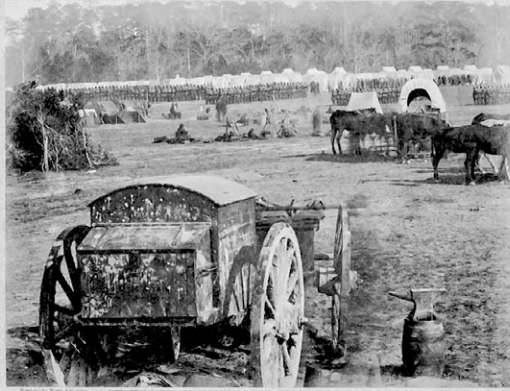> > And towns where maniacs ran.[27]

The poem finds its energy not in its solid marching rhythm but in the violently agitated waters of the wake. It is unsurprising, then, that the following poem in the collection is titled "The Frenzy in the Wake." Cropped and edited into juxtaposition, the poem bears witness from an opposing perspective. The final verse stakes a claim to the space recently occupied by Sherman's force:

> With burning woods our skies are brass,
>   The pillars of dust are seen;
> The live-long day their cavalry pass—
>   No crossing the road between.
>   We were sore deceived—an awful host!
>   They move like a roaring wind.
>   Have we gamed and lost? but even despair
>   Shall never our hate rescind.[28]

The tension between aspects shown in Melville's Civil War poetry, where the voices and tones of the poems juxtapose and counterargue, is equally evident in Gardner's *Sketch Book*: there is an unintended tension between the stark reality of the photographic images and their accompanying captions, which attempt to force interpretations of the images upon the viewer. Still, there is slippage between the meaning of the words and the meaning of the images. The authority of what one sees with one's own eyes is tested by the captions' claim to authoritative evaluation. The figure shown illustrates such an example from Gardner's text. The photograph shows the inspection of troops at Cumberland Landing. An extract from the caption reads:

> At Cumberland Landing, one of the most magnificent spectacles ever seen in the army was presented, when the combined forces, massed upon the bank of the river, converted to the barren fields, as if by magic, into an immense city of tents. . . . Our picture, interesting as it is, gives but a small portion of the gorgeous whole. The prominent object is a mud-bespattered forge, the knapsacks and blankets of the farriers carelessly thrown on the ground beneath. In the middle-ground are some mules picketed around the wagons, hard-working, much-abused creatures, and so humorous in their antics that they were often termed the comedians of the army.[29]

Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War, *plate 16,*
Inspection of Troops at Cumberland Landing, Pamunkey, Virginia,
May 1862. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-48782.

The photograph shows a disparity between the troops, whose for-
mations are impersonal and distant blocks, and the personal, per-
haps even homely tone of the caption. The aesthetic of the camera is
such that the human figures in the photograph are made small and
innumerable against the carts and working animals, which are fore-
grounded. There is an unintended irony in the caption's interpretation
of the hard-working mules (figured not unlike enslaved humans), the
master's favored animal that remains good-humored despite being
much abused.

Melville's poetry employs a similar mode of undercutting as a de-
vice to elicit deliberately ambiguous responses from the reader: the
aesthetic is one that encourages conflict. The ambivalent aesthetic
of aftermath that Gardner's text documents suggests the profoundly
complex nature of ethics in the immediate postbellum political situa-
tion that Melville strives to articulate. Kevin Hayes addresses the mat-

ter of "different voices" in Melville's Civil War poems and points to the example of "Donelson," where Melville makes "imaginative use of typeface and punctuation" to convey various points of view.[30] The poem is structured around the interplay between various dispatches from the front and the crowd's remarks and interjections as they are read out. Hayes comments on the poem's narrative style in the context of cinematography, whereby the camera readily cuts from focusing on the perspective of the action to that of the audience's response, such that the text is denied a single authority: a technique referred to in film as crosscutting.

Megan Rowley Williams maintains that the structure of "Donelson" foreshadows the "camera eye" of John Dos Passos's work.[31] Ian Finseth argues a similar point. He maintains that "Donelson" establishes "a dialogical relation between moral perspectives." He goes on to assert that in "certain moments or scenes" in *Battle-Pieces* "the formal qualities of the verse—its clotted syntax, involutions of image, sharply narrowed fields of vision, and manipulations of perspective and point of view—bring the reader into the closed spaces and private situations that Melville regarded as the primary, psychic *loci* of war."[32] As such, the notion of aftermath is a textual experience, whereby the uncanny text creates, for the critiquing reader, the psychical experience of post-event deliberation and the search for resolution.

For Timothy Sweet, "Donelson" makes an interesting point of similarity with Gardner's caption for his photograph *A Harvest of Death* (plate 36), which as the title describes depicts a battle site strewn with the "distorted dead." He argues that both Melville and Gardner "draw a pastoral frame around the corpses." For Melville, the frame is subsequently undercut by the "pain and suffering" in the following lines and is finally resolved by "invoking the recuperative trope of ritual 'sacrifice' which writes the ideological sign of theodicy over the dead body."[33] Moreover, Sweet concludes, in "Donelson" the dispatches treat death as "simply part of the aftermath" in the way that the news is delivered:

> *For lists of killed and wounded see*
> *The morrow's dispatch: to-day 'tis victory.*[34]

The element of victory is significant to the rhetoric of the dispatch message, and the names of the dead, whose details will be released

later, do not tarnish the brilliance or hinder the urgency of news of the triumph.

Gardner also seeks to assert a moral message in his *Sketch Book* and similarly uses the idea of aftermath as a device for conscious reflection. *A Harvest of Death* and other "such pictures," he writes, provide a "useful moral," depicting as they do the "blank horror and reality of war, in opposition to its pageantry." The caption for plate 36 reads:

> A battle has been often the subject of elaborate description; but it can be described in one simple word, *devilish!* and the distorted dead recall the ancient legends of men torn in pieces by the savage wantonness of fiends. Swept down without preparation, the shattered bodies fall in all conceivable positions. The rebels represented in the photograph are without shoes. . . . The pockets turned inside out. . . . Around is scattered the litter of the battle-field. . . . Killed in the frantic efforts to break the steady lines of an army of patriots, whose heroism only excelled theirs in motive, they paid with life the price of their treason, and when the wicked strife was finished, found nameless graves, far from home and kindred.[35]

Earlier in the photograph's caption, it is revealed that many of the Union soldiers who were killed in this battle were already buried before the photograph was taken. This point further underscores the moral lesson: the photograph's message is a stark warning about rebellious behavior. Left for dead, these bodies litter the field, fit only for the needy scavengers who remove their shoes and empty their pockets. The reader can only imagine what the next line of scavengers will be. Throughout Gardner's *Sketch Book*, tensions build between the voice inherent in each caption and the photograph to which it adheres and also between the more subtle messages within the photographs themselves. Elizabeth Young rightly claims that "there are numerous civil wars in Gardner's *Photographic Sketch Book*, centered . . . on the regional contest he presents in an overtly partisan way."[36]

The figure shown is Gardner's plate 37, *Field Where General Reynolds Fell, Gettysburg*, the photograph that follows *A Harvest of Death*. The tension that exists between the captions for both plates 36 and 37, which at first glance depict similarly graphic views of abandoned and shoeless corpses, adds further to Young's point. The overtly pro-Union

caption for this image forms two paragraphs, the first of which gives an account of the events of July 1, 1863. The second paragraph offers a lament for the dead:

> The dead shown in the photograph were our own men.... Some of the dead presented an aspect which showed that they had suffered severely just previous to dissolution, but these were few in number compared with those who wore a calm and resigned expression, as though they had passed away in the act of prayer. Others had a smile on their faces, and looked as if they were in the act of speaking. Some lay stretched on their backs, as if friendly hands had prepared them for burial.... In some instances ... the musket was held in one hand, and the other was uplifted as though to ward a blow, or appealing to heaven. The faces of all were pale, as though cut in marble, and as the wind swept across the battle-field it waved the hair, and gave the bodies such an appearance of life that a spectator could hardly help thinking they were about to rise to continue the fight.[37]

The caption contains echoes of Whitman's romanticized narrative style. Whitman is known to have revered photography. Ed Folsom notes that Whitman was acquainted with both Brady and Gardner, having been photographed by both in their studios, and argues that Brady's and Gardner's photographs of the Civil War helped show Whitman how to "turn the war inside out, to centre it on the hospitals rather than the battlefields, to focus on the lingering aftereffects instead of on the momentary heroics."[38] In contrast to the multiperspectival narrative in *Battle-Pieces* that requires a complex process of interpretation, *Drum-Taps* establishes a more cohesively narrated aesthetic that derives its forcefulness from the series of personal events described and the realism of the consequent emotions. To use again the analogy of the camera, Whitman places the speaker—the poet-visionary—as the subject of the camera's gaze, where the camera turns toward the speaker's own personal experiences of the war: the focus of the gaze is not multiperspectival but, rather, captures the inward search of the poet whose image of America finds a more Romantic impulse. Whitman employs the poetic voice to empathize with the individual who ever after suffers the effects of the war.

In "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods," Whitman takes the

Fig. 2. Plate 37, "Field Where General Reynolds Fell, Gettysburg, July, 1863"

(Courtesy of Library of Congress, Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the Civil War, LC-B8184-7946)

Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War, *plate 37, Field Where General Reynolds Fell, Gettysburg, July 1863. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-B8184-7946.*

theme of the war's harvest by way of individual experience. Autumnal leaves scatter at the speaker's feet and create music as the speaker's "toilsome" wanderings lead him to the grave of an unnamed soldier. In their retreat, the dead soldier's comrades have scribbled a brief but poignant note nailed to the tree that marks his burial place. It reads: "*Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.*"[39] In the second stanza, the speaker reveals that at many times and long after the encounter with the grave, he unexpectedly recalls the words written there. Eleanor Jones Harvey argues that Winslow Homer's *Trooper Meditating beside a Grave* (ca. 1865) conveys a similar message, noting how the necessarily "impromptu approach to honoring the dead" was difficult for Americans to accept, because they were denied the opportunity for the "formal observances" that were the norm when a loved one passed on.[40] These observances were an integral part of grieving, which was left incomplete for many wartime families. The

poem speaks of the anxiety over the act of remembrance and the prospect of the numbing effects of the war due to the passage of time. The "many a changeful season" that the speaker encounters reminds the reader that the cycle of the year repeats itself ad infinitum, and Whitman shows in this poem how the actions of one man, whose repeated memories of the unknown soldier live on, give hope for the future of humanity because he continues to mourn for its failures.

The theme of harvest is set out in a previous poem, "Come Up from the Fields Father," where Whitman adopts a filmic style of narrative to tell the story of an individual agrarian family affected by the arrival of a letter with the news that their only son has been wounded; they are unaware at the time they read the letter that Pete is already dead. The poem moves from the voice of the daughter to the omniscient voice of the watching poet who describes, to all the senses of the reader, the autumnal air of the farm. In the second stanza, the narrator invites the reader to enter into the scene:

> Lo, 'tis autumn;
> Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
> Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages, with leaves fluttering in the
>   moderate wind;
> Where apples ripe in the orchards hang, and grapes on the
>   trellis'd vines;
> (Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
> Smell you the buckwheat, where the bees were lately buzzing?)

Like Gardner, Whitman again uses the trope of the harvest, but his poem employs it to convey the story of the wholesomeness of family life and to emphasize that, ironically, its own fruit—its only boy, Pete—would not flourish safely in its heart. Whitman's family speaks for all families who faced death in the war, but the poem's message lies in the internalized perspective of the mother, the figurehead who will forever mourn the death of her son, "weeping, longing with one deep longing" that she might go to him.[41] The mother symbolizes Mother America who cries for all her sons.

In terms of subject matter, Whitman's "Look Down Fair Moon" and "Hymn of Dead Soldiers" (later titled "Ashes of Soldiers") closely align with Gardner's photograph in plate 37. In "Look Down Fair Moon,"

Whitman's poetic gaze mediates the scene; although the onlooker's eye is cast toward the battle dead, the poem's brevity is strategic and its perspective visceral, a viewpoint turned toward the heart rather than the eye. The concision of "Look Down Fair Moon" permits the onlooker only a moonlit glimpse of the corpses, which Whitman describes in two staccato phrases:

> Pour softly down night's nimbus floods, on faces ghastly, swollen, purple;
> On the dead, on their backs, with their arms toss'd wide....[42]

The shadowy aesthetic of Whitman's moonlight scene is shared by the contemporaneous photographer, whose medium could create only shadowy monochromatic pictures, the best of which were tonally rich. In the present day, because of the prevalence of color photography, such black-and-white photographs inspire feelings of nostalgia in us, but we should not overlook the nostalgic impulse of Whitman's poetry where the shadowy nature of his imagery figures like a memory to the reader. Whitman uses a similar formula in "Bivouac on a Mountain Side," where as the poem progresses the scene falls into darkness as night creeps upon the camp.

The poem opens with the poet having full vision: "I see before me now, a traveling army halting; / Below, a fertile valley spread, with barns, and the orchards of summer." Two lines later, the poet can just perceive the "clinging cedars" and "tall shapes" against the mountain-side, "dingily seen" until all that is perceptible are the "shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-sized, flickering" in the half-light of the campfires. Ultimately, the poet looks to the sky "far out of reach" and "studded with eternal stars."[43] Whitman calls upon the ethereal qualities of falling light, here accentuated by that of the campfires and the stars to create a richly nostalgic scene whereby the romantic vision and the memory are conflated.

However, Whitman's project is one of hope. In "Look Down Fair Moon," the action of the moon's light is likened to that of water: it has the poetic propensity to bathe, pour, and flood and its purpose, as Lawrence Kramer notes, is to cleanse. Kramer surmises that the moon is "summoned as a corpse washer" where its pouring light is "metaphorically providing a ceremonial and hygienic service to the dead on

the field."[44] In the poetic sense, Whitman's act of cleansing is a puri-
fication of the soul, an idea also encountered in "Hymn of Dead Sol-
diers" earlier in *Drum-Taps*. In this poem, in the wake of war, the dead
are figured as "divine and tender" "phantoms" visible only to the poet,
who pays homage to them with the chant of his "silent soul." The poet
calls for his chanting breath to purify the death-laden battlefield air:

> Dearest comrades! all now is over;
> But love is not over—and what love, O comrades!
> Perfume from battle-fields rising—up from foetor arising.
>
> Perfume therefore my chant, O love! immortal Love!
> Give me to bathe the memories of all dead soldiers.
>
> Perfume all! make all wholesome!
> O love! O chant! solve all with the last chemistry.[45]

Kramer notes how Whitman employs the "miasma" understanding
of disease as caused by a noxious form of "bad air" discharged from
rotting organic matter. He argues that in *Drum-Taps* "the vocative
'perfume' does not mean merely to cover a bad smell but to purify the
air, to make it sweet and wholesome to body and spirit."[46] This notion
is, however, inseparable from the idea of immortal love espoused by
the poet. The enduring love that the poet feels (the chants from his
"silent soul") for those fallen formulates the sweet-smelling air that
has the capacity to purify and restore. For Whitman, the war may be
over, but the love for those lost is not, and the role of the poet is to find
a way to breathe the restorative values of kinship and love in its wake.

For this reason, in "Hymn of Dead Soldiers" Whitman does not
bring before the reader images of the dead scattered across battlefields
as Gardner does but instead conveys images of the vibrant men they
once were together with all the symbols of victorious battle. Roberta
Tarbell argues that Whitman "objected" to the unmediated dissemi-
nation of battlefield photographs for public consumption because
"gory views of mangled human bodies … caused too much distress to
the civilians who saw them." She maintains that Whitman "decided to
limit his verbal interpretations of his direct experiences with soldiers
to softer, more positive observations."[47] As such, the hymn opens with
strong depictions that recall and reinforce images seen in previous
poems:[48]

… my cavalry, all on their spirited horses,
With their sabres drawn and glist'ning, and carbines clanking by
    their thighs—(ah, my brave horsemen!
My handsome, tan-faced horsemen! what life, what joy and pride,
With all the perils, were yours!)[49]

For Gardner, the tension between the caption and the photograph in plate 37, *Field Where General Reynolds Fell, Gettysburg*, remains unresolved. Gardner's own Whitmanesque caption for the picture does little to quell the disturbing sight of the five bloodied, bloated bodies that center the image and shout the horror of their deaths as they rot into the soil. Gardner's use of the term "field" with its suggestion of "harvest" is cruelly ironic. Compositionally, the photograph is analogous to Melville's "Malvern Hill (July 1862)." Before the poem commences, its title provides the caption for the subsequent imagery and sets the context of the place and date, while reinforcing the actuality of the picture described:

Ye elms that wave on Malvern Hill
    In prime of morn and May,
Recall ye how McClellan's men
    Here stood at bay?
While deep within yon forest dim
    Our rigid comrades lay—
Some with the cartridge in their mouth,
Others with fixed arms lifted South—
    Invoking so
The cypress glades? Ah wilds of woe![50]

Faith Barrett argues that as well as invoking traditional literary devices, Melville's poem "responds to the graphic depictions of battlefield corpses in wartime photography" by experimenting with new models of representation.[51] Melville explores the notion of time and the representation of time and space made apparent by the new medium of photography. While as Barrett maintains, the first stanza of "Malvern Hill" plays on the photographic arresting of time in relation to the fixedness of the dead bodies in rigor mortis contrasted with the "suspended present" suggested by the "high literary apostrophe" to the elm trees, the photograph has the more complex effect

of immortalizing time, locking temporality in perpetual suspense.[52] Melville's elm trees bear witness to events as does the camera; they, like humankind, move on in natural life, but these soldiers are imagined as being locked in death. Moreover, the trees are personified as silent witnesses and can make no judgment.[53] Gardner's photograph also depicts trees witnessing events, but their subtle inclusion is difficult to read poetically: there are only three recognizable trees standing, but the photograph shows what look like logs or fallen branches scattered in the background, suggesting that they were taken down at some point either in preparation for battle or as a result of battle. The foreground shows rough grasses that appear almost twig-like; bent and mangled, they make an uncomfortable deathbed for the fallen. This interpretation implies a subtle analogy between the fate of the soldiers and the fate of humankind in the conflict of war: both the human and the natural landscapes are scarred.

Lee Rust Brown maintains that Whitman did not seek new aesthetic forms in *Drum-Taps*, arguing that instead Whitman's "already amply defined" poetry is "affirmed" by the experience of war.[54] Rather than finding the troublingly incohesive formula shaped by the idea of aftermath as Melville did, Whitman brings before the reader the expressions of individual suffering conveyed in real time and experience, which he intends would speak for the nation. There is no sense of the political or ethical ambiguity of aftermath for Whitman. Instead, the drum-taps theme of the collection resonates with the beating heart of the poet: a steady pulsating rhythm whose drumbeat taps to the rhythm of every beating heart. As such, Whitman's sustained singular perspective endeavors to act as a kind of synecdoche for the collective perspective, attempting to unite the nation's vision as a panorama. By contrast, Melville's task was to bring us more closely in touch with the aesthetic of modernity, a formula that creates an enduring relationship with technology—which carries its own philosophical and ethical impulse. The idea of aftermath is played out by Melville in his camera-like recording of "the ruins of war," which conflict and contrast as does the camera from scene to scene. Moreover, the reading of Melville's text creates a drive toward finding the unobtainable truth: a truth with which the photographic camera, to this day, retains its teasingly problematic relationship.

{ 4 }

RECONCILIATION AS

SEQUEL AND SUPPLEMENT:

Drum-Taps AND *Battle-Pieces*

PETER J. BELLIS

Why does *Drum-Taps* require a sequel and *Battle-Pieces* a supplement? Walt Whitman and Herman Melville could simply have ended their books with the close of Civil War hostilities, but each decides against it. For both of them, something more is needed to give the war shape and meaning—an additional movement toward reunification and reconciliation. But in both cases, thematic or conceptual completion brings formal disruption: reconciliation is deferred or displaced into a separate section of the text and marked by an all-too-visible scar or seam. Whitman and Melville could, theoretically, have delayed publication of their books in order to better integrate this material, or they could have withheld it for a new volume. But instead each places sequel or supplement alongside his original text, *with* it but not exactly *in* it.

On one level, this is a small formal puzzle, a detail of publication history, more often treated by critics as a matter of information than interpretation.[1] But it also suggests the poets' different ways of understanding postwar reunification and recovery. Each moves his text toward closure but turns away from it in different ways and for different reasons. For Whitman, reconciliation is a psychological or symbolic process that remains separate from the war itself but still follows from it as a sequel. The term implies a continuing temporal development, in which the line between text and sequel serves as a hinge or transition, not an end. For Melville, on the other hand, reconciliation has been blocked by the politicized struggle of Reconstruction, a continuation of the war in a different guise. By 1866, *Battle-Pieces'*

poetic form seems not so much temporally incomplete as structurally flawed, requiring a prose supplement to compensate for its deficiencies.[2] Whitman sees reconciliation as a task that poetry can still accomplish, given time; Melville fears that it may lie beyond the reach of discourse altogether.

Whitman had been gathering the poems for *Drum-Taps* since the early 1860s, and he had described a "MS book" by that title as early as the spring of 1863.[3] By the time he had advertising posters printed in late March 1865, he had been discussing its publication for over a year and a half.[4] In a letter of January 6, 1865, to William O'Connor, Whitman repeatedly contrasts *Drum-Taps* with *Leaves of Grass*: the new project, he says, is quite separate from the old and "superior to" it, emphasizing the artistic "control" beneath what may only seem like "wildest abandon"; the collection is "adjusted in all its proportions," with no "verbal superfluity."[5]

Nevertheless, days after signing a publishing contract on April 1, 1865—by April 9, the date of Lee's surrender, and certainly after Lincoln's assassination on April 14—Whitman had already come to see the book as needing revision. He made a number of changes while *Drum-Taps* was in press, deleting ten poems and adding another seventeen, including his first elegy for the president, "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day."[6]

Ted Genoways has argued for the importance of economic factors—in particular the high cost of paper—in shaping the printed form of the original *Drum-Taps*. Once printed, the book could not really have been discarded, and the order of the poems may not convey a clear poetic intention. But whether one considers Whitman's original plan of March 1865 (Genoways's preference) or the published arrangement, *Drum-Taps* cannot be said to have an order based on more than parataxis, juxtaposition, or at best "montage."[7] The problem goes beyond what Michael Moon describes as "two discordant rhetorics"; as Anthony Szczesiul points out, "war poems" are mixed with "unwarlike" ones in both the March and the April versions in ways that "dilute the effect of the war poetry."[8]

Many of Whitman's changes, on the other hand, suggest an emerging thematic and structural intention. He limits the volume's scope by cutting poems like "Spirit Whose Work Is Done" and "Reconciliation," which make reunification their explicit subject.[9] Of the pieces he

adds, only "Hymn of Dead Soldiers" and "Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice" (a revised version of "Calamus 5") seem to anticipate the restoration of the Union.[10] And while "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day" speaks of grief at Lincoln's death, it does not look forward either. Whitman deliberately leaves such matters for the *Sequel*.

Paradoxically, by thus excluding or deferring reconciliation, Whitman gives his now-divided text an implicit temporal order. If reconciliation is to follow from or come after conflict, it requires this temporal, not just paratactic or associative, structure: the violence of *Drum-Taps* must be brought to a close if a restorative sequel is to begin. (It is this sequence—division, conflict, reunification—that will eventually come to structure *Drum-Taps* itself, beginning in the 1881 edition of *Leaves of Grass*.[11])

One of the things unchanged from the March 1865 table of contents is the book's concluding poem, "Not Youth Pertains to Me." This suggests that Whitman reaffirmed, rather than altered, his decision about how to end *Drum-Taps* itself; the book turns inward, describing not the end of the fighting but how the war has reshaped the poet. "Two things inure to me," Whitman writes. "I have nourish'd the wounded, and sooth'd many a dying soldier, / And at intervals I have strung together a few songs, / Fit for war, and the life of the camp."[12] Wartime experience has changed the poet, but it also serves and validates him. Four years of suffering and death find their conclusion in these "songs." But Whitman's description is surprisingly self-effacing: "I have strung together a few songs." And in his initial version, the songs themselves are seen as limited in both subject and audience— "Fit for war, and the life of the camp," relevant only to the period of the war and most resonant for the combatants. In both its self-enclosure and its restraint, "Not Youth Pertains to Me" reflects the "diminished sense of self and world" that Betsy Erkkila sees as characteristic of *Drum-Taps* as a whole.[13]

"Hush'd Be the Camps To-day" was Whitman's last addition to the book, and it too is notable for its attempts at enclosure and completion. The poem describes Lincoln as already outside time and history—"No more for him life's stormy conflicts, / … No more time's dark events"— a state imitated by the "hush" of the camp as individual soldiers "retire" into silence. As a "dweller in camps," the poet knows "the love we [soldiers] bore him," and his voice is to rise from and speak for their

"hush'd" ranks. Whitman's "verse" is directed not toward others, however; he is charged to "Sing, to the lower'd coffin there; / Sing, with the shovel'd clods that fill the grave—a verse, / For the heavy hearts of soldiers."[14] His words accompany and parallel both "the shovel'd clods" and the soldiers' "heavy hearts," their weight physically covering and pressing down upon Lincoln's coffin. It is as if the poem is to fill not just a gap in the text but also the silence and emptiness left by the president's death. In anticipating (incorrectly) Lincoln's burial (its original subtitle is "A. L. buried April 19, 1865"), "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day" seeks both to describe and to perform that burial, to make itself the physical and narrative endpoint of the nation's grief.

The poems of the *Sequel*, on the other hand, reverse this direction to begin the process of reunification. Over twenty-four pages, from "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" through "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod," they turn outward from the poetic consciousness into the physical space of the nation and away from wartime into the future. "Lilacs" begins at the point where "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day" ends, in stasis and blocked grief. The broken lines of section 2, with their percussive, exclamatory repetitions, are like the words or clods of the earlier poem: "O powerful, western, fallen star! / O shades of night! O moody, tearful night! / O great star disappear'd! O the black murk that hides the star!" The poem struggles to break free of such repetition into time and narrative progression. It does so most famously by reversing the burial of "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day" and tracking the redemptive journey of Lincoln's coffin through the landscape: "Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities, / Amid lanes and through old woods, . . . / Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprising." This movement carries the poem from a single catastrophic moment of loss—the assassination—not to another moment of enclosure (a burial) but through a process of renewal and return, the "lilac blooming perennial" in an "ever-returning spring."[15]

The poet does not simply follow the coffin, however; his path leads him first into fuller darkness and silence, into "the hiding receiving night, that talks not," where he may encounter death first as an abstraction and then as a natural phenomenon. Now the "sight that was bound in my eyes" opens "to long panoramas of visions," in which the "torn and bloody" "battle-flags" of the war appear: "I saw battle-

corpses, myriads of them, / And the white skeletons of young men—I saw them; / I saw the debris and the debris of all the dead soldiers."[16] All the "debris"—material, human, and emotional—of the war can now enter the poem, brought into a structure of survival and recovery. Poet and nation can move from private grief to public mourning and then beyond grief entirely, "passing" beyond the scope of the poem itself.

Of the poems deferred from *Drum-Taps* to the *Sequel*, several describe or enact a similar recovery or transformation, in which the violence of the war is internalized and converted into memory or song. In "Spirit Whose Work Is Done," the "spirit" that has "with muttering voice, through the war now closed, like a tireless phantom flitted, / Rousing the land with breath of flame" is asked to

> Touch my mouth, ere you depart—press my lips close!
> Leave me your pulses of rage! bequeath them to me! fill me with
>   currents convulsive!
> Let them scorch and blister out of my chants, when you are gone;
> Let them identify you to the future in these songs.[17]

The currents of violence are transfigured, given an erotic and emotional charge, in a kiss that convulses and fills the poet with verbal energy. His "songs" will in turn reshape that electric force and "identify" the war for future readers.

In "As I Lay with my Head in Your Lap, Camerado," the speaker's "words" are also "weapons, full of danger, full of death"; the poet has now become the "real soldier," replacing "the red-striped artilleryman." He "confront[s] peace, security, and all the settled laws," but this is a poetic project, not a military one. The poem moves from the past tense ("As I lay . . . / The confession I made . . .") into the present, as the speaker "resume[s]" an earlier prewar role.[18]

Such movement from wartime into the future becomes a narrative sequence in "In Clouds Descending, in Midnight Sleep." The poem begins with the "midnight sleep, of many a face of anguish, / . . . the look at first of the mortally wounded," before its second stanza shifts to "scenes of nature," in which the dead are buried "after the storm." In the third and final stanza, both the action and the tense shift from present to past: "Long have they pass'd, long lapsed—faces and trenches and fields." The "now" of this stanza is the postwar period, and these deaths recur only in the survivor's own sleep, in the refrain,

"I dream, I dream, I dream."[19] Just as "The Centenarian's Story" in *Drum-Taps* linked the events of 1861 with the Revolution through memory, so "In Clouds Descending" begins the process of historicizing the Civil War. That process is not a controlled one, however; in 1865, it is still a haunting, an involuntary recollection, not yet the distanced memory described in the poem's later title, "Old War-Dreams."

The *Sequel*'s turn outward toward the future is repeated and confirmed in its closing poem, "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod." The poet comes "Forth from my [wartime] tent emerging for good, loosing, untying the tent-ropes," singing not of "war, nor the dead" but offering a "call" to the "emanative" fields and "endless vistas" of America, "again to peace restored." Their response comes "not in words," however: "The average earth, the witness of war and peace," offers only "mute" "acknowledg[ment]." In *Drum-Taps*, the poet as "Dresser" nourished the wounded; now "The prairie draws me close, as the father, to bosom broad, the son; / The Northern ice and rain, that began me, nourish me to the end; / But the hot sun of the South is to ripen my songs."[20] As in "Song of Myself" and elsewhere, Whitman's vision is of the poet absorbed by, dispersed into, a nation "restored" to itself.

The poems of Whitman's *Sequel* thus perform a clearly different function from those of *Drum-Taps* proper. But their gestures of potential recovery and fulfillment are, as I have said, left in a strangely liminal position. Whitman feels them necessary enough to hold back the initial distribution of *Drum-Taps* but nonetheless only appends these poems to it.[21] Both the original volume and its sequel are again included without revision as "annexes" to the 1867 edition of *Leaves*, being fully incorporated into the volume only after 1871.[22]

Betsy Erkkila calls the 1867 *Leaves* the "most chaotic" edition, but there may be something behind this aspect of its disorder.[23] The change in direction between *Drum-Taps* and the *Sequel*—its turn away from the battlefield and its shift in perspective from inward to outward—does require a gap or break in which this pivot can occur. And so the *Sequel* must initially stand apart, if only to establish a temporal structure in which a beginning can take place. For Whitman in the late 1860s, reconciliation may indeed be underway, but it can still only be projected, distinguished from the war by a physical separation within the text.

In his prefatory note to *Battle-Pieces*, Melville describes most of its

poems as composed after the fall of Richmond in April 1865; he may have begun writing them earlier, but the forces shaping the volume are those of 1865 and 1866, not the years before, and they are quite different from those affecting *Drum-Taps*.[24] Melville's manuscript went to Harper and Brothers in late July 1866, in the midst of an intense political battle between President Andrew Johnson and congressional Republicans over the shape and terms of postwar reconstruction.[25] This conflict is all too visible in Melville's late revisions—in his addition of several poems and then, at the last, of the prose "Supplement" whose politics remain so problematic and controversial.

Battle-Pieces's preface is decidedly evasive in describing the collection's form: the poems, Melville claims, "were composed without reference to collective arrangement, but being brought together in review, naturally fall into the order assumed." He has, he says, "yield[ed] instinctively . . . to feelings" from different sources, "unmindful, without purposing to be, of consistency."[26] His multiple negatives ("unmindful, without purposing") notwithstanding, the result is neither a matter of chance nor a single natural order. Melville structures and restructures his materials in several different ways, even before the summer of 1866. One organizational principle or literary form succeeds another: poetic chronology and commemoration are followed by annotation and then his prose appeal. *Battle-Pieces* does not so much defer resolution as compulsively and repeatedly attempt it, each form proving insufficient in its turn.[27]

The book's first and longest section is organized chronologically— forty-three of its fifty-two poems are either dated or linked to a specific event, and they appear in a sequence running from 1859 to June 1865. This part comes to a natural close, according to Robert Milder, with a cluster of retrospective pieces—including "The Muster," "Aurora-Borealis," and the allegorical "America."[28] Milder sees the section as tracing a complex arc of "trauma and national reeducation," in which Melville depicts the nation's fall into history.[29]

Robert Penn Warren is sharply critical of "America," but he too notes its structural function in the text: "as its position in the volume *Battle-Pieces* indicates, it is a poem written to resolve—no, gloss over—the very issues raised in the body of the book."[30] Edgar Dryden takes Warren's reading a step further, describing the poem as a gathering point for echoes of both Milton and pieces from earlier in the vol-

ume, echoes that ironize and undercut the allegory but complete the narrative frame.[31]

This model of narrative completion is, however, followed by "Verses Inscriptive and Memorial." The sixteen poems of this section instead offer images of burial and commemoration, of repeated spatial enclosure or containment (as in Whitman's "Hush'd Be the Camps Today"). Melville's preface speaks of the "incidents of the conflict" as "making up" a "geographical" or spatial "whole," and here he offers a landscape of graves, marked (in "Inscriptions" or "Epitaphs") or unmarked (in "uninscribed" or "natural Monuments").[32] In one way, the "Verses" retrace the temporal progression of the preceding section, but only to disperse it across the space of the nation, from Missouri to Maine, Louisiana, and Virginia and finally to bodies lost at sea.[33]

The "Verses" might be seen as offering a balance or coda to the first section of the book, combining images of interment and commemoration with the outward movement we saw in "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod." But Melville cannot rest with even this double conclusion. The war's repressed violence returns in "The Scout toward Aldie," but now in the shapelessness of guerrilla warfare, its fallen landscape haunted by the gray ghosts of Mosby's Rangers. In a sense, this poem recapitulates yet again the movement of the book's first section, from naivete to disillusionment and grief. Unlike almost all the other battle poems, "The Scout" draws on Melville's own experience, but it lacks the specific dates of those poems or the locations of the "Verses Inscriptive and Memorial"; its setting is somewhere in northern Virginia, "toward Aldie."[34] And the "verse" is ultimately forced to "turn aside," trapped by grief as the Union soldiers had been by a Confederate ambush (and as Whitman's poet had been in the first sections of "Lilacs").[35]

Late in the construction of *Battle-Pieces*, in April 1866 or after, Melville added "Lee in the Capitol." Here he again works from historical fact, Robert E. Lee's testimony before members of the Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction in February 1866, but he inserts an admittedly fictional speech making the case for Northern "magnanimity" in victory.[36] The committee poses the key questions of the Reconstruction debate:

"Does the sad South still cherish hate?
Freely will Southern men with Northern mate?

The blacks—should we our arm withdraw,
Would that betray them? some distrust your law."[37]

This is the central issue of Reconstruction—in David Blight's words, "how to make the logic of sectional reconciliation compatible with the logic of emancipation."[38] But Lee's speech offers only an indirect or partial response. "'How shall I speak?'" he asks twice, "'Thoughts knot with thoughts, and utterance check.'" The "'natural offspring of this civil war'" are "'A desolated land, and all / The brood of ills that press so sore,'" but equally natural is the South's "'strong fidelity . . . to the home and to the heart.'"[39]

The scene ends with the general's apparent failure and his dismissal by the committee, but Melville adds a final stanza:

But no. Brave though the Soldier, grave his plea—
    Catching the light in the future's skies,
Instinct disowns each darkening prophecy:
    Faith in America never dies;
Heaven shall the end ordained fulfill,
We march with Providence cheery still.[40]

Lee invoked nature in his plea for magnanimity, but the poet invokes faith in providential history. This is certainly a rhetorical move toward the future, but its "cheery" optimism comes as a sudden, forced reversal of the previous stanza, in which "The Past her shadow through the Future sent."[41]

Melville's explanatory notes—which he ultimately placed between the final poem and the prose "Supplement"—would have marked the physical end of the volume in a self-reflexive gesture reminiscent of Whitman's "Not Youth Pertains to Me." The notes create a distance between the reader and the war, converting the poems into historical artifacts in need of explanation. The strategy resembles Whitman's in "In Clouds Descending, in Midnight Sleep," with its controlled movement from past to present into dream. But Melville's late additions—"Lee in the Capitol" and "A Meditation"—work against such closure, preventing the conversion of war into memory.[42] Lee returns from the past, moving from battlefield to capitol, because the conflict has returned as well, transposed from warfare into politics.[43]

It is here and for this reason, after at least four different attempts

at resolution, that we encounter Melville's "Supplement." This piece, added at the very last, destroys the "symmetry" of the book, he says. His rationale for the "Supplement" is the same as that for including "Lee in the Capitol": "events have not yet rounded themselves into completion."[44] But as Carolyn Karcher, Robert Milder, and others have noted, Melville's argument in the "Supplement" is not very different from the one in Lee's speech or in the book's final poem, "A Meditation."[45] Why, then, does he feel the need to break the symmetrical closure of his notes and extend the text? If the difference is not thematic, perhaps it lies in the formal shift from poetry to prose.

"Lee in the Capitol" sought to have a soldier speak, through poetry, to policy, but the effort failed.[46] This is no longer the time of "soldiers and sailors" or of poets but of "politicians," Melville says, and a different kind of rhetoric seems required. Between 1865 and 1866, a moral or psychological impulse toward reconciliation has given way to a political struggle over Reconstruction, and Melville's text is thrust into a still-unstable present: "to altered circumstances complicated adaptations are to be made," as "patriotism … overrid[es the] literary." The "Supplement" is offered as a political intervention, an act rather than an aesthetic "record," working through direct rhetorical address instead of the indirection of lyric or dramatic monologue.[47]

For Michael Paul Rogin, Melville speaks in the "Supplement" "more reliably in his own voice than anywhere else in his work"; Robert Milder sees the document as "reason[ing] with its audience," offering a "carefully modulated argument" for Melville's position.[48] For me, however, the "Supplement" is most striking in its lack of specificity and its evasiveness. Its language echoes the debates over the Freedmen's Bureau, the Civil Rights Act of 1866, and the Fourteenth Amendment but mentions none of them directly. Melville's first person may be more direct in form, but his essay works through a series of qualifications and negations, playing oppositions against themselves; it swings between charity and doubt, between the urge toward moderation and the moral claims of the formerly enslaved.

The poetry of *Battle-Pieces* had been characterized throughout by its formal and rhetorical restraint, its commitment to finding adequate linguistic structure for experience. The language of the "Supplement," on the other hand, goes well beyond the ironic play of voices in the poems—its verbal instability and excess seem to work against

the possibility of closure or coherence. The result is a text that indeed moves "as among sword-points," a self-consuming artifact par excellence.[49] In this, perhaps, it reflects both the tangled discourse of postwar politics and Melville's despairing sense of America's racial and political impasse.

Carolyn Karcher sees Melville as trying to create a middle ground between President Johnson's plan of national restoration and congressional Reconstruction, but she regards Melville's term, "Re-establishment," as in practice equivalent to restoration.[50] This seems to oversimplify the complex, often tortured debates and compromises from which the Fourteenth Amendment was crafted.[51] Melville in fact proposes neither a return to the status quo ante (restoration) nor the remaking of one region by another (Reconstruction). Nor does he adopt "a language of . . . national regeneration," as Whitman does in "Lilacs"; given the politics of 1866, he cannot see reconciliation as either a natural or a spiritual process.[52] The war has been a violent rupture, "an upheaval affecting the basis of" the entire nation, which can be "re-established" once again only through the imperfect, negotiated discourse of partisan politics.[53]

Again and again, Melville speaks of discursive constraint or repression: "one who never was a blind adherent feels constrained to submit some thoughts"; "how many and earnest thoughts still rise, and how hard to repress them."[54] His statements are often vague or hedged, buried in convoluted syntax and contrary-to-fact expressions:

> Though, perhaps, nothing could ultimately have averted the strife, and though to treat of human actions is to deal wholly with second causes, nevertheless, let us not cover up or try to extenuate what, humanly speaking, is the truth—namely, that those unfraternal denunciations, continued through years, and which at last inflamed to deeds that ended in bloodshed, were reciprocal . . .[55]

Melville's language here does precisely that which it claims to reject: it twists and turns and "covers up" and "extenuates" its "truth." The upshot is a diffusion—an evaporation, almost—of responsibility.

Ironically, the clearest part of the "Supplement" may be the one dealing with African American rights, even though it comprises only a single paragraph (the essay's longest) and appears two-thirds of the

way through. It is perhaps only logical that this part of the essay should have received the most critical attention, for it confronts the problems of postwar race relations far more fully than "Lee in the Capitol." Here the "agonized violence" of the war is acknowledged most directly and the fear of its return imaged most powerfully—as a volcano threatening to destabilize a perhaps only superficial peace.[56] But this is also the point at which Melville makes clear his racial paternalism and his willingness to privilege white brotherhood over black equality.

For him, the problem of race relations is the same "knot" whose "intricacy" "entangled" the America of "Benito Cereno"; Melville cannot "'Undo it, cut it'" a decade later either.[57] It reappears in Lee's "knotted" thoughts and, I would argue, in the twisted, clotted verbiage of the "Supplement" as well.[58] For Melville, a resolution remains unachievable—conceivable, yes, but only as indefinitely deferred:

> Surely we ought to take it to heart that that kind of pacification, based upon principles operating equally all over the land, which lovers of their country yearn for, and which our arms, although signally triumphant, did not bring about, and which lawmaking, however anxious, or energetic, or repressive, never by itself can achieve, may yet be largely aided by generosity of sentiment public and private.[59]

Peace will not come from force or the rationality of "law-making," and it can only be "largely aided" by charity and sentiment. The only way that Melville can "[suppose] a happy issue out of present perplexities" is in "the generation next to come."[60] As the "Supplement" itself demonstrates, the nation cannot be reconstructed, reconciled, or reestablished in language alone, whether poetry or prose.

Both Whitman's *Sequel* and Melville's "Supplement" are open-ended, forward- and outward-looking, turning toward the reader and deferring closure. They show the poets' different insights into a crucial paradox: the cessation of violence is not sufficient to give the war its meaning; that requires the reconstitution of the nation as a whole. But binding up the nation's wounds is not a singular event to be captured in a single "song" or "battle-piece." It can only be an extended and conflicted process; paradoxically, their texts can seek closure only by turning toward their audience, looking to their readers for completion.

It is at this point that Whitman and Melville diverge. Robert Penn

Warren speaks of Whitman's Civil War poetry as "synthetic" in its drive toward unity, seeking reunification through "aggregation, or absorption"; Melville's approach, on the other hand, is "analytic," viewing the Union as "a political arrangement" rather than a mystical one.[61] Such distinctions are useful, I think, in describing the different functions and fates of the *Sequel* and the "Supplement."

Whitman does believe that poetry can speak to policy, that their languages can be made one and the same. By 1871, he may be sanguine enough to bring both *Drum-Taps* and its sequel into the framework of *Leaves*. Or, as Cristanne Miller suggests, this may be only an "appeasement," a sacrifice of "Libertad" for the sake of "Reconciliation."[62] In his preface to the 1876 edition, Whitman speaks of *Drum-Taps* as "pivotal to" his project; the war is now a turning point, after which the United States are prepared "to enter upon their real history—the way being now (i.e. since the result of the Secession War) clear'd of death-threatening impedimenta, and the free areas around and ahead of us assured and certain."[63] And by 1881 he has merged poems like "Reconciliation" and "To the Leaven'd Soil They Trod" into *Drum-Taps* proper and established "Memories of President Lincoln" as a separate group of elegies. He is able to see a continuity, rather than a contrast, between war and reconciliation.

Battle-Pieces is not revised, however, never resituated by its author in a volume of collected poems. Carolyn Karcher may be right that for both Melville and Whitman "white identity provided a ground for cementing national unity," but Melville's bitter skepticism about the relation between poetry and policy remains.[64] As Edgar Dryden puts it, Melville "is driven to violate the work's formal purity with an addition that follows what properly ought to close itself . . . and suggests that the literary as such does not suffice."[65] His "Supplement" ends with a prayer that "fulfillment" may "verify in the end those expectations which kindle the bards of Progress and Humanity," a hope that someday a visionary poetry might be possible.[66]

As it stands, the "Supplement" anticipates—and repeats—the failure of the poems that precede it, but Melville's despairing judgment goes beyond the aesthetic. His "Supplement" foresees the failure of Reconstruction itself—a process that yielded a punishing North, a resistant South, and the eventual return of Jim Crow. From his darkened perspective, no postwar political arrangement—radical Recon-

struction, speedy restoration, or something in between—could have avoided renewed conflict and the sacrifice of African American freedom. Any plan would have remained inadequate and incomplete, at once excessive and insufficient, a substitute for an impossible, imagined natural reconciliation always in need of supplementation. More than 150 years later, it is all too clear that Melville, not Whitman, was the more prescient, for the tasks of reconciliation and reunification still remain.

Reimagining *Drum-Taps*

WHITMAN'S DISARMING POETICS: RECUPERATING THE LANGUAGE OF THE BODY IN *Drum-Taps*

KYLE BARTON

I n a notebook entry dated February 16, 1863, Walt Whitman catalogs the wounded and sick soldiers glimpsed outside of the Treasury Building in Washington, D.C. He rarely devotes a complete sentence to any one description of an individual or a group; rather, the appearance of a comma or an em dash signals the movement of his eye and mind from one person to another. Only once in this entry does he pause for an entire paragraph to record and meditate on a single member of this urban tableau. Whitman sees "a soldier, young, yet bent over as he walks just like a capital C," putatively on his way to try and claim his "back pay." He concludes his description with the vitriolic parenthetical, "the nation has used him to the utmost, short of life, and leaves him with the shape of a capital C, and may-be eight dollars a month."[1]

In this passage, the poet clearly establishes a connection between the corruption of the body and linguistic representation. Aside from the observation that the United States literally manipulated this soldier's body into an alphabetic letter, Whitman deploys that most central and multivalent word of his oeuvre, "leaves." By "leaving" the soldier in the shape of a "C," the nation has not only abandoned him in a state of bodily deformity, it has also written him onto the leaf of a book (of discharged soldiers) and forced him to become a symbol, a representation of the Civil War. The horror and indignation that Whitman experienced upon observing this soldier in particular, as well as many others like him, galvanized the poet to action. Incapable of protecting the actual bodies of fighters from being mutilated into letter-like shapes, he nevertheless possessed an arsenal that he used to stabilize

the words traditionally employed to represent those bodies, to save the language of the body from ideological assault.

The relationship between the human body and written language fascinated Whitman well before he composed the notebook entry. In fact, one of the major themes in his work is the transformation of the body into language, and he often uses metrics to illustrate this process. In the 1860 "As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life," for instance, he writes, "[I] Was seized by the spirit that trails in the lines underfoot."[2] This line of anapestic pentameter (with an initial iamb) follows one of free verse. The strict rhythm of this line results from the regular metrical feet Whitman uses that, particularly when juxtaposed with the preceding free verse line, indicate that the speaker is conflating human feet and lines of oceanic refuse with metrical feet and poetic lines. In the final line of the poem, addressing a possible poet-creator, the speaker confesses, "Whoever you are—we too lie in drifts at your feet."[3] This slightly more irregular bit of anapestic pentameter even constructs one of its anapests through an antisyncopic vowel augmentation as the word "lines" becomes "lie in." Thus, as the speaker realizes that he has himself become language, the word splits and the meter expands: the prosodic performance enacts the splitting of the individual's identity as his body transforms.

In analyses of such metapoetic moments in Whitman's work, some critics have argued that his central goal was mimetic.[4] In lines like those shown, though, while the poet does manipulate rhythm, making language mimic the cadences and pulses experienced in the natural world, he also demonstrates the way in which language violently strangles and binds a complex, material reality in a constructed, rhythmic order. Annie Finch refers to these self-consciously metrical lines that grapple with this issue as "metapentameters," and she asserts that "Whitman felt the pentameter itself as at times stifling and painful."[5] Whitman herein senses a pain similar to that of Jacques Lacan's "passion of the signifier," a process in which a predetermined structure forces a material object to conform to that structure, thereby sacrificing individuality. In other words, it is the pain of becoming generalized through language. Lacan writes that, in speech, "the signifier plays an active role in determining the effects by which the signifiable appears to succumb to its mark, becoming, through that passion, the signified."[6] In the traditional use of pentameter, the metrical

structure precedes content and, as a result, largely determines how that content will be represented in language. Metrically devout poets must force their ideas into words that will fit a specific, presupposed rhythm; this structure demands that content conform and contort itself.[7] In these lines from "As I Ebb'd," Whitman uses the pentameter to illustrate the constricting pain of the material (manifest here in the human body) being forced into what Lacan would eventually term the Symbolic Order.[8]

Nowhere in Whitman's poetry is the violence of this relationship between the human body and written language more prevalent than in the Civil War book-turned-cluster *Drum-Taps*. It is also in this text that he connects this violence with a specific perpetrator, the same perpetrator who carried out the alphabetic mutilation of the soldier described in his notebook: the nation. Other critics, such as Adam Bradford, have examined the recuperative elements of *Drum-Taps*, with Bradford emphasizing Whitman's reclamation of soldiers' names and identities from the military's generalizations.[9] I intend to examine Whitman's recuperation not of the individual soldiers but of the language used to conceal their wounded bodies. His countermilitaristic literary achievement occurs at a microscopic level: at the level of the word, even at the level of the letter. At the same time, however, these atomistic statements reveal an immensity about Whitman's lifelong poetic project and the ways that *Drum-Taps* constitutes a significant intervention in cultural rhetoric.

During the Civil War, the military seized not only the bodies of citizens, turning them into soldiers, it also ravaged the words used to represent those bodies, turning them into weaponry. Elaine Scarry terms this wartime process "redescription." In her seminal text, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, she succinctly states that "the main purpose and outcome of war is injuring." The commanding nation orders its soldiers "to alter (to burn, to blast, to shell, to cut) [the] human tissue" of the people belonging to the enemy state. Considering the body's absolute centrality to war, though, Scarry observes that wounded and mutilated bodies often vanish from the language used in wartime rhetoric through either omission or redescription. In the latter process, the injured human body disappears through renaming; the word "arm," for instance, loses its corporeal associations in order to represent weaponry. She argues that "the ex-

change of idioms between weapons and bodies has its most serious manifestation in the fact that in many different contexts the central inner activity of war comes to be identified as (or described as though it were) 'disarming' rather than 'injuring.'" Scarry further analyzes this semantic relationship between the body and weaponry, writing that "although a weapon is an extension of the human body . . . it is instead the human body that becomes in this vocabulary an extension of the weapon." The concept of the weapon eclipses the concept of the corporeal arm, and "the language is lent to the weapons at precisely the same moment that it is being lifted away from the sentient source of those projections."[10] In a time of war, language is manipulated in order to prioritize weaponry and hide the vulnerable body of the soldier.

Whitman sought the agent of such linguistic manipulation, and, as we have already seen in his February 1863 notebook entry, he found fault with the nation. Mark Osiel similarly emphasizes the intentionality of redescription, and he does so by complicating a passage from Scarry's text in which she reflects on a particular kind of redescription enacted following the American Civil War. Scarry argues that after the Civil War, the human casualties of both the Union and the Confederacy were joined in a single number. This new number represented a united group of Americans—rather than oppositional Unionists and Confederates—forced to violently destroy slavery, which had been "maiming" the nation. Here we see wartime violence displaced from the human body onto the personified forms of slavery and the nation. Osiel also notes that Scarry's writing implies that such narrative redescriptions (the Union and the Confederacy suffered losses together in order to end slavery), which allowed the two sides of the nation to rejoin under a single casualty count, occurred "automatically or effortlessly." He proceeds to argue instead that Lincoln intentionally carried out this process by producing legal documents such as pardons for Confederate soldiers that constructed slavery as a system that needed to be violently destroyed; these documents also worked to conceal the fact that Americans had split ideologically and spent years murdering one another.[11] Whitman, with his unflinching gaze, recognized the conscious redescription of the body from the war's earliest moments, as nationalist rhetoric transformed the vulnerable human body into munition.

In *Drum-Taps*, I will argue, Whitman depicts this process of re-description; then, in the book's final pages, he reverses it by restoring the language of the body to human tissue and by making that body visible within language again. He thus dissociates weaponry from the word "arms" in a profoundly poetic and political act. Beginning with a close examination of the opening poem from *Drum-Taps*, "First O Songs for a Prelude," and a couple of notebook entries on amputation, I will analyze the formal techniques Whitman uses to depict and critique the government's redescriptive seizure of corporeality and identity during the Civil War.[12] I will then track Whitman's highly complicated use of the word "arm" throughout the text. Finally, upon reaching "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," the opening poem of, first, *Sequel to Drum-Taps* and, ultimately, the "Memories of President Lincoln" cluster, I will alight with Lincoln's coffin to examine Whitman's conclusive repossession of material signification. Whitman could not protect the bodies on the battlefield; he could not ensure that the government would not morph them into alphabetic letters. He could, however, use his book of war poetry to reclaim the language of the body from the redefinitions imposed upon it by a militaristic culture. *Drum-Taps* therein also functions as a fiercely political defense of poetry and the art form's ability to critique and battle against criminal cultural abuses of language.

Drum-Taps' opening poem appears, in its theme, to celebrate war and its appropriation of the human body; its form, however, complicates this assumption. "First O Songs for a Prelude" has traditionally been read as one of Whitman's early, celebratory recruitment poems. Many critics have assumed that "Prelude" was written prior to Whitman's leaving New York and witnessing the carnage of the war, including numerous amputations.[13] However, there is little evidence to definitively confirm this critical assertion.[14] The opening lines of the poem introduce a strange vacillation between the disembodied actions of humans and the embodied behavior of a personified Manhattan.

In the first stanza, the speaker constructs an image of the city as a woman. She possesses "lithe limbs," an "indifferent hand" capable of throwing, and a "clench'd hand" that strikes the pavement in the second stanza. As she continues to gain corporeal form, however, the bodies of her constituents are absented from the page. The citizens

accomplish a number of physical acts but all without any mention of limbs. They jump, toss tools, throw reins, even "buckle . . . straps."[15] Mostly, though, they "leave" and "arm," and those two words again connect the human body and the page in a moment of deforming militaristic interference. The personified city rallies her citizens and appropriates the use of their bodies and the language representing those bodies in exchange for an "arm." In fact, her first action in the poem, described in line 3, is to lead the city to "arms," and Whitman bestows the third stress of the line on that word. In the following line, the speaker first notes the personified city's "limbs," a word that holds the third stress of that line. Through meter, Whitman is already demonstrating the dangerous transaction by which the human body disappears and the abstract state gains form. Here Lady Manhattan begins the pernicious work of redescription.

The act of arming here, of course, refers to the claiming of governmentally disbursed weaponry. This artificial and uniforming "arm" is the only one that each citizen-turned-soldier possesses in these leaves. The rhetoric of the military has stolen the other, fleshly kind and entrusted it to the topos of the body politic.[16] As Lady Manhattan (and the government she represents) uses her hand to throw off "the costumes of peace," other costumes are provided for the players.[17] Through the act of arming, the individualized body is displaced by the uniformity of a factory-produced prosthetic.[18]

As a result, we witness a twisted enactment of Lacan's "passion of the signifier." Each time that the word "arm" is used to refer to a specific person's individual limb, that material limb is forced, through speech, to conform to the general concept of *the* arm. In "Prelude," though, the concept of the bodily arm is separated from its own signifier, as the government fuses manufactured arms to the bodies of its citizens. Timothy Sweet writes that in the advent of the Civil War "a large number of supposedly free individuals became the property of the military state (soldiers). The governmental apparatus that in peacetime represented the autonomous subject to the state demanded in wartime that this representational relationship be altered."[19] Whitman expresses this alteration through Lady Manhattan's agglomerating of the citizens' bodies in order to compose and sustain her own. The changed relationship is also illustrated in the redescriptive rhetoric of arming, in which a word originally intended to represent a key

part of the agency of an autonomous subject's body comes to represent the property and agency of the state.

It is fitting that the line in the opening stanza, which is the first to feature the word "arm"—"How she led the rest to arms, how she gave the cue"—is the only one in that stanza to be written in irregular iambic pentameter, illustrating a process in which each poetic idea is forced into the uniform of a word capable of marching with an iambic or anapestic foot.[20] Thinking beyond Whitman's possible use of poetic mimesis, Doug Martin writes that "by seeing metrical freedom as analogous to political emancipation, Whitman begins seeing versification as it relates to the independence of America."[21] In this one line from "Prelude," then, we witness the painful pentameter forcing the body into symbolic organization as it temporarily suspends free verse, which is tied to American independence. Yet again, the government and the violent symbolic reframing of the body are bound together.[22]

It is important to remember that in this poem, we are not simply talking about individuality of personality but about individuality of the human body, something Whitman held sacred. The loss of individuality of the body actually occurs, however, not with injuring but rather with the act of arming, with the assimilation into the army and its oppressive rhetoric, which takes possession of the body and identity of the individual. The "de-individualizing signature of technology" is written on the bodies of soldiers, thus, when they take hold of the weapon, not when it wounds them.[23]

In a Washington notebook entry dated Saturday, May 2, 1863, Whitman records the arrival of a group of Confederate "rebel" prisoners on their procession to the Old Capitol Prison. Upon witnessing their wounded, amputated bodies, he writes, "I felt my heart full of compassion & brotherhood." He then reflects, "to have suffered! What a title it gives—!" The president, ambassadors, and all high-ranking officials, he continues, "must & shall yield place . . . to prisoners . . . poor boys, faint and sick in hospitals, without grace, [who] have not an eye for pictures[,] have not read the elder poets, but have amputated limbs."[24] In this strange passage, amputation—traditionally seen as the physical diminishment of the body—registers for Whitman as a moment of transition and expansion of identity.[25] In the entry, these Confederate soldiers are at once reintegrated into Whitman's brotherhood and pushed beyond it. They are granted an identity that trans-

gresses the national order, as even the head of the nation, the president, is required to bow to the naked display of the human body and its fragmentation. The individuality of their wounds provides them with new identities.

Amputation dismantles, to a certain extent, the borders of the body; it also, though, here dismantles the borders of the Union and the Confederacy as well as the limits of political hierarchies. Scarry points out that the postwar rhetoric reunited the nation; Whitman suggests that the soldiers' bodies, concealed and manipulated by that rhetoric, had already materially achieved this very goal. He complicates this subversive move in a later notebook entry, where he records that during the Civil War it was the wounded who truly exemplified "the expression of American personality."[26] Having liberated the soldiers from the militaristic deindividuation of their bodies, Whitman generalizes those bodies as emblems. Clearly, he experienced a strong ambivalence on this point. While he ultimately is unable to provide the wounded soldiers in his poetry a sense of individuality, he powerfully reasserts their materiality and condemns the language of redescription.[27]

Whitman asks the reader to perform this act of deconstruction with him in the middle of the long catalog involving the arming of citizens in "First O Songs for a Prelude." Timothy Sweet observes that the

> colossus is displaced by a catalogue of some types of the individuals—mechanics, lawyers, drivers, and salesmen—who comprise the body of "Manhattan." … The reabsorption of these individuals into "Manahatta a-march," smiling with exultation, by the end of the poem indicates the fluidity with which the structure operates to represent … myriad individuals by attributing to them a unified intention.[28]

I would argue, conversely, that the vacillation between the body politic and the individual citizens points to their disembodiment; that is, their bodies can be glimpsed only through actions, and even the word "arm" itself transforms into a verb. In the midst of this disembodiment, Whitman includes the semantically loaded line, "The white tents cluster in camps—the arm'd sentries around—the sunrise cannon, and again at sunset."[29] The word "cluster," Whitman's term for his poetic groupings, cues the reader that this is a metapoetic mo-

ment, one concerned with the relationship of the body to the play of language. If we look closely at "camps—the arm'd," we discover Whitman's sense of what the process of arming is doing to material bodies: it "amps—the arm."

The poet uses versions of this phrase at various points in his Civil War notebooks. In another 1863 entry, for instance, while "collecting" the identity and body of soldier Wm. Van Vliet, he jots down the soldier's injury as an "—arm amp—."[30] This is one of at least three instances in which Whitman uses this abbreviation for amputation in his notebooks.[31] This hidden phonemic aggregation in "Prelude" describes what the Union and the Confederate militaries implicitly ordered: amputating the material arm and replacing it with a metal prosthetic. In dismantling the word "camps" by removing the letter "c" (that letter which the nation had contorted soldiers' bodies to resemble), we dismantle the enshrouding structures to retrieve the fragmented identity.[32] By altering the signifier, the reader does to the military what the military has done to the citizen-soldier's body, changing it from a noun into a violent verb and thus exposing its true intentions. The reader then crosses the em dash and uses that punctuating scalpel to free the arm, a task made easier by the apostrophe that has already begun the process of severing the "d" from the rest of the word.[33] As with "camps" and "amps," "arm" now undergoes a transformation, this time of nominalization. The word "arm" is, in fact, used as a noun only once in "Prelude," at the moment of its passion in the metapentametric third line of the poem: it loses its status as a noun as it is restored to the body.

"Arm" is not the only word pertaining to the human body that demands our attention in this poem. As the men of Manhattan are arming, the speaker tells us that the cannons are "Soon, unlimber'd, to begin the red business." This line initiates the section of this "celebratory" recruitment poem announcing that, as citizens turn into soldiers, "The hospital service—the lint, bandages, and medicines"—is brought forth. The speaker then describes "The women volunteering for nurses—the work begun for, in earnest—no mere parade now." It is, rather, a march toward bloody wounds, amputations, and deaths. As the cannons are unlimbered, severed from their gun carriages, to enact "the red business" against the enemy, Whitman hints, by flashing the other signified of "limb" back through the stolen signifier, that

the red will also flow with the unlimbing of these currently arming soldiers. He conveys this fleshly meaning through the word once more in the poem when, in the penultimate stanza, the speaker commands, "Unlimber them! no more, as the past forty years, for salutes for courtesies merely."[34]

The correlation between the act of unlimbering and the cessation of saluting, a gesture performed with the raising of the arm, once again connects the claiming and activating of weaponry with the erasing of the body, with redescription. Salutes are terminated and the signifier "limb" is violated and given over to a martial concept. The aforementioned quoted line is also the sole one that "Prelude" shares with the "Broadway, 1861" manuscript, a sheet featuring drafts of unpublished poems on both sides of the paper that some critics argue evolved into "Prelude," thus dating that poem's inception to the period before Whitman left New York for the fields of battle.[35] Even this line that the two poems share, however, is largely altered. On the reverse side of the "Broadway" manuscript, it reads, "Unlimber the cannon— but not for mere salutes, for courtesy." The replacement of "the cannon" with the third-person plural pronoun allows the ambiguity of precisely what or who is to be unlimbered to come through. The word "unlimbered" appears in this manuscript apart from "arm," a word that helps gesture toward its more subversive meaning. "Arm," which appears fifteen times in "Prelude," does not appear even a single time in the "Broadway" manuscript.

As we proceed through the original *Drum-Taps*, Whitman invites us to resist redescription at various points.[36] In "Song of the Banner at Day-Break," during one of the poet's monologues, he says, "I hear and see not strips of cloth alone; / I hear the tr*amp of arm*ies."[37] Where we previously deconstructed the deindividualizing space of the military camp, we now can dismantle both the army itself and the uniformed marching performed in (poetic) lines.[38] This is also not the only instance in which the flag and the (amputated) body are united. In "Bathed in War's Perfume," the line describing soldiers' unified physical response to the flag's call reads, "O to hear the tr*amp*, tr*amp*, of a million answering men! O the ships they *arm* with joy!"—with "arm" stressed on the same iambic beat following "O the" as the initial "tramp," further connecting these two sounds.[39] In "Hymn of Dead Soldiers," the speaker tells all musicians to cease their playing. The

drum-taps, which our speaker directed into being in that first disem-
bodied moment of "First O Songs for a Prelude," are silenced by this
persona who now says that he does not ask the trumpeters "to sound."
He continues, "Nor you drummers—neither at reveille, at dawn, /
Nor the long roll al*arm*ing the c*amp*—nor even the muffled beat for a
burial."[40] The organizing and uniforming sounds and structures are
again dismantled and forced to give precedence, like the president
and ambassadors, to the signifiers of amputated arms.

In "World, Take Good Notice," as in "Song of the Banner at Day-
Break" and "Bathed in War's Perfume," the American flag appears in
conjunction with the language of amputation. In its description of the
war-torn flag, this short poem employs such words as "ript" and "de-
taching." The speaker then terms this flag a "Scarlet, significant, *hands
off war*ning."[41] The proximity of "scarlet" ("the red business") and the
phrase "hands off" ("soon, unlimber'd") makes clear the amputative
connotations, and both lines are trochaic with dactylic substitutions,
again emphasizing a dropping off of letters, meanings, and parts of
the human body. The flag is not simply a warning to other countries
to keep their hands off; the flag, the emblem of the United States, is
also forced to become a symbol of the human body, wounded in a war
that took hands off of arms. In "Prelude," the bodies of the individual
citizens were consumed by the symbol of Manhattan. Here, though,
the true symbol of the nation, the flag, is consumed by the wounds of
the bodies. Ripped and detached from itself, it represents the ampu-
tated bodies of those wounded citizens. Whitman has reversed the
representational horror of the soldier turned into a capital "C," forced
to represent the Civil War with his body.

The word "arm" itself, as distinct from the instances in which it
is fused with other letters to form alternate words, undergoes a se-
mantic recuperation throughout *Drum-Taps*, as Whitman struggles to
counteract the national redescription of that word. The word appears
twenty-four times in the deathbed version of the "Drum-Taps" clus-
ter.[42] The first nineteen instances (fifteen of which are in "Prelude") all
clearly refer to military weapons. It is not until we reach "The Wound-
Dresser" that "arm" is explicitly used to signify the human limb, and
it is fitting that it appears as an amputated arm. The speaker says that
"From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand, / I undo the clot-
ted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and blood."[43] The

anapests stress the presence of "arm" between enveloping stresses of "ump" and "amp." The "lint" reappears for the only time in the book-cluster here. We first encountered it in conjunction with "the red business," which the "Prelude" speaker predicted would result from the unlimbering. Now Whitman applies it to a literally unlimbed arm, an unsettling manifestation of that prophecy, and the reference to an amputated hand recalls the earlier "hands off warning."[44] The word "arm" is used once more in this poem to describe the arms of soldiers in the act of embracing the speaker, a gesture that physically brings bodies together.[45] It would seem that, through this poem, Whitman has fully retrieved the word's use for its material bodily signification.

After this sojourn in the hospital, though, we must return to the battlefield and attempt to reapply the corporeal meaning to the word in the context of that more fraught and semantically vulnerable environment. In "Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice," the speaker informs the populace that love and adhesiveness are the only things that will keep the nation together. He then chastens all with the questions, "Were you looking to be held together by lawyers? / Or by an agreement on a paper? or by arms?"[46] This usage at once represents weaponry while flashing forth the last usage in "The Wound-Dresser," where the dresser and his patients held one another with their arms; there is, thus, growing destabilization of this word.

The second-to-last employment of the word in "Drum-Taps," in "The Artilleryman's Vision," appears to be something of a regression. The speaker describes "the patter of small arms, the warning *s-s-t* of the rifles." "Arms" here seemingly refers solely to guns. It is worth noting, however, that the speaker of this poem is a soldier possibly suffering from post-traumatic stress, lying in bed after the war, with his infant child asleep in the room. Whitman hints that these sounds of war that the soldier remembers, such as cries and pattering of arms, are triggered by those same sounds made by the baby, thus connecting the military arms and the arms of the infant. Such a connection, as he certainly knew, already etymologically exists. In the third line of the poem, he introduces the soldier-speaker's child, noting that the veteran awakes to hear "the breath of my infant." Then, near the end of the poem, as he recalls the chaos of the battlefield, he mentions "the hastening of infantry shifting positions."[47] Etymologically, in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "infantry" finds its rooted connection to

"infant" in describing young foot soldiers as well as soldiers carrying "small arms." Thus, again, war rhetoric engages in redescription by transforming the arms of infants into small guns, and Whitman profoundly depicts the horror of this linguistic conflation through one man's post-traumatic merging of his newborn baby's cries with the sounds of war.[48]

In the final poem of *Drum-Taps* to use this word, we are once again left with a more objective and distanced speaker. The speaker of "Look Down Fair Moon" asks the titular celestial body to pour light down "On the dead, on their backs, with their arms toss'd wide."[49] Here a much earlier juxtaposition is recalled, when in the first entry of the central catalog of "First O Songs for a Prelude" in which all the individual citizens are militarized, Whitman writes, "The mechanics arming, (the trowel, the jack-plane, the blacksmith's hammer, tost aside with precipitation)."[50] The primary meaning of "arming" in this line appears to be bodily, since the rest of the line focuses on human corpses.[51] However, the concept of the weapon also flashes through the signifier: the weapons that replaced the tossed tools of the citizens and provided those people with uniform identities are now themselves tossed aside. Whitman thus neutralizes the signifier, disarming it of its gun concept.[52]

The repercussions of Whitman's reversal of redescription can be witnessed in section 7 of "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."[53] This eight-line section converses with the four-line "Look Down Fair Moon." The words "pour," "arms," "sacred," "dead," and "death" appear in both poems, and the color purple, used to describe the faces of the dead on the battlefield in the earlier poem, appears in the lilacs of section 7. Most importantly, though, the speaker of "Lilacs" says to death and the unnamed Lincoln's coffin (as well as the coffins of all the dead), "Copious, I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes: / With loaded arms I come, pouring for you, / For you and the coffins all of you, O death."[54] The key phrase here is, of course, "loaded arms." In this instant, Whitman uses a phrase involving the word "arm" that, based solely on the preceding adjective, connotes loaded guns. In this line, however, the arms are explicitly bodily, and they are loaded not with bullets but with flowers. As the speaker approaches the coffin of the assassinated president with loaded arms, therefore, he repeats John Wilkes Booth's advance, but Whitman's recuperation of the

bodily concept divides the two men. His ultimate point is made: such a confusion of body and weaponry is monstrous.

In the image of the "loaded arms," the landscape and the living body merge, and through this merging the ideology of war—an ideology that prioritizes weaponry over flesh—is successfully disarmed. This severance of the human body and symbolic signification reveals itself in the larger context of the poem as well. By refusing to represent Lincoln's body in "Lilacs," Whitman frees the man from signification. He removes the symbolic elements and fuses them to a star, leaving the body in a coffin, leaving the man his materiality. The word "arm" appears four more times in *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, and each usage explicitly signifies the human limb. In the opening stanza of *Drum-Taps*, the "arming" human bodies are subsumed by the body politic as manifest in Lady Manhattan. In "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Whitman completes his reversal of this war crime by absenting from his leaves the single human body most symbolically tied to the body politic, while disarming the language of the body of the concept of weaponry and rearming it corporeally.

Timothy Sweet argues that "it is not until well after the war, and then only in his prose, that Whitman comes close to admitting that the war dramatized the instability of [the body politic] topos," but an autopsy of the book's "arms" as well as of the corpse of the personified city in *Drum-Taps* and its *Sequel* suggests an alternative interpretation.[55] In section 12 of "Lilacs," Whitman suddenly seems to revert to the language of the opening of "First O Songs for a Prelude" when he writes, "Lo! body and soul! this land!" But he proceeds, "Mighty Manhattan, with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships, / The varied and ample land—the South and the North in the light—Ohio's shores, and flashing Missouri, / And ever the far-spreading prairies, cover'd with grass and corn."[56] What at first appears to be a personification of the nation instead reveals itself to be a brief catalog of the land itself that is addressed to the body and soul. The atoms of Lady Manhattan have disincorporated, and the language of the body is no longer meant for the nation. Whitman comprehended early on that the rhetoric of war, as well as actual battle violence, assaults the dignity of the human body, and while he may not have been able to disarm the soldiers themselves, he fought hard to make the word flesh and thereby return some sense of the inviolable self.

EMBODYING THE BOOK:

MOURNING FOR THE MASSES

IN *Drum-Taps*

ADAM BRADFORD

On March 17, 1863, Lieutenant Nathaniel Bowditch, son of abolitionist Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, was fatally shot during a charge at Kelly's Ford. His father, receiving the news, "fairly broke down" under the weight of his grief, but he nevertheless mustered the emotional strength to scramble to Virginia and procure Nat's body before excessive decay made such a thing impossible. Arriving, he arranged to have it embalmed—then a relatively new mortuary science—"that it may be seen on my return to Boston."[1] Bowditch brought the body home, and there the family, along with friends and community members, viewed it and held a funeral, mourning as they knew how.

Bowditch was unquestionably comforted by securing his son's body, but this was just the beginning of his mourning process. Seeking to maintain a sense of connection to his son and to remind himself of the afterlife they would one day enjoy together, in accordance with common cultural practices of the time he assembled an array of memorial objects. Taking a ring from Nat's finger and a button from his cavalry vest, he created an "amulet" that he connected to his watch, saying, "There I trust they will remain until I die." Every act of registering the passage of time could now remind him that he was nearing that much-anticipated moment when he would be reunited with his son. He also began a "collation of the letters, journals &c illustrative of his dear young life," which he bound and placed in a special cabinet that sat in the parlor. Over time he added other artifacts, making in essence a sacred shrine, filled with relics that allowed him to maintain an affective connection to the son he had lost. It was just such a connection that made the many years and countless hours necessary to

produce the volumes and cabinet worthwhile. As he said, "The labor was a sweet one. It took me out of myself" into the imagined presence of his deceased son regularly.[2]

Few had the opportunity to mourn as Henry Bowditch did. The nature of death on the Civil War battlefields prevented all but the most fortunate from engaging in these types of practices. The fact that soldiers were "blown to pieces by artillery shells … and hidden by woods or ravines," "stripped of every identifying object" before being "thrown by the hundreds into burial trenches," or placed in "hastily dug graves beside military hospitals" meant that roughly "40 percent of deceased Yankees and a far greater proportion of Confederates" died into a kind of radical anonymity that left most nineteenth-century Americans shocked and unsure how to ameliorate their grief.[3] During this period, witnessing the moment of death, preparing bodies for burial, commissioning postmortem portraits, and creating hair weavings, mourning quilts, mourning poems, and memorial jewelry were all commonplace acts. All these required access to the body of the deceased with the exception of mourning poems. Bodies were needed for funerals and burials, bits of hair were needed for weavings and paintings and jewelry, and clothing was needed for memorial quilts and jewelry.

Such traces functioned to make the dead a vital presence in the life of the living. Indeed, "most of these objects were made … so that the memory of the deceased could be kept alive and in the family," and "what motivated this seemingly unusual practice was the desire to maintain family continuity … the bereaved wished their dead to be restored to them as living presences."[4] These traces restored what death threatened to annihilate: the identity of the deceased as an active and important part of the mourner's life. Thus, failing to witness the death and burial—along with the impossibility of garnering any sign of the lost individual—created significant impediments to mourning. This had very real consequences. As the wife of one Confederate officer remarked, those who suffered such complete loss were often left "stunned and stupefied … forever, and a few there were who died of grief."[5] No bodies meant no true rituals of mourning and therefore no relief from the pain of grief.

Walt Whitman was unquestionably familiar with the way the Civil War impeded mourning and spawned perpetual grief. He spent much of it ministering to soldiers in the Washington hospitals, and he saw

Micah Jenkins, ca. 1861.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Unknown Civil War soldier.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

firsthand the faces of the bereaved who came to collect the bodies of those they loved. He certainly understood that for every individual fortunate enough to retrieve the body of a loved one, many more were devastated by the fact that they had no such opportunity. Seeking to counter the increasing interruption of ritual mourning practices, in the spring of 1865 he published *Drum-Taps*. Through these war poems, he sought to recover the bodies and preserve the identities of the Civil War's "Million Dead" in the face of their material annihilation. In so doing, he was working to mediate grief and foster successful mourning through a book that, like Bowditch's volumes, not only represented the deceased but allowed readers to imagine themselves reconnected to them through its pages. Fostering successful mourning, while important, was not the only benefit Whitman hoped would be derived from these poems. By connecting Northern and Southern

readers to their dead soldiers in the presence of the poetic "I" who ministered to those soldiers, he hoped to facilitate a collaborative process of mourning that would create what was, in essence, a community of readerly mourners united in spite of geographical, political, or ideological distance. Whitman was mirroring for such readers the way in which shared grief and collaborative mourning could emotionally anneal a new Union, bound together into what one contemporary memorably dubbed a "republic of suffering."[6]

Scholars have long noted how Whitman's Civil War poetry, not unlike *Leaves of Grass*, conducts work that is both intimately personal and broadly political. The rows upon rows of wounded whom Whitman observed certainly allowed him to indulge his "penchant for voyeuristic cruising" and discover the "erotic significance of the body's partiality."[7] Still, as Faith Barrett has commented, these soldiers also presented Whitman with the opportunity to forge a "metaphoric link between his speaker and the suffering [and sufferers] he observes," a link that drew him to revise his understanding of self and nation in light of the devastating effects of war.[8] Robert Leigh Davis, perhaps most critically attuned to the political stakes inherent in Whitman's depictions of "infirm" and "suffering bodies," claims they represented "the ideal democratic polity," the compromised body of the soldier existing as the perfect "analogue for the desirable instability of the democratic state."[9] Such work reveals the rich vein of interpretation to be found by exploring the links that Whitman forged among bodies, texts, and the body politic, but few of these scholars have looked specifically at how his work functioned to provide readers with the kind of intimate access to the deceased that would allow them to successfully mourn according to contemporary social customs, as well as how facilitating such acts of mourning served political ends.

Whitman's attempt to perform such personal and political work required him to find a way to both imaginatively and materially recover the bodies of the Civil War dead—without these, the bereaved could not mourn as they knew how. Suffice it to say, this recovery of the bodies and the identities of the Civil War's "Million Dead" was a project with a long foreground, and to understand how Whitman found himself able to effect such a recovery one must start where he did—in the hospitals where he ministered to the soldiers and in the notebooks where he first began writing about them. As is well known, when Whitman started

visiting the hospitals, he took with him small, ephemeral notebooks into which he scribbled much of the material from which he would ultimately produce his wartime poetry. To the casual observer, these notebooks appear to be little more than a lengthy catalog of soldiers, including details like names, dates, ranks, regiments, hometowns, wounds received, and confits desired. Whitman certainly used them this way, claiming that "from the first I kept impromptu jottings in pencil to refresh my memory of names and circumstances."[10] Yet what may have started as otherwise utilitarian jottings quickly became a means to recover what he felt the war threatened: the "subtlest, rarest, divinest … Humanity" of those to whom he ministered.[11]

Despite the fact that many individuals went off to war in hopes of claiming a new identity as a soldier, the war, Whitman knew, could just as easily reduce them to expendable cogs, ultimately annihilating them among the grinding wheels of an industrial war machine.[12] In his notebooks, Whitman set out to counter this tendency, penning lines that not only tabulated raw data but reinscribed the unique individual value of the men he found there, securing a means by which he might maintain a sense of affective connection to them. This recuperative and affective work is easily seen in selections from the notebooks themselves: "Bed 41 Ward G. Armory May 12 William Williams co F 27th Indiana wounded / seriously in shoulder—he lay naked to the waist on acc't of the heat—I never saw a more superb development of chest, & limbs, neck &c. a perfect model of manly strength—seemd awful to take such God's masterpiece & / nearest friend."[13]

Whitman begins this entry by acknowledging that the war threatens to erase this man's identity altogether. He is, after all, merely the incapacitated and soon-to-be-deceased occupant of "Bed 41 Ward G" when Whitman finds him. Immediately, however, Whitman begins recuperating whatever aspects of the man's identity he can. He begins by translating him from the occupant of "Bed 41" into "William Williams co F 27th Indiana wounded / seriously in shoulder"—an improvement, certainly, as this articulation moves him away from a point of virtual anonymity. And while the war-torn shoulder has, in effect, reduced this man's military identity to little more than the impending casualty who currently occupies "Bed 41," Whitman ironically uses it and the exposure it necessitates to recognize his "superb development of chest, & limbs, neck &c."

This statement both points toward Whitman's seeming erotic attraction to the man and appreciates (in the sense of raises) the man into a "perfect model of manly strength." No longer merely the inhabitant of "Bed 41" or even the otherwise anonymous soldier of "co F 27th Indiana," the man now becomes "God's masterpiece" and "nearest friend" and his loss seems "awful" to contemplate. The man's identity and value, although largely stripped away by the war, have been redressed here by Whitman. Through his eroticized appreciation of what he sees, Whitman redraws the man as virtually divine. In redressing the man's impaired identity, Whitman protects that identity from what his wounds have made inevitable: his impending death and the dissolution of his body. In literarily preserving Williams, Whitman finds a means of preserving and perpetuating a portion of his identity and maintaining an affective connection to him despite his material destruction.

Such descriptions proliferate across Whitman's notebooks, performing similar work for those he lists there.[14] If the hospitals represent a vast accumulation site for the human detritus churned out by war, then the notebooks represent a recollection of this detritus into a protective textual space where a recovery of unique identity can be assured, not unlike the memorial volumes Bowditch generated. As such, Whitman's notebooks move beyond being practical aids to memory and form an almost sacred space of (re)collection in which he reinscribes the unique identities of thousands of soldiers, using these entries to make the dead into active and available presences. Paralleling the work of contemporary mourning objects, Whitman's inscriptions become a way he can safeguard and recall these soldiers as unique individuals. He writes these "specimens" of inestimable value into his notebooks and reclaims each as both "God's masterpiece" and "nearest friend."[15]

Whitman's desire to secure the identities of the dead and perpetuate a sense of affective connection to them mirrored the needs of the broader populace. Millions of individuals on the home front found it difficult to grapple with their losses because "nearly half the dead remained unknown, the fact of their deaths supposed but undocumented, the circumstances of their passage from life entirely unrecorded." Unable to collect, preserve, and parlay material traces of the

dead into the mourning objects they needed, the bereaved were left in a state of "anxiety" and even "'phrensy'" that could not be ameliorated.[16] Nowhere was this desire for amelioration made more publicly evident than in the throngs who queued up outside Mathew Brady's studios following Antietam. After the battle, Brady and his men had photographed the field, and his pictures of the dead elicited a remarkable public reaction. A *New York Times* review illuminates this: "Crowds of people are constantly going up the stairs [to Brady's gallery]; follow them, and you find them bending over photographic views of that fearful battle-field, taken immediately after the action." These "hushed, reverend [*sic*] groups" too often represented the "one side of the picture that the sun did not catch … widows and orphans, torn from the bosom of their natural protectors by the red remorseless hand of Battle." Such groups were able, "by the aid of the magnifying-glass, [to discern] the very features of the slain," leading the reviewer to fear being "in the gallery, when one of the women bending over [these pictures] should recognize … the boy whose slumbers she has cradled, and whose head her bosom pillowed until the rolling drum called him forth—whose poor, pale face, could she reach it, should find the same pillow again … [now lying in] a shadowed trench."[17]

The reviewer's palpable unease at being in the gallery with such grieving crowds notwithstanding, the most remarkable thing about the review is the way it documents the widespread social anxiety of a public desperate for some means of locating, if not some way of recovering, the loved ones they had sent off to war. Nowhere is this admission more striking than in the disclosure regarding individuals who brought magnifying glasses to the gallery in hopes of finding those they had lost. Nevertheless, the fact that all who came searching for their dead did *not* find them was precisely the problem Whitman sought to address when he used his notebook jottings as the source texts for significant portions of his war poetry. Whitman understood that if his poetry could provide an increasingly desperate public with the endings of their soldiers' life narratives as well as some physical trace of them, then he could not only help rescue the "Million Dead" from some portion of their regrettable anonymity, he might also go a long way toward mediating the deep grief of a nation.

Whitman sought to provide material traces and end-of-life nar-

ratives for such mourners through his production of *Drum-Taps*, a poetic text littered with images of Civil War soldiers. But unlike the many notebook descriptions and newspaper articles in which he included details like names, units, ranks, and hometowns, the poetic images in *Drum-Taps* are marked by a lack of identifying features.[18] This fact is made more remarkable given that many of the descriptions of soldiers in *Drum-Taps* can be traced back to individuals represented in the notebooks. In "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," and "A Sight in Camp in the Day-break Grey and Dim," he made use of the experiences of individuals recorded in his notebooks to provide his readership with experiences thought to be crucial to successful mourning: receipt of the dying one's "last look," knowledge that the deceased was blessed with a "Good Death," presence at the burial, and depiction of the dead as inheritor of divine glory.[19] Throughout these poems and many others in *Drum-Taps*, markers of specific individuality are largely absent. Soldier images generally appear stripped of personal characteristics like name and rank and also of basic wartime distinctions, such as whether they fought for the Union or the Confederacy. Leaving these soldiers in such anonymity required readers to do the writerly work of imaginatively supplying an identity of their choosing—"the text," as Whitman said, "furnishing [only] the hints, the clue, the start or framework."[20]

Examining a few of the more poignant representations gives a view of Whitman at work constructing such images from his notebooks. In "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," he relies upon an account of the Battle of White Oak Swamp as "told me by Milton Roberts," one of the men he ministered to in the hospitals. Whitman records Roberts's tale of a "silent stealthy march through the woods, at times stumbling over the bodies of dead men in the road" until he reaches a church converted into a hospital: "dimly lit with candles, lamps[, and] torches," it is now "filled, [with] all varieties [of wounded,] horrible beyond description … crowds of wounded, bloody & pale … the yards outside also filled—they lay on the ground, some on blankets, some on stray planks."[21] Using Roberts's story, Whitman crafted a poem in which a soldier, with the reader in tow, finds himself first on Roberts's "march" and then in the presence of one of the "crowds of wounded" encountered there:

A march in the ranks hard-prest, and the road unknown;
A route through a heavy wood, with muffled steps in the
    darkness;
Our army foil'd with loss severe, and the sullen remnant
    retreating;
Till after midnight glimmer upon us, the lights of a dim-lighted
    building;
We come to an open space in the woods, and halt by the
    dim-lighted building....[22]

This opening is of interest for the way in which Whitman both per-
sonifies and generalizes this account through the collective pronouns
"we" and "our," both of which make the poem's experiences ones that
we—soldiers, narrator, and reader—seemingly share; the lights of the
church glimmer upon us, speaker, reader, and ranks alike, and it is our
army that comes dejectedly upon the dimly lit building. Mirroring his
folding of Roberts's narrative into the poem, Whitman's use of collec-
tive pronouns in this moment merges the speaker's experiences with
the reader's, so that the speaker's identity appears almost collective.
In a state of curious conflation encouraged by the progression of the
poem, the reader is allowed to move into the building where together
the speaker and the reader see "crowds, groups of forms . . . on the
floor, some in the pews laid down," before encountering the following:

... a soldier, a mere lad, in danger of bleeding to death,
    (he is shot in the abdomen;)
I staunch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is
    white as a lily;)
. . . .
Then hear outside the orders given, *Fall in, my men, Fall in;*
But first I bend to the dying lad—his eyes open—a half-smile
    gives he me;
Then the eyes close, calmly close, and I speed forth to the
    darkness....[23]

By inviting readers into close proximity to a soldier represented so
completely generically—a lad dying from a gunshot wound to the ab-
domen references thousands of actual Civil War soldiers—Whitman
works to ensure that as many readers as possible can impress this

image with the identity of a beloved soldier. Brought imaginatively into the presence of their own lost soldiers, readers are then invited to witness the final moments of life and gain an accounting of an event that would otherwise have been lost to them. Witnessing this moment was of crucial significance for nineteenth-century individuals. In general, successful mourning required that someone, preferably a family member, "witness a death . . . for these critical last moments of life would epitomize a soul's spiritual condition. . . . Kin would then use their observations . . . to evaluate the family's chances for a reunion in heaven. A life was a narrative that could only be incomplete without this final chapter."[24] By giving readers the opportunity to witness a beloved soldier's last half-smile, Whitman provided them with a crucial sign that indexed the state of that soldier's soul. If a reader could see his or her lost soldier in the text, then that reader could rest assured that the soldier had died a "Good Death," that he was now at peace, and that hopes for continued association and reunion were not in vain.

Such imagined access provided other opportunities as well. Through the actions of Whitman's cohabited poetic I, readers were allowed not only to witness this death but to comfort and even minister to the soldier they loved. Whitman's poetic persona assists them in this regard both as "a surrogate . . . who took it on himself to do what the relatives could not do" and as a kind of literary conduit through which a reader is actively able to identify, minister to, remember, and ultimately mourn a soldier.[25] Rather than standing in for the otherwise absent family member, Whitman's persona becomes the conduit through which the reader becomes the principal player in the exchange; readers are invited to reach out imaginatively and staunch the wound, to "bend to the dying lad" and ensure that his last living look is at a true friend, and to testify to themselves and even to him that he is an individual greatly valued by both narrator and reader alike. In one brief poem, readers found themselves able to imagine the chaos of death on the Civil War battlefields in profoundly powerful ways—acknowledging the unique individuality and worth of their soldier as they minister to him, constructing an end-of-life narrative that they can find comfort in, and gathering at the deathbed where they can receive that last look which would reassure them that their beloved deceased waited in the beyond.

"A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown" is only

one example of Whitman's commitment to producing a text through which readers can access and productively mourn their lost loved ones. Whitman used the experiences of another soldier, William Giggee, to perform similar work in "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night." In the notebook scholars have called "Return My Book," Whitman recorded: "William Giggee, Sept 18th '62. I heard of poor Bill's death—he was shot on Pope's retreat—Arthur took him in his arms, and he died in about an hour and a half—Arthur buried him himself—he dug his grave."[26] Historical evidence suggests that William and Arthur were brothers, friends, or perhaps even lovers and that, while fighting together at the Second Battle of Bull Run, Bill was shot. He died as Arthur and a comrade tried to rush him to the hospital tent.[27] Whitman apparently knew Bill well and could have represented his death in great detail, given that it had been related to him by Arthur. Nevertheless, in spite of the availability of such detail, Whitman chose to represent the deceased generically and to do so through a speaker whose relationship to the deceased may or may not be familial:

> Vigil strange I kept on the field one night,
> When you, my son and my comrade, dropt at my side that day,
> One look I but gave, which your dear eyes return'd, with a look I
>   shall never forget;
> One touch of your hand to mine, O boy, reach'd up as you lay on
>   the ground;
> Then onward I sped in the battle, the even-contested battle;
> Till late in the night reliev'd, to the place at last again I made my
>   way;
> Found you in death so cold, dear comrade—found your body, son
>   of responding kisses, (never again on earth responding;) …[28]

Once again, the poem provides the reader with a kind of last look. Here, however, that look is so thinly described (as "a look I shall never forget") that the face which imparts it and the character of the look itself are totally up to the reader to assign. In this way, the reader is granted a kind of access to the final moments of life in which he or she is allowed to see that the dying soldier died willingly and well. Perhaps as important, if not more so, is what the reader is allowed to witness at the poem's close. Here the speaker, with the reader once again in imaginative tow, returns to the body and enacts the burial:

... at latest lingering of the night, indeed just as the dawn
    appear'd,
My comrade I wrapt in his blanket, envelop'd well his form,

.   .   .   .

And there and then, and bathed by the rising sun, my son in his
    grave, in his rude dug grave I deposited,

.   .   .   .

And buried him where he fell.[29]

In this final section, the poem not only provides readers with the opportunity to see that a loved one died a "Good Death" but also offers them the consolation of being virtual witnesses to the funeral. By granting such access, the poem is primed to effectively give the bereaved information and accounts that can console them and foster healthy mourning.

Whitman's invitation to use his text as a window through which to approach a soldier of intimate concern is perhaps most overtly seen in "A Sight in Camp in the Day-break Grey and Dim." It is also here that he invites readers to see their soldiers as the "divine" individuals that, in death, they have apparently become. This poem is drawn from Whitman's own experience when visiting his brother George in Virginia. In his notebook he records, "*Sight at daybreak* (in camp in front of the hospital tent) on a stretcher, three dead men lying, each with a blanket spread over him—I lift up one and look at the young man's face, calm and yellow. 'tis strange! (Young man: I think this face, of yours the face of my dead Christ!)."[30] In the poem, unlike the notebook, Whitman depicts his speaker examining the bodies of three men, whom he describes alternately as "elderly ... so gaunt and grim, with well-gray'd hair," a "sweet boy, with cheeks yet blooming," and finally "the third—a face nor child, nor old, very calm, as of beautiful yellow-white ivory." Speaking of this last soldier, Whitman goes on to say, "Young man, I think I know you—I think this face of yours is the face of the Christ himself; / Dead and divine, and brother of all, and here again he lies."[31] Whitman's notebooks indicate that he looked at only one of the soldiers, but in the poem he describes three, each representing a different age group but remaining largely void of other markers of individuality. In this one image, he offers a trio capable

of representing almost any common soldier who fought in the Civil War—a visual synecdoche of the rank and file itself.

Having cast his net almost as widely as he can and made room for readers to identify at least one of these men as *their* soldier, Whitman moves from one to another, lifting their blankets to gaze upon them, asking the question, "Who are you?" In doing so, he prompts his readers to supply the identity that the speaker cannot. In accepting such an invitation, the reader is imaginatively in the presence of a loved one once again. But it is at this point that Whitman translates the deceased soldiers into (or at the very least associates them with) the dead Christ, the most powerful and widely understood embodiment of the ideas of resurrection, eternal life, and continued existence available to nineteenth-century Americans. Through his use of Christic imagery, Whitman suggests to his readers that the death of their loved ones is a moment of transition, and that eternal life and perpetual association are assured. Such imagery by virtue of its visual and ideological characteristics was meant to help readers find consolation, ameliorating their grief through the suggestions that their loved one now enjoyed a divine, immortal existence not unlike that of Christ himself.

As these poems suggest, Whitman was working diligently to translate his notebook's representations of actual soldiers into soldier images that could stand in for virtually any soldier lost in the war.[32] In each of these scenes, the collaboration of the author's poetic persona, the generally ambiguous descriptions employed, and their own imaginations allow readers to experience things they would otherwise have no access to. They "see" the wounds, "share" the last smile, "witness" the death and burial, and are led to "envision" a loved one's perpetual worth and existence. Through this interaction, loss is acknowledged, and the desire to touch, hold, and recover the dead is imaginatively realized. As such, this text became a talisman of sorts, one capable of providing the bereaved with an opportunity to mourn as they knew how.

Whitman did not limit his attempts to reconnect a bereaved public with its lost loved ones to poetic images alone. Rather, he designed a book that materially suggests itself as the much-longed-for physical traces of a soldier whose body might otherwise have been annihilated by war. Whitman had experienced firsthand the power of such traces.

It was as much the physical traces of the soldiers he ministered to, the bloodstains he said marked the notebooks' pages, as it was the words jotted down that turned these notebooks into "a special history … full of associations never to be possibly said or sung"—a history of associations that evoked "undreamed of depths of emotion."[33]

Recognizing the power that a soldier's war-drawn blood had to relimn such associations, Whitman sought to translate these bloodstains into his poetic texts just as he had the soldiers' experiences. It was an effort he testified to in "Lo! Victress on the Peaks!," where he claimed that in *Drum-Taps* it was not only "poem[s] proud I, chanting, bring to thee" but "a little book, containing . . . blood-dripping wounds." Certainly the physical body of the book *Drum-Taps*, which Whitman designed personally, seems just as bloodstained if not more so than Whitman's notebooks were. The first binding of *Drum-Taps*, for example, was brownish red, approximating the color of dried blood. Furthermore, it was circumscribed on the front and back with long rectangular double rules. In its proportions, double-ruled as it was, the volume resembles the plain rectangular wooden coffins in which soldiers were buried. And with its poetic contents constituting a whole host of images that could stand in for each reader's lost soldier, the book's binding suggests Whitman attempting to give the blood-soaked body of the soldier back to a loving reader in a container customarily reserved for the dead. Whitman had only a few copies bound this way, changing the binding in the larger second run to a dark bloodred and then gilding the edges of the pages in a deep crimson, as if to make holding the book suggestive of holding the body of a soldier marked by "blood-dripping wounds."

Like the binding, the visual ornaments and typography in the book's interior evoke a sense that this book is offered as a stand-in for the material body of a soldier. Throughout his initial printing of *Drum-Taps*, Whitman employed a set of typographical ornaments that, like the rank insignias and uniform decorations of the time, are a curious mixture of sharp-lined, spear-like ornaments and wavy, vine-like ivies. Resembling chevrons of rank as well as the striping and ivy clusters that might adorn the vests and caps of the volunteers and enlisted men, these ornaments again suggest that in its typographical construction Whitman was seeking to make the material text evoke the very bodies of the Civil War's soldiers.

However, even more significant than these ornaments is what Whitman selects to follow them in the book's second section, where he binds in the *Sequel to Drum-Taps* poems. In a kind of visual narrative played out through the type itself, he replaces his militaristic ornaments with ones resembling sawn logs and elegantly spiraling twigs. These twigs, not insignificantly, appear to be uncurling, a motion that suggests emerging life. The shift from ornaments that are militaristic to ones that resemble trees and tendrils visually reminds readers that the bodies of their soldiers are the "leaven"—to invoke a term Whitman favored—that enriches the earth and results in the growth of new life and, in particular, new plants. Such plants would have included the trees or the cotton bushes that grew from the woods and fields where the Civil War was fought and from which pulp and paper would have been made—the very paper upon which such a book as his might be printed.[34] Thus, through its ornamentation and binding and the substance of its very paper, Whitman suggests the radical possibility that the reader might finally hold the much-desired material trace of a loved one otherwise lost to war.[35]

Whitman's desire to produce a book whose images and physical construction provided nineteenth-century mourners with the traces and end-of-life narratives they needed in order to mourn effectively was, in part, driven by the fact that he knew that collaborative mourning held the power to anneal individuals across geographic, ideological, and partisan lines. He recognized that if he could help the survivors mourn, he might help move them along the path to a new political order. Whitman testifies to as much when he claims in his *Drum-Taps* poem "Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice" that by sharing an affective sympathy for each other a nation of readers could cohere into a group of "friends triune, / More precious to each other than all the riches of the earth."[36]

While aiding his readers to effectively mourn, Whitman was also seeking to bring them to a greater awareness of the way their grief could forge a new affective U/union. His hope was that they would discover that "in [their] shared grief a personal and national bond" had emerged.[37] Whitman spoke overtly of this grief-inspired bond in postwar editions of *Leaves of Grass* where *Drum-Taps* is followed by "As I Sat Alone by Blue Ontario's Shore"—a poem that reminds readers that a unified "America" is now "the offspring following the

SONG

OF

THE BANNER AT DAY-BREAK.

Poet.

1 O a new song, a free song,
Flapping, flapping, flapping, flapping, by sounds, by
    voices clearer,
By the wind's voice and that of the drum,
By the banner's voice, and child's voice, and sea's voice,
    and father's voice,
Low on the ground and high in the air,
On the ground where father and child stand,
In the upward air where their eyes turn,
Where the banner at day-break is flapping.

2 Words! book-words! what are you?
Words no more, for hearken and see,
My song is there in the open air — and I must sing,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

3 I'll weave the chord and twine in,
Man's desire and babe's desire — I'll twine them in, I'll
    put in life;
I'll put the bayonet's flashing point — I'll let bullets and
    slugs whizz;
I'll pour the verse with streams of blood, full of volition,
    full of joy;
Then loosen, launch forth, to go and compete,
With the banner and pennant a-flapping.

(9)

---

16   Drum-Taps.

Out of reach — an idea only — yet furiously fought for,
    risking bloody death — loved by me!
So loved! O you banner leading the day, with stars
    brought from the night!
Valueless, object of eyes, over all and demanding all —
    O banner and pennant!
I too leave the rest — great as it is, it is nothing —
    houses, machines are nothing — I see them not;
I see but you, O warlike pennant! O banner so broad,
    with stripes, I sing you only,
Flapping up there in the wind.

By the Bivouac's fitful flame.

By the bivouac's fitful flame,
A procession winding around me, solemn and sweet and
    slow; — but first I note,
The tents of the sleeping army, the fields' and woods'
    dim outline,
The darkness, lit by spots of kindled fire — the silence;
Like a phantom far or near an occasional figure moving;
The shrubs and trees, (as I left my eyes they seem to be
    stealthily watching me;)
While wind in procession thoughts, O tender and
    wond'rous thoughts,
Of life and death — of home and the past and loved,
    and of those that are far away;
A solemn and slow procession there as I sit on the
    ground,
By the bivouac's fitful flame.

Drum-Taps.   65

Bend your proud neck to the long-off mother, now
    sending messages over the archipelagoes to you;
Bend your proud neck low for once, young Libertad.

11 Were the children straying westward so long? so
    wide the tramping?
Were the precedent dim ages debouching westward
    from Paradise so long?
Were the centuries steadily footing it that way, all the
    while unknown, for you, for reasons?
They are justified — they are accomplish'd — they shall
    now be turn'd the other way also, to travel to-
    ward you thence;
They shall now also march obediently eastward, for
    your sake, Libertad.

FLAG OF STARS, THICK-SPRINKLED
BUNTING.

Flag of stars! thick-sprinkled bunting!
Long yet your road, fateful flag! — long yet your road,
    and lined with bloody death!
For the prize I see at issue, at last is the world!
All its ships and shores I see, interwoven with your
    threads, greedy banner!
— Dream'd again the flags of kings, highest borne, to
    flaunt unrivall'd?
O hasten, flag of man! O with sure and steady step,
    passing highest flags of kings,
Walk supreme to the heavens, mighty symbol — run up
    above them all,
Flag of stars! thick sprinkled bunting!

Binding and details from Drum-Taps *(1865).*
Courtesy of The Walt Whitman Archive.

SPIRIT WHOSE WORK IS DONE.

Spirit whose work is done! spirit of dreadful hours!
Ere, departing, fade from my eyes your forests of bayonets;
Spirit of gloomiest fears and doubts, (yet onward ever unfal-
    tering pressing;)
Spirit of many a solemn day, and many a savage scene!
    Electric spirit!
That with muttering voice, through the years now closed,
    like a tireless phantom flitted,
Rousing the land with breath of flame, while you beat and
    beat the drum;
—Now, as the sound of the drum, hollow and harsh to the
    last, reverberates round me;
As your ranks, your immortal ranks, return, return from
    the battles;
While the muskets of the young men yet lean over their
    shoulders;
While I look on the bayonets bristling over their shoulders;
While those slanted bayonets, whole forests of them, ap-
    pearing in the distance, approach and pass on, re-
    turning homeward,
Moving with steady motion, swaying to and fro, to the right
    and left,
Evenly, lightly rising and falling, as the steps keep time;
—Spirit of hours I knew, all hectic red one day, but pale as
    death next day;
Touch my mouth, ere you depart—press my lips close!
Leave me your pulses of rage! bequeath them to me! fill
    me with currents convulsive!
Let them scorch and blister out of my chants when you are
    gone;
Let them identify you to the future in these songs.

Beyond Paradise—perfumed solely with mine own perfume;
Including all life on earth—touching, including God—
    including Saviour and Satan;
Ethereal, pervading all, (for without me, what were all? or
    what were God?)
Essence of forms—life of the real identities, permanent,
    positive, (namely the unseen,)
Life of the great round world, the sun and stars, and of
    man—I, the general Soul,
Here the square finishing, the solid, I the most solid,
Breathe my breath also through these little songs.

I HEARD YOU, SOLEMN-SWEET PIPES OF THE ORGAN.

I heard you, solemn-sweet pipes of the organ, as last
    Sunday morn I pass'd the church;
Winds of autumn!—as I walk'd the woods at dusk, I
    heard your long-stretch'd sighs, up above, so
    mournful;
I heard the perfect Italian tenor, singing at the opera—I
    heard the soprano in the midst of the quartet singing;
... Heart of my love!—you too I heard, murmuring low,
    through one of the wrists around my head;
Heard the pulse of you, when all was still, ringing little
    bells last night under my ear.

NOT MY ENEMIES EVER INVADE ME.

Not my enemies ever invade me—no harm to my pride from
    them I fear;
But the lovers I recklessly love—lo! how they master me!
Lo! me, ever open and helpless, bereft of my strength!
Utterly abject, grovelling on the ground before them.

20

" Must I leave thee, lilac with heart-shaped leaves?
Must I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, return-
    ing with spring?

" Must I pass from my song for thee;
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, com-
    muning with thee,
O comrade lustrous, with silver face in the night?

21

" Yet each I keep, and all;
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird, I keep,
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul, I keep,
With the lustrous and drooping star, with the countenance
    full of woe;
With the lilac tall, and its blossoms of mastering odor;
Comrades mine, and I in the midst, and their memory ever
    I keep—for the dead I loved so well;
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands...
    and this for his dear sake;
Lilac and star and bird, twined with the chant of my soul,
With the holders holding my hand, nearing the call of the
    bird,
There in the fragrant pines, and the cedars dusk and dim.

RACE OF VETERANS.

Race of veterans!
Race of the soil, ready for conflict! race of the conquering
    march!
(No more credulity's race, abiding-temper'd race;)
Race owning no law but the law of itself;
Race of passion and the storm.

Details from Sequel to Drum-Taps *(1865–66).*
Courtesy of The Walt Whitman Archive.

armies" and the sacrificed soldiers.[38] However, he urged this realization upon his readers even more powerfully and intimately in *Drum-Taps* poems like "Come Up from the Fields Father," "Old Ireland," and "Year that Trembled and Reel'd Beneath Me." In these poems, Whitman sought to make readers aware that they were not alone in experiencing such profound grief. He showed them that others—an Ohio family, an Irish widow, and even Whitman himself—experienced war-born despair so intense as to drive them toward isolation and threaten to leave them, as so many had been left, inconsolable. Ironically, such shared inconsolability nevertheless suggests itself as a common affective experience, one capable of laying the groundwork for a sense of communion holding profound political import.[39]

While actual readers' responses to *Drum-Taps* are rather scarce, there are both public and private responses that indicate that the larger text functioned as a means to assist the bereaved, aiding them in their process of mourning and uniting them across the partisan lines drawn by the Civil War. Articles in *The Radical*, *The Round Table*, and *The Galaxy* all perform such work publicly, but perhaps the most intimate and profound example is found in a letter written by "Theresa Brown" of "Waco, Texas."[40] For Brown, Whitman's work brokered invaluable affective connections, bonding her to her deceased husband, a Confederate soldier, and to Whitman as well. At first glance, the letter reads rather strangely, as Brown spends a significant amount of time talking about the poem she has sent him. However, viewing this gesture in light of nineteenth-century conventions of mourning makes her preoccupation far more understandable and crucially significant. She says:

> I have written sometimes what seemed poetry to me but when I tried to put it in regular harmonious order hoop it round like a barrel, as it were, the poetry was all chocked [*sic*] out and it fell flat and insipid from my hands. [My poem] is only a harmless conceit of a working woman.… My husband was a Southern soldier and is dead; it seems as if it would be a sort of satisfaction to me if I could think in my mind, 'Walt Whitman has read my attempt at poetry.' I do not believe you will misunderstand my sentiment.[41]

As she points out, what prompted Brown to write to Whitman was the fact that as a widow who had read his poetry and benefited from the experience, she might satisfy herself—and perhaps her sense of obligation to him—by giving him a poem in return. As her early characterization of the poem and her final statement indicate, Brown labored under no suspicions that she was a talented poet hoping for an established literary persona's notice; rather, she envisioned herself in an economy of sentimental exchange that she felt sure Whitman would understand because it was one he had commenced.

This sentimental economy, revolving around the exchange of poetry and thoughts of the dead, was a staple practice of nineteenth-century mourning, and the "give and take, the circulation of affections," concretized in the gifting of mourning poems was a common means of structuring "a collaboration through which individuals join together in solving the seemingly local problem of grief in the face of death." Moreover, such an exchange results in "the conversion [of an individual] from the isolated, dysfunctional 'one' or 'I' [who mourns], into a 'we' able to act on and promote communal interests."[42] In other words, the exchange of poetry constitutes not only an acknowledgment of the ability of Whitman's poetry to aid Brown in the work of coping with grief, it points to the promise such poetry had for sympathetically uniting individuals across political divides. Their affective union models the potential that Whitman's text had for invoking a shared sense of suffering and for engendering a collaborative mourning of the dead that itself held the potential to heal individuals *and* the national social body. By mourning together, Whitman and Brown's exchange seemed to promise, we can find ourselves reconnected to the dead we have lost, and we can see ourselves as part of a larger collective whose citizenry is now affectively annealed through the shared pain of grief.

The extravagant death toll and thwarting of mourning conventions caused by the Civil War left many Americans desperate for a way to reconnect with their dead. Whitman actively sought to provide a grieving Civil War public with the means to do so. By lacing his text with a vast array of anonymous soldier images, Whitman invited readers to invest those images with the identities of the soldiers they had lost. These anonymous soldier images haunt the poetic landscape of *Drum-*

Taps, always drawing close or being drawn close to but never given a voice with which to tell their story or assert their identity. By embodying his poems with such phantom images, he provided his readers with the opportunity to see their own soldiers within a text that provided them with both end-of-life narratives and a sense of ongoing intimate communion.[43] It was a sense aided by the text's physical construction—its binding, typography, and visual ornamentation—all of which suggested the text be seen as that all-important physical trace so crucial for successful mourning.

Like Bowditch's memorial volumes, Whitman's *Drum-Taps* represents an important poetic intervention in the damage caused by civil war—an intervention through which individual mourners could access the deceased who mattered most to them and in the process gain respite from their grief. Carried in a jacket pocket, "beneath your clothing" next to the "throbs of your heart," or resting in a parlor near the mourning portraits, samplers, and quilts representing other deceased family members, this little volume was meant to be a material means of fostering a sense of perpetual connection with a soldier sent off to but never returned from war.[44] Undoubtedly, Whitman hoped such recuperative connections might be multiplied as readers were led to consider that their sense of grief was shared by countless others in a bereaved U/union. Like the rest of the mourning objects that proliferated during the period, this book was, as Whitman said, "unprecedently sad," but at the same time "truly also . . . [it] has clear notes of faith and triumph," for it was designed in hopes of relimning important bonds—bonds affectively reuniting not only the living and the dead but the grief-stricken and otherwise shattered body politic of the very nation itself.[45]

Drum-Taps

AND THE CHAOS

OF WAR

CODY MARRS

For Walt Whitman, the Civil War's greatest surprise came in the winter of 1862, when he received word that his brother George, an infantryman with the Fifty-First New York Volunteers, was among the nearly 10,000 Union soldiers wounded in the recent battle at Fredericksburg. Whitman immediately took the train to Washington, D.C., and spent two straight days "hunting through the hospitals, walking all day and night, . . . trying to get information" but without acquiring "the least clue to anything."[1] When he finally reached George, he discovered that his brother was relatively unscathed. An exploding shell had cut his cheek open, but he was convalescing quickly and could soon return to his regiment.

Whitman, however, decided to stay behind. In the hospitals, he discovered that there were countless other soldiers—brothers all, in his "Calamus"-like estimation—who needed his care. So for the next three years, he volunteered his services as a nurse, swapping out bandages, comforting the wounded, and writing letters home for those who could no longer write for themselves. "Never before," he attested, "had my feelings [been] so thoroughly and . . . permanently absorbed, to the very roots, as by these huge swarms of dear, wounded, sick, dying boys—I get very much attached to some of them, and many of them have come to depend on seeing me, and having me sit by them a few minutes, as if for their lives." Throughout the day, Whitman often recorded what he witnessed in stray lines and memoranda, writing— as he later recalled—"by fits and starts, on the field, in the hospitals, as I worked with the soldier boys. Some days I was more emotional than

others, then I would suffer all the extra horrors of my experience—I would try to write, blind, blind, with my own tears."[2]

Over the course of the ensuing decade, Whitman expanded these loose notes into a series of searching meditations that span from *Drum-Taps* (1865) to *Memoranda During the War* (1875) and *Specimen Days* (1882). I want to focus primarily on *Drum-Taps* (and its subsequent merger into *Leaves of Grass*) because of its transbellum scope. It originated during the war and then acquired a variety of different forms: a book (1865), a sequel (1865–66), an addendum (1867), and a series of clusters (1870–71, 1881, and 1891). Across these textual instantiations, *Drum-Taps* continually evolves as Whitman tries, again and again, to represent this long and bloody war.

When it first appeared, *Drum-Taps* met with a rather mixed reception. Reviewers liked some of the poems, especially "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," but considered the book overall to be rather poorly designed and hastily executed. "The trouble about it," William Dean Howells opined, is that it is "music[al]" but "inarticulate"; it does not endow thought or experience with "a portable shape" and fails to provide a cogent vision of the war. The most biting criticism came from a young Henry James, who deemed *Drum-Taps* a melancholic and unpoetic hodgepodge. According to James, every poem—nay, every line of every poem—"stands off by itself, in resolute independence of its companions, without a visible goal," furnishing a wild "medley" of impressions that never converge into "a single idea."[3]

Such reviews, of course, probably tell us less about Whitman's poetry than they do about the importance of a unified artistic consciousness to budding realists like James and Howells. But they are right, in a certain sense, about *Drum-Taps*' structural heterogeneity. Whitman's book is an astonishingly fragmented affair. Unlike Melville's *Battle-Pieces* (1866), which proceeds through historical time, *Drum-Taps* unfolds through perspectival shifts. The poems also enlist a broad range of affective, aesthetic, and experiential registers, from the imagistic ("Cavalry Crossing a Ford," "Mother and Babe," "A Farm Picture") to the prophetic ("Over the Carnage Rose Prophetic a Voice"), all of which are articulated through assorted metaphors of movement (marching, stopping, waiting, walking) and sound (the material tap, the funereal dirge, the bugle's wail).

This disorder is partly the result of Whitman's process of composition. *Drum-Taps* is not a retrospective meditation on a conflict that has just concluded but a book penned amid the war that it so beautifully and variously records. Whitman published a version of "A Broadway Pageant" in the *New York Times* in 1860. And the poems "Beat! Beat! Drums!," "I Heard You Solemn-Sweet Pipes of the Organ," and "Old Ireland" all appeared in periodicals shortly afterward, in 1861. Critics who have studied *Drum-Taps*' publication history have argued that the book's chaotic arrangement was something of a forced choice: Whitman's contract allotted him only seventy-two pages, and the economics of wartime publishing compelled him to cram as many poems as he could into these limited "leaves."[4]

Nonetheless, if there is one thing we know about Whitman, it is that he conceived of his books as extensions of himself and of the world more broadly. No writer who refers to his poems as "autochthonous song[s]" or who conceives of the United States as "essentially the greatest poem" would issue a book of verse that was not carefully and lovingly designed.[5] Upon the eve of *Drum-Taps*' publication, he told a friend that the book's disorderliness was what made it "superior to *Leaves of Grass*—certainly more perfect as a work of art." "I feel at last," he declared, "& for the first time without any demur, that I am . . . content to have it go to the world verbatim." Although "the ordinary reader," he added, will think it was "let loose with wildest abandon," *Drum-Taps* but expresses the raw heterogeneity of "this *Time & Land we swim in*, with all their large conflicting fluctuations of despair & hope, the shiftings, masses, & the whirl & deafening din,… the unprecedented anguish of wounded & suffering, the beautiful young men, in wholesale death & agony, everything sometimes as if in blood color, & dripping blood."[6]

Drum-Taps tends to figure these "shiftings" and "fluctuations" temporally. Eschewing the idea that a single vision can be wrested from the war, Whitman uses a variety of proliferating timeframes, from the calendrical—"Broadway, 1861," "Year that Trembled and Reel'd Beneath Me"—to the musical—"Beat! Beat! Drums!"—and the astronomical—"Year of Meteors (1859–60)." Although he occasionally flirts with ideas of fated emergence, *Drum-Taps* immerses the reader in a stunning array of disparate temporalities. The war thereby emerges

as a polyvalent and multilinear event that is most amply recorded not in combat but in the volatile timeframes of grief and pain, in the cadences of the march, and in the pauses required for wonderment.

Drum-Taps' discordant temporalities made the book, as Michael Warner has argued, a rather "unusual piece of war discourse." Whereas most Civil War poetry reflected on the war's defining battles and ideas, *Drum-Taps* shuttles "between different layers of composition and different rhetorics of time." Some of the poems, Warner points out, are addressed to specific "years, recreating and commenting upon historical frames of expectation and uncertainty," but the underlying suggestion of the volume is that "the calendar itself has been rendered directionless and non-numerically suggestive." *Drum-Taps*, he writes, "does not exactly record history; events have been pushed to the margin along with the historical god who is usually thought to direct them. Its oddly looped narrative time is registered through a kind of trembling before history."[7] This description of temporality as "oddly looped" and of history as "trembl[ed] before" rather than recorded helps us understand just how transformative the war must have been for Whitman. The "red business" of the "Secession War" extinguished his vision of America's temporal and political harmony, and he responds in *Drum-Taps* by fashioning a series of unbound, nonlinear timeframes.[8]

Warner's account also helps us make sense of one of the more peculiar dynamics in *Drum-Taps*: the relative absence of violence in this volume that was written, in Whitman's words, with "the bayonet's flashing point" for a pen and "streams of blood" for ink (*Leaves*, 2: 458). If Whitman is interested more in fragments than in totality, it makes sense that violence manifests itself only as something that is expected, remembered, or mourned over. Bullets and "slugs whizz" (*Leaves*, 2: 458) not in battle itself but in the anticipatory time-space of the recruitment poems ("Drum-Taps," "First O Songs for a Prelude") and in the vivid memories of aged nurses ("The Wound-Dresser") and veterans ("The Veteran's Vision"). The only bodies that are opened up, showing us precisely what war does to the divine human corpus, are either undergoing surgery or are already buried, having been transformed through violence into "white skeletons" and "debris" (*Leaves*, 2: 538). These elliptical representations of the dead, Warner helps make clear, mimic the broader structural architecture of *Drum-Taps*, which tends to break the war into pieces because for Whitman no

vision of its historical totality is poetically thinkable or philosophically tenable.

Nonetheless, I am far less convinced than Warner is that *Drum-Taps'* assorted frameworks have an "implicitly and sometimes explicitly religious cast."[9] The volume's chaotic temporalities certainly touch on matters of religiosity, particularly in "A Child's Amaze" and "Hymn of Dead Soldiers," but most of the poems consider very different types of experience, like the processes of reading and learning ("Shut Not Your Doors," "Beginning My Studies"), the meanings of flags and other signs ("As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods," "Flag of Stars, Thick-Sprinkled Bunting," "World, Take Good Notice"), and the power of memory ("The Wound-Dresser"). Even when Whitman claims to have learned a lesson from the war, as he does in "Solid, Ironical, Rolling Orb," it is framed as a secular insight:

> Solid, ironical, rolling orb!
> Master of all, and matter of fact!—at last I accept your terms;
> Bringing to practical, vulgar tests, of all my ideal dreams,
> And of me, as lover and hero. (*Leaves*, 2: 522)

What Whitman accepts here is not some providential faith but the raw destructive power of the earth's perpetual revolutions: this is the cosmological "fact" that "tests" his democratic "dreams."

If one construes time in *Drum-Taps* as theologically inflected, it is difficult to understand why so many of the poems are interested more in things like ships, faces, or moonlight than they are in gods or creeds. Several poems, for instance, are primarily concerned with water during wartime. In "The Torch," Whitman envisions a lake near the Pacific:

> On my Northwest coast in the midst of the night a fishermen's
>   group stands watching,
> Out on the lake that expands before them, others are spearing
>   salmon,
> The canoe, a dim shadowy thing, moves across the black water,
> Bearing a torch ablaze at the prow. (*Leaves*, 2: 503)

Here we are almost entirely removed from the world of Gettysburg and Shiloh. The war itself seems like a "dim shadowy thing" in these four lines, which replace the temporalities of battle with the more

melodious experiences of "watching" and "spearing" (which, not co-incidentally, are poetic as well as waterborne acts). A similar sense of momentary peace is cultivated in the concluding stanza of "The Ship Starting":

> Lo, the unbounded sea,
> On its breast a ship starting, spreading all sails, carrying even her
>   moonsails,
> The pennant is flying aloft as she speeds she speeds so stately—
>   below emulous waves press forward,
> They surround the ship with shining curving motions and foam.
>   (*Leaves*, 2: 512)

Whitman, of course, was always drawn to the water: "Song of My-self" features a crucial nautical section, and both "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" and "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" depict *Leaves* as an oceanic poem and performance. During the war, the "unbounded sea" seems to have provided Whitman with a natural analogue for the Union's war effort. And it is precisely by forging this sense of liquid cadence that his maritime poems feed back into the volume's broader temporal looping, which ties these moments of undulation to a broad array of other perspectives and frameworks.

Across *Drum-Taps*, Whitman is particularly interested in the temporalities of wartime movements, none more so than the march. The book draws its very title from the rhythmic drumming that led the armies, in unison and en masse, from the camp to the battlefield and back. Throughout the poems, as Whitman sings about the soldiers' "unknown road[s]," the "world of labor and the march," and the sight of men "countermarching by swift millions," it becomes clear that marching is not simply a form of martial kinesis but an emblematic mode of collective action (*Leaves*, 2: 494, 475, 504). To march, the same actions must be repeatedly and serially enacted in a ritualized absorption into a group whose membership is felt and gauged in the measured motions of the body. In *Drum-Taps*, marching is a secularized congregation of movement, a joint practice of devotion that solidifies an embodied covenant with the Union and its representative army.

Marching also manifests as a literary rhythm that encapsulates

Whitman's own *ars poetica*. This connection among marching, poetics, and violence is most explicit in "Spirit Whose Work Is Done":

> Spirit of gloomiest fears and doubts, (yet onward ever
>   unfaltering pressing,)
> . . . .
> While I look on the bayonets bristling over their shoulders,
> As those slanted bayonets, whole forests of them appearing in the
>   distance, approach and pass on, returning homeward,
> Moving with steady motion, swaying to and fro to the right and
>   left,
> Evenly lightly rising and falling while the steps keep time;
> Spirit of hours I knew, all hectic red one day, but pale as death
>   next day,
> Touch my mouth ere you depart, press my lips close,
> Leave me your pulses of rage—bequeath them to me—fill me
>   with currents convulsive.... (*Leaves*, 2: 542–543)

Although this poem directs itself apostrophically to the war, its true subject (as is so often the case with Whitman) is Whitman. The lines focus not on the generals or the soldiers or the bloodshed but on what Whitman sees: the patterns of relation forged by the march, as "whole forests" of bayonets sway back and forth, blending in perfect unison, as though pulsating to the beat of a single heart. The poem then turns toward a fictive, wished-for encounter between Whitman and the war's "Spirit," capped by a single impossible kiss that will miraculously convey to him the struggle's "currents convulsive." The poem thus represents Whitman as the war's most adequate conduit, and what comes from this imagined transfer is an identification of the war almost exclusively with the march and the particular manner in which it "keep[s] time."

For Whitman, as for many Civil War soldiers, marching provides a way to momentarily take leave of all the war's terrifying timeframes—the anticipations of violence, the fraught timeframes of grief and mourning, the surprises of combat and destruction—and be swept up, in their absence, by a hypnotic rhythm. If, as Cheryl Wells has posited, the war scrambled the temporalities that had hitherto prevailed in the United States by introducing "battle time," which "impinged on,

overrode, and rearranged" other chronometrics, it is possible to view Whitman's turn to the march as an attempt to keep time, in the midst of such upheaval, by focusing on the thing that he treasured the most: the human body.[10] In other parts of *Drum-Taps*, the divine body is profoundly at risk. In "The Wound-Dresser," we encounter lacerated necks, shattered knees, amputated hands, and crushed heads (as Whitman later attested, when he first went to the hospitals he was greeted by a giant "heap of amputated feet, legs, arms, hands, &c., a full load for a one-horse cart").[11] But in the marching poems, the body is returned to its original beautiful totality. Arms, feet, and faces advance in unison, generating a shared rhythm—a processional, embodied timescape—which makes momentary order out of chaos.

Whitman also inscribes that beat of the march into the very structure of his poems. Both "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" and "Dirge for Two Veterans" enlist quatrains that encase the most unwieldy of experiences—generational passage and mourning, respectively—in a pattern of doubled return. Whitman's famous rhymed dirge for Lincoln, "O Captain! My Captain!," measures time with the same pulse as soldiers' marching feet:

> O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
> The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
> The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
> While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
>   But O heart! heart! heart!
>   O the bleeding drops of red,
>   Where on the deck my Captain lies,
>   Fallen cold and dead. (*Leaves*, 2: 540–541)

This poem has enjoyed such a long afterlife because it is the most orderly of elegies. The iambs strike almost like taps on a drum and the rhymes advance in a steady, paired procession (*aabb*). The poem's quarters also establish two intertwined movements—one that is longer and more narrativized and one that is shorter and more exclamatory—which alternate, lockstep, until the final grim statement (which is also a refrain): "But I with mournful tread, / Walk the deck my Captain lies, / Fallen cold and dead" (*Leaves*, 2: 541). These formal choices have been described as integral to "a communal rhetorical strategy, appealing in [their] memorizable simplicity to a broad base

of readers," and that strategy is successful precisely because the poem draws on the beat of the march in order to contain the uncontainable.[12]

Marching, however, is only one of many different timeframes in *Drum-Taps*. Several of the poems, such as "Camps of Green," "Mother and Babe," and "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer," are about what happens when there is nothing to march to or from. "A Farm Picture," for instance, pivots not on action, whether individual or collective, but on pausing and looking:

> Through the ample open door of the peaceful country barn,
> A sunlit pasture field with cattle and horses feeding,
> And haze and vista, and the far horizon fading away. (*Leaves*,
>   2: 497)

Here we witness light's gorgeous diurnal rebirth. As the sunlight fills the pasture and then dissipates into "haze and vista," the war—like the darkness that precedes the morning—seems to fade away at the horizon. This picture finds a fitting companion in "Bivouac on a Mountain Side":

> I see before me now a traveling army halting,
> Below a fertile valley spread, with barns and the orchards of
>   summer,
> Behind, the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt, in places rising
>   high,
> Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall shapes dingily
>   seen,
> The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far, some away up on
>   the mountain,
> The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-sized,
>   flickering,
> And over all the sky—the sky! far, far out of reach, studded,
>   breaking out, the eternal stars. (*Leaves*, 2: 526)

The "halting" at the poem's outset seems to promise some insight— a clue, perhaps, to where and why this army is traveling. The only thing yielded by this cessation, however, is a scene of pastoral (and then astral) beauty. As the lines slide from the traveling corps to the valleys, orchards, terraces, and cedars, they erase the lines of battle (it

is even ambiguous whether this is a Northern or a Southern Army), and the war vanishes into the stars. Both these poems temporarily suspend the very conflict whose devastation not only fills the volume but also limns these brief stunning scenes. In the initial versions of *Drum-Taps* (that is, the editions published between 1865 and 1867), "A Farm Picture" immediately follows Whitman's discovery of three anonymous corpses—an old man "all sunken about the eyes," a young boy "with cheeks yet blooming," and a middle-aged man with a "calm" visage—by a hospital tent (*Leaves*, 2: 496); and "Bivouac" is placed just before a poem about mass deaths on the battlefield ("Pensive on Her Dead Gazing, I Heard the Mother of All"). What makes these scenes so vivid and so moving has less to do with their particular contents than with their timing: these are pauses before and after loss, moments that either precede or follow death.

These poems, like countless others in *Drum-Taps*, imaginatively retrace Whitman's lines of vision. In "A Farm Picture," his gaze is photographic and horizontal: the observer sees the light catch the earth through the barn's "open door"; his sight is bounded by a square frame, just as in the daguerreotypes that Whitman loved and cherished. Similarly, in "Mother and Babe," he looks directly at the war-torn world around him and records it as if it were a photograph, "catching life on the run, in a flash":[13]

> I see the sleeping babe nestling the breast of its mother,
> The sleeping mother and babe—hush'd, I study them long and
>   long. (*Leaves*, 2: 491)

In other poems, Whitman directs his gaze downward, either at the ground ("Quicksand Years," "Rise O Days from Your Fathomless Depths") or at the corpses and near-corpses that will soon fill it ("Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown"). A vast majority of the poems in the volume, however, tend to tilt their vision upward. The great western "orb" in "Lilacs"; the stars in "Bivouac"; the mountains in "Lo! Victress on the Peaks!"; and the astronomical bodies of "Look Down Fair Moon," "Year of Meteors (1859–60)," and "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun" all direct Whitman's sight—and our own—away from the earth and toward the heavens. This stargazing is most finely captured in "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer":

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and
   measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with
   much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars. (*Leaves*, 2: 483)

This is surely one of the weirdest of all war poems. Meditating on the stars rather than the struggle at hand, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" seems to be almost entirely disconnected both from the Civil War and also from the volume of poems in which it appears.

Nonetheless, the poem's ideational movement is exceedingly familiar. As Whitman moves from the lecture room to the open air, measurement gives way to wonder, and that ensuing sense of astonishment—of being stunned into silence by the immeasurable—is in many respects the prevailing affect in *Drum-Taps*.[14] It is repeated almost every time he sees a corpse, aids in a surgery, or gazes up through "the mystical moist night-air."

In certain respects, this silent amazement is a kind of eloquent refusal. By the time *Drum-Taps* first appeared in print, multiple forms of demographic and statistical accounting had emerged to record, quantify, and assess the war's costs. The Union and Confederate governments scrupulously tracked the numerical categories that indexed victory and defeat: revenues and expenditures, soldiers killed and conscripted, munitions depleted, armaments produced. Regional newspapers regularly printed lists of the local dead and presumed dead, and national periodicals routinely used statistics to explain assorted routs, setbacks, and impasses. Although these accounting practices originated long before the Civil War, that conflict's unprecedented scales of loss and destruction made such numerical measurements indispensable for imagining and reckoning the war. This collective impulse to cognitively map the struggle by way of numbers was markedly unstable, however. As Max Cavitch points out, "the scientific tallying of the dead" often had the paradoxical effect of underscoring its own

inadequacy, since it promised to "redeem unidentifiable and unlocatable bodies for a symbolic totality of otherwise immeasurable sacrifice, while at the same time highlighting the pace at which the war was outstripping both the psychic and material resources of individuated mourning."[15]

Much of the literature that surrounds the war views these accounting practices with skepticism. Herman Melville and Frederick Douglass locate the war's meaning in the deep patterns of history rather than the calculated present, and Emily Dickinson's poems repeatedly challenge the idea that the war can be historically or cognitively mapped at all. In *Drum-Taps*, Whitman constructs a kind of antistatistical vision of the war, a poetry of incalculability that recalls his well-known description, in *Memoranda*, of the war's countless "*strayed* dead" who lay, unburied and unremembered, in the nation's "fields and woods and valleys":

> ... the estimate of the War Department is 25,000 National soldiers kill'd in battle and never buried at all, 5,000 drown'd—15,000 inhumed by strangers or on the march in haste, in hitherto unfound localities—2,000 graves cover'd by sand and mud, by Mississippi freshets, 3,000 carried away by caving-in of banks, &c., ... the dead, the dead, the dead—*our* dead.... Some where they crawl'd to die, alone, in bushes, low gulleys, or on the sides of hills—(there, in secluded spots, their skeletons, bleach'd bones, tufts of hair, buttons, fragments of clothing, are occasionally found, yet) ... the general Million, and the special Cemeteries in almost all the States—the Infinite Dead—(the land entire is saturated, perfumed with their impalpable ashes' exhalation in Nature's chemistry distill'd, and shall be so forever, and every grain of wheat and ear of corn, and every flower that grows, and every breath we draw,)—not only Northern dead leavening Southern soil—thousands, aye many tens of thousands, of Southerners, crumble to-day in Northern earth.[16]

This chemistry cannot be grasped through science. (Hence the progression, in Whitman's language, from the wholeness of numbers to the fragmentation of bodies.) The only proper way to register these deaths is to experience the same kind of astonishment that Whitman feels upon leaving the astronomer's lecture. That decision to glide out

and wander by himself is a decision to gaze rather than add or divide. When Whitman looks up in *Drum-Taps*, as he so frequently does, it is to acknowledge the war's patternlessness, which can be partially beheld but never fully assessed.

Whitman's war poems thereby contravene epochal categories such as "antebellum" and "postbellum," which hinge on a neat and progressive segmenting of historical time. First published in 1865, *Drum-Taps* entered the world around the same moment that, according to our prevailing model of periodization, the postbellum era began to come into being. This is supposed to be the moment of realism's embryonic birth and Romanticism's eclipse. This is the moment when the war ostensibly "swept away" the "whole intellectual culture of the North" and created the conditions for modern life and American pragmatism. This is the moment when, according to most American literature anthologies and surveys, there is a macrohistorical passage from prewar to postwar, a progression from everything that was antebellum to everything that came after it.[17] Yet that moment never materializes in *Drum-Taps*. Instead of witnessing a tectonic shift in the structure of historical time, we gaze at the stars. Or we wait, or we march. Or we see Whitman nursing soldiers or taking pictures.

This prodigious mixture of timescales in *Drum-Taps* mirrors the various modes of cross-identification that fill out Whitman's other Civil War writings. In *Specimen Days* and *Memoranda*, he tends to represent himself, as Roy Morris and Robert Leigh Davis remark, as both "doctor and nurse, mother and father, friend and lover, angel and Death," folding different identities into one another so that "'enemies' are at the same time 'brothers,' 'sisters,' 'fathers,' 'friends,' and 'lovers.'" A similar dynamic unfolds across *Drum-Taps*, but Whitman's cross-perspective here pivots less on identity than on time, as his "splintered, centerless point of view" weaves together a heterogeneous array of temporal frameworks, feelings, and perceptions.[18] The Civil War thereby becomes spectacularly diffuse, manifesting in these poems not as a single upheaval that can be confidently timed and measured but as a variety of sounds, processions, pauses, and surprises, which Whitman weaves into a chaotic series of exquisite songs.

Reimagining *Battle-Pieces*

MELVILLE AND THE LORD OF HOSTS:
HOLY WAR AND DIVINE WARRIOR RHETORIC
IN *Battle-Pieces*

JONATHAN A. COOK

One of the most common roles for God in the Old Testament is as a divine warrior, the Lord of Hosts, a role in which Yahweh ensured Israel's triumph over its enemies. In the sermons, speeches, journalism, and poetry of the American Civil War—a war fought between peoples of fervent, predominantly Protestant religiosity—one finds pervasive invocation of this same rhetoric of holy war, which posited God as a divine warrior providing support for either the Union or the Confederate Army, depending on one's Northern or Southern sympathies. It is thus not surprising that in his 1866 collection of Civil War poetry, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, Herman Melville included a similar depiction of the Judeo-Christian god of war in a number of poems, showing the poet's civic commitment to the righteousness of the Union cause. Yet his use of these allusions was ultimately a rhetorical strategy in which he gave voice to popular patriotism while qualifying its overall effect through various forms of compression, disjunction, equivocation, and juxtaposition in order to emphasize the tragic cost of war in human suffering for the reunited nation as a whole.[1]

Before exploring these issues in Melville's Civil War poetry, we must first examine the relationship of God and war in the Christian Bible. The Old Testament has long been viewed as authorizing the legitimacy of so-called holy war in the actions of Yahweh as champion and defender of his chosen people during the Exodus and the Conquest. In their initial struggle for freedom from Egyptian oppression and then in their battles to gain possession of the land of Canaan, the Israelites invoked the aid of their divine protector and interpreted

their successes and defeats in the light of his divine favor and rebuke. As a military leader, Yahweh appeared under the title of the Lord of Hosts (Sabaoth) and was thought to be enthroned among the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant that served as a symbolic locus of the Israelites' faith and accompanied them into battle during the Conquest. The title Lord of Hosts, describing God and his heavenly army (or the forces of divine power generally), is found 279 times in the Old Testament, principally in the major and minor prophets, where the term implies the moral righteousness of God backed by his supreme power to execute justice.

Although it is most salient in the Old Testament, the metaphor of the divine warrior is found throughout the Christian Bible, for the battles against tangible external enemies in the Hebrew scripture are often transferred to more abstract demonic enemies in the New Testament. Biblical scholars Tremper Longman and Daniel Reid have accordingly identified five general categories of divine warrior rhetoric in the Christian Bible: first, God's role as guarantor of victory for the Israelites during the Exodus and the Conquest; second, God's battles against the Israelites for failing to follow his commands during the Conquest and then under the monarchy; third, the creation by the prophets of a tradition of a future Day of the Lord when God would seek vengeance against his enemies; fourth, Christ's and Saint Paul's assimilation of holy war rhetoric in their fight with the sword of the spirit against demonic or political opponents; and fifth, the extensive use of battle symbolism in the book of Revelation to dramatize the final conflict between godly and diabolical powers in the universe.[2]

Arguing that the Civil War was "the 'holiest' war in American history," George Rable has aptly noted: "Never before and likely never again would so many ministers, churches, and ordinary people turn not only to their Bibles but to their own faith to explain everything from the meaning of individual deaths, to the results of battles, to the outcome of the war itself."[3] Because religion played a critical role in the Civil War, the recurrent biblical ideas of holy war and God as a divine warrior were essential features of the conflict, with both sides often casting themselves as antitypes of Old Testament Israel. Both North and South accordingly enlisted God in the righteousness of their cause and demonized their enemy, while religious faith sustained both soldiers' and civilians' dedication to fight in the unprece-

dented series of bloody battles, with their mass casualties over the four-year span of the conflict.

Both sides interpreted the progress of the war as confirmation or disconfirmation of divine support, with official days of national thanksgiving or fasting and prayer commemorating each. Both sought and received theological justification for their war efforts in churches of varied denominations; both assigned chaplains to military units; both oversaw distribution of Bibles and other religious literature to soldiers; and both experienced periodic religious revival movements in their armies. In both North and South, too, the events of the war were reflexively related to their most relevant biblical prototypes. The roles of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Christ were affixed to generals and politicians, with Stonewall Jackson and Abraham Lincoln, for example, becoming Moses figures for their exemplary leadership and premature deaths and Lincoln being transformed into a Christ figure because of his assassination on Good Friday.

In the North, there was widespread belief that the South's act of secession was a rebellion akin to the revolt of Satan and his rebel angels against godly authority, an allegorical scheme based on the book of Revelation and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It was only appropriate, then, that the unofficial anthem of the Union Army, Julia Ward Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," composed in the fall of 1861, gave an already familiar tune new lyrics drawn from biblical prophecy beginning with the triumphant return of a militant Christ as evoked in the book of Revelation. It was similarly appropriate that on the day before the fall of Richmond on April 3, 1865, General Marsena Patrick, the white-bearded provost marshal for the Army of the Potomac, led prayers for the conquest of the Confederate capital in which, as a contemporary soldier reported, the general "took it for granted that the Almighty regarded the cause of Jeff Davis and that of Satan in the same light, and he prayed for the complete overthrow of the rebel army, and their utter annihilation."[4]

As Melville noted in his preface, most of the poems in *Battle-Pieces* were composed following the fall of Richmond and were meant to reflect the varied moods, broad geographical range, and historical evolution of the war as well as its immediate aftermath. Writing from the perspective of Union victory, Melville used parts of the twelve-volume *Rebellion Record* for historical background; he also drew on

the Bible, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Shakespeare's tragedies and histories as important literary sources. He evoked scenes from Exodus, the Conquest, and the Apocalypse as his main biblical proof texts in keeping with similar preferences in the religious culture of the Union. In the following analysis, I will focus on five poems in *Battle-Pieces* containing some of the most significant holy war and divine warrior rhetoric: "The Battle for the Mississippi," "Gettysburg," "The Swamp Angel," "The Fall of Richmond," and "A Canticle."[5]

Describing events taking place in late April 1862 more than a year after the start of the war, "The Battle for the Mississippi" is premised on the analogy of the Union Navy's successful passage up the Mississippi River, led by Admiral David Farragut, to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea and the drowning of Pharaoh's army, the archetypal demonstration of God's power as holy warrior in the Old Testament. Surviving the shelling from two Confederate forts, St. Philip and Jackson, on opposite sides near the mouth of the Mississippi and cutting the cable meant to block ships from entering the river, Farragut took his fleet of seventeen vessels upriver and overcame a force of sixteen Confederate gunboats just below New Orleans in a night battle on April 24, taking control of the city on April 29 after losing only one ship, the *Varuna*.[6] Melville's poem based on these events begins by alluding to the victorious "Song of the Sea" of Exodus 15:1–21 (sometimes called the "Song of Moses"), as sung by Moses and the Israelites while the prophetess Miriam and the Israelite women played the tambourine-like timbrels and danced:

> When Israel camped by Migdol hoar,
>   Down at her feet her shawm she threw,
> But Moses sung and timbrels rung
>   For Pharaoh's stranded crew.
> So God appears in apt events—
>   The Lord is a man of war!
> So the strong wing to the muse is given
>   In victory's roar.[7]

Re-creating the biblical scene near Migdol, where God had told the Israelites to camp while pursued by Pharaoh (Exod. 14:2), the poet envisages the escaping Israelites throwing aside their oboe-like shawm for exultant vocal celebration, while the jubilant exclamation

of Moses, "The Lord is a man of war" (Exod. 15:3), becomes the keynote for attributing the Union victory to the aid of the Old Testament divine warrior. Yet the last two lines of the stanza slightly qualify the unfettered triumphalism of the initial biblical allusion by claiming that the poet's muse has been temporarily exalted to make such claims by the contagious roar of victory.

Indeed, in the ensuing description of the battle, the poet implicitly makes clear that it was the bravery of the Union Navy and its commander, not the miraculous hand of God, that led to victory. Evoking the chaotic scene of the night battle on the river as the "shock of ships" colliding amid the fiery spectacle of "flaring fire-rafts, glare and gloom," the poet compares such a form of warfare to that of "Michael's waged with leven [lightning]" (47), an allusion to the war in heaven depicted in book 6 of *Paradise Lost*. In the poem's evocation of the battle, the battered Union fleet sinks the Confederate ironclad *Manassas* and sails past the two forts, appearing at dawn in "scarred yet firm array" (48). The last two stanzas evoke the scene of grateful prayer on the Union ships, whose guns now "Hold the lewd mob at bay" (48), an apt description of a city that, according to historian James M. McPherson, was "filled with burning cotton and cursing mobs brandishing pistols against the eleven-inch guns trained on their streets."[8] Ignoring the rancorous mob, the captain and crew in Melville's poem give thanks to God and mourn their dead, who merit a glorious afterlife for their heroism: "There must be other, nobler worlds for them / Who nobly yield their lives in this" (48). In contrast to its triumphalist biblical beginning invoking a key salvific event of the Old Testament, the poem ends on a more tentative note of hope for the afterlife of the dead Union sailors, in accordance with New Testament doctrine.

By evoking an archetypal scene in Exodus that was repeatedly used by Union and Confederate political and religious commentators to support their own interpretations of the events of the Civil War, Melville is paying homage in "The Battle for the Mississippi" to one of the most powerful and versatile proof texts in the Bible to support the notion of God as a holy warrior. While his use of the story of the Israelites' passage through the Red Sea bears some manifest resemblances to the Union fleet's defeat of the Pharaoh-like forces of the Confederates, Melville nevertheless tempers the claim that God fights on the Union side. For as the poet points out in the second stanza, Farragut's

victory on the Lower Mississippi was only the beginning of a long campaign to control the length of the river, for when he subsequently sailed upstream to Vicksburg, he was repulsed by a Confederate ironclad in another fierce contest: "Dully through din of larger strife / Shall bay that warring gun" (47). The "larger strife" thus anticipates the long and grueling campaign against Vicksburg over the coming year. In like manner, the Israelites faced a long ordeal of testing in the Wilderness before they reached their Promised Land. "The Battle for the Mississippi" nevertheless celebrates the Union's hard-won victory on the Mississippi below New Orleans, as the poet pays tribute to the divine warrior who embodies or operates along with the Union forces.

In "Gettysburg," subtitled "The Check," the poet celebrates the decisive Union victory in the battle on the first three days of July 1863 that permanently halted the threatened Confederate invasion of the North and represented a major turning point in the war—at the combined cost of some 50,000 casualties. Here again we find the North associated at the beginning of the poem with the righteousness of God and the South with satanic rage and defiance. The first stanza compares the check to the Confederate Army at Gettysburg to the symbolic defeat of the Philistines by Israel:

> O pride of the days in prime of the months
>   Now trebled in great renown,
> When before the ark of our holy cause
>   Fell Dagon down—
> Dagon foredoomed, who, armed and targed,
> Never his impious heart enlarged
> Beyond that hour; God walled his power,
> And there the last invader charged. (62)

Just as the Lord of Hosts was imagined to be enthroned above the cherubim on the ark bearing the two tablets of the law, the constitutional "ark" of the Union's "holy cause" defeated the militarized forces of "Dagon," the Philistine (or Confederate) idol that twice fell on its face, as if in worship or submission, when the captured Hebrew Ark of the Covenant was brought into the idol's temple at Ashdod; the second time it fell, it was dismembered: "And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and

both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him" (1 Sam. 5:4). Following this mysterious providential event, the Israelites regained their captured ark. So, too, in "Gettysburg" it is allegedly due to God's power as a divine warrior that Lee's invading forces are now defeated and "walled" out of Union territory.

In the second stanza, the Southern foe is characterized, like Milton's Satan, as having "charged, and in that charge condensed / His all of hate and all of fire" in his attack. This concentrated, enraged "charge" could serve as a general description of the aggressiveness of Confederate assault during the battle or, more particularly, of Major General George Pickett's famous failed "charge" on July 3 against Cemetery Hill, after which the Confederate Army acknowledged defeat by withdrawing to Virginia. The poet conveys an impression of the terrifying chaotic sounds that accompanied the onslaught of Confederate troops in this supreme battle of the war, with its three days of heavy combat:

> Before him went the shriek of shells—
> Aerial screamings, taunts and yells;
> Then the three waves in flashed advance
>   Surged, but were met, and back they set.... (62)

Ultimately, the key to the Union victory for the poet lay in the impregnable justness of its cause: "Pride was repelled by sterner pride, / And Right is a strong-hold yet" (62). If the Confederate foe is characterized by infernal and unholy "hate" and "fire" like the armies of Satan in book 6 of Milton's epic, the Unionists are able to stop them because "Right is a strong-hold" as powerful as the Israelite Ark of the Covenant. In the third stanza, the poet uses a nautical metaphor to compare the lines of mangled bodies of Confederate dead to the wreckage of ships strewn on beaches following a storm:

> Before our lines it seemed a beach
>   Which wild September gales have strown
> With havoc on wreck, and dashed therewith
> Pale crews unknown— (62)

The storm metaphor implies that, unlike the fierce human hatred that motivated the Confederates, the Union Army acted more like a force of nature in defeating its adversary, while imagery of the piles of

Southern dead looking like bodies washed up on a beach also evokes the famous photography of Mathew Brady and others immediately after the battle. The poet concludes the stanza by hinting at the pathos of the Confederate dead in an image that also captures the ultimate defeat of their cause: "The evening sun / Died on the face of each life-less one" (63).

Finally, in the fourth stanza, the poet pays homage to the Union dead who fought at Cemetery Hill and were killed while defending this hallowed ground at the center of the three days of fighting; as a result, now "over these a glory waves" (63). Cemetery Hill gets its name from Evergreen Cemetery located there. During the fighting, the Union troops that held it flattened some of the graves to preserve them and also used them for protection from enemy fire; inevitably, the cemetery was severely damaged by the battle. In a reversal of the initial image of the fallen idol Dagon, an overturned tombstone in Evergreen Cemetery that marked the grave of a Union officer killed in the Peninsular Campaign in 1862 (as Melville explains in a note) will rise up with added significance, thanks to the creation of the new cemetery for the fallen:

> The warrior-monument, crashed in fight,
> Shall soar transfigured in loftier light,
>   A meaning ampler bear;
> Soldier and priest with hymn and prayer
> Have laid the stone, and every bone
>   Shall rest in honor there. (63)

As in the biblical Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–9), when Jesus climbed a mountain and became radiant with light as he received God's blessing in the company of the patriarchs Moses and Elijah, the battlefield tomb in Melville's poem will attain "loftier light" in the ensuing civil religion of the Union cause, as memorialized by Lincoln's famous address on November 19, 1863, consecrating the new Union cemetery for the fallen.

Yet the poem's final historical reference is not to the now-famous ceremony at which Lincoln made his address but, as Melville clarifies in his note to the poem, to the later ceremony of July 4, 1865, laying the cornerstone to the Soldiers' National Monument at the center of the new Gettysburg National Cemetery. The predicted "loftier

light" of the soldier's resurrected tombstone makes possible allusion to the future sixty-foot column, topped by a statue of a female Liberty, that was eventually dedicated on July 1, 1869. The individual "warrior-monument" in Melville's poem becomes synonymous with all the Union dead at Gettysburg, whose graves now have an "ampler" meaning with the civic rituals ("Soldier and priest with hymn and prayer") performed at the national cemetery to honor their sacrifice for the preservation of the Union. Overall, the victory commemorated in "Gettysburg" reaffirms the popular Northern faith in the divine righteousness of its cause by comparing the Union to ancient Israel during the Conquest, but it should be noted that the poem's divine warrior rhetoric is implicitly qualified by its placement before the ensuing poem, "The House-top," which evokes the New York City Draft Riots that immediately followed the victory at Gettysburg and, ironically, required veterans of the recent battle to quell the unrest.

In "The Swamp Angel," the poet evokes the Union bombing of the city of Charleston by the huge Parrott rifle emplaced nearby in the summer of 1863, now represented as an act of retribution by a black angel of death and destruction pitted against the city that led the Secession movement and launched the war with the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April 1861. This lethal dark angel is thus symbolically allied with the angelic host that accompanied Yahweh as the Lord of Hosts, while the gradually demolished city futilely calls upon the angel giving its name to Charleston's oldest and most prominent church, St. Michael's, to defend it. However, the angel has unexpectedly switched sides, and the city is doomed like the apocalyptic Babylon (Rev. 18).

In order to understand "The Swamp Angel," we must make a brief excursus to explore the historical circumstances that shaped the poem. In July 1863, at about the same time he ordered the well-known attack of African American troops on Fort Wagner, Union General Quincy A. Gillmore commanded that a battery be constructed in the swampy area between Morris and James Islands in Charleston Harbor in order to install a massive Parrott rifle capable of bombarding the city with incendiary shells (so-called Greek fire) from the unprecedented range of five miles. In a remarkable feat of engineering, soldiers under Colonel Edward Serrell were able to create a heavily sandbagged and timbered parapet and a foundation that could bear the 24,000-pound weight of the gun and its carriage, all constructed on a narrow strip of

mud. Alternately called the Marsh Croaker, Mud Lark, and Serrell's Folly, the gun received its most distinctive nickname when one of the Union soldiers working on its elaborate foundation remarked: "We're building a pulpit on which a Swamp Angel will preach."[9]

Shooting a 150-pound shell from an eight-inch bore, the Parrott rifle commanded by Lieutenant Charles Sellmer was first fired on Charleston at 1:30 a.m. on August 22, using the steeple of St. Michael's Episcopal Church as a range finder. From then until dawn, a total of sixteen shots were fired on the city, ten of which were incendiary shells, destroying a number of buildings and terrorizing the inhabitants. Following a daylong hiatus for the withdrawal of noncombatants, shelling resumed on the evening of August 23. On the sixth round of firing that night, the cannon moved in its breech band and a makeshift arrangement was used to secure the gun until, on the twentieth shot, the breech exploded and the gun became inoperable. Not long thereafter, General Gillmore established another four-gun battery on Black Island from which more shells were rained on Charleston. The redoubtable Swamp Angel fired only thirty-six shells on the city over the space of two nights, but its unprecedented range and incendiary effects made it a historically significant agent of retribution against the spiritual heart of the Confederacy.

In the first stanza of Melville's "The Swamp Angel," the speaker personifies the huge new gun as a "coal-black Angel / With a thick Afric lip" (78) breathing out destruction on the city that had led the South in its defense of slavery and move toward secession. The "angel" "dwells (like the hunted and harried) / In a swamp where the green frogs dip" (78). In a manifest irony, the black gun is placed in a remote swamp, a place where fugitive slaves might go for temporary refuge; it is also associated with frogs, one of the plagues of Egypt (Exod. 8:6). It is important to note that the racial resonances of the poem may be enhanced by the reader's knowledge of the historic attack on July 18, 1863, by African American soldiers of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Infantry, commanded by Robert Gould Shaw, against the Confederate-held Fort Wagner not far from where the Swamp Angel would soon be emplaced. In Melville's poem, the retributive power of the huge black gun thus formed a symbolic confirmation of the pioneering involvement of black troops in the war against their Southern oppressors.[10]

In the second stanza of "The Swamp Angel," the speaker goes on to

describe the nocturnal bombardment of "the City" as the shell soars into the air like a "star" or "meteor" before falling with its terrible impact (78). The image of the shell's hanging in the air like a star is appropriate for the remarkable range from which the Parrott rifle fired and the incendiary nature of many of the shells, which rained fire on their targets when they exploded. In the third stanza, the fall of the destructive shell assumes an implicitly religious significance by means of a simile relating it to Christ's Second Coming, which was alleged to occur like "a thief in the night" (Matt. 24:43, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Pet. 3:10, Rev. 16:5). The appearance of a shell "comes like the thief in the gloaming; / It comes, and none may foretell / The place of the coming—the glaring." The unpredictable fiery explosions of the nocturnal shelling cause the inhabitants to live in a "sleepless spell" that "wizens, and withers, and whitens" their faces and bodies as "The Swamp Angel broods in his gloom." As a divine angel of destruction, the Swamp Angel sends out rapid aerial "messengers"—the literal meaning of the New Testament Greek word *angelos* or "angel"—with extended intervals between shots throughout the night, so that the traumatized city dwellers are constantly forced to move away from "their crumbling walls" (78–79).

In the face of this ruinous assault from the sky, the speaker rhetorically asks, "Is this the proud City? the scorner / Which never would yield the ground? / Which mocked at the coal-black Angel?" (79). Once the home of the South's most violent and unyielding proponents of slavery and secession, Charleston is now the victim of a gun that symbolizes the forces of nemesis and is a retributive response to the humiliation of the fall of Fort Sumter. The city of Charleston thus invokes the aid of Saint Michael, based on the name of its most historic and architecturally prominent church, but ironically the heroic angel that fought the dragon in Revelation 12 is now on the side of the Swamp Angel:

> Vainly she calls upon Michael
>   (The white man's seraph was he),
> For Michael has fled from his tower
>   To the Angel over the sea. (79)

In the war in heaven, the archangel Michael and his fellow angels fight against the dragon and his angelic allies, after which the latter

were cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:9); in Melville's poem, by contrast, the archangel ironically deserts the city to join the retributive black angel sending out destruction from a swamp where terrorized slaves might have hidden.

In the final quatrain, the poet insists that whoever weeps for "the woeful City"—like those who wept for the fallen Babylon (Rev. 18:9–19)—should weep for humanity in general, while whoever feels joy at the city's despair should learn compassion from "Christ, the Forgiver" (79), whose Lord's Prayer specifically enjoined the need for mutual forgiveness. The poet extends compassion even to those inhabiting the spiritual heart of the Confederacy, for all Americans share in the guilt of slavery. The invocation of "the woeful City" and "Christ, the Forgiver" in the last stanza might also suggest the example of Christ lamenting over the doomed city of Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37–45, as Brian Yothers notes: "Charleston is an antitype of both Babylon and Jerusalem in this poem: a city to be condemned like Babylon, but also to be wept over, like Jerusalem."[11]

In "The Fall of Richmond," subtitled "The tidings received in the Northern Metropolis," Melville portrays the joyful reception in New York City of the news of the fall of Richmond on Monday, April 3, 1865. With bells pealing and cannons firing, the crowds in the first stanza celebrate the approaching end of the Confederacy after the conquest of its capital. Under imminent threat from Union regiments to the south and east, the Southern capital was evacuated by the Confederate Army and government and its tobacco warehouses, bridges, military depots, and other strategic assets were burned by retreating soldiers, but the massive fires unexpectedly consumed much of the city's business district in a symbolic holocaust. In Melville's poem, the speaker initially juxtaposes New York and Richmond, the victorious and fallen cities, as paired in a striking antithetical alliteration: "A city in flags for a city in flames" (99). The antithesis is historically apt, for as historian Nelson Lankford notes of New York City at the time: "The rage for flags exhausted the supply. The Stars and Stripes festooned every public building and most private ones. Miniature flags bedecked railway cars and horse-drawn wagons and carriages. Ferries draped their railings with bunting. From the waterfront to the hotels along Broadway, and on to the mansions of the rich farther up Manhattan, red, white, and blue fabric covered the city."[12]

In another historically astute image, the poet in "The Fall of Richmond" goes on to evoke the symbolism of Revelation when remarking that "Richmond goes Babylon's way" (99). The Northern identification of the defeated Confederate capital with the apocalyptic Babylon was pervasive, with its fall prophetically anticipated by the angel in Revelation 14:8: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Thus a contemporary handbill announced, "Babylon has Fallen!! . . . Richmond, the proud, the defiant stronghold of treason and head-quarter of traitors has been humiliated." The jubilant African Americans who greeted Lincoln during his daring visit to the city only a day after its capture sang "Babylon Is Fallen!," a popular 1863 song by the abolitionist songwriter Henry C. Work. On April 6, 1865, the antislavery New York weekly *The Independent* similarly rejoiced over the fall of Richmond, calling it "Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." Finally, the *Richmond Evening Whig*, now a pro-Union newspaper, declared in a poetic image on April 21 that "Babylon falls, and her temples and towers / Crumble to ashes before us."[13]

In the second stanza of "The Fall of Richmond," the speaker invokes the persistence through "weary years" of the determination to resist "The helmed dilated Lucifer," diabolical head of the infernal army finally beaten here (99). As a symbol of the rebel cause, Lucifer is "dilated" with pride, in keeping with Milton's archetypal characterization of Satan and the original biblical image of Lucifer in Isaiah 14:12–17. In the third stanza, the poet insists that it was "the faith we firmly kept" that resisted "the Terrors that trooped from each recess / When fainting we fought in the Wilderness, / And Hell made loud hurrah" (99). The terrible Battle of the Wilderness of May 1864, fought in the woods northwest of Richmond near Fredericksburg, had involved enormous casualties—17,500 Union soldiers in two days of fighting—and intense anxiety in the North; these were "fearfully critical anxious days" in which "the destinies of the continent for centuries" would be determined, as the New York diarist George Templeton Strong wrote at the time.[14]

The original biblical wilderness, of course, was the realm in which the Israelites wandered and had their faith tested for forty years. The Union having kept faith in its cause through such fearsome trials, the

poet now confidently declares that "God is in Heaven, and Grant in the Town, / And Right through might is Law" (99). In short, the God of the North controls the supernatural realm and the supreme Union commander controls the ruined capital of the Confederacy, leading to the poet's assertion of the justice of the Union cause. Melville in effect reformulates Robert Browning's famous lines from "Pippa Passes"— "God's in his Heaven / All's right with the world"—while putting Grant into the position of a semidivine warrior next to God. As in a covenantal relationship, the God of the Union has rewarded the North because of its battle-tested faith and the righteousness of its cause in the elimination of slavery. Now that the apocalyptic battle is over and Babylon has fallen, the poet depicts the Lord of Hosts as deserving psalm-like praise in three liturgical, italicized refrains after each stanza: "*Sing and pray*," "*Bless his* [Grant's] *glaive*," and "*God's way adore*." The poet thus commemorates the key victory leading to the Confederate surrender six days later by structuring the poem as a de facto prayer-and-response.

Placed between "The Surrender of Appomattox" and "The Martyr" (describing Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865), "A Canticle"— subtitled "Significant of the national exultation of enthusiasm at the close of the War"—expresses the collective sense of joy, gratitude, and euphoria at the formal conclusion of hostilities, combined with a hymn of thanksgiving to the Lord of Hosts for victory. A canticle is, of course, a biblically based song of praise and thanksgiving used in various Christian liturgies, similar in form and content to the Psalms. The traditional Anglican and Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer*, two copies of which Melville owned, features twenty-one canticles used in morning and evening prayer services; one of these canticles, designated for use in morning services in the Easter season, is taken from the "Song of the Sea" of Exodus 15. Because Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox took place on Palm Sunday, Melville's implicit use of Exodus 15 for his own canticle celebrating a final victory for the Lord of Hosts is both historically and liturgically appropriate.[15]

In Melville's adaptation of the form, the poet uses three main motifs to convey the euphoric national mood at the end of four years of hostilities, namely, the fall of the rebel angels in *Paradise Lost*, the pictorial iconography of Niagara Falls, and the Israelites' deliverance from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea. If, as implied by "The Conflict of Con-

victions" at the start of *Battle-Pieces*, Milton's war in heaven acts as a poetic model for the Civil War, with the South cast in the role of the rebel angels, the initial images of "A Canticle" would seem to rehearse this cosmic event in Melville's imagery of the "precipice Titanic / Of the congregated Fall, / And the angle oceanic / Where the deepening thunders call—" (101). By the same token, the image of a giant waterfall over a "precipice Titanic" is also evocative of Niagara Falls, long considered a consummate symbol of North American nature and an icon of the national sublime. Repeatedly depicted in the art of the antebellum era, notably in Frederic Church's 1857 *Niagara*, Niagara Falls typified the sense of religious awe and overwhelming power conveyed by the idea of the sublime as defined by Edmund Burke and others.

The first stanza of "A Canticle" presents an image of the giant waterfall as a sublime spectacle juxtaposing heaven and hell—"the Gorge so grim, / And the firmamental rim!"—with huge volumes of water passing over the precipice: "Multitudinously thronging / The waters all converge, / Then they sweep adown in sloping / Solidity of surge" (101). The aquatic imagery here typifies the unity of purpose of the victorious Northern Army and people as they have completed a supreme test of will, with the ordeal of civil war first conveyed as a terrifying plunge into the abyss reenacting the fall of the rebel angels (or rebel soldiers), followed by the nation's coming together in a "Solidity of surge" as the re-United States.[16]

The second stanza, a responsive antiphon, is a more direct statement of the praise for divine aid in victory indicated by the title of the poem. We find here a mystical image of the emotional "impulse" of the "Nation," which moves "Mysterious as the tide, / In emotion like an ocean" and is as "deep in her devotion / As humanity is wide" (101). The coming together of the people to celebrate the victory is synonymous with thanks to the divine warrior who has led them to victory:

> Thou Lord of hosts victorious,
>   The confluence thou has twined;
> By a wondrous way and glorious
>   A passage Thou dost find—
>   A passage Thou does find:
> Hosanna to the Lord of hosts,
>   The hosts of human kind. (101)

The "confluence" brought about by God hints at either the unanimity of purpose that motivated the Northern war effort or the final rejoining of North and South into one nation again as a result of Confederate defeat. The ensuing "passage" that the Lord of Hosts has found recalls the miraculous passage through the Red Sea as celebrated by Moses in Exodus 15, with its bold exclamation that "the Lord is a man of war" (Exod. 15:3). The word "Hosanna" as an indication of joyful praise, on the other hand, occurs in the Bible only in reference to Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:9, Mark 11:9–10, John 12:13), which is appropriate in the context of "A Canticle" because of Lee's surrender on Palm Sunday, but it is revealing that the poet's praise in the last two lines is directed at both the divine "Lord of hosts" and the "hosts of human kind"—the Union Army that ultimately won the war. Melville's use of the word "Hosanna," implicitly recalling the Palm Sunday greeting to the messianic Christ, would imply a quasidivine status for the Union Army.

In the third stanza, the poet returns to the image of the Niagara-like waterfall to describe a rainbow, "Iris," appearing in the mist generated by the falls. "The Iris half in tracelessness / Hovers faintly fair" (102) suggests the rainbow that God designated as a symbol of a new covenant of peace with humanity following the Flood (Gen. 9:11–17). Despite heavenly winds that interrupt its appearance, "The Arch rekindled grows" until it becomes "the Glory perfect there," implying that God is physically present in his luminous "glory" (Hebrew *kabod*), as on the top of Mount Sinai or in the Hebrew tabernacle or temple (102). Despite the official declaration of peace in the nation, however, as symbolized by the rainbow, the poet points out in the next stanza that the hellish features of the huge cataract are still present— "But the foamy Deep unsounded, / And the dim and dizzy ledge"— while an unnamed "Giant of the Pool / Heaves his forehead white as wool" (102). The Giant here is almost certainly akin to the Miltonic fallen angel Satan, who remains a symbolic threat to the newly reunited country within the unrepentant but defeated South; the image of the Giant's "forehead white as wool" ironically borrows language from biblical images of both God and Christ (Dan. 7:9, Rev. 1:14) while hinting at the creature's white racial identity. The image of the Giant hidden in the foaming pool at the base of the falls accordingly

evokes the description of the fallen Satan in book 1 of *Paradise Lost* and reiterates a common Miltonic interpretation of the war:

> Thus Satan talking to his nearest Mate
> With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes
> That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides
> Prone on the Flood, extended long and large
> Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
> As whom the Fables name of monstrous size....[17]

Just as Satan remains a potential menace to the heavenly order in Milton's epic, the submerged Southern Giant of Melville's poem remains a threat to the fragile rainbow of newly won peace in the nation—a vindictive monster that was initially (and erroneously) imagined to be responsible for the assassination of Lincoln on Good Friday, but a creature that would more dangerously emerge to menace the fruits of Northern victory during Reconstruction.

In the penultimate stanza of "A Canticle," the poet turns again to the image of the waterfall as a symbol of humanity, except now it represents "The Generations pouring / From times of endless date" as "Humanity" moves perpetually "Toward the fullness of her fate" (102). If the poet is implicitly evoking the perfected future of "Ages of endless date" as proclaimed by the angel Michael to Adam at the end of *Paradise Lost* (7: 549), the reference to "fullness" in the final line of the stanza recalls Saint Paul's well-known use of the same word to describe the "fulness of the Gentiles" at the end-time when Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:25). In the last stanza, the poet again pays tribute to the "Lord of hosts victorious" by asking that God providentially "Fulfill the end designed" (102). The rest of the stanza repeats the second half of the second stanza celebrating the salvific "passage" that God has found for the people, through the Red Sea and through the Civil War, while again saying "Hosanna" to the hosts of God and "human kind" (103).

"A Canticle" is a noteworthy expression of Northern victory in that it displaces the concrete realities of Union triumph into a symbolic natural setting while conflating Miltonic fallen angels, a sublime representation of Niagara Falls, and an archetypal Red Sea passage. Ultimately, the poem expresses thanks to God as a divine warrior, as in

Moses's "Song of the Sea" in Exodus 15, while avoiding any explicit demonization of the South except to note an unnamed satanic Giant that remains submerged within the abyss of national history.

Published sixteen months after the end of hostilities, Melville's poetic *Battle-Pieces* included a prose "Supplement" in which the author noted that he was tempted to "withdraw or modify some of them, fearful lest in presenting, though but dramatically and by way of a poetic record, the passions and epithets of civil war, I might be contributing to a bitterness which every sensible American must wish at an end" (183). As critics have noted, in his Civil War poetry and his prose "Supplement," Melville showed his patriotic identification with the Union while largely avoiding a punitive moral righteousness toward the defeated South, leading him to embrace a tone of moderation and compassion.[18] As he insisted, "the glory of the war falls short of its pathos—a pathos which now at last ought to disarm all animosity" (184). If some of the poems in *Battle-Pieces*, as we have seen, invoked several well-known biblical proof texts relating to the ideas of holy war and a divine warrior, the overriding argument of the prose "Supplement" was a New Testament–inspired plea for a Lincolnesque forgiveness toward the South to further reconciliation and avoid Old Testament models of retribution. The critical and popular failure of *Battle-Pieces*, Melville's first published book of poetry, was symptomatic of a Northern public that was in no mood to forgive its recent enemy or to read war poetry that offered complexity and ambiguity instead of unalloyed patriotism and sentimental piety.[19]

"NEARER TO US IN NATURE":

THE SOUTH AND MELVILLE'S

LITERARY LOST CAUSE

TIMOTHY MARR

I n October 1857, Herman Melville was invited to lecture in a slave state. The Literary Association of Clarksville, Tennessee, flattered Melville by assuring him of an appreciative audience: "there are many amongst us who have delightedly perused your productions, and who are eager to render personal, that charming acquaintance they have formed with you through the medium of your genial pen."[1] With three weeks to travel to his Tennessee gig from his prior lecture in Detroit, Melville journeyed five hundred miles by coach through the winter mud of Ohio and Indiana and then two hundred miles down the Ohio and up the Cumberland Rivers to Clarksville. His January lecture on the statues of Rome was, according to a local paper, "one of the events of the season. The spacious Hall was crowded with a large and fashionable audience."[2] Melville was paid the most he had ever received for a lecture, and a local critic wryly observed "a striking congeniality between . . . [his] quiet manner and those mute forms that stand still and silent amid the venerable ruins of 'ancient Rome.'"[3] Melville's excursion into Tennessee offering classical ideals in exchange for money—wearing a new hat and neckerchief he had purchased in Nashville—reprised in personal performance his recent and final published novel about travel down the Mississippi River, *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade*, and contrasted with his youthful journey back up the Ohio River as a twenty-year-old in the summer of 1840 before he became a literary man.

The South for which Melville is most renowned is the South Seas. His focus on figuring the more proximate region of the U.S. South—which during his writing life was undergoing the throes of resistance, secession, and Reconstruction—has received less critical attention. Similar

to the way Melville considered British readers when he published his novels first in England, he was also responsive to regional differences within the United States. The rigors of his antebellum visit to Clarksville embodied his aspiration that his own literary generativity might democratically encompass the nation—inclusive of what he called "the genial and delightful regions of the sunny south."[4] This is precisely the organic practice that Melville himself enacted in his famous 1850 review "Hawthorne and His Mosses," which he asserted was written by "A Virginian spending July in Vermont." Channeling his commentary through this southern persona, Melville engendered the fraternal fertility of American literary nationalism, as well as the ideal receptivity of its broad audiences, by figuring Hawthorne as one who "dropped germinous seeds" while "shooting his strong New-England roots into the hot soil of my Southern soul." His 1855 sketch "The Tartarus of Maids" presented his New England narrator as a farmer seeking paper for envelopes to disseminate his seeds as widely as "the far soil of Missouri and the Carolinas."[5] Ironically, his seeds came from Shaker communities celebrated for their celibacy yet renowned for their enterprise in circulating garden seeds in pasted paper packets throughout the nation. Melville aspired to be a national writer whose works would be not dead letters but fertile words that might associate with all sections of the nation. He viewed the nation's southern expanses as a source of the noble gentility needed for the United States to prosper as a civilization.

Melville's lifetime was tragically coeval with the crisis of American sectionalism that continually confounded his desire for a confederation of the nation's extremes. He was born during the congressional negotiations that produced the Missouri Compromise; he lived to experience the overthrow of slavery, the end of Reconstruction, and the beginning of the racial resegregation of the South; and his writing career was bisected by the tragedy of the Civil War that was the subject of his first published book of poetry, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, in 1866. The seeding of slavery in the democratic land of liberty represented the paradoxical fate of what might be termed an (un)natural wrong, an American amalgamation that he would call in *Battle-Pieces* "the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime" (see Ed Folsom's essay in this volume).[6]

An examination of Melville's imaginative engagement with the South reveals an artist honorably attempting to span with sympathetic

creativity the most prominent and problematic political division of his lifetime. His ultimate failure in this task exposed both the tragic rupture of democracy in nineteenth-century America and the critical drama of the lost cause of his literary aspirations. His unflagging efforts in 1866 to measure through poetry the magnitude of a Civil War whose political outcome had not been resolved and whose consequences were too vast to comprehend made him an exemplar of what C. Vann Woodward later called the ironic historian. This "rare and difficult" perspective emerged from a "nonparticipant" who "must have an unusual combination of detachment and sympathy" and "must be able to appreciate both elements in the incongruity that go to make up the ironic situation, both the virtue and the vice to which the pretensions of virtue lead."[7] Reinhold Niebuhr's reflections on the "irony of American history"—the combined innocence and imperialism of the United States—claimed, in ways consonant with Melville's earlier art, that "the evils against which we contend are frequently the fruits of illusions which are similar to our own."[8]

Melville's lack of success in locating a government job until after the Civil War can be explained in part by his protean politics of seeking spoils from both Democratic and Republican administrations; indeed, he was proud to assert that he "never was a blind adherent" (181). He used the word "ambidexter" at different points in his career to describe a relationship that holds together two opposing positions so uncertain that they might be at cross-purposes or might even simultaneously invert and resolve into each other.[9] This is a telling concept for understanding the tangle of his multiple allegiances on registers at once historical and literary, pragmatic and ideal, immediate and gradual, certain and unknown. Melville ambiguously blended viewpoints about the Civil War and its legacy that David Blight has contrasted as "emancipationist" and "reconciliationist," the first dedicated to a Lincolnesque rebirth of the republic in the name of expanding equality, the other emphasizing the shared valor of those soldiers who tragically died with dedication and pride despite their contrary definitions of American nationalism.[10] Melville's ambidexter meditations glimpsed how the vain materialism of Northern superiority and its inability to offer complete justice to African Americans produced a reorganized state blind enough to the perplexities of history to perpetuate a legacy of unresolved conflict.

In this essay, I argue that Melville's hopes for the restoration of the nation depended on the ideal qualities of the South that went unrecognized by the Northern victors in the flush of their prevailing dominance over their subdued enemies. Moreover, the brutal cataclysm of modern war and the partisan bitterness that attended its conclusion and perverted its memory largely decommissioned any imagined resources of Southern decency that Melville relied upon as a wellspring of redemptive civility. The deeper irony was that Melville's broad-minded generosity to the defeated Southerners was itself seeded with an antidemocratic racial allegiance to whiteness that proved to be a primary force impeding the purification of the nation from the excesses of the war. His failure to find an audience for his interventions meshed with the tragedy of a compromised democracy to produce an anguished acuteness of defeat akin to what Woodward would later call the burden of southern history. Melville's woeful sense of tragic reverse—which he poetically diagnosed in *Clarel* during the centennial year of 1876 as "the arrest of hope's advance"—ultimately allied him existentially with aspects of the South's Lost Cause.[11]

In February 1862, five winters after Melville's visit to proslavery Clarksville, Union forces overran Fort Donelson before spreading fifty miles upstream to conquer that Queen City of the Cumberland. Melville's appraisal of Southerners in "Donelson" features both the fortitude of their fighting and the finality of their loss. The poem begins in warm weather where "ancient boughs" "strange with green mistletoe, betray / A dreamy contrast to the North" and depicts Southern officers not unlike some who may have attended his lecture in Fowler's Hall: "men of face / And bearing of patrician race / Splendid in courage and gold lace" (24, 26). Melville aligns the elemental onslaught of polar winter with the military invasion from the Northern Army and then erases the distinction between enemies as both sides are reduced to bloody corpses stiffened in the snow. His poem reports that the stereotypically "*craven Southerners*" (27) tried unsuccessfully to care for wounded Union troops left in the freezing woods at night:

The rebel is wrong, but human yet;
He's got a heart, and thrusts a bayonet.
He gives us battle with wondrous will—
This bluff's a perverted Bunker Hill. (30)

In attesting to the "human" "heart" and "wondrous will" of the Confederates as well as and despite the perverted wrong of their cause, Melville dramatizes how victory in civil war itself expresses the horrible destruction of national community. In "Donelson" as in other "Battle-Pieces," he violently entangles separate partisan forces in a many-sided struggle of common death, what Drew Gilpin Faust has called a republic of suffering.[12] By exposing the "curs'd ravine," the widening "fissure in the hearth" that split the nation, uncivil war revealed the fatal catastrophe of interfamilial killing that Melville viewed as the fratricidal inheritance of Cain and Abel as played out in the American Revolution (36, 12). This larger ruin of rebellion universalized the tragedy of secession under which "all fatherless seemed the human soul" (30).

Melville was drawn toward the ardent aristocracy of Southern leaders in ways that contrasted with Walt Whitman, who while evoking the South's "quick mettle, rich blood, impulse and love, good and evil" in "O Magnet South" from 1860 (then called "Longings for Home") dismisses their chivalry as a charade he called "toplofticality."[13] William Taylor argued that many Northerners saw in the South aspects of civilization that they themselves lacked: "vestiges of an old-world aristocracy, a promise of stability and an assurance that gentility—a high sense of honor, a belief in public service and a maintenance of domestic decorum—would be preserved under republican institutions."[14] Stanton Garner noted that Melville "recognized that the chivalry of the past was an ideal of the aristocratic South, not of the democratic North."[15]

Melville valued the gentility and geniality that comprised part of the stereotypical character of the Southern cavalier. In *White-Jacket*, he figures planter John Randolph as "the chivalric Virginian" who once testified that more whipping was dealt out on one journey of a naval ship than had ever been done on his own plantation of five hundred slaves. Melville relates a common observation among those in the navy "that the Lieutenants from the Southern States, the descendants of the old Virginians, are much less severe, and much more gentle and gentlemanly in command, than the Northern officers, as a class."[16] He admired Confederate cavalry under Commander John S. Mosby, calling them "Virginians; some of family pride, / And young, and full of fire, and fine / In open feature and cheek that glowed"

(198). Even his mysterious sailor Bulkington in *Moby-Dick* is figured as a noble Virginian with a Southern accent. Bulkington refuses to return home because the "treacherous, slavish shore" "seemed scorching to his feet," self-seceding from a nation whose northern states had just federally committed themselves by law to return fugitives to slavery (enforced in Massachusetts by Melville's father-in-law, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw). Bulkington's impossible existence intimates Melville's lingering desire to preserve the possibility of dignified Southern dissent, even if this freedom can only fugitively survive on the margins of the nation and as a "sleeping partner" in the memory of his novel. Melville's relationship with the South remained a key element of the paradox of his dual allegiance both to democratic equality and to the noble virtues associated with a seemingly natural aristocracy.[17]

With *White-Jacket* in 1849, Melville had sought to influence the political progress of flogging reform; in *Battle-Pieces* in 1866, his concern was to temper the passions of the victorious Northerners, especially the Radical Republicans, in their punitive demands for Southern penitence. Melville's "Supplement," the most political prose he ever published, foregoes much of his characteristic authorial irony and aesthetic ambiguity to foreground an earnest and pragmatic political appeal for "forbearance" toward the defeated Southerners (187). The fact that he claims to have begun his collection after the fall of Richmond absolves him of not having taken part in its battles; instead, he enters the fray by penning a civilian act of commemoration as a political contribution to postbellum reconciliation.

In "Donelson," Melville presents a "cross patriot" from the North who responds to the news of the battle by growling "ugh! / 'Twill drag along." By describing "His battered umbrella like an ambulance-cover / Riddled with bullet-holes, spattered all over," he dramatizes the inability of this civilian to stay safely removed from the strife, rendering him into both an angry cynic about the fraternal bloodbath and a wayward critic of monumental patriotism (27). Russ Castronovo and Dana Nelson expand this figure of the cross patriot to explain how Melville's sliding perspectives on the war preserve a democratic dialogue of disagreement, acknowledging that "each side may more readily share a history of villainy." By "letting his poetic voices and his patriotic voice work at odds with each other," they argue, Melville

maintains a comparative poetics of "contingent patriotism" in which the constitution of "our country" remains ideologically ambidexter.[18]

Melville confessed that "the glory of war falls short of its pathos" and poignantly described how the fervor of enlistment and the pageantry of patriotism overran the humanity of the "swarms" of what he would later call "Tradition's generous adherers" (184, 112).[19] He mused and meditated in several poems in *Battle-Pieces* on the tragic fate of innocent boys ("Moloch's uninitiate") excitedly rushing together to their own brutal demise. Melville lamented the newly mustered Yankee boys who enthusiastically invaded the South only to discover "Death in a rosy clime" (14). "Each grape to his cluster clung," he wrote, testifying how the wrath of war trampled out an evil harvest of bloody intoxication (119). The narrator of "Ball's Bluff" looks out the window at noon in a town at the "sight—saddest that eyes can see— / Young soldiers marching lustily / Unto the wars," a vision that haunts the speaker weeks later in the middle of the night with the realization that they had been marching eagerly to their deaths (19).

Throughout *Battle-Pieces*, Melville expressed his disdain that the passionate zeal that had infused the mustering of troops still crested in the vindictiveness of Northern triumph. He was deeply concerned that the continuation of "intestine rancor" would "confirm the curse" and prevent Re-establishment, as Reconstruction was called immediately after the war (167, 168). Melville agreed with Lincoln's statement to his cabinet on the day he was shot: "we must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union," and he modeled his poetic mission as one of saving "the flushed North from her own victory."[20] In his "Supplement," he strongly cautioned against retaliation toward former Confederates flowing from "an exultation as ungenerous as unwise" (183). He asked: "Shall censorious superiority assumed by one section provoke defiant self-assertion on the other?" (187). "But shall the North sin worse, and stand the Pharisee?" he questioned in "A Meditation" (171). He also inquired: "Shall North and South their rage deplore . . . ?"—fearful that if the answer was no, then history might leave "both sides undone" (55, 168).

In his life and in his works, Melville had more experience and found more glory in the endurance of defeat than he did in the exultation of victory. This was one of the reasons for his sympathy for Southerners

in *Battle-Pieces*. As shown by one review of the poems that found "too much said about generosity to the vanquished," Melville prudently had to provide evidence that he was not a traitor.[21] "In times like the present," he confessed about his pragmatic challenge, "one who desires to be impartially just in the expression of his views, moves as among sword-points presented on every side" (187). He argued with certainty that the Confederacy had been destined to "bite the dust" because its commitments to the "systematic degradation of men" had endowed its cause with motives that were "deplorably astray" (183). He likewise lambasted those who fought for the Confederacy as "the zealots of the Wrong," capitalizing the word "Wrong" five other times in the volume, and assailed their allegiance as a misguided "superstition of vast pride" that they themselves did not fully recognize (29, 112).[22] This vilification is balanced by his solemn commemoration of the Union dead who fought for the "Right," the only poems included in the section of *Battle-Pieces* called "Verses Inscriptive and Memorial."

Nevertheless, Melville boldly attributed a "reciprocal" blame for the war by arguing that partisans on both sides had inflamed their compatriots with "unfraternal denunciations," and that all Americans, as he had written in *Mardi*, were the "fated inheritors" of slavery (184).[23] He suggested that devious conspirators, allied with "the perversity of fortune," "cajoled into revolution" many Southerners with what he called "Belial's wily plea," Southerners who felt a "most sensitive love of liberty" and who were naturally most concerned with fidelity to their families and communities. Melville also argued what later historians would confirm: the Northern victory was not a result of superior fighting qualities but rather an effect of the physical might of "superior resources and crushing numbers."[24]

With *Battle-Pieces*, Melville sought to retrieve the character of the Southerner from that of the enemy by distinguishing crucial qualities needed to reconsolidate the nation after, as he wrote in the "Supplement," the "convulsion" of a civil war that caused "an upheaval affecting the basis of things" (181). Nathaniel Hawthorne, who did not live to see the end of the war, in 1861 had "rejoice[d] that the old union was smashed" because "we never were one people, and never really had a country since the Constitution was formed."[25] In contrast, Melville persevered in his dedication to a democratic confederation even when some considered it treasonous to do so during the waning em-

bers of the war's holocaust. He attempted to enlist Northern support for a more humane treatment of former Confederates (as well as to communicate a more complete history of the war) by urging an "impartiality" that could appreciate the admirable aspects of the Southerner as resources for reanimating American democracy. These qualities included the valor and successes of the South's military leaders and their renown even in Europe and the North, the "courage and fortitude matchless" of Southern soldiers who risked and sacrificed their lives for their "country," and sympathy for all families grieving the loss of their loved ones. "The mourners who this summer bear flowers to the mounds of the Virginian and Georgian dead are, in their domestic bereavement and proud affection," Melville wrote in his "Supplement," reluctant even to draw the distinction, "as sacred in the eye of Heaven as those who go with similar offerings of tender grief and love into the cemeteries of our Northern martyrs" (183–184). To him, these were "verities" shared by all Americans that could help heal and reconcile the nation (184).

Melville's two poems about the 1862 Battle of Shiloh stake out this common ground. One is the famous "Shiloh: A Requiem," which represents the "dying foemen" who groan and pray together on the field in the evening after the battle. Melville transforms them into "friends" in the tragic suffering that ends in the silent truth of their shared deaths: "Fame or country least their care; / (What like a bullet can undeceive!)" (46). His other Shiloh poem, "Rebel Color-Bearers at Shiloh," is a retrospective "plea against the vindictive cry raised by civilians shortly after the surrender at Appomattox" three years later. Derived from an account in the 1862 *Rebellion Record*, the poem exalts the patriotic devotion of Confederates who courageously faced death by carrying their battle flags into the midst of combat. Melville's poem celebrates these Southerners as "bold," "daring," and "proud" "martyrs" whose flags resemble "living robes" of "flame divine." Though he is certain to call their "Cause" one of "Treason" and "Wrong," yet his poem audaciously challenges his Northern readers to "mark the men" and "Draw trigger on them if you can." Melville's entreaty is to "Spare spleen her ire." If the Union "patriot" refused to kill the courageous color-bearers in the heat of battle in 1862, all the more reason why magnanimity is needed in peacetime at the close of the war: "*Now* shall we fire? / Can poor spite be?" (107–108).

The Northern narrator of *Battle-Pieces*' final poem, "A Meditation," likewise argues that the "manful soldier-view" is to show "mercy" to the Southerners: "When Vicksburg fell, and the moody files marched out, / Silent the victors stood, scorning to raise a shout" (173). Melville admonishes Union civilians to respect the noble actions of Southerners the way the military itself had with the color-bearers at Shiloh, Grant had treated Lee during his surrender at Appomattox, and Lincoln had called for "malice towards none" in his second inaugural speech.[26] He petitions for a demobilization of war rhetoric to transform the former enemy, now that treason had been subdued, back into a comrade who must be treated with dignity when resuming his share as an American citizen.

Melville worked boldly to feature the perspectives of soldiers from the South in *Battle-Pieces*, expressing esteem for the quality of their dedication on the battlefield and the extent of their devastating losses to the "Nineveh of the North" (112). From his location in New York City, he witnessed the degradation of Confederate captives who had been freed from Union prisons at the close of the war. He describes them as they "wandered penniless about the streets, or lay in their worn and patched grey uniforms under the trees of the Battery" (178). He discloses the hidden eye of "The Released Rebel Prisoner" through which his inviolate heart is revealed "like a mountain-pool / Where no man passes by." Melville's evocation of the "Rebel" figures him as deceived by conspiratorial appeals to "*feudal fidelity*" and seduced by the glamour of his combat leaders into joining the inexorable current in the way "the Gulf-weed drives." The magnitude of his loss is depicted by how he "lingers" "listless" during the festivities of Union soldiers returning to their families with their guns as heirlooms, which only places in relief his own absence of manly power (112–113).[27]

The only strands of memory of home that consciously remain are represented by "The cypress-moss from tree to tree" that "Hangs in his Southern land" (112–113). In the poems of *Battle-Pieces*, Melville figured the South as a tropical land of palm and the North as a contrasting one of pine. He depicts soldiers from Maine killed in Baton Rouge, a "zone of fig and orange, cane and lime": "A land how all unlike their own" (125). Similar to Whitman's celebration of a "glisten[ing]" live oak in Louisiana whose "moss hung from the branches" as it "uttered joyous leaves of dark green," Melville saw the cypress moss as a manly

beard of southern fertility.[28] However, the relentless war devolved the cypress from an exotic source of fecundity into a funereal wreath: a "denser cypress gloom" standing for "dole" and "dirges" (54, 162). Such a shift is registered in his postproof revision in "The Released Rebel Prisoner" that altered the adjective describing the cypress from "wierd" (*sic*) to "drear" (661). In "Malvern Hill (July 1862)," these "cypress glades" symbolize the dying vision of the Confederates as they attack from the north and perish with their "fixed arms lifted south," facing a homeland transformed into the "wilds of woe" (49).[29]

Among the dead Confederate soldiers cataloged in *Battle-Pieces* are two specific corpses who are made to matter as Melville's commentary on the internecine conflict. "A Grave Near Petersburg, Virginia," dedicates a green, grassy grave to "Daniel Drouth," a "rebel of iron mould" who was "true to the Cause" and "Full of his fire . . . of hell" (114). It is only after consulting Melville's note about how the enemy "interred some of his heavy guns in the same field with his dead . . . with every circumstance calculated to deceive" that the reader grasps how the poem punningly partakes in the Confederate ruse (178). The irony is that the only common soldier who is individualized in the entire volume embodies this "*buried gun*" and comes to represent Melville's fear of renewed conflict. A deeper challenge to recognizing the nobility of Southern soldiers is manifest in the poem "Magnanimity Baffled," which documents in real time a Union veteran's attempts to make peace and shake hands with a Confederate counterpart. Renewed entreaty leads to increasing frustration, until a forced and macabre encounter reveals the reason for the Southron's brusque lack of response: he is a corpse. Melville insinuates that it is only the silence of the dead that can voice the human scale of tragic loss. The "slain" are the "Sole solvers" of the "riddle of death," and the only undeception of the "brooding" survivors is intimated by the italicized word "*truth*" (76, 88).

Part of Melville's strategy in *Battle-Pieces* was to honor the stalwart dignity of the very Southern officers who took up arms against the Union. Poems name and address Union commanders Abraham Lincoln, Nathaniel Lyon, George McClellan, Philip Sheridan, and William T. Sherman (yet Ulysses S. Grant receives no poem, though Melville had met and talked with Grant while encamped near Brandy Station, Virginia). However, it is the Confederate leaders Stonewall

Jackson and Robert E. Lee who enlist Melville's deepest inquiries into the character of leadership. His two poems about Jackson reveal the ambidexter aspects of his cross-patriotism. "Stonewall Jackson Mortally Wounded at Chancellorsville (May, 1863)" is a Northern elegy that celebrates Jackson's personal qualities while condemning the error of his political allegiance. One energy of the poem registers Jackson's role as an "outlaw" who "vainly" fought for "Wrong" to whom "no wreath we owe." Yet the poem's own existence in the volume enunciates grounds on which to mark his magnitude. The adjectives that the poem bestows on Jackson—"fierce," "stout," "relentless," "bold," and "earnest"—signalize Melville's appeal to remember the "Man." Melville enlists Northern readers, through the narrator's use of "we," to "drop a tear" on his "bier," which signifies respect without acknowledging any passion of (s)weeping allegiance. Elsewhere he uses an italicized "*we*" in the poem to urge all Americans to "relent" and to cease to see Jackson as an enemy now that both he and his "Cause" have died. In acknowledging that Jackson was "True to the thing he deemed was due / True as John Brown or steel," Melville obfuscates partisan allegiance—ideology is reified as a "thing"—and replaces it with a commemoration of the truth of determined dedication itself (59).

In sculpting his corollary tribute to "Stonewall Jackson (Ascribed to a Virginian)," Melville assumes a Southern voice and speaks of a Confederate "we" (166–167).[30] Pondering Jackson's "weight," he unpacks the mysteries of adulation and allegiance by having his narrator proudly hail Jackson's superiority to be so pronounced that even the North cannot but revere him.[31] Melville desacralizes the legend of Jackson by reconverting him from a Christ-like martyr back into a puzzling exponent of fatalistic destiny. Naturalized as "lightning's burning breath" and the "Wind of the Shenandoah," Melville's Jackson is a confounding force of nature: a Christian killer, a classical fighter versed in modern war, and a leader who is victorious as a result of submission. Like John Brown's "meteor," Jackson's star was not a fixed light, but a shooting one, soon eclipsed by the "vanity" of war; indeed, the star that he follows in the five internal stanzas are surrounded by the off-rhymed word "war" in the first and the last (60–61). Whatever constituted the star that Jackson followed, Melville suggests it was not Bethlehem's—he sneers at the civility of "the sanctioned sin of blood, / And Christian wars of natural brotherhood" (170). Melville shows that

the adulation of Jackson's Christian faith was ironically an expression of the feudal idolatry that led to the South's defeat. The mystery of Jackson's private religious life subsists outside his public legend—and beyond Melville's poem—as indicated by the absent line that would have rhymed with the word "grace."

Melville's most dramatic assumption of a Southern ethos in *Battle-Pieces* comes in "Lee in the Capitol," when he enlists General Robert E. Lee to speak his own magnanimous plea on behalf of Southerners against the "censorious superiority" of the Northern power in victory (187, and see Brian Yothers's essay in this volume). Melville impersonates the proud and bitter Lee to voice the pain of Southern loss. Lee's advice to members of the Senate rehearses many of the themes of the previous poems: "Push not your triumph; do not urge / Submissiveness beyond the verge" and "Avoid the tyranny you reprobate."[32] Moreover, he asserts that "Common's the crime in every civil strife" and that the blended "bones of the slain in her forests" are "Bewailed alike by us and you" (166–167).

Melville, through Lee, refuses to demean "Nature's strong fidelity" of Southerners who fought in dedication to their homeland and their families: "True to the home and to the heart, / Throngs cast their lot with kith and kin, / Foreboding, cleaved to the natural part— / Was this the unforgiveable sin?" (166–168). For Melville, it was more noble to retain fealty to the intimacies of human connection than to ally with the partisan patriotism of a nation "flushed" with victory whose passionate abstractions might sow seeds of ongoing strife (164). In two later poems, he would again sympathize with the cruel and impossible dilemma faced by the Southerner forced to choose kin over country, comparing the choice to the puzzle of the Gordian knot and to Job's agonizing attempts to maintain spiritual integrity.[33]

Melville also presents two poems in *Battle-Pieces* that juxtapose Northern and Southern perspectives on Sherman's advance across the South from Atlanta to the Atlantic.[34] "The March to the Sea" metrically evokes the juggernaut of the Union Army's invasion, the "trampling of the Takers" who "breathed the air of balm-lands / Where rolled savannas lay" (96). "The Frenzy in the Wake" voices the vehement despair of the Southerner as the Confederacy is being destroyed by Sherman's unfolding devastation after his soldiers turn north from Savannah. Melville knew that invoking the cursing hate of South-

erners ran the risk of stoking the dangerous bitterness he counseled against and therefore emphasized in his notes the "purely dramatic character" of the poem (176).

Nevertheless, Melville's inclusion of a second Sherman poem voicing the existential anguish of suffering Southerners illustrates his desire to present a fuller understanding of the war and, importantly, to dramatize the bitter fruit of punitive revenge. The poem viscerally dramatizes Melville's call for political leniency, one that had been carried out, he notes, by the Roman government under Pompey but not by the United States under Grant and Lincoln.[35] The local witness to "The Frenzy in the Wake" observes the devastating conquest of the Confederates through the chaotic conflagration of "burning woods" and "pillars of dust." The Southerner sees Sherman's soldiers "move like a roaring wind" and states that the stars of the Union flag "Like planets strike us through," yet the almost biblical retribution only steels his resolve for ongoing hostile resistance: "even despair / Shall never our hate rescind" (98).

Melville acknowledged that the tragic war had fostered "resentments so close as to be almost domestic in their bitterness." His imperative appeal was to realize the integral place of outcast Southerners in healing the ruptured kinship of the national family. Would the continuation of sectionalist fervor "perilously alienate" the South and "infix the hate"? Or could magnanimous leadership distinguish "the great qualities of the South, those attested in the War," from their failed rebellion and thereby make these natural resources "nationally available at need" (187, 185)? This common birthright is asserted through the final poem in the volume, "A Meditation," which comprises the reflections of a Northerner after attending the funerals of two officers, brothers who died from wounds received while fighting on separate sides in the waning battles of the war. This vignette dramatizes the hope that if former foes could in fact be kinsmen, then the nation might also resume its familiar friendship. Melville noted that Southerners were "a people who, having like origin with ourselves, share essentially in whatever worthy qualities we may possess" (184). The "strife of brothers" should not efface the shared history of veterans who had fought together in the Mexican-American War or students who were "messmates on the Hudson's marge" at West Point (171).[36] Melville's ultimate cause was to revive a common dedication to the

promise of American democracy rather than submission to the imposition of sectional imperialism.

Nevertheless, while Melville dared to promote a kinship between Southern and Northern whites who had recently been violent enemies, he was tragically unable to imagine with any comparable sympathy the political unity that black and white Americans shared. Carolyn Karcher has rightfully argued that "the greater affinity he feels for white southerners leads Melville to prioritize reconciliation between North and South over justice to African Americans."[37] Melville's caution against actions that would alienate Southern "communities who stand nearer to us in nature" was a racial stance that opened a chasm between reconciling white Northerners and Southerners as Americans and recognizing black men and women as humans—at the time of *Battle-Pieces*' publication, African Americans had yet to be naturalized as citizens, as they would be two years later by the Fourteenth Amendment (185).

In "The March to the Sea," Melville pictured enslaved Southerners becoming converted into contrabands as "they joined the armies blue" (95). However, he never represents any African American individuals fighting directly for their liberty. The poems in *Battle-Pieces* neglect the almost 180,000 African American men who fought in the Union Army and fail to memorialize any of the 40,000 who died in the war. When the white Southern witness in "The Frenzy in the Wake" calls the African American an "imp"—noting how he "gibbers / imputing shame"—Melville seems more sympathetic to the disgrace experienced by white Confederates, stripped of power and experiencing the affront of an uneducated slave ("gibber" meaning "drivel" or "jabber"), than he is to the figure of the freedman armed to end slavery and demanding his political rights (97).

Melville's championing of former Confederates thus offered African Americans a correspondingly partial and marginalized sponsorship. His postbellum advocacy remained a paternal sympathy rather than a bold call for their inclusion as full Americans. In his "Supplement," he called the freed black Southerners "unfortunate," "infant," and "ignorant"; his "natural solicitude" for them was conceived as a "duty" requiring "kindliness" and "considerate care." He even called the demographic presence of the emancipated a "grave evil" that could be overcome only after a long period of time and a considerable pro-

cess of patience. The abolition of slavery had not ended what Melville called the calamity of racism. Other than philanthropically reasoning that they were entitled to their humanity, he could not envision black and white citizens coexisting in the national body politic in part because he viewed the former as "originally alien" (185–186).

Whereas Abraham Lincoln had argued, in his second inaugural speech, for an equation of wartime justice so that "every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword," Melville reversed this calculation and blamed the victim: "Can Africa pay back this blood / Spilt on Potomac's shore?" (170–171).[38] His failure to enfranchise African Americans as Southern men and women was an alienating effect of his own association of the region with an aristocratic gentility premised on common origins of European, especially British, descent. His ambidexter cross-racial rhetoric, while charitable on the surface, nevertheless accentuated this separateness. He benevolently argued, "Let us be Christians toward our fellow-whites, as well as philanthropists toward the blacks, our fellow-men" (186). Yet the distinct phrases here themselves segregate religion from philanthropy and separate whiteness from blackness.

Melville genuinely feared that punitive legislation against former Confederates combined with Radical Republican rights to African Americans would "provoke, among other of the last evils, exterminating hatred of race toward race" (185). This dread of racial reprisal effaced his excitement for emancipation and affected his calculus of which aspects of the war to represent. The poem "The Swamp Angel" dehumanizes black agency by reducing it to a reified specter of the wanton destruction of Charleston delivered by Union artillery shells fired from a distant Parrott rifle. As with the "buried gun" of Daniel Drouth, Melville personifies this weapon: this time as a "coal-black Angel / With a thick Afric lip" that deals out devastating doom and "wild despairing" (78–79). Here he also musters the antebellum heritage of escaped maroons, signified by the refuge of the swamp, as a contraband resource for manifesting Union military might. But instead of celebrating this power as an expression of the rightful liberty of black people, he renders it as a collective and brutal retaliation against defenseless white Southern families.

This evasion of black political freedom is performed in the single poem in *Battle-Pieces* that does feature an emancipated African Ameri-

can. In "Formerly a Slave," Melville depicts an anonymous elderly peanut seller in the North whose real name was Jane Jackson, the subject of an idealized portrait by Elihu Vedder exhibited in New York at the close of the war.[39] Melville suggests that her experience of radical emancipation is limited because of her age and education, her "deliverance" conceived only through "prophetic" intimations that only her "children's children" would enjoy the full fruits of freedom. He mystifies the experience of black freedom in "Formerly a Slave" as "sibylline, yet benign," even as he wrote in the "Supplement" that "effective benignity, like the Nile, is not narrow in its bounty, and true policy is always broad" (115, 185). But the Africanist breadth of his bounty remains aestheticized as well as deviously distant and diffuse.[40] "Benign" here does not signify its etymology as well born or even only its meaning of being kind and tolerant; it points to the sense that the old woman is harmless and presents no political threat to postwar reconciliation. Melville refuses to dramatize the manly expression of requited black liberty that was the contrasting experience of Jane Jackson's son, who fought with the United States Colored Troops. In speaking about the integration of black and white citizens, he offers that "something may well be left to the graduated care of future legislation and to heaven," but history has revealed how much that "something" mattered, and both Langston Hughes and Martin Luther King, Jr., would protest against the "deferred dream" of such gradualism a full century later (186).[41]

Melville impeaches himself as his own words attest to the uncertainties and challenges of his ambidexter political situation. "To be sure, it is vain to seek to glide, with moulded words over the difficulties of the situation," he wrote in reference to the incorporation of freed African Americans into the reestablished nation, "and for them who are neither partisans, nor enthusiasts, nor theorists, nor cynics, there are some doubts not readily to be solved. And there are fears." The paradoxical mixture of his certainty ("to be sure"), his uneasy confidence and self-abnegating complicity ("vain," "glide," "moulded"), his inability to affirm a stable political position ("neither," "nor," "nor," "nor"), and his sense of unrest ("difficulties," "doubts," "fears") all signify how entrapped he felt by the thickets of racial difference that impeded his capacity to negotiate or forecast an integrated political future.

The characteristic Melvillean litotes here signalizes his disquiet about the problem of race at the outset of postbellum Reconstruction. For example, in suggesting the generous attitude with which legislation must be supplemented, he notes that "with this should harmoniously work another kind of prudence, not unallied with entire magnanimity." The combination of the prescriptive, the undefined nature of the prudence, and the double negative with a superlative exemplifies his verbal double-dealing. Another example acknowledges the challenges of racial integration by averring that "more or less of trouble may not unreasonably be expected" (185–186). In more direct terms, Melville here actually confesses that some degree of interracial conflict is reasonable, though the reasons why, the trouble to which he refers, and whether it includes violence remain undefined.

Melville ultimately found himself stuck in the dilemma of having to honor a Union victory the full expression of which, especially the granting of rights to African Americans, would promote the sectional bitterness that he felt would prevent the war's final resolution in a restored nation. His ambidexter cross-patriotism was taken to task by the *New York Times*, which challenged his sympathetic attitudes toward the South as "treasonable language."[42] The Radical Republican press called him a "happy optimist," asserting that "gentlemen of Mr. Melville's class are mischievous men in these troublous times. Only absolute justice is safe."[43] Melville's plea in his "Supplement" for more interpersonal charity and benevolent providence implicates him in the same compromised position as his own narrators in *The Piazza Tales*, whom he reveals to be too blithe and blind. He expressed too much confidence in trusting that there were enough "gentlemen" of "decency" motivated by "reciprocal respect" on both sides to mollify vindictive Northern triumphalists and restrain unrepentant Southern racists (186–187).

Melville's hope that "amity" might link the former enemies as "true friends" and "punctilious equals" would be sundered by the tawdry corruptions of the Gilded Age (186–187). The reconciliation he proposed soon became a political tactic of those opposing the agenda of racial equality. Democrat Horace Greeley's strategy in trying to defeat President Ulysses S. Grant in the presidential election of 1872 was to call for former enemies to "clasp hands across the bloody chasm" and for government of the Southern states to be returned to its "best

men."[44] It was such a reconciliation that eventually enabled Jim Crow segregation to be legally established in the Southern states during the decade in which Melville died.

Melville delivered his clearest response to the political failure of both *Battle-Pieces* and the promise of the nation ten years later in his next published book of poetry, *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land* (1876). The exiled Confederate veteran in the poem reverts to a Native American named Ungar who embodies the festering despair of the defeated Southerner traumatized by the "malevolence in man towards man."[45] Ungar is the unbowed rebel who keeps seceding, refusing to turn another cheek and be reconstructed. This "man of scars" speaks out a devastating condemnation of American democracy that C. Vann Woodward called "in all probability … the blackest commentary on the future of his country ever written by an American in the nineteenth century."[46] Ungar's revenge is to prophesy the destruction of the Union that blithely believed it had won the war. He sees American democracy as having squandered its inheritance of what Lincoln called "the last best hope on earth," devolving instead into an empire of materialism and mediocrity, a "civic barbarism" where "man and chaos are without restraint."[47] His fate represents the bitterness of Melville's lost cause: the futility of reform in the postbellum United States and the expiration of hope in the survival of any redeeming quality of gentility, Southern or American.

This commentary was amplified by the fact that *Clarel* was published in the midst of the nation's centenary celebrations in 1876, on which Melville wryly commented by means of "half faded" graffiti scrawled on the wall of a cave of a "crazed monk" in the Holy Land: "'… teen … six, / The hundred summers run, / Except it be in cicatrix / The aloe—flowers—none.—'"[48] In this year, after a heavily contested presidential election, the infamous Compromise of 1876 resulted in all the electoral votes of South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana being given to Republican candidate Rutherford B. Hayes. The compromise included an understanding that his victorious administration would end Reconstruction by pulling national troops out of the Southern states, opening the way to the resumption of the white supremacy that many Southern gentlemen, with moulded words, ironically called redemption.

MELVILLE'S HISTORICAL IMAGINATION IN "THE HOUSE-TOP"

CHRISTOPHER OHGE

One of the most original, puzzling, and enduring poems in *Battle-Pieces*, "The House-top" is a concise yet allusive portrayal of what are believed to be the New York City Draft Riots of July 1863. In composing "The House-top," Herman Melville called upon not only contemporary journalistic coverage of the Draft Riots but also a variety of literary works such as the Bible, Jean Froissart's *Chronicles*, several Shakespeare plays, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Robert Southey's *The Curse of Kehama*, and William Wordsworth's *The Excursion*. Melville's felicity in echoing so many different authors, often in a single image or phrase, rescues the poem from being too clearly indebted to any one author. Examining his allusions demonstrates that the reading of the poem as a straightforward, pessimistic indictment of the rioters is no more apt or satisfying than the one that sees it as a piece of dramatic irony by an ambivalent author.

In one sense, Melville's originality has encouraged the ongoing debate about the meaning of his poem. Yet its apparent lack of concrete historical detail has also contributed to the problem of its interpretation. While it is dated "July, 1863" and presumably set in New York City, it does not identify the city (major draft riots occurred in other cities in July 1863). Strange entities ("tawny tigers," "red Arson") and mythical characters (Sirius, Draco, Nature's Roman) enter into and form the subject of this night piece. Also, the speaker of the poem lambasts the rioters and seems to salute the artillery of the state, even though it is unclear whether Melville himself sympathized with the rioters' complaints and was uneasy about the draconian measures taken against them.

What some see as an ambivalent or noncommittal attitude reflects a doubleness that is neither ironic nor straightforward but is, rather, grounded in allusion and metaphor. This double aesthetic deals in ambiguities and demonstrates a nuanced view of the conflict without being partisan, gesturing to social realities while taking upon itself the mysteries of reality. Melville's imagination reveals a tension between the particular events that inspired the poem and the abstract ideas they suggested. This reading of the poem is inspired by Samuel Otter's idea of "verbal doubleness" in several of Melville's writings that sets him apart from the "*deus ex machina* of irony often used to redeem him from the taint of his culture or from the too-easy ambivalence used to describe an author said to see 'both sides.'"[1] A figure of dual mindedness, the narrator of "The House-top" cannot endure as a pure outsider, despite his desire to be anchored to the life of the mind.

This undertaking seeks to add to the apprehension and appreciation of Melville's allusive practice as it relates to his historical imagination in "The House-top." It is the nature of the poem's style to balance the intricate details of the Draft Riots against the literary imagery and rhetorical devices borrowed from the author's readings. Although understanding the poem requires a consideration of Melville's political and economic context, it is important to recognize his attempt to distance himself from that context by engaging in his literary tradition. These two components reflect the dueling impulses of what he himself described to Nathaniel Hawthorne as a belief in "unconditional democracy" as well as "a dislike to all mankind—in the mass."[2] In echoing various sources, recognizing their legitimacy, and elevating the subject to a work of art, "The House-top" exposes the tragic problems underlying civil unrest: the innate depravity of humanity and the lack of thought in the citizenry. The angst of the poem comes from the realization that freedom and security cannot coexist—that virtue is impractical in a depraved world. Melville makes the poem an iteration of civil unrest in a series of battles that will continue to be fought, even in the years and decades after the Civil War.[3] The narrator's exhausted presentation—with its tension between intellectual sympathy and a sense of horror—is jarring, his internal strife expressing itself as musical discord. He is troubled by what he has seen and by what his poem is saying.

To date, critics of "The House-top" have focused less on judg-

ing Melville's allusions and more on judging his political beliefs, the poem's straightforwardness versus its irony, or its pessimism as opposed to its ambiguity. A convincing example of the so-called literal reading is William Shurr's brief analysis, in *The Mystery of Iniquity*, of Melville's "earnest" pessimism in "The House-top."[4] Similarly, Larry Reynolds has bluntly stated that "The House-top" exemplifies "conservative views of man and society that could not be much darker."[5] Contrasted with these readings, Stanton Garner's *The Civil War World of Herman Melville* argues that the poem "is a dramatic monologue in which Herman does not speak in his own voice but through a dramatic character whose opinions differ markedly from his own." The "polish" of the poem's speaker makes Garner suspect irony and an ambiguity of attitudes.[6]

Suspecting irony is not an assertive reading, and a poem that contains ambiguities does not necessarily entail its author's ambiguity of attitudes. Yet since Garner's monumental study, no substantial examination of Melville's allusions has confirmed or countered his reading of "The House-top" or other similar readings, such as the one proposed by David DeVries and Hugh Egan regarding the narrator's shifting points of view and "heteroglossic spirit" of "competing discourses."[7] Even though Melville's political context, his allusions, and a close reading of the poem do not suggest irony or competing philosophies, the literalist readings have downplayed the forcefulness of his imagination—namely, the surprising yet illuminating combinations of words and ideas. His tactfulness as a poet allows at once a wide variety of allusions as well as a humane attentiveness to a difficult situation.

Writing "The House-top" required a historical imagination, for during the Draft Riots Melville was not in New York but in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where locals were lighting off celebratory fireworks to welcome the victorious Berkshire regiment home from Gettysburg. Eventually he gathered the basic story of the riots from newspapers, periodicals, and family and friends. On Saturday, July 11, 1863, a group of Irish laborers and volunteer firemen gathered at the draft board at the Ninth District headquarters on Third Avenue and Forty-Sixth Street to protest the Enrollment Act of March 3, 1863, which granted a deferral from serving in the Union Army for a $300 commutation fee. By the end of that day, officials drew the names of several mem-

bers of the "Black Joke" Engine Company Number 33 who believed that they should have been exempt from conscription. On Monday morning, they returned to the Ninth District headquarters, stormed the office, and set the building on fire. They then attacked policemen and several high-ranking police officials.

With the draft office blazing, a group of men from the Invalid Corps—many still recovering from battle injuries—met the mob on Forty-Third Street and withered under a barrage of stones. The mob dispersed throughout the east side of the city while many Black Jokes, who supported burning only the draft office, attempted to put out fires in adjacent buildings. "The failure of the authorities to respond faster, the ridiculously easy victories over the police and the Invalids encouraged many who might have remained mere spectators to join the mob," Adrian Cook has concluded.[8] Many of those spectators used the opportunity to air grievances concerning not only the draft (from which black men were exempt because they were not considered to be citizens) but also labor conditions, Republican policies, and abolitionists.[9]

The Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 had intensified the economic concerns and racism among Irish and German laborers in New York City to such an extent that "nowhere in the North were Negroes and abolitionists more hated than in New York City."[10] The leader of the riots was reported to be John Urkhardt Andrews, a lawyer from Virginia who had encouraged resistance to the draft at the Cooper Institute before the riots. Incidentally, Andrews addressed the rioters from a rooftop, saying, "if necessary, I will become your leader," according to a July 14 report in the *New York Daily News*. After the first day of rioting, many of the Black Jokes who had initiated the riot disengaged and returned home to protect their neighbors from the rioting they had unleashed.[11] By midweek, the violence was reduced to a small group of Irish laborers who attracted other young and bigoted industrial workers.[12] In five days, the rioters had looted stores, destroyed telegraph lines, ransacked the office of the *New York Times*, lynched African Americans on the street, and burned down the Colored Orphan Asylum on Fifth Avenue. Federal troops arrived after the second day of rioting, and the Seventh Regiment engaged in a final skirmish at Gramercy Park on July 16, dispersing the mob. New York City was soon restored to order under the leadership of General John A. Dix, a close friend of the Melville and Gansevoort families.

The riots resulted in an estimated $5 million in damages and about a hundred deaths, mostly of rioters.

Contemporary accounts of the riots in newspapers and periodicals show how Melville's poem reimagines the intricacy of the Draft Riots. *Harper's Weekly*, which he consulted while writing *Battle-Pieces*, featured its first editorial in the aftermath of the riots on July 25, stating that mobs "can only be radically cured by grape and canister." Many New Yorkers had questioned Governor Horatio Seymour's and Mayor George Opdyke's leadership due to widespread corruption, and many members of the upper classes were not interested in city politics.[13] Many Irish laborers viewed the law as an abstract enemy, believing they could effect change only through violence.

The exasperation of the *Harper's* editors—and in turn the speaker in "The House-top"—reflects the municipal government's inability to protect its citizens and to negotiate with the Irish, who as staunch Jeffersonian-Jacksonian Democrats had become rancorous toward the war effort due to the arrests of prominent Catholics and many other wartime Republican policies.[14] Melville may have noticed that on August 1, *Harper's* featured a column questioning whether the Draft Riots were a popular uprising: "In this country what class of citizens is to be especially described as 'the people'?" *Harper's* argued that the rioters had forfeited their freedom, a position that helps contextualize the language of citizenship in "The House-top." Even though the narrator reflects the status quo view of well-to-do New Yorkers (like Melville himself), the poem's doubleness abstracts the Draft Riots by balancing sources historical and artistic. The result is a poem disturbed and disturbing.

"The House-top" is mindful of historical and literary influences. An encapsulation of this comes from Melville's reading of Matthew Arnold's sonnet "To a Friend," which like "The House-top" is set in the context of class conflict and revolutionary upheaval. Rather than aligning himself with the progressive zeal of his friend and fellow poet Arthur Hugh Clough, Arnold asks in the first line, "Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind?," and calls upon classical antiquity to find an ennobling balance between withdrawal and commitment with a broad philosophical perspective. Melville's annotation at the end of this sonnet identifies Arnold's allusions—"Homer, Epictetus, Sophocles"—and demonstrates his ability to notice three kinds

of allusion at play in this short poem: epic poetry, stoic philosophy, and tragedy.[15] In "The House-top," a troubled mind follows Arnold's example by seeking out similar sources to ground his tragic sense of the Draft Riots with philosophical skepticism about human goodness, political freedom, and progress.

Many scholars have attended to the poem's biblical resonances, yet its setting could have been inspired by *Harper's Weekly*, as is revealed by several accounts about the happenings on the housetops and roof-tops during the New York riots. One witness was quoted in the August 1 issue as saying that "dropping shots were coming from the windows and roofs of houses," which were "filled by assassins, and from all the windows and housetops shots, stones, and brickbats were thrown with great rapidity . . . The insurgents had gained the windows and housetops of nearly all the buildings in that vicinity." Melville's narrator uses a housetop to witness both sides of the battle—the rioters and the authorities. In addition to the rioters bombarding troops from the top of buildings, black residents were seen jumping from windows of burning buildings. Other residents skipped between houses using clotheslines or hopped between rooftops to find safety.

Still, the journalistic emphasis on housetops connects to biblical imagery: the King James Version also contains many instances of house-tops, such as Psalm 102:7, which Melville underlined and side-lined in his Bible: "I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top."[16] He may also have known that the housetop could be a site for preaching difficult truths, as in Luke 12:3: "and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops." Melville used the housetop as a fraught site for brooding or rioting or truth telling itself, so it is clear that he carefully chose the setting of the poem. "The House-top" accounts for the activities on the house-tops reported in *Harper's* while pointing to the biblical motif of medi-tating on the housetop during troubled times.

The punchy opening phrase of the poem—"No sleep"—has a pro-tracted trajectory of influence that is particularly difficult to pin-point.[17] Compelling parallels to the Bible and several Shakespeare plays undermine the idea that Melville was indebted to only one author. Hennig Cohen's notes to *Battle-Pieces* point to lines in five Shakespeare plays, including not only *Macbeth*'s "sleep no more" but also "To die: to sleep; / No more" in *Hamlet*.[18] Cohen does not cite

other compelling instances, such as Queen Margaret's curse on the Duke of Gloucester early in *Richard III*: "No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine, / Unless it be whilst some tormenting dream / Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils!" In Melville, Shakespeare's curse of "no sleep" amid political turmoil and acts of sedition coexists with the biblical imagery of the housetops.

Robert Duggan has argued that "No sleep" comes from book 10 of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and that Melville sought to "rewrite" book 10. In this episode, Wordsworth likens the violence of the French Revolution to the curse in *Macbeth*, "sleep no more," further elevating the treachery of the Jacobin Reign of Terror.[19] In Duggan's view, Melville nods to Wordsworth in the opening of "The House-top" and then proceeds to deconstruct the Romantic idealism presented in *The Prelude* by showing how the rabble turns human nature into a destructive force. Yet by singling out *The Prelude* as an influence, Duggan oversimplifies the poem's force and overlooks its ambitious allusiveness.

Following the tension of sleeplessness and political unrest, the phrase "dense oppression" speaks to the state of poverty that fueled the riots as well as the narrator's anguish. The conditions of the Irish were in some respects worse than those of free African Americans, so the rioters had some justification to oppose a war that benefited those who they thought were taking their jobs. Stanton Garner points out that at this time 1,600 families possessed 60 percent of New York City's income, whereas 58 percent of the population "were packed into slums" in fifteen wards of lower Manhattan "that rivaled the rookeries of London in squalor and filth."[20] Those who could not afford to live in tenements downtown squatted in the woods and crags of mid-Manhattan (now Central Park) or lodged in rat-infested cellars near the docks on the East River. In "The House-top," then, the "dense oppression" that "binds the brain" is as much the experience of the poem's speaker as it is of the rioters. The seemingly vitriolic phrase "ship-rats … And rats of the wharves" was a common figure of speech that reflected the dockhands' living conditions.

Yet the "dense oppression" is also densely written; it elaborates on the pervading "sultriness," a natural force that "binds the brain" of both the narrator and the town itself. This recalls a passage in book 8 of *Paradise Lost* (a book that Melville heavily marked), where Adam's "soft oppression seiz'd / My droused sense" after he lay in "balmy

sweat" from the heat of the sun.[21] That Melville's sense of oppression "binds the brain" suggests his familiar prisoner motif; it acknowledges and yet counters Milton's sunny "soft oppression" and "droused sense" with the directness of "No sleep" and a night piece with "matted shades"—a terrifying intuition of something wrong behind the shadows. This bespeaks Melville's allusive tact: the language interweaves various oppressions—of the poet's mind, the people's political situation, and nature itself—with the burden of poetic tradition in the backdrop.

Melville's phrase "tawny tigers" acknowledges the real conditions of the rioters as well as the rumors of the sneaks sponsoring the rioters. The word "apt" suggests some sympathy with the animalistic reaction of rioting in that it is "appropriate" because the "ravage" results from the "sultriness" and "oppression." The rioters' oppression may be due to wealthy sneaks or merely to their own wretched living conditions. Melville's likening the "dense oppression" to "tawny tigers . . . Vexing their blood and making apt for ravage" could be an echo of either Shakespeare's *Henry VI* ("Out Tawny-Coates, out Scarlet Hypocrite") or Matthew Arnold's "tawny-throated" nightingale in *Philomela*. Melville probably knew that "tawny" could evoke a beastly nature or a sublime voice of nature as well as heraldry, privilege, or priestly garment. William Blake's "The Tyger" lurks in the background, too, with its "burning" metaphor in the backdrop of political rebellion. Melville's use of "matted shades" illustrates not only the troubling darkness but also the pent-up violence in Blake's "Tyger" with a simile that recalls the "tiger heart that pants beneath" the ocean in *Moby-Dick*.[22] Violence pervades the summer air even before it is expressed; it is a part of nature.

The conditions of civic chaos early in the poem illustrate another combination of historical resonance and literary imagery such as is seen in Robert Southey's epic poem *The Curse of Kehama*, which bears some resemblance to the opening lines of "The House-top."[23] Southey's poem begins with a funeral procession: "Midnight, and yet no eye / Through all the Imperial City clos'd in sleep!" It begins as a night piece, with interruptions, for "clos'd in sleep" ends in a full stop (the hushed exclamation of the sleepless), just like Melville's "No sleep." Southey's scene on the streets appears at once celebratory and uncontrollable, on the verge of mindless destruction. The

motley scene of the parade has "ten thousand torches [which] flame and flare / Upon the midnight air," and "the fiery sky" gives way to "one long thunder-peal" from thousands of voices that "Pour their wild wailing" in a deafening way, whereas Melville's "mixed surf / Of muffled sound" exudes less pomp and more fear.[24]

Melville's "red Arson" complements the rioters "Vexing their blood" to ravage the city, a dual image that compares to Kehama's son Arvalan, who mirrors the redness of the fire on the streets with the "crimson canopy / Which o'er his cheek the reddening shade hath shed."[25] Later in *The Curse of Kehama*, the peasant Ladurlad is cursed with insomnia because he killed Arvalan in order to protect a peasant girl. In book 5, Arvalan (now a demon) appears to the peasant girl with a "Tyger's hungry howl."[26] Southey's death march, the power-hungry priest Kehama, the peasants' rebellion, and the heightened emotions all relate to Melville's characters in "The House-top." "The House-top" hearkens back to the mythology, wildness, and symbolism in Southey's strange poem of foreignness and violence, yet it addresses a real moment of contemporary history about the problems of integrating foreigners into society.

The exotic landscape and simile construction in lines 5 and 6 ("the roofy desert spreads / Vacant as Libya") allude to the conclusion to book 12 of *Paradise Lost*, in which the archangel Michael takes the "brandish'd sword of God" and with "vapour as the Libyan air adust, / Began to parch that temperate clime."[27] Milton's "adust" is synonymous with "scorched," which, coupled with Michael's parching Eden, feeds into Melville's ninth line, "Yonder, where parching Sirius set in drought." Though all the world was before Adam and Eve, their sins led to the destruction of Eden; so, too, does Melville's narrator suggest that the moral corruption in New York could lead to blight like the one ending *Paradise Lost*. That Melville calls attention to an Abrahamic scene with the Greek Sirius (the "swart-star" in *Lycidas*, which he read carefully) shows his indebtedness to Milton's style as well as his playfulness with mythology.[28]

Melville's conceit that "man rebounds whole aeons back in nature" affirms Milton's sense of innate depravity while questioning the viability of the social order during wartime. The "roofy desert" imagery is also a pastoral invocation, harking back to Melville's simile in "The Conflict of Convictions," where "The People spread like a weedy

grass"—which follows God's decree that all humans are born to suffer, and that "strong Necessity / Surges, and heaps Time's strand with wrecks."[29] The housetop is a site where each group deserves equal measures of admiration and pity, for a "strong Necessity" has made their suffering so.

When the muffled sound in the distance gives way to the "Atheist roar of riot," the rioters' violation of a tender social contract illustrates a verbal doubling of the two worst racially charged incidents of the Draft Riots. The "red Arson" not only connects to the vexed blood in line 4, it also accounts for the burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum as well as the lynching of African Americans. A report in *Harper's* relayed that rioters attacked a "negro cartman" and proceeded to hang him, then, "procuring long sticks, they tied rags and straw to the ends of them, and with these torches they danced around their victim, setting fire to his clothes, and burning him almost to a cinder."[30] It is hard to imagine Melville's desire to create a piece of dramatic irony after reading that account. Rather, he would probably have seen it as an unadulterated expression of an innate atavism. "Red Arson" is also bloody arson; it is bad blood boiling over and the taking of blood from black victims.

The historical context behind "red Arson" casts doubt on Stanton Garner's argument that, *pace* the narrator, Melville disapproved of the government's treatment of the rioters: "He deplored the satanic impulses that had been aroused in the mob, but was not the entire nation afflicted by the same evil?"[31] The nation was affected by an immoral blight, the irresolvable contradiction that an egalitarian democracy was built on slavery—a fact that Melville captures in "Misgivings" as "the world's fairest hope linked with man's foulest crime"—but Garner disregards Melville's belief that the state ought to mitigate the kinds of evils he read about in *Harper's*.[32] The "Atheist roar" also recalls a subtle example of Melville's disillusionment with sudden political progress, channeling Edmund Burke's polemic against the "atheistical fanaticism" of revolutionaries.[33]

The "red Arson," then, leads to two senses of "sway" in the lines:

… All civil charms
And priestly spells which late held hearts in awe—
Fear-bound, subjected to a better sway
Than sway of self; these like a dream dissolve.

Whereas reports in *Harper's Weekly* initially indicated that the rioters' burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum "inaugurated their sway," then on August 8 lamented the "times in our history when bigoted prejudice has had sway," Melville used "sway" as a noun and a verb, respectively. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, as a noun "sway" has a range of connotations, from physical ("force or pressure") to sociological ("inclination or bias") to political ("power of rule or command"). The word itself sways throughout *Battle-Pieces*, such as the "crowds like seas that sway" in "The Fall of Richmond" and "Our rival Roses warred for Sway— / For Sway, but named the name of Right" in "The Battle of Stone River, Tennessee." One sense of "sway" may also acknowledge the lynchings on the streets of New York. "The Portent" has John Brown *"Hanging from the beam, / Slowly swaying (such the law)."*[34] The parenthetical *"such the law"* pits the sway of power against the futility implied in the phrase. In "The House-top," the "sway of self" that leads men to commit violence is a verbal reminder of the literal swaying of a lynched man. Yet the "better sway" is a complicated—and not entirely positive, as it is under "priestly spells"—political and social pressure that has dissolved with disastrous consequences.

Melville's statement that "man rebounds whole æons back in nature" connects Miltonic depravity and fatalism to Jean Froissart's account of the 1358 Jacquerie uprising during the Hundred Years' War (from Sir John Bourchier's translation of the *Chronicles*). Cody Marrs has written that Melville's note shows that "solidity's uncertainty flows from historical patterns of disintegration and collapse."[35] Attacking and killing African Americans in New York are indistinguishable from the peasant revolution in France; these acts illustrate Melville's motif of civilization's tendency to uncivilize itself. A similar use of allusion as abstraction appears in "The Whiteness of the Whale," where Ishmael muses on "the art of human malice," and recalls another passage in Froissart.[36]

With Melville's myriad echoes surveyed thus far, it is difficult to agree with Robert Duggan's claim that Melville alluded primarily to *The Prelude* in "The House-top." No surviving evidence indicates that he had read *The Prelude* at all before publishing *Battle-Pieces*.[37] His first encounter with it was probably in 1869, when he scored passages quoted in Matthew Arnold's *Essays in Criticism*. Melville did

read Wordsworth's *Complete Poetical Works* (which did not include *The Prelude*) before and after the Civil War. In 1977, Thomas Heffernan announced the discovery of Melville's copy of *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* with ample marginalia.[38] Hershel Parker has written that Melville first read *The Complete Poetical Works* in the early 1850s, when he probably focused on *The Excursion* while composing *Pierre*.[39] During his voyage around Cape Horn in 1860, he wrote the ship's coordinates in the flyleaf of his copy of Wordsworth: "Pacific Ocean, Sep 14th 1860 / 5° 60″ N.L."[40]

Parker has suggested that by the early 1860s "Wordsworth was the poet most prominent in Melville's mind as his modern predecessor, the one he envied for his tenure as poet laureate and other honors and was contemptuous of for Wordsworth's own contempt for ordinary people." Some well-documented annotations in William Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets* illustrate Melville's ambivalence toward Wordsworth, such as the one calling him "that contemptible man (tho' good poet, in his department)."[41] Much of Melville's attitude was due to the fact that late in life, the poet laureate of England saw "nothing but darkness, disorder, and misery in the immediate prospect" of liberty and democracy.[42]

Yet Melville's deference to and gratitude for the artistry of Wordsworth's *The Excursion* show in "The House-top." That eight of its last eleven lines allude to marked passages in *The Excursion* suggests that Wordsworth helped Melville finish the poem and make it his own rather than a political poem or an aloof exercise in Romantic mimesis. In the preface to *The Excursion*, Melville double-scored the passage that Wordsworth inserted from the conclusion to the first book of *The Recluse*:

> … Not Chaos, not
> The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
> Nor aught of blinder vacancy—scooped out
> By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
> As fall upon us often when we look
> Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man,
> My haunt, and the main region of my Song.[43]

In the preface, Melville also scored Wordsworth's condemnation of the city, as when he claims that the poet who travels to "see ill sights / Of

madding passions mutually inflamed" must eventually be "Brooding above the fierce confederate storm / Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore / Within the walls of Cities."[44] Melville adopts Wordsworth's familiar theme of the poet witnessing the mob from above as well as the prisoner motif with the "confederate storm" within the city walls. Melville's sleepless narrator takes Wordsworth's "haunt" to be a haunted trap.

Book 3 of *The Excursion* likely affected Melville's conclusion to "The House-top." Wordsworth's narrator, the Poet, presents a dialogue in which the Solitary debates the Wanderer on the truth of religion and the nature of humankind. Melville scored the passage where the disenchanted Solitary tells the Wanderer: "Hail Contemplation! from the stately towers, / Reared by the industrious hand of human art / To lift thee high above the misty air / And turbulence of murmuring cities vast."[45] Melville's man on the housetop stands above the "turbulence" of the rabble. Like Wordsworth's Solitary, he contemplates how the human "industrious hand" in the spirit of "progress" has led the individual away from nature and peace. Melville's "rumble" works against Wordsworth's ironic "Contemplation": "Hail to the low dull rumble, dull and dead, / And ponderous drag that shakes the wall."

Both *The Excursion* and "The House-top" meditate on the nature of power and the loss of faith resulting from uninhibited liberty. The Solitary's disenchantment follows from the Jacobin Reign of Terror: speaking of the Old World, he asks, "Where now that boasted liberty? No welcome / From unknown Objects I received." Then he notices a "Volume—as a compass for the soul— / Revered among the Nations," whose guidance disappoints him:

> … but the infallible support
> Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused
> To One by storms annoyed and adverse winds;
> Perplexed with currents; of his weakness sick;
> Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,
> And by his Nature's, ignorance, dismayed![46]

Melville underlined the words "his own" and "his Nature's," the spirit of which appears in the last two lines of "The House-top" with their emphasis on a corrupted self as against Nature. Wordsworth's skepticism of a boasted liberty, coupled with his lack of faith, gives Melville "The grimy slur on the Republic's faith implied." Yet examining

Wordsworth's poem also reveals Melville's powerful silence: while Wordsworth's narrator exclaims "dismayed!," Melville's narrator is quite dismayed without having to use the word. Melville laments his fellow citizens' loss of civility and lack of awareness, suggesting the impracticability of virtue in a fragmented world.

Later in book 3 of *The Excursion*, the Solitary finally journeys to the New World, where he finds as little comfort as he did in the old one. Seeing "Big Passions strutting on a petty stage," he narrates:

> Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
> To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
> Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,
> Of all unsocial courses, is least fit
> For the gross spirit of Mankind,—the one
> That soonest fails to please, and quickliest turns
> Into vexation.—Let us, then, I said,
> Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge
> Of her own passions.[47]

Wordsworth's Solitary then makes haste for the West, where dignified "Man abides, / Primeval Nature's Child." Melville underlined "To keep the secret of a poignant scorn" (which points to the unacknowledged slur on humanity's natural goodness) and "unknit Republic to the scourge / Of her own passions" and placed an "X" in the right margin followed by "186 | & | 186." The annotation, which was partially trimmed away during the book's rebinding, is probably a dating of the start of the Civil War and the year of the Draft Riots or of the end of the Civil War.

Wordsworth's observations linguistically and thematically connect to "The House-top": "Man" and "Nature" inhibiting goodness and liberty, the presence of vexation, and the pairing of demonic and unsocial behavior. The "unknit Republic" anticipates the dissolution in "The House-top" surrounding Wise Draco:

> He comes, nor parlies; and the Town, redeemed,
> Gives thanks devout; nor, being thankful, heeds
> The grimy slur on the Republic's faith implied,
> Which holds that Man is naturally good,
> And—more—is Nature's Roman, never to be scourged.[48]

Melville begins and ends his poem in negation: "No sleep" and "never to be scourged," an imperative yet sleepy conclusion with a passive construction. The end of "The House-top" reverts to its beginning, illustrating a motif of recurrence—a lack of consolation. Reading Wordsworth's portrayal of the mob mentality—"unsocial courses," "gross spirit of Mankind" ("gross" being both large and grimy), "vexation," and extreme "passions"—Melville knew that all these ideas exemplified the conditions underlying riots.

Gesturing to his memories of the madness unleashed after the French Revolution, Wordsworth essentially predicts the American Civil War. This prophecy, coupled with the poem's relevance to the Draft Riots, intrigued Melville enough that he recorded two dates from the 1860s in the margin. But when Melville alludes, he also departs: the narrator does not flee to find a pure primeval Man, and whereas Wordsworth complains about a Republic, Melville shifts attention to an inscrutable Nature. In this way he parallels Thomas Carlyle's commentary in *The French Revolution* that mobs are "a genuine outburst of Nature; issuing from, or communicating with, the deepest deep of Nature."[49] Even though Carlyle dismisses the rioters with erudite vitriol, and Wordsworth's character walks away ("Let us . . . Leave"), Melville's "there—and there" and "never to be" have more immediacy and concern, suggesting no escape.

Melville also follows Wordsworth's example in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads* to find "similitude in dissimilitude" in his poem. This idea is no less powerful than is its application in book 5 of *The Excursion*: "Nature had framed them both, and both were marked / By circumstance, with intermixture fine / Of contrast and resemblance." Melville left several marginal scores on the page with that passage, including these apt lines: "The good and evil are our own; and we / Are that which we would contemplate from far."[50] Amplitude, distance, and contemplation complement his humane concern for the evils that are self-created—or half-created?—and yet seemingly predetermined. Wordsworth's "similitude in dissimilitude" is also a doubling of poetry's relation to history. Melville scored a passage in the "Essay Supplementary to the Preface" that poetry ought to "treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses* and to the *passions*."[51] That he left at least one marking on each page of Wordsworth's "Essay" shows

how his historical imagination was indebted to Wordsworth's idea that poetry is historically aware, full of visionary ambition, and jarring at the same time. The word "jarring" gestures to Melville's noting the word "jars" in the place of "shakes" in line 18 of his postpublication copy of *Battle-Pieces*.[52] The editors of his *Published Poems* retained "shakes" because it was not clear that Melville meant to delete it, but "jars" nevertheless evokes the discord within (and surrounding) the troubled narrator.

The puzzling character of Wise Draco also illustrates Melville's inventiveness. Stanton Garner explains how the Draco sobriquet was as negative then as it is now: "Thus Draco, or Dix, is wise only to one who believes, contrary to the principles on which the nation was founded, in controlling supposedly free men through terror."[53] Yet it is faulty to assume that Draco is General Dix: he was not appointed to oversee the military's Department of the East in New York City until after the riots, so he was not the leader of the "midnight roll." Iver Bernstein's more nuanced view suggests that Melville's Draco "displayed two very different tempers to the city" in its middle and upper classes, respectively—the conservatives who sympathized with the rioters and treated them "with a mixture of force and conciliation" (and who ignored the violent treatment of African Americans) and the radicals who called for martial law, thinking the rioters were treasonous, ignorant paupers who deserved harsh punishment.[54]

Melville places Draco in the context of the "cynic tyrannies of honest kings"—not a value judgment but a fatalistic understanding that Draco's will to control the situation, while honestly conceived, reveals an inscrutable darkness within. One could just as easily say that the Black Jokes honestly attempted a limited protest to the draft but unintentionally encouraged a raging mob. "The House-top" outfoxes Wordsworth's treatment of the people by presenting what Rosanna Warren has called Melville's "tragic knowledge" that "tolerates the void and accepts death."[55] In "The House-top," Melville's fascination with individual greatness and egalitarianism frustrates him because they both seem unattainable. The ending of the poem leaves the impression that the narrator reluctantly accepts Nature and understands only the tragedy of the situation.

In choosing "A Night Piece" as the subtitle to "The House-top," Melville may have been thinking about Wordsworth's "A Night-Piece,"

in which "the Vision closes" and the mind "Is left to muse upon the solemn scene."[56] Yet Melville takes what Keats called Wordsworth's "egotistical sublime" and strips out the ego, as is evident in the dissolving "sway of self."[57] Melville's own night piece is not only similar to Wordsworth's, but with Wordsworth he also joins a dialogue with lines 81 to 84 of Abraham Cowley's *Davideis*:

> There is a place deep, wondrous deep below,
>   Which genuine *Night* and *Horrour* does o'reflow;
> No bound controls th' unwearied space, but *Hell*
>   *Endless* as those dire *pains* that in it dwell.[58]

As imagined from a housetop, Melville restores the gravity of these lines and lifts the horror out of the deep.

"The House-top" moves beyond Melville's predecessors in terms of structure and sound. It does not rhyme like Southey's poem, and unlike the fairly strict unrhymed iambic pentameter in *The Excursion*, it employs the English heroic line: some short lines are lengthened to pentameter in order to create thoughtful repetition ("there—and there," "rats—ship-rats," "dull rumble, dull and dead"), and the last line, in hexameter, is the longest and most ponderous. The poem departs from Romantic lyricism: that almost every line is interrupted by a dash, semicolon, or full stop gives the poem a jagged rhythm and illustrates the frustration of stopping the riots (it gives one pause). It also features long adverbs ("fitfully," "Balefully") and polysyllabic words ("sultriness," "corroborating," "artillery") to increase intensity before the final line, which does not include a word with more than two syllables and departs from the previous lines by using passive voice (which casts doubt on who has agency). Melville's prosody is more akin to Milton's than to Wordsworth's. In his copy of Milton's *Poetical Works*, Melville noted at the end of *Paradise Regained* that the "intensifying of intense phrases" in the "blank verse" of *Paradise Lost* illuminates the "*subject.*"[59] By "*subject*" he meant the musings on the "grand thought" that would concern him in "The House-top." Also, apropos of his fatalism in "The House-top," Melville's annotation in book 7 of *Paradise Lost* calls the teleological idea of human advancement toward the divine "A grand thought, tho fanciful," which he evokes with the rebounding phrase "back in nature."[60]

The blank verse in "The House-top" also features intriguing sounds:

"He comes, nor parlies" parallels "the Town, redeemed . . . nor, being thankful, heeds" (and features the assonance of "parlies," "redeemed," and "heeds"). Melville's use of "parley" (to truce or discuss terms) can be easily confused with "parlay" (to bet or invest), a near homonym that hints at the ways in which negotiations with aggrieved groups involve risky bets and compromised resources (financially and politically). In choosing not to parley, Wise Draco parlays his power. These structural aspects of doubleness, from the repetition of words to the play of parallelisms and suggestive sounds, reveal a distinct complexity in "The House-top."

Riots lack the clarity of battles, and "The House-top" leaves many questions unanswered about why they keep happening and how to prevent them. During the Draft Riots, Lincoln chose not to declare martial law and deferred to elite Democrats such as Dix, showing New Yorkers that the city would not be entirely controlled by the Republican purists who viewed the riots as an opportunity to "reconstruct" the city.[61] This reflects the "micropolitics" of the Draft Riots—that is, the cumulative effect of tactics and transgressions by Republican purists, Peace Democrats, War Democrats, and Irish workers in a time when oppositional politics compromised an already delicate social order.[62] That New York City was neither completely democratic nor socially controlled by law and order provides essential context for explaining why Melville had grounds to believe in the impracticability of virtue in society.[63] "The House-top" departs from the wavering "Yea" and "Nay" of its companion piece from earlier in the collection, "The Conflict of Convictions," and anticipates the doubleness in "The Apparition" that "Solidity's a crust" covering the burning core below. The rhetorical question concluding that poem also applies to the Draft Riots: "All may go well for many a year, / But who can think without a fear / Of horrors that happen so?"[64] That "The House-top" is written in the present tense suggests that such explosions of unrest will continue to happen.

The artistic success of "The House-top" illustrates Melville's desire to fashion a dignified work of art about the Draft Riots that contributes to the tradition of historical poetry on rebellion and ungoverned human nature. Melville acts as a sympathetic witness to a social order (a lower-class immigrant population) to which he could never belong, and his poem attempts to situate that social order within a

comfortable context: art. The poem's dual core of historical and literary inheritances offers philosophical complexity to an event while distancing itself and its author from the event's particularities. "The House-top" is a fabrication about power, governmental and spiritual, showing that the disunity of the antebellum United States reflected a fundamental disunity in human nature, something that would not be resolved by one brief and violent riot or one long and devastating war.

MELVILLE'S RECONSTRUCTIONS:

THE MOORISH MAID IN
"LEE IN THE CAPITOL"

BRIAN YOTHERS

Reconstruction has been a vexed issue for scholars of Herman Melville's Civil War poetry. The pre–Civil War Melville can seem to be among the more insistent critics of racist and racialist ideologies in antebellum American literature, whereas the postbellum Melville can seem tentative and vacillating on the subject of race and racism.[1] As Carolyn Karcher has noted, Melville the youthful advocate of equality and racial justice in *Typee*, *Moby-Dick*, and "Benito Cereno" can seem to have been replaced by a much more temporizing and conflicted, even conservative Melville by 1866, suggesting that "the greater affinity he feels for white southerners leads Melville to prioritize reconciliation between North and South over justice for African Americans."[2] In particular, the ambivalence of the prose "Supplement" in its extended discussion of race, Reconstruction, and reconciliation can have the effect of making Melville seem an early supporter of the post-Reconstruction consensus in which reconciliation between white Northerners and Southerners was achieved at the expense of justice for the formerly enslaved African American population of the South and even the free black population of the North. As Russ Castronovo and Dana Nelson charge, the "Supplement" "leaves white racism's structure of demonization suggestively intact."[3]

This view of Melville as a postwar supporter of a conservative racial retrenchment is broadly defensible (indeed, intuitive) in light of the stance he outlines in the "Supplement." But in both the "Supplement" and the poems themselves, notably "Lee in the Capitol," layers of irony and ambivalence call into question the idea that the Melville of *Battle-Pieces* prioritizes white reconciliation over interracial justice.

The "Supplement" has justly been criticized for some aspects of its treatment of race. Acknowledging that the circumstances of those who were recently emancipated "appeal to the sympathies of every humane mind," Melville argues for "kindliness to communities who stand nearer to us in nature."[4] These lines, which lend themselves to a racial hierarchy of ethical concern, can be painful to read for those of us who are drawn to Melville in part by his frequently expressed antiracism and cosmopolitanism, but they must be acknowledged. To some degree, this context establishes that when Melville calls for his readers to "revere that sacred uncertainty which forever impends over men and nations," he is embracing a variety of gradualism that the succeeding history of the nation has not endorsed (185). There is also a sense, however, in which a call for "sacred uncertainty"—and indeed the tentative and pacific tone of the entire "Supplement"—points in another direction: not, to be sure, toward an unambivalent embrace of radical postwar change but also not toward an embrace of policies designed to undermine Reconstruction and promote reconciliation at the expense of justice.

Melville's call for both doubt and self-criticism on the one hand and forbearance on the other may resonate with some proreconciliation and anti-Reconstruction arguments, but careful attention to both the "Supplement" and the poems within *Battle-Pieces* reveals that there is more to his position than postbellum conservatism. When considering the likely effects of a Southern victory in the "Supplement," he asserts that "the most sensitive love of liberty was entrapped into the support of a war whose implied end was the erecting in our advanced century of an Anglo-American empire based upon the systematic degradation of man," and he refers to slavery directly as an "atheistical iniquity" (182, 185). If Melville's position is pacific, it is clear-eyed about the evil that slavery and racism represent. Individual Southerners could manifest a "sensitive love of liberty" that a victorious Northerner could respect, but the essence of the Southern cause, he makes clear, is the "systematic degradation of man," a system of racial bigotry that destroys the oppressed physically and the oppressor morally.

Ed Folsom's work on Walt Whitman in the Civil War and postbellum period sheds some light on this matter. Folsom has argued that we might think not just in terms of the "unwritten war" that provided

the title for Daniel Aaron's influential study of Civil War literature but also in terms of an "unwritten Reconstruction" that has too often been still more invisible.⁵ If scholars and critics have lamented the invisibility of the Civil War in American literature, too often the Reconstruction has not registered at all. And yet, in Melville's case, Reconstruction is not so absent as we might assume. The "Supplement" itself draws attention to the political questions facing the nation during the Reconstruction period, and "Lee in the Capitol," among other important poems in the collection, comments broadly on such issues. In calling attention to matters of race and Reconstruction, Melville gives voice to the impulses supporting reconciliation in the Reconstruction era and subtly calls these impulses into question.

In "Lee in the Capitol," one of the most substantial and ambitious poems in *Battle-Pieces*, Melville considers the relationship between a moral man and an unjust cause and between immoral men and just causes. Lee is portrayed at the start of the poem in his postwar retirement, most actively concerned with forgetting the carnage of which he had been a principal part. He is summoned out of this solitude, however, by members of the United States Senate looking to investigate his role as a leader in the rebellion. Melville is interested both in Lee's dignity and in the severity of the crime of which he is unquestionably guilty, and he uses models drawn from an interreligious encounter to account for both.

Notably, Melville uses an unusual metrical scheme to open the poem: in a curious reversal of the tetrameter-trimeter alternation that we so often expect in narrative poetry, especially the ballad stanza, he opens with tetrameter and alternates the tetrameter with pentameter. The result can be initially jarring, as the swiftly moving narrative promised by the tetrameter is slowed down by the stately lines of pentameter. The poem is throughout a curious amalgam of realistic narrative verse of the sort Melville would employ at great length in *Clarel* and the epic poetic conventions he admired in *Paradise Lost*. Lee is introduced as having been a "soldier-chief," echoing the compound form of many Homeric epithets, now in a state of pastoral retirement as "a quiet seminary's head" (163). Once he begins his journey toward the Capitol, the lines smooth out into a more consistent tetrameter, interrupted with pentameter when he speaks in more characteristi-

cally epic modes, as when he delivers a vaunting speech reminiscent of a Homeric warrior or Milton's Satan directed toward the Capitol itself:

> "So be it! They await me now
> Who wrought this stinging overthrow;
> They wait me; not as on the day
> Of Pope's impelled retreat in disarray—
> By me impelled—when toward yon Dome
> The clouds of war came rolling home." (lines 34–39, 164)

The first three lines here are in tetrameter, with a caesura disrupting lines 34 and 36. Line 37 is in pentameter, and lines 38 and 39 resume tetrameter, with a caesura in line 38. The defeated Lee's defiant boast is centered on the pentameter line, and it recalls similar boasts made by Satan in *Paradise Lost* regarding temporary successes in arms against the overwhelming power of the Almighty. Lee speaking before the Senate is thus presented, through content and allusion, as a character at once heroic and morally ambiguous.

Following these moments of resentment and rage on Lee's part, a curious verse paragraph frames its meditation largely in terms of the subjunctive:

> Intrepid soldier! had his blade been drawn
> For yon starred flag, never as now
> Bid to the Senate-house had he gone,
> But freely, and in pageant borne,
> As when brave numbers without number, massed,
> Plumed the broad way, and pouring passed—
> Bannered, beflowered—between the shores
> Of faces, and the dinn'd huzzas,
> And balconies kindling at the sabre-flash,
> 'Mid roar of drums and guns, and cymbal-crash,
> While Grant and Sherman shone in blue—
> Close of the war and victory's long review. (lines 50–61, 164)

The passage captures something important about Lee as the speaker later in the poem: he is distinguished by numerous admirable qualities compromised by his failure to embrace a just and victorious cause (resembling, perhaps, his fellow Confederates' "sensitive love of liberty

… entrapped" into the service of "the systematic degradation of man" as described in the "Supplement"). Formally, the passage extends Melville's metrical experiments: it begins with a line of pentameter (line 50), moves into tetrameter for the next three lines (51–53; line 52 is catalectic, approximating pentameter), returns to pentameter in line 54, and then after three lines of tetrameter (55–57) and two lines of pentameter (58–59) ends the stanza with a line of tetrameter followed by a line of pentameter (60–61). Again, Melville moves between genres via his use of pentameter and tetrameter, suggesting the gap between Lee's epic possibilities and the grim reality of his role as a defeated general in an unjust cause.

Lee stands before the assembled senators as an acknowledged and unsuccessful rebel—the sort of person, Melville well knew, who in earlier generations would almost certainly have met a public and gruesome end. At the same time, Melville's narrator asserts, it must be remembered that Lee is a criminal because he has been defeated, something that would have been true for George Washington, for whom the capital city has been named, had he been vanquished by the British in the American Revolution. The fact that Lee is pleading his case rather than suffering for his crimes demonstrates the difference between the Union and previous victors in similar circumstances. And yet Lee pleads for understanding for a defeated and culpable South.

Lee acknowledges that his judges are both victorious and justified by the outcome of the war but suggests that "Where various hazards meet the eyes, / To elect in magnanimity is wise" (lines 142–143, 167). He advances the (self-interested) argument that the uncertainties that face the Union make a generous policy toward the South desirable. The perspective ascribed here to Lee points toward reconciliation between the North and the South and downplays the role of slavery in the war, echoing some of the more troubling sentiments from the "Supplement." Melville's position with regard to Lee is unstable here: on the one hand, Lee is treated throughout as a tragic and admirable figure by the narrator; on the other, his status as the leader of a morally reprehensible rebellion is acknowledged. One question that the poem poses, then, is how to deal responsibly with the brute reality of the Civil War. The fact that potentially admirable men have betrayed the Union in defense of a principle that is abhorrent to Melville as a Union supporter and a moral critic of slavery means that the

position of Northerners attempting to understand how to respond to the end of the war is fraught with alternatives that are both unacceptable and unavoidable.

One of the most striking moments in "Lee in the Capitol" demonstrates how thoroughly the model of religious difference defines Melville's approach to the Civil War. Melville puts into Lee's mouth a long anecdote, told in tetrameter, about a Muslim girl in "Moorish lands"—possibly Palestine, Spain, or North Africa—who is ordered to convert to Christianity and renounce her father by her captors:

> A story here may be applied:
>   'In Moorish lands there lived a maid
> Brought to confess by vow the creed
>   Of Christians. Fain would priests persuade
> That now she must approve by deed
>   The faith she kept.... (lines 163–168, 167)

Although she has been willing to renounce her faith in the abstract, the Muslim maid is unwilling to accede to the demand that follows: that she forsake her father because "If heaven you'd win— / Far from the burning pit withdraw, / Then must you learn to hate your kin" (lines 171–173, 167). She is willing to exchange one abstract creed for another but finds the concrete act of denying family ties unthinkable. She ultimately declares her willingness to be burned at the stake rather than renounce her devotion to her family:

> "Then will I never quit my sire,
> But here with him through every trial go,
> Nor leave him though in flames below—
> God help me in his fire!"' (lines 176–179, 168)

Not only is this young "Moorish" woman willing to be executed in a particularly cruel way, she is willing even to be damned ("Nor leave him though in flames below") rather than deny her bond to her family.

The Muslim maid here is a carefully chosen example, both for Melville as author and for Lee as character. By using her for his example, Lee is cautiously acknowledging the rectitude of the North's cause: just as Christianity is the true religion for both Lee and his interlocutors, the Union represents the political truth for America. Since both Lee and the senators would regard Islam as falling short of the truth

of Christianity, Melville here suggests that the South has been in the wrong relative to the North. This acknowledgment does not signify, however, that the consensus Lee invokes means that the maid's Christian inquisitors are right to persecute her. Instead, the maid's intransigence is presented as both morally admirable and psychologically understandable, supporting Lee's case that Southerners may be mistaken in their beliefs, but their refusal to abandon them is psychologically inescapable.

This perception resurrects a motif that ran through much of Melville's earlier work: the sense of admiration that moral inflexibility can produce. Melville copied on the front pastedown of his copy of *The New Testament and Psalms* an extended quote from Goethe that imputes moral inflexibility to Christ himself. In a paradoxical sense, then, the Muslim maid's refusal to convert to Christianity if such conversion means renouncing filial piety becomes itself a Christ-like act.[6] The Muslim maid imitates Christ by refusing to worship him if that worship entails a violation of her moral compass. Her intransigence likewise points back to earlier Melvillean heroes and villains, including Captain Ahab, Bartleby, John Paul Jones, and Babo, and forward to numerous figures in *Clarel*, *Timoleon Etc.*, and *John Marr and Other Sailors*.

It is also worth noting that the maid's identity as Moorish potentially suggests African heritage as well as Islamic faith. This is not to say, of course, that "Moorish" and "African" or more particularly "Negro" occupy the same space in the racial economy of the nineteenth-century United States. It is to suggest, however, that the Moorish maid constitutes an interruption in a field of discourse that imagines normative American identity as European or white. In a delicious paradox, Lee justifies Southern white feelings with reference to an example inflected with African resonances and both racial and religious otherness—a rhetorical choice that brings home the decisiveness of the North's moral victory at the same time that it cautions the North not to lose the moral high ground. Lee is able to make a case for the South in this poem only by accepting the North's moral narrative for the war. Given his personal distaste for slavery, which antedated the war, he is perhaps better positioned than most Southerners to make this sort of admission.

Also noteworthy here is the fact that the strength and physical and

moral courage of women provide an essential component of Melville's understanding of morality in the wake of the Civil War. The Moorish maid, like the sibylline ex-slave in Melville's "Formerly a Slave," provides a model for what it means to live with dignity and transreligious faith amid the fraught uncertainties of war. This attraction to feminine modes of belief was not new to Melville's work, as anyone who has read "The Chola Widow" sketch in "The Encantadas" can attest, but in *Battle-Pieces* it gathers an urgency that will be most fully expressed in *Clarel* and the works that follow.

The potential sources for the story of the Moorish maid also shed some light on the choice of the anecdote. In Robert Southey's 1798 "The Lover's Rock," a poem with which Melville would likely have been familiar (at the very least, we know from Merton Sealts's *Melville's Reading* that Melville consulted other works by this author), a "Moorish maid" appears in a familial and interreligious context that is largely reversed in Lee's oration.[7] Southey's "Moorish maid," a young woman named Laila, defies her father and runs away with a Christian youth named Manuel. Her outraged father pursues and captures her and condemns her and her lover to death for her disobedience. Just as the father's archers are about to shoot Laila and Manuel, they leap over a cliff, ending their lives in a mutual suicide.[8]

In another possible source, "The Legend of the Three Beautiful Princesses" in Washington Irving's *The Alhambra* (a copy of which we know from Sealts that Melville owned, as part of *The Works of Washington Irving*), Irving raises the ante, narrating the story of three princesses born to a Moorish monarch and a European Christian woman whom he had abducted. The princesses ultimately elope with Christian captives of their Muslim father. Like Southey, Irving tells a story of Muslim women who prefer Christian lovers to fathers who are tyrannical and cruel and are racialized as non-European.[9] When Melville puts into Lee's mouth the tale of a Moorish maid who chooses her Moorish father over his European Christian persecutors, he reverses the expected narrative. Lee's tale is a substantial inversion of the stories told by Irving and Southey. Rather than telling the story of a cruel non-European, non-Christian father and a daughter who is drawn to Europe and Christianity despite her upbringing (a story that seems a kind of transatlantic Pocahontas tale), Melville gives Lee a narrative about a young woman loyal to a father who is both Islamic in

faith and associated with Africa in race and ethnicity, implicitly arguing that bonds within the human family are limited neither to Europe nor to Christianity.

Lee's story implies that interpersonal connections are essential and that when faith, spiritual or political, attempts to deny these connections, it will fail. The narrator's frame around Lee's anecdote suggests that his eloquence and the example of the Muslim maid will not be heeded: "Instinct disowns each darkening prophecy: / Faith in America never dies; / Heaven shall the end ordained fulfill, / We march with Providence cheery still" (lines 210–213, 169). If Lee's speech is an admission of both Southern guilt and the rightness of the Union cause and also a warning of the danger of abstract and uncomplicated faith, the narrator suspects that only the first element will be heeded. The line "Faith in America never dies" gives a rich sense of Melville's ambivalence in the aftermath of the war. Does this mean that *faith* never dies in America, or does it mean that *faith in America* is immortal? The ambiguity here is significant, as Melville connects the religiosity of his nation with tendencies toward civil religion and American exceptionalism. The cheery faith in a Providence that favors the right may, he suggests, lead his country astray.

At this point as at so many others in *Battle-Pieces*, however, it is necessary to note that Melville's call for uncertainty is not the expression of a relativistic justification of slavery or secession, both of which he explicitly abhorred, but rather a call for self-knowledge and self-doubt even among those who are in the right. Melville's Lee is not the Lee of Confederate nostalgia but a vanquished foe whose merits could be acknowledged even as his role in a crime was remembered. The "sacred uncertainty," to use this crucial phrase from the "Supplement," expressed in "Lee in the Capitol" is the position that results when moral earnestness confronts a bewildering moral complexity that can neither be resolved into certainty nor dismissed via relativism, a contradiction that must be retained with a profound sense of anguish at its unsatisfactory resolution.

What, then, is the import of "Lee in the Capitol" for twenty-first-century scholars trying to assess Melville's treatment of race and religious difference and for those attempting to reconstruct Melville on Reconstruction? My suggestion is that the Moorish maid is crucial to understanding the racial and religious politics of this poem and indeed

of *Battle-Pieces* more broadly. By using the Moorish maid—a potentially African (or at least racially ambiguous) woman and a member of a persecuted religious minority—as Lee's rhetorical device for asking for clemency, Melville refuses to erase, in the service of social consensus, persistent questions surrounding race and broadly divergent interpretations of religious and ethical imperatives. Instead, he calls attention to the tenacious conflicts that his pacific prose "Supplement" cannot erase. In Melville's writing on Reconstruction, if Robert E. Lee is allowed to request forgiveness for the South, Melville's readers, in the 1860s and after, are not permitted to forget.

Drum-Taps and *Battle-Pieces*

Brought Together

WALT WHITMAN, HERMAN MELVILLE, AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR POETRY ANTHOLOGY

IAN FAITH

The Civil War was a defining moment for American identity as much as it was for American poetry, and in many ways the two are inseparable. Stanton Garner observes that the Revolutionary War and the Civil War are the only conflicts in which Americans battled to create and define national identity. The Civil War is unique because, first, it was a distinctly American conflict and, second, the literature it produced involved not just prose advocacy but the deliberate establishment of a complex poetic tradition.[1] Nineteenth-century readers understood poetry as a crucial form for engaging in political discourses. Poems written during the Civil War served a myriad of political functions as well as humorous and satirical ones: calling for unity, encouraging military enlistment, imagining individual experiences, allaying the fears of those at home and those headed for the front, and even establishing a national anthem.

By a tacit understanding, poets did not represent scenes of gore or suffering but instead focused on self-determination and valor. Northern and Southern poets alike left no room for moral ambiguity in their work and imparted profound meaning in their respective side's cause by glorifying the sacrifices of soldiers and their families. As Cynthia Wachtell puts it, "poetry helped the Civil War generation to define the meaning of the war, the meaning of sacrifice, and the meaning even of death. It was not simply a cultural indulgence. Poetry was central to the war endeavor in a way that we—more than a dozen years into America's longest war and still without a battle anthem—can little comprehend."[2]

Nevertheless, because we recognize how instrumental Civil War poetry was in defining national identity, Americans return to it in times of crisis. For example, on September 14, 2001, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., held a two-hour memorial service for the victims of the 9/11 attacks just three days prior. Following an emotional address by President George W. Bush, members of the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters stood at the altar and sang Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic" while a congregation of senators, state representatives, and former presidents rose to sing along. But there are several ironies to using "Battle Hymn" as a unifying gesture under the Bush administration's War on Terror. Like much of Howe's poetry, "Battle Hymn" is ambivalent about nationalist stances, and Howe herself became a peace advocate following the Civil War. More importantly, "Battle Hymn" is a Northern-authored Union anthem, whose use in this historic moment underlines the regional, racial, and historical fissures that continue to divide Americans into warring political constituencies.[3] Civil War poetry retains significant political economy, and its editors, by deciding which poems to include and which to exclude in early anthologies, canonized specific authors as the poets of a new American identity and literary tradition.

Yet at the war's sesquicentenary and following the first African American presidency, protests and social movements against systemic racism (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Colin Kaepernick's activism), public debates over the removal of Confederate monuments, and the backlash characterized by the 2017 Unite the Right march in Charlottesville, Virginia, underscore the fact that we have only begun to seriously deal with the Civil War's lingering racial and regional divides because the historical impulse has been not to discuss it. In this essay, I am interested in the ways in which the Civil War has been both a formative moment for American democracy and one of its greatest conversational, political, and literary taboos. The failure of American literature to reconcile the secession war's consequences in the nearly seventy-five-year gap, from the end of Reconstruction to just before the centenary, provides insight into how the war was being represented, memorialized, and remembered.

Civil War poetry, once so crucial in enumerating national interests and making sense of the regional schism, serves as a unique litmus test for cultural and political motivations in this context. I consider

the political economy of Civil War poetry by tracing the development of edited anthologies, the poems and poets editors decided to include, and the trajectory of its literary criticism to explain the twentieth century's long silence as well as the curious emergence of Walt Whitman and Herman Melville in the 1970s as the poets laureate of the war. While nineteenth-century readers tended to be dismissive of *Drum-Taps* (1865) and *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866), these collections received renewed interest beginning in the mid-twentieth century because, in retrospect, Whitman and Melville seemed prescient about the war's lasting effects. Both poets felt a profound need to address the war's consequences, yet both feared that reconciliation would not happen without the sort of racial and regional struggles that intensified during the 1950s and continue today. Whitman hoped for reconciliation on an emotional level, writing in his *Sequel to Drum-Taps*:

> Word over all, beautiful as the sky!
> Beautiful that war, and all its deeds and carnage, must in time be
>   utterly lost.[4]

The speaker of "Reconciliation" bends down and kisses the "white face" in the coffin in an act of simultaneous forgiveness and apology, a dynamic complicated by the speaker's ambiguous regional and racial identity. Melville, however, was less hopeful about reconciliation because he conceived of such relations politically. In the "Supplement" to *Battle-Pieces*, he fears that lingering racial tensions and Northern indignation will continue to divide the nation: "Emancipation has ridded the country of the reproach, but not wholly of the calamity.... Our institutions have a potent digestion, and may in time convert and assimilate to good all elements thrown in."[5] Despite their differences, in their poetry Whitman and Melville share an anxiety that resolving the war's consequences would be an ongoing struggle for future generations. As racial tensions became more obvious nearly a century later, the ambiguity and realism of *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces* appealed to poets and editors, in particular Muriel Rukeyser and Robert Penn Warren, who would incite a scholarly revival of Whitman's and Melville's poetry.

Practically, Civil War poetry held so much political economy because rapid expansion in print media and technology allowed more

newspapers and magazines to be printed cheaply and transported easily via the growing railroad systems. Despite wartime shortages of paper, ink, and printing presses (especially in the South), the Civil War saw an extraordinary outpouring of literary production by established and aspiring authors alike. Even when faced with these production constraints, Southern newspapers like the *Southern Illustrated News* still printed upward of 20,000 copies per issue.[6] But while the Civil War provided the occasion for the emergence of Southern nationalism in print culture, it was by no means its inception. Well before regional hostilities broke out, Southern newspapers and magazines were fashioning themselves as distinct literary venues in answer to Northern papers like *Harper's Weekly*. With print forums in place, Southern publications were flooded with submissions of poetry, essays, articles, reviews, editorials, and illustrations by literary hopefuls.

Pre-Confederate literature was disorganized in its probing of Southern identity, and its main contributors were an often random assemblage of anonymous readers. Coleman Hutchison has argued that pre-Confederate literary forums like the *Southern Literary Messenger* were integral to the development of a sense of Southern nationhood because they provided an opportunity for people to engage in literary and cultural criticisms that actively compared the emerging Southern literary tradition with other forms. The emergence of the *Messenger* in 1830, thanks to the work of Edgar Allan Poe and others, made it possible later for Southern nationalism to go on display in print in resistance to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) and other antislavery writings by Northern authors.[7] Because Southern literary venues were already in place and in need of eminent authors, submitting an article or a poem to the *Messenger* and its ilk was akin to applying for Southern literary celebrity.

By the time the Civil War broke out, there was an abundance of poems and poets to choose from among the various Southern literary magazines and newspapers, but they were greatly in need of organizing. Professionally edited compilations like Frank Leslie's *Pictorial History of the American Civil War* (1861) and G. P. Putnam's *The Rebellion Record* (1861–1863) began to foreground poems, songs, and other materials as integral to the war's events. Faith Barrett notes that these compilations provided a model for amateur scrapbooks and albums, and it is likely that they also served as a model for the Civil

■ Southern Anthologies   ■ Northern Anthologies   ■ Integrated Anthologies
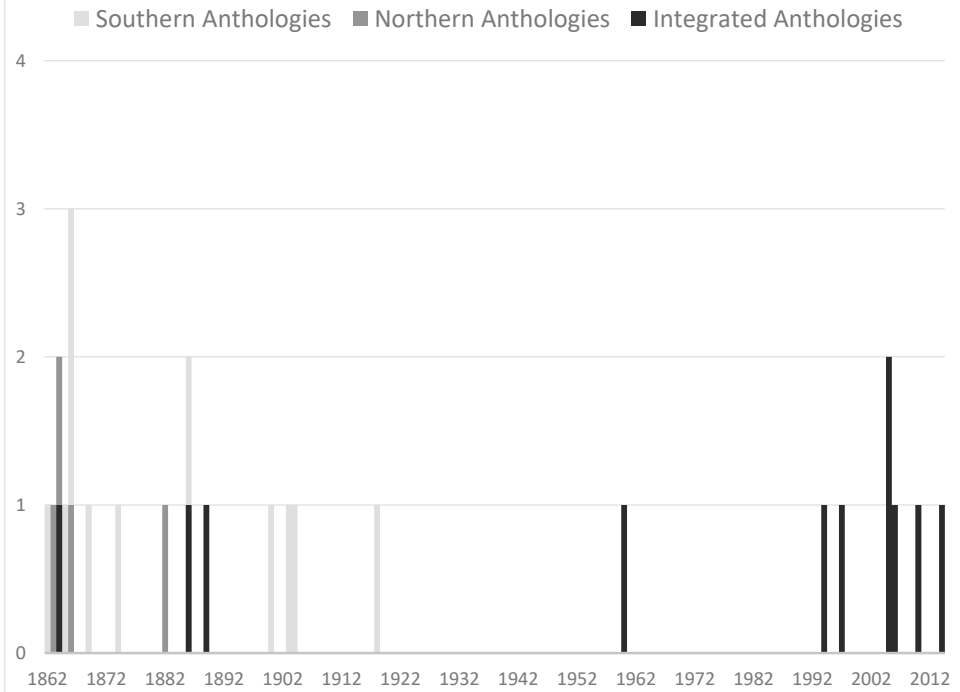
War poetry anthologies that followed.[8] Of the surprisingly few Civil War anthologies published, it is worth noting that a substantial number were Southern and that Southern poetry anthologies appeared during the war and on into the twentieth century, whereas Northern anthologies appeared only during and immediately following the war, with one exception in 1882: Frank Moore's *Civil War in Song and Story, 1860–1865*. In the few decades before the long silence on the Civil War, published anthologies overwhelmingly represented the literature of the South. The timing, quantity, and content of early Southern poetry anthologies suggest that their poetry held great political and literary value for the seceding states. After all, the Civil War might have been for the South what the Revolutionary War was for the colonies. If the South was to become its own nation, it would need its own literature, and editors seemed to have been self-consciously assem-

bling the work of writers who would become the Southern poets laureate.

These editors were simultaneously creating a new literary canon and inscribing a sense of national identity. For example, one of the most frequently included poems in Southern anthologies is George Tucker's "The Southern Cross," which first appears in the *Southern Literary Messenger* in March 1861 and is set to the musical score of the North's then-unofficial anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner," as an imagined Southern national anthem. Other poems return to the Southern landscape as a site for constructing a collective "we" or beginning to establish a pantheon of national heroes such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis.[9] Commemorative broadside poems like "The Spirit of 1861" celebrated the act of secession and the establishment of provisional governance, and roll call poems such as "The Southern Wagon" apostrophized states individually to assemble them under a new Confederate sovereignty. But besides the public display of broadsides, most Southern poetry appeared in popular newspapers juxtaposed with journalism, fiction, humor, editorials, essays, cartoons, and advertisements. In other words, Confederate poetry was a part of daily cultural life that sought both to be distinct from Northern literature and to remain sympathetic to European literary traditions by serving similar political functions and appearing in conventional publication venues.

While Southern anthologies published during the war concerned themselves with identifying the major poets of the Confederacy, postbellum collections sought to "reset not only the terms of Confederate literary nationalism but also the very definition of Confederate poetry."[10] To this end, Southern editors began preserving Confederate literature after the war under a broader American nationalism. William Gilmore Simms, one of the poets most frequently featured in Southern collections, writes in the preface to *War Poetry of the South* (1866) that

> though sectional in its character, and indicative of a temper and a feeling which were in conflict with nationality, yet, now that the States of the Union have been resolved into one nation, this collection is essentially as much the property of the whole as are the captured cannon which were employed against it during the

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN POETRY REPRESENTATION IN ANTHOLOGIES (1862–PRESENT)

—Poems by Southern Poets   —Poems by Northern Poets
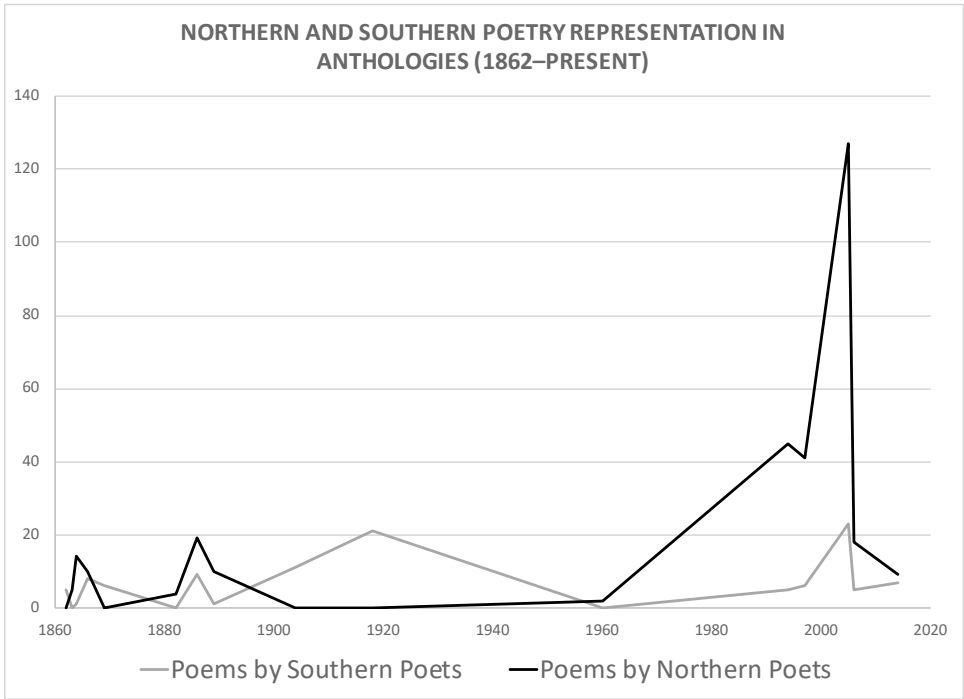
progress of the late war. It belongs to the national literature, and will hereafter be regarded as constituting a proper part of it.[11]

Simms treats Southern literature as a resource to be taken possession of and weaponized against a defeated Confederacy. He implies that if Southern literature were to survive, it could not be perceived as secessionist, and most editors followed his dictum. By selecting "polite" poets like Simms, Henry Timrod, and (anachronistically) Sidney Lanier, Southern anthology editors could retroactively define Confederate poetry to make it palatable to a Union readership indignant at the South's secession. As a political tool, anthologies could change how the South would be remembered: as the Southern States of the Union rather than the Confederate States of America. To this end, Southern editors in particular made sure to exclude specific references to Confederate nationalism and the battles that were fought in its pursuit. The result was a set of literary maneuvers that elided the Civil War and its causes, despite the paradoxical existence of a Civil

War poetry anthology. To achieve such leaps in logic, editors selected poems with features that Coleman Hutchison identifies as conveying a sense of lagging behind and needing to catch up, writing for a vanishing present, making agroliterary appeals that refer to the pastoral rather than the plantation, and never mentioning slaves.[12] Poems that did not support or valorize secession and instead celebrated love of country and compatriots were more easily reincorporated into Union poetics.

Beyond content, many of the efforts to subsume Southern poetry into a broader American nationalism translated into literary underrepresentation. Although Southern anthologies continued to be published longer than their Northern counterparts, regionally identified anthologies had ceased publication altogether by the early twentieth century in favor of integrated collections. However, Southern poets were rarely included in these comprehensive editions, and when they were, they tended to be from a select group of tacitly approved-of poets whose literary presences were dwarfed by their Northern counterparts. Integrated anthologies, either by design or by the challenges of identifying authorship during the war, often erased regional demarcations from their collections. In an early integrated anthology entitled *Bugle Echoes* (1886), editor Francis Fisher Brown declares,

> The two classes of poems, Northern and Southern, at first intended to be placed separately in the volume, were finally brought together, for the sufficient reasons that their interest is thus increased, and in some cases it could not be determined to which side a piece belonged; and, further, that as there is no political division between North and South, there should be no division in their literature.[13]

Northern editors were just as eager to pretend that the Civil War had never occurred, and the erasure of literary difference was but one effort of Reconstruction. But the reintegration of Northern and Southern poetry was not always so seamless as in Brown's collection. George Cary Eggleston's *American War Ballads and Lyrics* (1889) takes on the considerable task of anthologizing American war poetry from the Revolution to the Civil War. Of the ninety-seven Civil War poems included, only twenty-seven are Southern, and each is distin-

guished from the Northern poems they intermingle with by the footnote "[SOUTHERN]."

Eggleston found himself in a perilous position. To denote Southern poetry is to imbue it with stigma, but to censor its regional identity is to ignore its historical and cultural heritage. Such dilemmas underscore how integrated anthologies struggled to redefine the once-divided Union along its literary fractures. Canonization served as an early solution, as the figures that nineteenth-century anthology editors overwhelmingly turned to were the established Northern poets like Bryant, Lowell, Whittier, Emerson, and Longfellow as well as the polite Southern poets Timrod and Simms. But by the end of the Reconstruction period, many Northern authors had begun to lose their luster as Civil War poets. *Bugle Echoes* reduced the number of poems by such authors from six or more to just two or three. By the time of Eggleston's edition, Bryant, Whittier, Longfellow, and Howe had only one poem each, and Emerson, whose "Boston Hymn" had been until that point obligatory, was cut entirely.

Brown's and Eggleston's reductions of established Northern poets opened up space for lesser-known poets. As the first and last serious attempts to integrate Northern and Southern poetry before the twentieth century's long silence on the Civil War, it is also notable that these two collections mark the first anthologized appearances of Whitman's and Melville's war poetry. Brown includes six of Whitman's poems so that he immediately overtook Emerson and Whittier in his first appearance. Brown argues for his arrangement by asserting that previous editors included "indiscriminate" collections of poems, but *Bugle Echoes* set out to provide a "body of the really notable poetry" that the war evoked and excluded poems whose popularity was due to their "music and not their words."[14] Brown's project was to interweave Southern and Northern poets throughout the volume as a gesture of canonized unification, as if to suggest that the poets and poems in his volume were essential to understanding the American Civil War and that the rest could be dispensed with. His near overrepresentation of Whitman suggests that he was integral to understanding the Civil War. Brown does not include Melville, however. His preface suggests that Melville's absent poetry might have been more musical than substantive, which is strangely contrary to contemporary reviews of

Battle-Pieces that argued that his poetry lacked the musical quality of his prose. Still, Brown's arrangement foreshadowed and even predicted the renewed interest in Whitman's war poetry that would follow in the late twentieth century.

Melville first appears a few years later in Eggleston's collection with only one poem, "Stonewall Jackson (Ascribed to a Virginian)." Despite the grand scale of Eggleston's project to encompass all American war poetry, he did not view his own collection as definitively as Brown did. In his introduction, he conceded that the merit of war poetry was not subject to any objective standard, rendering "the work of selection . . . difficult, and the result . . . unsatisfactory." Instead, he aimed to make *American War Ballads and Lyrics* "fairly representative in character" and to include poems that reflect "the spirit of the times which produced them."[15] Because Eggleston did not include Whitman, he apparently felt that the Good Gray Poet did not capture the spirit of the war.

Brown and Eggleston provide us with two instances of early attempts to encompass the war with a uniquely American poetics, and it should not be surprising that they disagreed on what that poetics should look like. Dissent among early editors hinged upon the question of which poems and poets would describe the war's convulsions for the next generation, and in doing so they had begun to turn away from conventional poetry. *Bugle Echoes* and *American War Ballads and Lyrics* mark a shift in understanding Civil War poetry apart from the generally agreed-upon authors that would not be realized until decades later. But before we can make sense of the temporal gap in this genre and the critical revival of Whitman and Melville in particular, it will be helpful to explore their near absence in nineteenth-century anthologies.

That Whitman and Melville appear so seldom in early collections suggests that their work did not conform to what nineteenth-century readers considered representative of wartime experience. Indeed, contemporary critics did not respond well to *Battle-Pieces* or *Drum-Taps*. Jerome Loving observes that *Drum-Taps* and its *Sequel* had hardly been published before they came under attack by critics who respected Whitman's volunteerism but refused to consider him a poet.[16] For example, Henry James wrote in an 1865 *Nation* review that Whitman's poems are melancholy reading not because of their
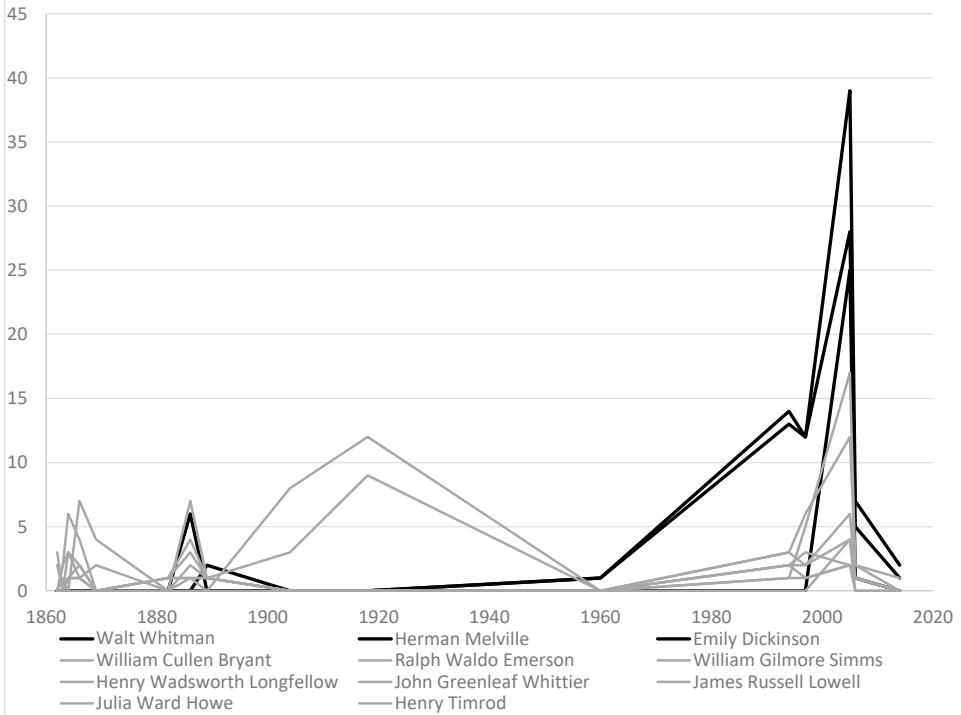
content but because they "openly pretend to be something better."[17] Others were repulsed by Whitman's use of free verse, and what little praise *Drum-Taps* and its *Sequel* did receive tended to look favorably only on "O Captain! My Captain!" An unsigned review in *The Independent* in 1865 mused that "O Captain!" provides "abundant evidence that Walt Whitman could write true poetry if he would only consent to write either rhyme or reason."[18]

One of the harshest reviews—and one that many subsequent critics responded to—came from William Dean Howells in *The Round Table* in 1865, in which he finds all of *Drum-Taps* "inarticulate" and unable to provide a coherent vision of the war.[19] These kinds of reviews, Cody Marrs argues, tell us less about Whitman's writing than about the expectations that contemporary readers had for poetic form and Civil War poetry. But Whitman was not concerned with contem-

porary reviewers' prescriptions and proscriptions concerning his war poetry. As with *Leaves of Grass* in 1855, Whitman's war poetry hints that his ideal readers have not yet been born, thereby invoking a transbellum present that explores the end of the war as an ongoing struggle for reconciliation that has not happened yet.[20] Behind purist calls for traditional poetic form and content, what was so disturbing to Whitman's contemporary readers was the future-directedness of his war poetry, which forced them to experience and reexperience a war that most would have preferred to leave in the past.

Melville's *Battle-Pieces* was met with as much, if not more, confusion and open hostility. William Dean Howells reviewed it in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1867, stating, "Mr. Melville's work possesses the negative virtues of originality that it not only reminds you of no poetry you have read, but of no life you have known."[21] His complaint with Melville, as with Whitman, is that his poems do not represent the war in a way he or other readers can recognize. But Melville faced an additional challenge in that before *Battle-Pieces* he was better known to readers as a prose writer rather than a poet. In eleven years he had published nine novels, about twice as many short stories, and numerous essays and reviews.[22] As a result, critics continually judged his poetry against his earlier fiction, especially *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), and *Moby-Dick* (1851). In 1866, one reviewer wrote in the *New York World* that *Battle-Pieces* demonstrates "the fact that the poetic nature and the technical faculty of poetry writing are not identical," making the reviewer wish Melville had instead written *Battle-Pieces* in prose.[23] Others were outright dismissive, like one anonymous reviewer in the *San Francisco Alta California* in 1866 who remarked conciliatorily that "the book as a whole is a decided failure, but no worse than a hundred other books of verse published every year."[24]

For Stanton Garner, the frequent dismissals of Melville's poetry on the basis that it was not as good as his prose suggest that contemporary readers were unprepared for the demands of his poetics.[25] Along similar lines, Andrew Delbanco claims that *Battle-Pieces* did not sell well because of its content, which "sounded a dissonant note at a time of high nationalist feeling."[26] If Melville was addressing assumedly white Northern readers, he clearly did not reach them. Like Whitman, his prospective views about American regional relations were addressing future readers more than contemporary ones. Even early in his

career, Melville knew that mid-nineteenth-century readers would not buy his work, and yet he continued to write in his unique style despite impending financial troubles. In a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne in June 1851, he observed sullenly, "Though I wrote the Gospels in this century—I should die in the gutter."[27] As with Whitman, critics responded negatively to Melville in large part because he knowingly defied genre expectations in his Civil War poetry, particularly with his commitment to graphic realism rather than patriotic nationalism.

Like *Drum-Taps*, Melville's poetry looks back to the war as a way to direct its gaze toward the future. For both authors, the Civil War was not temporally or geographically bounded, as other poets had conceived of it, nor were its central issues. Contemporary scholarship has even begun to question whether "the foulest crime" both poets allude to is secession, rather than slavery as previously assumed.[28] Prior to the Civil War, Whitman and Melville repeatedly confronted race relations in their work, providing every indication that they foresaw the coming conflict over slavery.[29] In the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman's scenes of the runaway slave, the slave auction, and the later excised speaker (Lucifer), who embodies the slave in the poems that would become "Song of Myself," "I Sing the Body Electric," and "The Sleepers" respectively, speak to heightened racial tensions in the South and the need for reconciliation. In "Benito Cereno" (1855), Melville would similarly depict racialized violence set against the naive white benevolence of Captain Amasa Delano to show how easily slave and master could switch roles.

When hostilities did break out between Northern and Southern forces, however, Whitman and Melville would write to and about crucial events in the Civil War timeline while curiously avoiding the issue of race in their poetry. Instead, both poets' postbellum publications recall and reanimate scenes from the war for different poetic effects: Melville is cynical about the possibility of reconciliation, while Whitman sees his poetry as an act of suture that can heal the divided Union with its return to Nature. For most of the war, Whitman and Melville were separated by geography, personal experience, and poetic style. Nevertheless, both poets struggled against the conventions of a growing genre of Civil War poetry that celebrated sacrifice by insisting that readers stare at the horrors of war inscribed on the landscape, human body, and American psyche.[30] In this sense, the crushing Northern

defeat at Fredericksburg, for example, was an attractive subject for both poets.[31] Although Whitman's and Melville's poetic realism repelled nineteenth-century critics and editors, it is precisely because they resisted contemporary Civil War poetics that they were consistently included in post-1960 anthologies.

It is the long erasure of secession from American memory that explains the sudden reappearance of Whitman's and Melville's Civil War poetry in 1970s literary criticism and anthologies. With the exception of Lee Steinmetz's 1960 *The Poetry of the American Civil War*, there is a seventy-five-year gap before anthologies begin to reappear near the turn of the twenty-first century. Steinmetz's collection is a fascinating exception in that it consciously avoids well-known authors like Howe, Longfellow, and Lowell in order to privilege the forgotten voices of soldiers, their families, and volunteers. This collection is a self-styled oral history of the Civil War as told by common voices that history has ignored or forgotten. But Steinmetz finds that he cannot ignore Whitman and Melville, however well known they were. He includes only one poem by each ("Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night" and "Apathy and Enthusiasm"), because "to have represented these poets with anything like the completeness which their worth suggests" would have been antithetical to his goals of preserving the unheard voices of Civil War experience.[32] As discussions about the Civil War reemerged at the centenary, conventional literature that avoided the horrors of war, its epoch, and its effects was unhelpful in understanding a racial, regional, and fratricidal conflict. Instead, critics sought less romanticized and more realistic poetic descriptions.

From the beginning, a culture of stoicism and silence developed around Civil War participants, from soldiers and volunteers to their families back home. Although the Civil War was the occasion for an outpouring of literary production, little of it was authentic (that is, based on personal experience) because, with the exception of high-profile officers' accounts like Ulysses S. Grant's *Personal Memoirs* (1885), most did not write about their experiences, as it was considered "unsoldierly" to do so. Moreover, the perceived impossibility of representing the war in print discouraged literary men and women from trying. As a result, Northern writers like Bryant and Whitman, who even visited the South and had Southern acquaintances, "possessed only the flimsiest knowledge of Southern life and institutions."

Likewise, Southern writers displayed no greater awareness of Northern life, and what they read only confirmed their distrust of the North. But even if Civil War literature had captured its lived experience, contemporary readers would not have been receptive. As Daniel Aaron writes, "Polite literature before and after the War excluded certain kinds of experience ... powder-blackened, lousy combatants daily exposed to bullets and shells, representing their superiors, hating the 'Nigs,' were hardly presentable subjects to the predominantly feminine reading public." The following generation, the middle-aged writers of the early twentieth century, was too young to have fought in the war and yet too close to the war's consequences to see it as an American epic.[33]

The Great Depression and the eruption of two world wars in the early twentieth century served as ample distractions from any interest Americans might have had in the Civil War. Meanwhile, the Jim Crow segregation laws of the South made the war seem ineffectual in its failure to absorb freed slaves into American society. From Reconstruction to the centenary, few people were willing to write or read about the Civil War, and national and international crises seemed to divert attention away from the war's effects or else be more pressing. Those who did discuss the war often had to do so in ways that carefully avoided its causes and ongoing challenges in the interest of unification.

David Blight traces such efforts to depict the war in polite terms to the Reconstruction period, where three distinct narratives of Civil War memory struggled for dominance: white supremacist, manifested in the Jim Crow South; emancipationist, in which African Americans struggled with the politics of radical Reconstruction; and reconciliationist, which concerned itself with memorializing the dead and reestablishing a singular American nationalism.[34] Reconciliatory rhetoric dominated because, over time, it became easier for Americans to remember the dead on Memorial Day (established as Decoration Day in 1868) than to grapple with the ideologies for which battles had been fought. American culture was soon awash in sentimental literature published in magazines like *Scribner's*, *Lippincott's*, the *Century*, and *Harper's*.

By the 1880s, the South had been glorified by the disaster, as though "its ruins had become America's classical past, a terrible and fascinat-

ing civilization that multitudes wished to redeem and admire because it was lost. Beguiling because so gothic, the South's evil could now be addressed as something that really did not exist."[35] Such sentimental literature essentially remade the South in the North's image through a nationalist rhetoric of inclusion and an ongoing motif of rebirth. For Blight, the enduring Southern narrative of segregation was hegemonic and continued alongside the isolated emancipationist narrative that, finally, embodied by the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, could not be contained as the centenary neared.[36] As Americans looked across several decades of silence and coded discourse on the Civil War, they had to find new ways of discussing the democratic challenges it left behind. For this reason, Whitman's and Melville's encounters with the war's convulsions, casualties, and anxieties made them appealing candidates to twentieth-century critics.

Catherine Gander has suggested that the revival of literary figures like Whitman and Melville, especially their protodocumentarian methods of recording American experience, influenced writers as early as the 1930s, including Muriel Rukeyser.[37] In *The Life of Poetry* (1949), Rukeyser argues that American poetry in particular is embedded within a culture of conflict, and it was not until Melville's *Battle-Pieces* that "the conflict is open, and turned to music." Contrary to editors like Francis Fisher Brown, who precluded Melville for his verse's musical quality, Rukeyser finds it to be a mark of poetic distinction. As she considers how Melville deals with the evils of war in verse, her focus shifts disjointedly to Whitman's body and the inclusive "I" of "Song of Myself." Her analysis oscillates between these two poets curiously, seemingly without structure, before she states definitively, "Melville is the poet of outrage of his century in America, Whitman is the poet of possibility."[38]

But Rukeyser's attempts to distinguish Whitman and Melville are merely an afterthought to her extended consideration of an implied paradox: that two of nineteenth-century America's major authors commented on one of the most formative events in American history with their poetry, and, somehow, critics have historically neglected both *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*. Her praise of Whitman and Melville occurs within the vacuum of criticism on the Civil War broadly and likely incited renewed interest in other poets and critics. Robert Penn Warren would later take up Rukeyser's observations in the intro-

duction to an edited volume of Melville's poems (1967), agreeing that "Whitman and Melville are the poets of the Civil War."[39] Because he was one of the key players in the Southern Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s alongside Allen Tate, William Faulkner, and Zora Neale Hurston, Warren's endorsement of two Northern poets was no insignificant gesture. But while critics would turn to these poets' work broadly in the 1970s, their Civil War poetry would not gain the luster Rukeyser and Warren suggest in scholarly inquiry or anthologies until the late twentieth century. How are we to make sense of a simultaneous endorsement of these two poets and widespread ignorance of *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*?

As the long silence on the Civil War ended around the centenary, discourse began to celebrate not racial progress but the Lost Cause and the romance of the antebellum South. At the same time, it produced two key pieces of scholarship on Civil War poetry: Edmund Wilson's *Patriotic Gore* (1962) and Daniel Aaron's *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War* (1973). Wilson's and Aaron's projects were to remind literary critics that America did in fact have Civil War literature but, counterintuitively, their assessment of its quality (or lack thereof) largely stultified subsequent interest in it. As the first comprehensive investigation into this genre, Wilson's survey became the authority on Civil War literature. He asserts that the war period produced a "remarkable literature which mostly consists of speeches and pamphlets, private letters and diaries, personal memoirs and journalistic reports."[40]

Wilson does not include poetry among the literature he judges as having merit. He writes, "The period of the Civil War was not at all a favorable one for poetry.... An immense amount of verse was written in connection with the war itself, but today it makes barren reading." Since Wilson had done the immense chore of trudging through the period's literature, he assures scholars that there is no need for them to do the same. Although he anticipates objections about the literary value of Whitman, who he concedes is the only poetic innovator between Poe and Pound, he argues that even if Whitman wrote the best poetry of the Civil War, *Drum-Taps* isn't really worth reading because it is, after all, Civil War poetry. He dismisses Melville entirely, stating that his poems "seem to me not really poetry."[41] Wilson's argument is that there isn't much Civil War literature, and what we have isn't

worth critical attention anyway. His conclusions, however presentist or elitist, came to characterize scholarly opinion for nearly two generations. As a result, critics who studied Civil War literature and editors who compiled poetry collections merely looked to the "fertility of select poets while taking for granted the purportedly barren literary field in which they thrived."[42]

Critics who disagreed with Wilson seemed to accept his assumptions even as they worked against their implications. Daniel Aaron, for example, dismissed Wilson's impetus to evaluate the literary merit of Civil War literature in favor of a focus on its cultural significance. Aaron argues that the paucity of epics and masterpieces is no index of the impact of the war on American authors. Whitman and Melville figure prominently in his analysis, but like Wilson, he doesn't find that their war poetry has literary merit. Aaron is particularly skeptical of Whitman's *Drum-Taps*, which he reads as subverting politics to personality. Ultimately, he judges the collection as less poetic than *Leaves of Grass*.[43]

The political Whitman for Aaron is found not in his poetry but in his essays, particularly "The Eighteenth Presidency." Instead, he finds that *Drum-Taps* has cultural significance as a testimonial of the war's experience: "Whitman paid a poetic price for a gamble that he lost, but *DT* is nonetheless a personal if not necessarily a powerful expression of the War's impact upon him." By contrast, Aaron understands Melville's poetry as cynically political in its sustained examination of democratic paradoxes, ironies, and conflicts. For him, *Battle-Pieces* and *Drum-Taps* confounded contemporary readers because they underscored how the war might have taught Americans something but mocked the democratic ideal in the process in either form or content.[44] In other words, the cultural significance of Melville's and Whitman's war poetry was realized in retrospect, and the centenary provided that opportunity, along with the undertaking of acknowledging Civil War literature in general.

Wilson and Aaron opened the way for other literary critics to discuss Civil War literature, and these critics followed their suggestions for poets who might be worth scholarly attention. Many early studies that were interested in Whitman and Melville arrived at similar conclusions. Aaron's acknowledgment that Whitman and Melville approach a poetics of secession in radically different tones is one that

has been echoed since the first comparative essay by David Hibler in 1969. For Hibler, as for Aaron, comparing these two poets was a way of probing the zeitgeist of Civil War America, with the war solidifying Whitman's practical sense of compassion for the defeated South as well as Melville's metaphysical pessimism. Hibler's analysis considers several of Whitman's and Melville's poems, paired seemingly at random, with the goal of transcending the cold historical record with their poetic accounts of personal change over four years of slaughter.[45]

A few years later, Vaughan Hudson would take up a more sustained comparative analysis of *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*. Hudson inserts himself into a long line of calls for such scholarship, beginning with John Howard Bliss's 1933 observation of the curious lack of Whitman and Melville scholarship. Hudson makes the case that the two writers are politically alike but temperamentally opposite: "if Melville suggests a subjective impression of detachment, then Whitman must surely suggest sincere dedication, an almost religious devotion to a cause."[46] R. Scott Kellner would later argue that comparative studies that found differences between the two poets were misguided, because

> Whitman and Melville might differ in temperament and outlook, but when it comes to the subject of the Civil War both men share some basic beliefs: that a democratic union, regardless of internal conflicting ideologies, still represents the best method of government; and that Americans could eventually triumph over the morass of their social systems and over their own natures.[47]

The influx of comparative studies of *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces* was a unique invention of 1970s literary criticism, begun decades earlier by curious critics and poets and made possible by the reopening of Civil War discourse by Edmund Wilson and Daniel Aaron. By the end of the 1970s, critics had established the poetic differences between Whitman and Melville, and the looming question was how to explain those differences. The new impulse of the 1980s and 1990s was to historicize their work within the political landscape of the war. Some of the first attempts sought to find inspiration for *Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces* in news periodicals. In 1978, Jerry Herndon argued that Whitman's "Year of Meteors (1859–60)" may have been inspired by a falling meteor observed on November 15, 1859, which a *New York Times* editor interpreted alongside John Brown's raid on Harper's

Ferry as an ill omen, an association that Melville adopts in "The Portent."[48] Similarly, Kent Ljungquist reads "Year of Meteors" along a timeline in which Harper's Ferry initiates a year of ominous events that culminate in Lincoln's election, noting that the central human figure is actually John Brown.[49]

Whitman's and Melville's interpretations of Brown's hanging as ominous differed greatly from those of their literary contemporaries, who often saw this event as redemptive, either in administering justice or in signaling positive change to come. Nathaniel Hawthorne, to whose "genius" Melville dedicates *Moby-Dick*, remarked that "nobody was ever more justly hanged" than "this blood-stained lunatic," while Thoreau wrote in "The Last Days of John Brown" (1860) that Brown's career had a meteoric rise, "flashing through the darkness in which we live."[50] Historical criticism on these two poets reaffirmed what earlier comparative studies had suggested about their shared visions of the war, core beliefs about American democracy, and dissent from contemporary poets.

By the 1990s, the canonized poets of the war were unsurprisingly from the Union, and as Whitman's and Melville's sections were bolstered, others dwindled, were extracted, and even replaced by lesser-known poets. Thirty years after Robert Penn Warren's endorsement, critics awarded Whitman and Melville the title Poet of the War. In his introduction to *The Columbia Book of Civil War Poetry: From Whitman to Walcott* (1994), Richard Marius suggests that near the turn of the century memories of the Civil War diminished into nostalgia, at least until the popularity of *Gone with the Wind* in 1936. Marius recognizes nineteenth-century poetry as a public act that was at once aesthetic, political, and civic, but he elides the significance of his collection's literary implications.[51] Given that it was one of the first comprehensive Civil War poetry anthologies to appear in three-quarters of a century, a cursory glance at the table of contents illustrates how much conceptions of the canon had changed in that long interval. Marius organizes his anthology into seven discrete sections based on poetic themes, including graphic imagery, elegy, and morality. He includes only one Emerson poem ("Battle Hymn"), one from Bryant ("The Death of Slavery"), three from Longfellow, and three from Whittier. Whitman and Melville dominate this edition with thirteen and eight poems, respectively.

In *Poets of the Civil War* (2005), edited by J. D. McClatchy, Whitman is represented by ten and Melville by eight poems. McClatchy's decision to cut so many Northern authors while retaining Whitman and Melville is telling, because he argues that the true bards of the Civil War should have been Southern poets. To this end, he includes authors like Nathaniel Shaler and Sidney Lanier. Yet he cannot help but yield to Melville's "Lee in the Capitol" to sum up Southern relations at the end of his introduction.[52]

Faith Barrett and Cristanne Miller's *"Words for the Hour"* (2005) mirrors contemporary anthologies in representing authors with single poems, but it also includes postbellum collections as de facto sections by Whittier, Henry Timrod, and a few others. Again, Whitman (twenty-nine poems) and Melville (twenty poems) overwhelmingly represent the poetic voices of the Civil War. It is important to note, however, that in these more recent Civil War poetry anthologies, Dickinson has also been given increased prominence comparable to Melville and Whitman. McClatchy includes six Dickinson poems, and Barrett and Miller include an impressive nineteen. Defending their decision, Barrett and Miller reject the idea that Dickinson did not write political poetry and advocate for her inclusion in the canon of American Civil War poets because "her oblique stance" in relation to the war "underlines the idea that women writers face particular difficulties" in writing about and writing within a male-dominated literary and wartime context.[53]

During the twentieth century, critics increasingly looked to Walt Whitman's and Herman Melville's poetry to fill the unwritten literary and cultural histories that the Civil War seemed to have left in its wake. Since then, an immense amount of insightful work has been done on Whitman's and Melville's poems individually, but few scholars have made serious attempts to consider them together beyond those outlined in this essay. Ed Folsom observes that Whitman and Melville, exact contemporaries who at one time lived mere blocks away from one another in Washington, D.C., and who were aware of each other's work, "seem to have spent their lives in some perversely complex dance of avoiding each other."[54] Given the tendency of critics to identify as either Whitman or Melville scholars and to discuss them in isolated monograph chapters or in demarcated sections of the same article, we might extend Folsom's observation to those who study the

poets. Indeed, the first academic conference that brought Melville and Whitman scholars together was not held until 2013.[55]

There remains a great deal of scholarship to be written on both these authors, and considering them together as two of nineteenth-century America's greatest authors can illuminate much about one another's work as well as the literary and cultural nuances of the time in which they lived and wrote. We have turned to Whitman and Melville to better understand the Civil War and its ongoing regional, racial, and cultural fissures. But because we have yet to resolve the tensions the war left behind, their poetics and the work of other poets like Emily Dickinson (as well as the often ignored Southern poets) can reveal much about how American identity has been challenged and redefined since the Civil War and what implications that may have for the twenty-first-century United States.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AMERICAN CIVIL WAR POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

Shepperson, William G., ed. *War Songs of the South*. Richmond, Va.: West and Johnson, 1862.

Hayward, J. Henry, ed. *Poetical Pen-Pictures of the War: Selected from Our Union Poets*. New York: self-published, 1863.

Editor unknown. *Songs of Love and Liberty*. Raleigh, N.C.: Branson and Farrer, 1864.

Ledyard, Bill, ed. *Pen-Pictures of the War*. New York: C. A. Alvgard, 1864.

Moore, Frank, ed. *Lyrics of Loyalty*. New York: George P. Putnam, 1864.

———, ed. *Personal and Political Ballads*. New York: George P. Putnam, 1864.

———, ed. *Rebel Rhymes and Rhapsodies*. New York: George P. Putnam, 1864.

F. B., ed. *War Flowers: Reminiscences of Four Years' Campaigning*. n.p., 1865.

Editor unknown. *War Lyrics and Songs of the South*. London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1866.

Jordan, Cornelia, ed. *Richmond, Her Glory and Her Graves*. Richmond, Va.: Medical Journal Printing Co., 1866.

Simms, William Gilmore, ed. *War Poetry of the South*. New York: M. T. Richardson and Co., 1866.

White, Richard Grant, ed. *Poetry: Lyrical, Narrative, and Satirical of the Civil War*. New York: American News Co., 1866.

Mason, Emily, ed. *The Southern Poems of the War*. Baltimore, Md.: John Murphy and Co., 1869.

Allan, Francis D., ed. *Allan's Lone Star Ballads*. Galveston, Tex.: J. D. Sawyer, 1874.

Moore, Frank, ed. *Civil War in Song and Story, 1860–1865*. New York: P. F. Collier, 1882.

Barnes, Thomas Q., ed. *Southern and Miscellaneous Poems*. Mobile, Ala., 1886.

Brown, Francis Fisher, ed. *Bugle Echoes: A Collection of Poems of the Civil War, Northern and Southern*. New York: White, Stokes, and Allen, 1886.

Moore, Frank, ed. *Songs and Ballads of the Southern People 1861–1865*. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1886.

Eggleston, George Cary, ed. *American War Ballads and Lyrics*. New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1889.

Fagan, W. L., ed. *Southern War Songs*. New York: M. T. Richardson and Co., 1890.

Stanon, Henry, ed. *Poems of the Confederacy*. n.p., 1900.

Davidson, Nora Fontaine M., ed. *Cullings from the Confederacy*. Washington, D.C.: Rufus H. Darby, 1903.

Wharton, H. M., ed. *War Songs and Poems of the Southern Confederacy 1861–1865*. Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1904.

Ellinger, Esther Parker, ed. *The Southern War Poetry of the Civil War*. Philadelphia: Hershey Press, 1918.

Steinmetz, Lee, ed. *The Poetry of the American Civil War*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1960.

Marius, Richard, ed. *The Columbia Book of Civil War Poetry: From Whitman to Walcott*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Negri, Paul, ed. *Civil War Poetry: An Anthology*. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1997.

Barrett, Faith, and Miller, Cristanne, eds. *"Words for the Hour": A New Anthology of American Civil War Poetry*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005.

McClatchy, J. D., ed. *Poets of the Civil War.* Washington, D.C.:
    Library of America, 2005.
Goldensohn, Lorrie, ed. *American War Poetry: An Anthology.*
    New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
Busby, Brian, ed. *War Poems: An Anthology of Unforgettable Verse.*
    London: Arcturus, 2010.
Biespiel, David, ed. *Poems of the American South.* New York:
    Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.

Notes

"THIS MIGHTY CONVULSION"

1. Brian Higgins and Hershel Parker, eds., *Herman Melville: The Contemporary Reviews*, 520.

2. See Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Michael Moon, 234, note on *Drum-Taps*.

3. "Beat! Beat! Drums!" was published simultaneously in *Harper's Weekly* and the *New York Leader*. See ibid., 237, n. 3.

4. Walt Whitman, *Memoranda During the War* (1875), 73.

5. See Betty Barrett, "'Cavalry Crossing a Ford': Walt Whitman's Alabama Connection."

6. See Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 301.

7. See Jay Leyda, *The Melville Log: A Documentary Life of Herman Melville, 1819–1891*, 2: 793, 806, 821.

8. See Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 35, and Betsy Erkkila, *Whitman the Political Poet*, 191, respectively.

9. Walter Lowenfels, ed., *Walt Whitman's Civil War*, 286.

10. Whitman's quotes from "agonistic and lurid" through "henceforth homogeneous Union" are from "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Moon, 480; "best described" and "word convulsiveness" are quoted in Mark B. Feldman, "Remembering a Convulsive War: Whitman's *Memoranda During the War* and the Therapeutics of Display." Feldman cites Walt Whitman, *Prose Works 1892*, 1: 2.

11. Roy P. Basler et al., eds., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 7: 535.

12. Whitman, "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads," *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Moon, 480. See also n. 6: "think of the book as a whirling wheel," he said, "with the War of 1861–5 as the hub on which it all concentrates and revolves."

13. See ibid., 267, n. 3. "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors" did not appear in the book *Drum-Taps* but only in the "Drum-Taps" cluster in the 1881 edition of *Leaves*. The poem first appeared in *Leaves* in 1870–71, when Whitman included it in a cluster he later abandoned, "Bathed in War's Perfume." A few other poems in *Battle-Pieces* mention slaves or slavery ("The March to the Sea") or Africa or Africans ("A Meditation"), but these concern slavery only marginally. All quotations from *Battle-Pieces* in this essay are from Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al.

14. See Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 35.

15. Robert Penn Warren, "Introduction," in Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, 26.

16. See Carolyn L. Karcher, *Shadow Over the Promised Land: Slavery, Race, and Violence in Melville's America*, 263–264, and Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 34.

17. Hennig Cohen, "Introduction," in Herman Melville, *The Battle-Pieces of Herman Melville*, 19.

18. See Douglas Robillard's introduction to Herman Melville, *The Poems of Herman Melville*, 7.

19. See especially ibid., 1–7, and Hershel Parker, *Melville: The Making of the Poet*. And see Hershel Parker's "Note on Printing and Publishing History" in Melville, *Published Poems*, 531.

20. Parker writes that possibly excepting some verses in *Mardi* and his other prose writings, "Inscription for the Dead at Fredericksburg" was "Melville's first appearance in print as a poet." See Melville, *Published Poems*, 503. For a discussion of this poem focusing on Melville's revisions, see Cynthia Wachtell, "The Battle of Fredericksburg Revised: Whitman's and Melville's Poems in Draft and Final Form."

21. Parker, "Note on Printing and Publishing History," in Melville, *Published Poems*, 503, 504, 508.

22. See Cohen, "Introduction," 19.

23. See Warren, "Introduction," 32; William H. Shurr, *The Mystery of Iniquity: Melville as Poet, 1857–1891*, 11–43; and Robert Milder, "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," 175.

24. See Justin Kaplan, *Walt Whitman: A Life*, 310–311.

25. Ibid., 321.

26. See David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography*, 451–457, on William O'Connor and the creation of the Whitman myth.

27. See Parker, "Note on Printing and Publishing History," in Melville, *Published Poems*, 525, 522, 514, 509.

28. See ibid., 513, 514, 522, 526–527.

29. See ibid., 509–510.

30. See ibid., 526, 509. See also Robert J. Scholnick, "Politics and Poetics: The Reception of Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*."

31. See Parker, "Note on Printing and Publishing History," in Melville, *Published Poems*, 543.

32. Edmund Wilson's *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War* (1962) also falls within this period, but Wilson dismisses the literary merit of both *Drum-Taps* (with the exception of "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd") and *Battle-Pieces*.

1. "THE FOULEST CRIME"

1. This poem from *Drum-Taps*, "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day," 69, is subtitled "A. L. buried April 19, 1865," which is the date the newspapers recorded Lincoln's

funeral was to take place. Whitman, in New York at the time to oversee the publication of *Drum-Taps*, quickly wrote the poem in order not to delay the printing. He assumed that the burial would be at Arlington Cemetery in Washington, D.C., the day of the funeral, and so he imagined "the shovel'd clods that fill the grave" after Lincoln's "coffin" was "lower'd . . . there." Lincoln's body, of course, as Whitman would have learned in the days following (as the book was being printed), was about to go on a funeral train to be placed in a tomb in Springfield, Illinois, on May 4. By the 1871 edition of *Leaves*, Whitman had changed the subtitle to "(May 4, 1865)" and had altered the final stanza to acknowledge "invault[ing] the coffin."

2. Lawrence Kramer, "Introduction: *Drum-Taps*, *Leaves of Grass*, and the Civil War," in Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*, ix–xxi.

3. See Ted Genoways, "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," for a full examination of the printing history of *Drum-Taps*, including "the high cost of paper in the late Civil War and Whitman's financial concerns."

4. Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 51; Herman Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, 11.

5. Juana Celia Djelal, *Melville's Antithetical Muse: Reading the Shorter Poems*, 66. Djelal notes that Melville visited the National Academy of Design in April 1865 (a month before the initial short-lived appearance of *Drum-Taps*) and viewed "paintings of drummer boys, slave women, cavalry charges and soldiers departing for the front, remind[ing] Melville of those paintings in the genre known as battle-pieces, by Salvator Rosa and others, that he had viewed in European museums and noted in his travel journal" (65). It is possible that Whitman's new book, as it appeared in October with *Sequel to Drum-Taps*—the full title of which tied together the sounds the "drummer boys" made ("drum-taps") with the resonant term "pieces" ("and other pieces")—reconfirmed Melville's choice of a title.

6. Walt Whitman, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 11.

7. See Walt Whitman, "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," *Leaves of Grass* (1881), 249, and Melville, "Formerly a Slave," *Battle-Pieces*, 154. See Ed Folsom, "Lucifer and Ethiopia: Whitman, Race, and Poetics before the Civil War and After," for an examination of the similarities between Melville's and Whitman's poems, including their possible common origin in a drawing by the artist Elihu Vedder, who knew both writers.

8. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 28.

9. See Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 261, and Melville, *Battle-Pieces*, 107.

10. Melville, *Battle-Pieces*, 13.

11. Merton M. Sealts, Jr., *Beyond the Classroom: Essays on American Authors*, 228.

12. Edgar A. Dryden, *Monumental Melville: The Formation of a Literary Career*, 77.

13. Aaron Kramer, *Melville's Poetry: Toward the Enlarged Heart*, 29.

14. Robert Milder, "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," 178; Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 61, 396.

15. Brian Yothers, *Sacred Uncertainty: Religious Difference and the Shape of Melville's Career*, 139.

16. See Harold Blodgett and Sculley Bradley's note in Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition*, 339.

17. Whitman, "This Dust," ibid.

18. Edward Huffstetler, "The American South," 672.

19. Roy Morris, Jr., *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War*, 229.

20. George Anastaplo, "Walt Whitman's Abraham Lincoln," 444, 446.

21. Muriel Rukeyser, "Whitman and the Problem of Good," 196; Vivian Pollak, "Whitman Unperturbed: The Civil War and After," 30.

22. Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, 647.

23. Helen Vendler, "Poetry and the Mediation of Value: Whitman on Lincoln," 16–17.

24. Mark E. Neely, Jr., "Whitman and the Civil War: A Response to Helen Vendler," 33.

25. Google Ngram Viewer, https://books.google.com/ngrams.

26. U.S. Representative Henry May of Maryland rose in the House of Representatives in February 1863 to address President Lincoln's suspension of the right of habeas corpus, an order (so May argued) that "extinguished the legislative power of Maryland, and took captive the liberties of its best citizens," thus becoming the "foulest crime of our century." See *Speeches of the Hon. Henry May, of Maryland, Delivered in the House of Representatives, At the Third Session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress*, 25.

27. In the official documents of the House of Representatives, an Ulster, Ireland, newspaper article was entered, claiming that the Confederacy had plotted the assassination: "a deliberate plot, formed in the confederate capital, for the perpetration of the foulest crime that human wickedness could commit." See *Appendix to Diplomatic Correspondence of 1865: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln, Late President of the United States of America, and the Attempted Assassination of William H. Seward, Secretary of State, and Frederick W. Seward, Assistant Secretary, On the evening of the 14th of April, 1865; Executive Documents printed by order of the House of Representatives, during the First Session of the Thirty-Ninth Congress, 1865–'66*, 420.

28. Henry Wilson, *History of the Antislavery Measures of the Thirty-Seventh and Thirty-Eighth United-States Congresses, 1861–65*, 326.

29. Frederick Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, 269.

30. "Union Men in the South," *New York Times*, April 21, 1861.

31. See Daniel Wait Howe, *Political History of Secession*, 77.

32. Deak Nabers, *Victory of Law: The Fourteenth Amendment, the Civil War, and American Literature, 1852–1867*, 33.

33. Andrew Delbanco, "The Civil War Convulsion."

1. On relic collecting in the armies of the Civil War, see Joan E. Cashin, "Trophies of War: Material Culture in the Civil War Era"; Michael DeGruccio, "Letting the War Slip through Our Hands: Material Culture and the Weakness of Words in the Civil War Era," 15–35; and Teresa Barnett, *Sacred Relics: Pieces of the Past in Nineteenth-Century America*.

2. Barnett, *Sacred Relics*, 80.

3. See, for instance, Henry S. Washburn, "The Vacant Chair" (1861). For a more detailed discussion of other poems focusing on physical absence and casualty lists in particular, see my "'Reading the List': Casualty Lists and Civil War Poetry." Examples of literary works on missing limbs and amputees include the poems "A Soldier's Letter and a Woman's Answer," *Harper's Weekly*, April 19, 1862, and S. E. Carmichael, "Amputated," *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, March 11, 1865, as well as Silas Weir Mitchell's short story "The Case of George Dedlow," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1866.

4. For more on the inadequacy of words to capture the reality of the Civil War, see DeGruccio, "Letting the War Slip through Our Hands," 16–17.

5. Barnett, *Sacred Relics*, 94–95.

6. J. Howard Wert, *Complete Hand-Book of the Monuments and Indications and Guide to the Positions on the Gettysburg Battle-Field*, 110.

7. Mary Louise Kete describes a similar failure of material objects originally intended as souvenirs or mementos, in this case photographs, to be contained within these categories. See *Sentimental Collaborations: Mourning and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century America*, 152.

8. Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, xvi. Bennett makes a convincing case for recognizing prototypes of the idea of "thing-power" in nineteenth-century literature and before (2–3).

9. See Timothy Morton, "Sublime Objects," and Graham Harman, "The Well-Wrought Broken Hammer: Object-Oriented Literary Criticism," 195–196, 188.

10. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 2–3.

11. See, for instance, Faith Barrett, "'They Answered Him Aloud': Popular Voice and Nationalist Discourse in Melville's *Battle-Pieces*." Similarly, poems such as "An Uninscribed Monument on One of the Battle-fields of the Wilderness" and "On a Natural Monument in a Field of Georgia" raise the problem of how to memorialize the unknown soldiers who fell during the war.

12. Barnett, *Sacred Relics*, 83.

13. Herman Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, 182. All quotations from Melville's poems are taken from this 1866 edition.

14. Ibid., 144.

15. Ibid., 182.

16. As Christopher Kent Wilson explains, "For many the hearth was a place of solace; for others it was the somber reminder of loss, but for all, the return to the hearth marked a completion of the war." See "Winslow Homer's *Thanksgiving*

Day—Hanging Up the Musket." Wilson's article also shows that such scenes must be read against the background of the contemporary controversy over mustering out the soldiers at the end of the war, which cast the soldier's rifle or musket either as a sentimental object or as an agent of violence that had the potential to destabilize civilian life.

17. Melville, *Battle-Pieces*, 151. Compare this scene also to the desolation of the home described in "The Armies of the Wilderness" through the destruction or appropriation of material objects.

18. Ibid., 183. While the poem does not make clear whether the volunteer has returned after the end of the war, the reference to Gettysburg signals that at the time in which the poem is set, the war's outcome most likely favored the Union.

19. I am indebted to Kristina Scott for her ideas on this aspect of the rifle's usage, as developed in a seminar on Civil War literature.

20. Melville, *Battle-Pieces*, 183.

21. During the war, letter reading and writing occupied a significant part of Whitman's life. As a volunteer caregiver in the military hospitals of Washington, D.C., he wrote many letters for sick and wounded soldiers, effectively functioning as the link between these soldiers and their families across long distances.

22. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 20.

23. Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 40. All quotations from Whitman's poems are taken from this 1865 first edition of *Drum-Taps*.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. The trope of a reader being wounded vicariously through the act of reading about the physical wounding or killing of a soldier was a popular one in Civil War literature and culture. See Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861–1865*, 135.

27. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 40.

28. Ibid. Many writers emphasized the ability of letters to establish a spiritual connection between correspondents on the home front and battlefront. These contemporary representations of letters as sentimental objects with the ability to summon absent bodies and emotionally connect individuals form an important context as a way to understand Whitman's concept of the wartime notebook and letter as material objects with great affective and mnemonic potential as well as the tropes invoked in some of his Civil War poetry.

29. Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, 3: 100–101, 1: 198. Another example of a letter described by Whitman as retaining great affective power long after the end of the war is one he sent to Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Haskell, August 10, 1863, about the death of their son in a military hospital (1: 115–118).

30. Walt Whitman, *Memoranda During the War* (1875), 1–2.

31. Barnett, *Sacred Relics*, 87, 91.

32. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 9.

33. Ibid., 11.

1. Gardner's collection includes the work of several of Brady's most skilled employees who left his studio to join forces with Gardner.

2. Eleanor Jones Harvey, *The Civil War and American Art*, 95.

3. A *carte-de-visite* is a cheaply made visiting card with a tiny portrait photograph pasted onto thick paper card stock. In the first stages of the war, the public bought images of their war heroes; for example, more than a thousand prints per day were made and sold of figures such as Major Robert Anderson, who led the Northern soldiers at Fort Sumter. Timothy Sweet notes that the large New York firm E. and H. T. Anthony and Company produced some 3,600 *cartes-de-visite* per day throughout the war; see *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union*, 81.

4. Geoffrey C. Ward, *The Civil War: An Illustrated History*, 404.

5. E. F. Bleiler, introduction to Alexander Gardner, *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, ii.

6. Ward, *The Civil War*, 79.

7. Miles Orvell, *American Photography*, 64. It is also worth considering under this discussion the idea of "the ruins of war" as a context for George Barnard's collection of photographs, *Photographic Views of Sherman's Campaign*. In the period shortly after the war, Barnard revisited key battle sites that he had not been able to photograph during the campaigns because of the difficulty in processing photos in the field. Thus the theme of his collection of retrospective images, which was also published in 1866, was unmistakably that of aftermath. See Duke University Libraries' Digital Collections: http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rubenstein _barsi01001.

8. More than a century after the Civil War, Henri Cartier-Bresson, the photojournalist and founder of Magnum Photos, wrote that the camera is "designed to evoke, and in the best cases—in its own intuitive way—it asks questions and gives answers at the same time." See *The Mind's Eye: Writings on Photography*, 47.

9. Lee Rust Brown, introduction to Herman Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*, ix.

10. See Melville's short preface in Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al.

11. Mustafa Jalal, "*Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, The Novelist as Poet: A Study in the Dramatic Poetry of Herman Melville," 76, 85. Jalal, like many critics of *Battle-Pieces*, cites the passage from Melville's preface that compares the contrasting "airs" of the poet to those caught by the harp whose tunes vary according to the "wayward winds."

12. In making the more complex argument about the photographic image and its powers of suggestion and evocation, it is helpful to consider Roland Barthes's writings on imagery (specifically photography) in his *Image, Music, Text*, where he gives an account of how he perceives that imagery functions. See the two opening essays, "The Photographic Message" and "The Rhetoric of the Image," where Barthes dis-

cusses how photographs might be interpreted and how they might function along-side written text in the context of press photography.

13. John P. McWilliams, Jr., "'Drum-Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*: The Blossom of War," 193.

14. Megan Rowley Williams, "'Sounding the Wilderness': Representations of the Heroic in Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*," 144–47.

15. James E. Miller, *Walt Whitman*, 67.

16. Whitman's "The Veteran's Vision" is a remarkable depiction of post-traumatic stress disorder, where, years after the action, a surviving soldier relives in his mind his experiences of war as he rests next to his wife.

17. Walt Whitman, *Prose Works 1892*, 2: 434.

18. McWilliams, "'Drum-Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*," 197.

19. Walt Whitman, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 16.

20. McWilliams, "'Drum-Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*," 194, 186.

21. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*, 573.

22. Orvell, *American Photography*, 61.

23. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, 2–3.

24. Ian Finseth, "On *Battle-Pieces*: The Ethics of Aesthetics of Melville's Civil War Poetry," 73.

25. Lawrence Buell, "Melville the Poet," 138.

26. Melville, *Published Poems*, 94.

27. Ibid., 96.

28. Ibid., 98.

29. Gardner, *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, caption for plate 16.

30. Kevin Hayes, *The Cambridge Introduction to Herman Melville*, 91.

31. Williams, "'Sounding the Wilderness,'" 154–155. More widely, however, Williams makes a conflicting argument to that of this essay when she posits that the photograph possesses "surface" or "superficial" qualities that are in contrast to the depth of meaning of Melville's poetry. She argues that "while a photograph can mark great changes, instantaneous moments, and the contrast between life and death, it cannot represent the slow passage of minutes and hours. Unlike words, it cannot describe a change in onlookers that is both internal and intrinsic to the experience of the Civil War." My argument in this essay rests on the notion of interpretation and effects of imagery, both visual and textual.

32. Finseth, "On *Battle-Pieces*," 83.

33. Sweet, *Traces of War*, 182.

34. Melville, *Published Poems*, 35.

35. Gardner, *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, caption for plate 36.

36. Anthony W. Lee and Elizabeth Young, *On Alexander Gardner's "Photographic Sketch Book" of the Civil War*, 57. Young makes the point that much of the "image-text" news media material was pro-Union. (Young borrows W. J. T. Mitchell's term

"imagetext," which describes the combined use of image and text that is overtly adopted in news reporting.)

37. Gardner, *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, caption for plate 37.

38. Ed Folsom, *Walt Whitman's Native Representations*, 9. Critics also note how in *Drum-Taps* Whitman borrows from the visually black-and-white aesthetic of photography, casting over the scenes central to his poetry the light of the moon. It is a romantic gesture that signals the shadowing darkness of the texts' themes, but simultaneously the moon is a symbol of peace that serves to undercut it in an attempt to find resolution. See Ed Folsom's introduction to *Walt Whitman's Native Representations* and Doug Martin's *A Study of Walt Whitman's Mimetic Prosody: Free-Bound and Full Circle*, 76–79.

39. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 58.

40. Harvey, *The Civil War and American Art*, 167.

41. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 39.

42. Ibid., 66.

43. Ibid., 70.

44. Lawrence Kramer in Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*, 158.

45. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 60.

46. Kramer in Whitman, *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*, 155.

47. Roberta Tarbell, "Whitman and the Visual Arts," 170.

48. Lawrence Kramer identifies the poem as a palinode, whereby the images "negate counterparts" in the earlier poems: "Cavalry Crossing a Ford," "O Tan-Faced Prairie-Boy," and "Beat! Beat! Drums!" Interestingly, he also notes how Whitman's fascination with the properties of the daguerreotype influenced his notion of the "phantom"—an idea that recurs within *Drum-Taps*. The daguerreotype's curious ability to shift between negative and positive aspects, dependent upon its angle to the viewer, suggested to Whitman the "phantom state" between the body and the soul (the "corporeal and the incorporeal"). See Kramer's notes to "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun" and "Hymn of Dead Soldiers" in Whitman, *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*.

49. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 59.

50. Melville, *Published Poems*, 49.

51. Faith Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave: American Poetry and the Civil War*, 267–268.

52. See chapter 6, "They Answered Him Aloud—Popular Voice and Nationalist Allegiances in Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," in ibid.

53. The term "witness tree" generally refers to those trees that still remain on battle sites and are usually proved to remain because they bear bullet holes or are found to have bullets still lodged in them. At Gettysburg, it is estimated that there are some one to two hundred witness trees from the Civil War years. See http://www.gettysburgdaily.com/gettysburg-witness-trees/.

54. Lee Rust Brown, introduction to Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*, iii.

4. RECONCILIATION AS SEQUEL AND SUPPLEMENT

1. In "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," Ted Genoways has carefully laid out the publication history of *Drum-Taps*, including the poems Whitman displaced into his *Sequel*, but in another essay, "Civil War Poems in 'Drum-Taps' and 'Memories of President Lincoln,'" he nevertheless treats them as a single text. Betsy Erkkila often does the same in *Whitman the Political Poet*. Similarly, in *Exiled Royalties: Melville and the Life We Imagine*, 169, Robert Milder describes Melville's "Supplement" as an "afterthought," "only the overt political expression of an intention that operates throughout the volume."

2. My comments on terms here are based on nineteenth-century usage as detailed in the 1971 *Oxford English Dictionary*. There a "sequel" is defined as something that "follows as a result from an event" or "as a continuation"; a "supplement," on the other hand, is "something added to supply a deficiency." Also applicable here is Jacques Derrida's discussion of writing as supplement in *Of Grammatology*, 144–145. Melville's poetry cannot be said to invoke a spoken presence in the way that Whitman's sometimes does, but the prose "Supplement" to *Battle-Pieces* is, in Derrida's terms, both a surplus and the mark of an absence in the poetic text.

3. See Walt Whitman, *The Correspondence*, 1: 86.

4. Genoways, "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," 98.

5. Whitman, *The Correspondence*, 1: 246, 247.

6. Genoways, "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," 102, 109.

7. See Michael Moon, *Disseminating Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in "Leaves of Grass,"* 172, and Anthony Szczesiul, "The Maturing Vision of Walt Whitman's 1871 Version of *Drum-Taps*," 129.

8. Moon, *Disseminating Whitman*, 173; Szczesiul, "The Maturing Vision," 129, 130.

9. Genoways, "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," 100–101.

10. In the case of "Hymn of Dead Soldiers," this may be because Whitman would later use some of its lines in "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd": "I chant this chant of my silent soul, in the name of all dead soldiers.... / Perfume therefore my chant, O love! immortal Love!" See *Drum-Taps*, 59.

11. As Szczesiul notes, most critics who speak of a narrative structure within *Drum-Taps* work from the cluster in the 1881 edition of *Leaves*. Samuel Coale, "Whitman's War: The March of a Poet," and John P. McWilliams, Jr., "'Drum-Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*: The Blossom of War," offer good examples of this approach.

12. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 72.

13. Erkkila, *Whitman the Political Poet*, 222.

14. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 69.

15. Whitman, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 3, 4.

16. Ibid., 9, 11.

17. Ibid., 14.

18. Ibid., 19.

19. Ibid., 20. Whitman uses a progression of tenses in a similar way to provide temporal structure to "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry."

20. Ibid., 24.

21. See Justin Kaplan, *Walt Whitman: A Life*, 300.

22. See Gay Wilson Allen, *The New Walt Whitman Handbook*, 112.

23. Erkkila, *Whitman the Political Poet*, 263.

24. See Hershel Parker, *Melville: The Making of the Poet*, 194.

25. See Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 433.

26. Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al., 3.

27. Maurice Lee sees this pattern in individual poems, which "dramatize" "partiality by looping back on slightly altered refrains,… as if the speaker cannot resolve his thought and so repeatedly tries and fails again before finally leaving off"; see "Melville, Douglass, the Civil War, Pragmatism," 398–399.

28. Robert Milder, "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," 175.

29. Milder, *Exiled Royalties*, 181–182, 169. Throughout this cluster, Melville uses—and critiques the use of—natural imagery to confirm its concluding function. Soldiers become an "Abrahamic river" in "The Muster," the flashes of bayonets are northern lights in "Aurora-Borealis" (*Published Poems*, 109, 111), and young soldiers are compared to plants or vines in "On the Slain Collegians":

> They know the joy, but leaped the grief,
> Like plants that flower ere comes the leaf—
> Which storms lay low in kindly doom,
> And kill them in their flush of bloom. (119)

"Striplings" of both North and South are "swept by the wind of their place and time," leaves "leaping" upward to be "laid low" (119, 118, 120–121). But "A Grave Near Petersburg, Virginia"—"May [the] grave be green—still green / While happy years shall run"—holds a gun rather than a human corpse, and "The Apparition" reminds the reader of the "core of fire below" a field of "pastoral green" (114, 116). Timothy Sweet emphasizes Melville's critique of the pastoral in *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union*, 190–200.

30. Robert Penn Warren, "Introduction," in Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, 31.

31. See Edgar A. Dryden, *Monumental Melville: The Formation of a Literary Career*, 89–94.

32. Melville, *Published Poems*, 3, 123, 126, 130, 134.

33. This section, too, ends with a naturalizing gesture, as "the returned volunteer" turns from his rifle to the "blue" and "green" of the Hudson River valley; Melville, *Published Poems*, 138.

34. See Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 304–323.

35. Melville, *Published Poems*, 162. Grant Shreve notes the poem's placement in the text in "a liminal space between . . . the war and the process of reunion"; see

"The Shadows of Reconstruction: Marriage and Reunion in Melville's 'The Scout toward Aldie,'" 14.

36. Melville, *Published Poems*, 167.

37. Ibid., 165.

38. David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, 31.

39. Melville, *Published Poems*, 166, 168.

40. Ibid., 168–169.

41. Ibid.

42. Stanton Garner groups "A Meditation" with "Lee in the Capitol" as late additions to the collection; see *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 432.

43. "The armies had virtually all disbanded.... Thus the conflicting conceptions of justice, victory, defeat, liberty, labor, and rights had to be worked through in the only arena available—politics"; see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 43.

44. Melville, *Published Poems*, 181.

45. See Carolyn L. Karcher, "White Fratricide, Black Liberation: Melville, Douglass, and Civil War Memory," 351, 357, and "The Moderate and the Radical: Melville and Child on the Civil War and Reconstruction," 227, and Milder, *Exiled Royalties*, 169. Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson, on the other hand, see *Battle-Pieces* and the "Supplement" as at odds in their discursive approaches, with Melville's "poetic voices" open to division and difference in ways that the "patriotic voice" of the "Supplement" is not; see "Fahrenheit 1861: Cross Patriotism in Melville and Douglass," 346.

46. The poetry-policy distinction derives from Allen Grossman's "The Poetics of Union in Whitman and Lincoln: An Inquiry Toward the Relationship of Art and Policy," 873.

47. Melville, *Published Poems*, 181, 183. Melville draws a contrast between his poetry as "a poetic record [of] the passion and epithets of civil war" and of "the emotion of victory" and the "Reason" and "intellectual impartiality" that the postwar period demands (183, 181). This is why, he claims, he has been "tempted to withdraw or modify some of them" and why they must be supplemented now (183). But such a distinction between feeling and reason, poetry and prose, soon breaks down: the only "practical" way in which Melville can imagine reconciliation is "if the South have been taught by the terrors of civil war to *feel* that Secession, like Slavery, is against Destiny; that both now lie buried in one grave; that her fate is linked with ours; and that together we comprise the Nation" (182, emphasis mine). Here both feeling and poetic figuration—the burial of secession and slavery—are required to re-create the nation.

48. Michael Paul Rogin, *Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville*, 279; Milder, *Exiled Royalties*, 169, 183.

49. Melville, *Published Poems*, 187.

50. Karcher, "The Moderate and the Radical," 225, 226; see also Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877*, 240.

51. See Foner, *Reconstruction*, 251–255.

52. See Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 32.

53. Melville, *Published Poems*, 181.

54. Ibid., 181, 184.

55. Ibid., 184.

56. Ibid., 185.

57. Herman Melville, *Piazza Tales and Other Prose Pieces, 1839–1860*, 76.

58. Melville, *Published Poems*, 166.

59. Ibid., 185.

60. Ibid., 183.

61. Warren, "Introduction," in Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, 26, 30, 29.

62. Cristanne Miller, "*Drum-Taps*: Revisions and Reconciliation," 184.

63. Whitman, quoted in Sweet, *Traces of War*, 12, and in *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Michael Moon, 660.

64. Karcher, "The Moderate and the Radical," 241.

65. Dryden, *Monumental Melville*, 67.

66. Melville, *Published Poems*, 188.

5. WHITMAN'S DISARMING POETICS

1. Walt Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 559.

2. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1860–61), 195.

3. Ibid., 199.

4. See, for instance, Doug Martin's *A Study of Walt Whitman's Mimetic Prosody: Free-Bound and Full Circle*, in which he argues that Whitman relies on strict meter when trying to re-create the rhythms of feet marching, drums tapping, or hearts beating.

5. Annie Finch, *The Ghost of Meter: Culture and Prosody in American Free Verse*, 51.

6. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits*, 578.

7. Doug Martin argues that this is, in fact, one of the things Whitman's poetry consciously avoids doing, following Emerson's theory in "The Poet." See *A Study of Walt Whitman's Mimetic Prosody*, 8.

8. Multiple critical pieces have examined the relationship between the body and the written word in Whitman's poetry. For one of the more recent examples of this, see Barbara Henry, *Walt Whitman's Faces: A Typographic Reading*.

9. Adam Bradford argues that during the Civil War, the government collected free, individual citizens and "repackaged [them] militarily" until their value to the nation was entirely dependent upon whether or not they could kill. See "Re-collecting Soldiers: Walt Whitman and the Appreciation of Human Value," 127. Whitman, in Bradford's view, subsequently recollected the soldiers by listing their names and attributes in his notebooks, thus restoring their individual identities, before once again generalizing them in his poetry in an attempt to textually circulate their now-regeneralized bodies. This literary process, he asserts, helped provide catharsis for civilian family members who could then project their soldiers' identities onto the vague poetic figures. Lindsay Tuggle puts forward a similar argument with

a much heavier focus on the possible homoerotics of such a recuperative endeavor. She writes that "like Walter Benjamin's collector, Whitman rescues the soldiers from their value as war commodities, capturing them instead as fetish sex objects within his own 'interior' 'phantasmagoria'—the book." See "'Specimens of Unworldliness': Walt Whitman and the Civil War," 150.

10. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, 63, 64, 67.

11. Mark Osiel, *Mass Atrocity, Collective Memory, and the Law*, 131. Various other writers have used Scarry's theory of redescription to talk about the vanishing of the body and the postwar (re)construction of myth, such as that of the united force of the Union and the Confederacy in destroying slavery. Thomas Cushman, for example, uses Scarry's theory to examine Bosnia in "The Reflexivity of Evil: Modernity and Moral Transgression in the War in Bosnia."

12. From its initial publication in the 1865 first edition of *Drum-Taps* through the 1871 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, "First O Songs for a Prelude" was titled "Drum-Taps." It was not until the 1881 edition of *Leaves* that Whitman altered the title to its first line.

13. Maire Mullins, for instance, states that "First O Songs for a Prelude," along with the other "recruiting" (or "mobilization," as Luke Mancuso terms them) poems "Beat! Beat! Drums!" and "Eighteen Sixty-One," was "written at a distance" from the war. See "Stopping History in Walt Whitman's 'Drum-Taps,'" 9. Mullins references Jerome Loving in *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself*, who states that the poem was written before Whitman left New York. Regarding the fact that Whitman witnessed numerous amputations, there is, of course, the famous incident in which he discovered "at the foot of a tree … a heap of feet, legs, arms, and human fragments, cut, bloody, black and blue, swelled and sickening." See Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 504.

14. Gay Wilson Allen, to whom many defer, never mentions the poem among those written for *Banner at Day-Break*, a collection Whitman initially intended to publish early in the war that would have been composed of certain poems that later appeared in *Drum-Taps*. While other critics have cited the connection of "Prelude" to the "Broadway, 1861" manuscript (see Ted Genoways, "Civil War Poems in 'Drum-Taps' and 'Memories of President Lincoln,'" 523), the two poems relate to one another almost solely in thematic content. They share only a single line, which Whitman revised before putting it in print. Also, the first line (and title) of "Prelude" marks itself as the opening of a larger collection, as a piece therefore written after enough other poems were composed for the poet to know he was forming a collection. Additionally, the title directs its words toward the other poems ("First O Songs for a Prelude"), suggesting that it was written or at least largely altered quite late. Whether or not it reached its final form prior to Whitman's leaving New York, there is a definite ambivalence in the poem that is expressed through formal techniques that are repeated in other poems found later in the collection. Finally, as Kathy Rugoff has argued, Whitman's feelings of ambivalence toward the war reveal themselves in the formal elements of some of the earliest-produced poems, such as

"Eighteen Sixty-One." All this evidence supports the view that the poem demands a critical reexamination—one that does not approach it with the assumption that it blindly and uncritically celebrates the commencement of war. See Kathy Rugoff, "Opera and Other Kinds of Music," 265. See also Gay Wilson Allen, *The Solitary Singer: A Critical Biography of Walt Whitman*.

15. Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 5, 6.

16. See Timothy Sweet, *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union*, 1.

17. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 5.

18. In a brief 1972 note, Nancy Lenz Harvey tracks the poet's deployment of the word "arm," arguing that it provides "a unifying motif for the entire poem." She, as I will also, looks at the doubled meaning of the term and its "antithetical implications." Lenz Harvey focuses on *Leaves*, though, and devotes only a few paragraphs to *Drum-Taps*, in which she discusses the word's shift to referencing weaponry in this war book from referencing the body as it mostly did in *Leaves*. See "Whitman's Use of 'Arms' in *Leaves of Grass*," 136.

19. Sweet, *Traces of War*, 1.

20. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 5.

21. Martin, *A Study of Walt Whitman's Mimetic Prosody*, 19.

22. Luke Mancuso cites Robert Leigh Davis's assertion that the tympanum, as both "a sign of the body (the inner ear) and a sign of the state (the military drum)," represents the simultaneity of the "private and public" at the commencement of war. See "Civil War," 299. I would argue, though, that this is another replacement of a piece of the body with an instrument of military organization through the theft of a signifier.

23. Mark B. Feldman, "Remembering a Convulsive War: Whitman's *Memoranda During the War* and the Therapeutics of Display," 2.

24. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 533.

25. Jonah Lehrer writes briefly about Whitman's relationship with the doctor Silas Weir Mitchell, who performed amputations, wrote fiction about the surgical procedure's effects on a soldier's sense of identity, and studied phantom limb syndrome. Mitchell posits that men suffered from a loss of existential identity in relation to the amount of body that was lost. Whitman's prose here clearly opposes this conception. See *Proust Was a Neuroscientist*, 14.

26. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 581.

27. Writing about Whitman's use of the body or bodies in the context of the body as text metaphor, Mark Feldman concludes that "the Civil War conclusively demonstrated their metaphoric status by rendering them literal, material, and therefore inoperable as metaphors. . . . The war made the interchangeability of body and text, and the metaphoric equivalence of individual body and nation, problematic." In "Prelude," we can see that Whitman also asserts the perniciousness of using text to make the body and national weaponry interchangeable. See Feldman, "Remembering a Convulsive War," 4.

28. Sweet, *Traces of War*, 17–18.

29. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 6.

30. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 604.

31. The other two uses can be found on pages 571 and 696 of Whitman's *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manucripts*.

32. Sweet writes that "once enlisted [the soldier] has no choice in his mode of political representation. In fighting 'for' freedom in the abstract he surrenders his own individual freedom—that is, his body disappears into an ideological text." Katherine Kinney, discussing Sweet's work, then asserts that "the uniform marks the state's power to expropriate individual will and desire and commandeer the body for the collective corps." See Sweet, *Traces of War*, 14, and Kinney, "Making Capital: War, Labor, and Whitman in Washington, D.C.," 186.

33. In the original publication of *Drum-Taps* (as well as in the "Drum-Taps" clusters of 1867 and 1871), there is an em dash here. In the 1881 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, this em dash is replaced, along with all the others, by a comma, a different, more scythe-like symbol of separation.

34. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 7.

35. "Broadway, 1861" in its manuscript form can be viewed and read online via *The Walt Whitman Archive*, https://whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/figures/nyp .00004.001.jpg.

36. "Bathed in War's Perfume" and "Hymn of Dead Soldiers" were later shifted to other clusters, and "Hymn" was retitled "Ashes of Soldiers."

37. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 12, emphasis mine.

38. The first line is written in regular iambic pentameter. The second line also begins with iambs, which would seem to support Martin's claims about Whitman's occasional employment of the iamb to mimic marching. A caesura immediately following "armies" completely disrupts the meter, though. The line tries to reassert its original pattern of rising beats, but by the time we reach "challenging," with its dactylic drop, the line has given over to falling beats, perhaps, using Martin's approach, representing a falling off of excessive letters and meanings in a poetic imitation of amputation.

39. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 43, emphasis mine.

40. Ibid., 59, emphasis mine.

41. Ibid., 67, emphasis mine.

42. The removal of "Years of the Unperform'd" results in the loss of a single appearance of the word from the final version of the cluster.

43. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 33.

44. Mark Feldman's concerns about the government's transformation of bodies into machines are also pertinent here. He writes that "for Whitman, bodies that convulse can only properly be themselves; they can only attest to their broken particularity and cannot be made to do metaphorical or ideological work," before concluding that "wounded bodies must remain simply wounded bodies, and this is the truth of the war that ought to be shared." In this poem, though, as placed in the context of the rest of the book-cluster, Whitman further asserts that the *language* of the body

should not be called upon to represent things other than the body either, especially weaponry. See Feldman, "Remembering a Convulsive War," 20–21.

45. Nancy Lenz Harvey is particularly concerned with this connotation.

46. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 50.

47. Ibid., 56.

48. I owe this observation to a comment made by Ed Folsom.

49. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 66.

50. Ibid., 6.

51. Nancy Lenz Harvey argues that "a synthesis is established" in this line and that "physical limbs and military apparatus are indistinguishable in death"; see "Whitman's Use of 'Arms' in *Leaves of Grass*," 138.

52. Jeff Sychterz argues that Whitman, not the poets of World War I as has commonly been assumed, was actually the first modern war poet, "the poet who first fashioned himself explicitly as a war poet." In his view, Whitman was the first war poet to begin writing about a major war from a supportive and celebratory perspective before his firsthand experiences of violence transformed his support into horror. I disagree with this argument in the sense that I believe, alongside Kathy Rugoff, that even some of Whitman's earliest war poetry displays a discernible ambivalence toward violence. I do, however, believe that Whitman's attempts to recuperate the stolen language of the body support Sychterz's titling of the poet. Elaine Scarry herself sees this linguistic hijacking as indicative of and aligned with modern warfare, and Whitman's unprecedented dismantling of these signifiers appears to be similar. See Jeff Sychterz, "'Silently Watch(ing) the Dead': The Modern Disillusioned War Poet and the Crisis of Representation in Whitman's *Drum-Taps*," 10.

53. "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" was the first poem in *Sequel to Drum Taps* and became the first poem of the eventual "Memories of President Lincoln" cluster in *Leaves of Grass*. As a result, in both its first and its final appearances in Whitman's texts, it is the first poem to follow *Drum-Taps* and "Drum-Taps."

54. Whitman, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 5.

55. Sweet, *Traces of War*, 21.

56. Whitman, *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 7.

6. embodying the book

1. See Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 167.

2. Ibid., 169, 170. This mourning project did not end here, either, for his father ultimately placed the memorial volumes into a larger memorial cabinet that occupied a conspicuous place in the family parlor. Over time, Bowditch filled the cabinet with many of Nat's personal effects and later began to include objects that served to memorialize other lost members of the family as well. For more information about Bowditch's memorial cabinet, see Tamara Plakins Thornton, "Sacred Relics in the Cause of Liberty: A Civil War Memorial Cabinet and the Victorian Logic of Collecting."

3. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 104.

4. See Phoebe Lloyd, "Posthumous Mourning Portraiture," 67, 71.

5. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 145.

6. See Frederick Law Olmsted, *Hospital Transports: A Memoir of the Embarkation of the Sick and Wounded from the Peninsula of Virginia in the Summer of 1862*, 115.

7. See Lindsay Tuggle, "'Specimens of Unworldliness': Walt Whitman and the Civil War," 146.

8. Faith Barrett, "Inclusion and Exclusion: Fictions of Self and Nation in Whitman and Dickinson," 244.

9. Robert Leigh Davis, *Whitman and the Romance of Medicine*, 8.

10. Walt Whitman, "Memoranda During the War," in *Two Rivulets*, 3.

11. Walt Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 520, and "Memoranda During the War," 3.

12. For more information on the way in which the Civil War offered an opportunity for individuals to claim a new social identity, see Dora Costa and Matthew Kahn, "Forging a New Identity: The Costs and Benefits of Diversity in Civil War Combat Units for Black Slaves and Freemen," and James M. McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, 308–338.

13. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 632.

14. Other entries function similarly, such as "ward C bed 46 May 64 Wm Hamblin co D 5th Maine wounded 10th lft leg just below knee bone fract came here 26th / wife Louisa M Hamblin Biddeford Maine wrote from Fred'k'g" (ibid., 2: 450). Here Whitman locates the man within the geographical space of the hospital and the ideological confines of his identity as a soldier before broadening out to place him in the social world of Biddeford, Maine, and in his role as a husband and affective partner. Another example, that of "ward C bed 28 May 16 Michael Gilley age 27 Nativity Germany co G 9th N Y Cav. (died)—sister Mary Gilley Sheldon wyoming co New York g[un] s[hot] w[oun]'d in right hip hit on 7th May / brother John is also wounded (young) ask if he wrote & if so what hosp he is in," works similarly (2: 448). It rescues the man from being merely another anonymous casualty of war by relimning the connections between him and the broader locale and affective circle whence he was drawn. Despite the fact that the man has died, his inclusion in Whitman's notebook works to preserve a greater sense of his unique identity and to make him forever available for Whitman to reconnect with him when perusing the volume.

15. Ibid., 2: 632. Whitman would engage in "specimenizing" and "collecting" throughout his career. Not only can *Leaves* and the notebooks be seen to operate in this way, but texts like "Memoranda During the War" are similarly marked when he states that "to me the main interest of the War, I found, (and still, on re*collection*, find,) in those *specimens* … stricken by wounds or disease at some time in the course of the contest" ("Memoranda During the War," 4–5, emphasis mine). Similarly, his publication of memoirs in 1882, a sizable portion of which depicts his Civil War years, is appropriately titled *Specimen Days and Collect*.

16. See Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 104.

17. "Brady's Photographs: Pictures of the Dead at Antietam," *New York Times*, October 20, 1862.

18. I have argued elsewhere that Whitman's first foray into connecting readers with their lost soldiers began in his wartime journalism. However, the conventions of journalistic prose, which required the reporting of details such as names, dates, Union or Confederate, unquestionably inhibited the degree to which readers could impress the soldier they were reading about with an identity of their choosing. This in turn inhibited the type of mourning process that I argue the poetry was able to foster. For more information, see chapter 4 of my *Communities of Death: Whitman, Poe, and the American Culture of Mourning*.

19. Encounters with anonymous soldiers also appear in poems like "The Wound-Dresser" (originally "The Dresser"), "Drum-Taps," "Cavalry Crossing a Ford," "O Tan-Faced Prairie-Boy," "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods," "Hymn of Dead Soldiers," "I Saw Old General at Bay," "Look Down Fair Moon," "How Solemn as One by One," "Dirge for Two Veterans," and "Reconciliation." Indeed, in all of *Drum-Taps* only one soldier is represented by name—and that is the soldier Pete in "Come Up from the Fields Father"—an important divergence in Whitman's practice in this text that I will return to shortly.

20. Walt Whitman, "Democratic Vistas," in *Two Rivulets*, 76. Gregory Eiselein has noticed a similar method in "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which he characterized as operating via "poetic polyvalency and the imagination of readers in a democratic society"; see *Literature and Humanitarian Reform in the Civil War Era*, 73.

21. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 651.

22. Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 44.

23. Ibid., 44–45.

24. See Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 10.

25. See M. Wynn Thomas, *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry*, 35.

26. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 493.

27. William Saley Giggie, born March 10, 1844, in Luzerne, Pennsylvania, died (according to official records) August 29, 1862, at Manassas—the site of Pope's retreat from the Second Battle of Bull Run (also called the Battle of Second Manassas). As Whitman indicates in his notebook, William Giggie (Whitman spells it Giggee) was a member of the First Regiment, Company E, New York Volunteers, but Arthur's identity has remained a mystery. Given the resonances between the recording of the event in the notebook and the poem, critics such as Charles Glicksberg, seeing this notebook entry as the "germinal seed" for "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," have taken the poem largely at face value and assumed (incorrectly, it appears) that Arthur was William's father. See Charles I. Glicksberg, ed., *Walt Whitman and the Civil War: A Collection of Original Articles and Manuscripts*, 142. More recently, Martin Murray has provided a provocative possible reading of the two as a homosexual couple serving together in the war. See Martin G. Murray, "Responding Kisses: New Evidence about the Origins of 'Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night,'" 193.

The story may be more complex than either of these two readings implies. Civil War rosters for the First Regiment, New York Volunteers, list three men with the last name of Giggie—Arthur and William, both privates, and Ira, a wagoner. The 1850 census shows Ira as the father of a family that included two sons, William and Andrew—but no mention of an Arthur. Unquestionably, Arthur was not William's father (as Glicksberg assumes), and the poem's representation of a son being buried by his father does not correspond with actual events. Ira was, in fact, discharged from service due to disability on May 10, 1862—a full three months before William's death.

However (and as another alternative to Murray's formulation), the possibility exists that Arthur was in fact Andrew, and that the census taker merely misrecorded the name. Andrew was born in 1849 and would have been only thirteen years old at the time—young to be a private in the Volunteers but not unheard of. If Andrew Giggie and Arthur Giggee are indeed the same person, then the poem represents an almost complete reversal of the actual historical record—a thirteen-year-old boy burying his eighteen-year-old brother as opposed to an older father burying his son. Regardless of the nature of the relationship between Arthur and William (brothers or a couple), it is compelling evidence of Whitman's rewriting and erasing of historical facts as he translated events from the notebooks to the poetry to provide himself with the opportunity to mediate the reader's experience of approaching and accessing a lost soldier.

28. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 42.

29. Ibid.

30. Whitman, *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*, 2: 513.

31. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 46.

32. Both "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown" and "A Sight in Camp in the Day-break Grey and Dim" are in some ways even more remarkable because, despite my broader claims here, they are two poems in which Whitman actually limits the ability of a reader to assign an identity to the primary soldier depicted therein by giving him a characteristic that is generally absent in other poems. In both poems, Whitman makes mention of the dying or dead soldier's race. In "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest," he describes the soldier as "a mere lad" with a face as "white as a lily," marking him as Caucasian. And in "A Sight in Camp," he describes the face of the slain Christ-soldier as resembling "yellow-white ivory"— perhaps olive-skinned, perhaps lighter.

Still, many of Whitman's other poems, such as "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," "The Wound-Dresser," and "Dirge for Two Veterans," generally refrain from making mention of race. There are a few exceptions to this. Of the approximately six soldiers Whitman depicts in "The Wound-Dresser," only one is described as having a "pale" face (one dying boy is described as being "yellow-blue" in hue, and the rest have no racial qualities assigned). There are also a few poems where Whitman makes passing mention of soldiers having "brown" faces—a fascinating characterization that could easily signify either the tanned face of a white individual or the skin tone of an African American soldier. In "Cavalry Crossing a Ford," he de-

scribes "brown-faced men" who "rest on the saddles," and in the poem "Drum-Taps" he claims to "love" a group of soldiers with "brown faces" that he sees marching by. Despite these mentions, most of which are brief and passing, Whitman's general practice was to refrain from mentioning the race of the soldiers he depicted in *Drum-Taps*. This may have been a conscious choice on his part or perhaps the ironic result of a racial imagination in which virtually all soldiers were white and therefore skin color was generally taken for granted. Either way, Whitman's project of allowing readers to assign identity to those soldiers inhabiting the poems was generally broadened by the exclusion of this detail.

33. Whitman, "Memoranda During the War," 3.

34. The evolution of death into emerging life is a process that Whitman overtly invites readers to think about in another of the *Drum-Taps* poems, "Pensive on her Dead Gazing I Heard the Mother of All," where the earth is charged to "absorb" the "young men's beautiful bodies," turning them into the "essences of soil and growth," with their "blood, trickling, redden'd" soaking the "grass" and "trees, down in your roots." As their bodies are translated into the natural flora of the war's battlefields, these young men are essentially "[held] in trust … [and] faithfully back again give[n]" as the plants grow to fruition and become the resources that constitute the material of the book itself (*Drum-Taps*, 71). Thus, not only in its images, but in its material construction, this text sought to mediate a sense of connectedness by inviting readers to imagine that their dead soldiers had, in some sense, been returned to them, translated into the poetry and the paper of the volume itself.

35. Whitman's desire to leave his readers with such a trace was perpetuated even after the war, when he began the work of folding *Drum-Taps* into *Leaves of Grass*. In the 1867 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, he bound *Drum-Taps* into the volume after the conclusion of the *Leaves of Grass* poems, sacrificing the original cover, bloodred and double-ruled, for a rather unremarkable (but arguably more affordable) one. However, the textual ornamentations and suggestive typefaces in *Drum-Taps* and *Sequel to Drum-Taps* remained the same. In fact, Whitman was inserting the page copies of *Drum-Taps* and *Sequel to Drum-Taps* that he had produced in 1865–66 but had not had bound into separate volumes. Fittingly, he also introduced the "Drum-Taps" cluster of this volume with "Now Lift Me Close"—a haunting lyric that also serves as the coda to the *Leaves of Grass* poems. It is a poem that once again primes readers to think of the book they hold in their hands as a trace of the dead when it claims, "Now lift me close to your face till I whisper, / What you are holding is in reality no book, nor part of a book; / It is a man, flush'd and full-blooded—it is I…. / take from my lips this kiss; / … I give it especially to you; / … And I hope we shall meet again." See *Leaves of Grass* (1867), 338. "Now Lift Me Close" serves as a parting farewell to the reader of the *Leaves of Grass* poems, but it also serves to perpetuate Whitman's original design for *Drum-Taps*, inviting readers to see the book as a physical talisman imbued with the power to foster intimate interpersonal interaction between the reader and the deceased.

36. Whitman, *Drum-Taps*, 49.

37. See Vivian Pollak, *The Erotic Whitman*, 158.

38. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1867), 5. Whitman's Civil War work, whether the *Drum-Taps* poems, poems like "As I Sat Alone by Blue Ontario's Shore," or later prose work like *Memoranda During the War*, almost always served to remind readers of the political significance of these soldiers' deaths. *Memoranda During the War*—once again marked by the bloodred color and double rules of *Drum-Taps*—conceptualizes the loss of these soldiers as ensuring the "launch [of] The United States fairly forth … [now] leading the fleet of the Modern and Democratic, on the seas and voyages of the Future" ("Memoranda During the War," 68). By way of note, *Memoranda During the War* would essentially be reprinted in *Specimen Days and Collect*—a volume that maintains a focus on the personal and political import of these soldiers' sacrifices. *Specimen Days* doesn't make use of the same suggestive binding style of *Drum-Taps* or *Memoranda During the War*, but it does feature an engraving on its spine of a butterfly sitting on Whitman's finger—an image of metamorphosis and the interconnectedness between the natural world and the human individual that is not without resonance when we think about how the soldiers are still present and accessible in the world around us.

39. "Come Up from the Fields Father" serves as a good example. In the poem, a "just-grown" Ohio farm girl with "little sisters huddle[d] round" calls to her mother and father to come "to the front door" as she has just received "a letter from our Pete." In a scene whose essentials were undoubtedly replayed countless times on doorsteps throughout the North and South, the "trembling" mother, fearing "something ominous," seizes the letter, opens "the envelope quickly," and while "All swims before her eyes" reads news in "a strange hand": *"gun-shot wound in the breast, cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital, / At present low, but will soon be better."* Unfortunately, the letter is not written in Pete's characteristic handwriting, and so the letter suggests the reality she later learns: her "poor boy" will never be better, "the only son is dead" (*Drum-Taps*, 40).

This scene itself would certainly have encouraged any reader who learned of the wounding or death of a loved soldier in a similar manner to recognize that his or her experience had been mirrored in the experiences of countless others. However, Whitman goes even further in his attempts to lead readers to understand that their grief actually forms the basis for a sense of community when he describes the mother's feelings of inconsolable sorrow and loss at the poem's end. The final stanza depicts the mother in deep mourning—"drest in black," "her meals untouch'd," "at night fitfully sleeping"—a bereaved mourner "longing with one deep longing" to "withdraw unnoticed, silent from life escape and withdraw, / To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son" (ibid.). Whitman's depiction of a grief so intense as to spur the one feeling it to isolate herself from society nevertheless ironically creates the conditions for the emergence of a broader sense of community and connectedness, for it suggests to readers currently experiencing a similar grief that they share a kind of affective kinship with another who feels as they do. In short, such a poem effectively testifies to readers that they are not alone, that the feelings of despair and sorrow accompanying their loss affectively unite them with others who feel similarly and form the basis for a sense of community among the otherwise inconsolable.

40. A reviewer writing in *The Radical* in April 1866 picked up on the idea that the text allows readers a kind of physical proximity to the soldiers of the war while affording them a sympathetic friend, as through "the soft and sweet strains of sublime tenderness" found in the poem, they "walk with him through some of the hospitals"; see "Walt Whitman's *Drum-Taps*," *The Radical*, April 1, 1866. William Dean Howells, writing in *The Round Table* in November 1865, forewarned readers that the volume would engage them emotionally, and that they should be prepared for "woman's tears [to] creep unconsciously to the eyes"; see Howells, "Drum-Taps." Finally, a review by John Burroughs appearing in *The Galaxy* in December 1866 claimed that in *Drum-Taps* a reader is "not drawn to the army as a unit—as a tremendous power wielded by a single will, but to the private soldier, the man in the ranks, from the farm, the shop, the mill, the mine." For him, "the end contemplated by the poet . . . [is to raise] that exalted condition of the sentiments at the presence of death . . . [where] the mere facts or statistics of the matter are lost sight of." See Burroughs, "Walt Whitman and His 'Drum-Taps.'"

For Burroughs and arguably for Howells and the reviewer in *The Radical* as well, the volume countered the war's tendency to reduce these men to mere casualties, engendering a kind of redemptive communion among the reader, the text, the author, and the lost soldier. In each of these reviews, the poetry is represented as making recuperative connections, bringing readers into mental proximity with otherwise inaccessible soldiers. They point collectively toward the book's potential to mediate the type of frenzied grief and pain experienced at the complete loss of loved ones—the access to the dead working to inspire, in Burroughs's words, that more "exalted condition of the sentiments" reached when the reader is, perhaps, with a loved one "at the presence of death."

41. Theresa Brown, quoted in Sherry Ceniza, *Walt Whitman and Nineteenth-Century Women Reformers*, 238.

42. See Mary Louise Kete, *Sentimental Collaborations: Mourning and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century America*, 3, 54.

43. Whitman speaks overtly of this in "Hymn of Dead Soldiers": "I chant this chant of my silent soul, in the name of all dead soldiers. / Faces so pale, with wondrous eyes, very dear, gather closer yet; / Draw close, but speak not. / Phantoms, welcome, divine and tender!" (*Drum-Taps*, 59).

44. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1860–61), 346.

45. See Walt Whitman, *Selected Letters of Walt Whitman*, 109.

7. *DRUM-TAPS* AND THE CHAOS OF WAR

1. Walt Whitman, letter to Louisa Van Velsor Whitman, December 29, 1862, in *The Correspondence*, 1: 58.

2. Whitman, letter to Thomas Jefferson Whitman, March 6, 1863, in ibid., 1: 77; Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, 2: 137.

3. William Dean Howells, "Drum-Taps"; Henry James, Jr. (unsigned in original), "Mr. Walt Whitman."

4. See Ted Genoways, "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*," and Cristanne Miller,

"*Drum-Taps*: Revisions and Reconciliation." On the circumstances surrounding the composition of *Drum-Taps*, see also Roy Morris, Jr., *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War*, 184–185, 215–221, and David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography*, 413–447.

5. Walt Whitman, *Prose Works 1892*, 2: 731, 434.

6. Whitman, letter to William D. O'Connor, January 6, 1865, in *The Correspondence*, 1: 246–247, emphasis mine.

7. Michael Warner, "Civil War Religion and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*," 84, 86.

8. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: A Textual Variorum of the Printed Poems*, 2: 455, hereafter cited parenthetically as *Leaves*; Walt Whitman, *Memoranda During the War*, ed. Peter Coviello, 148.

9. Warner, "Civil War Religion and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*," 84.

10. See Cheryl Wells, *Civil War Time: Temporality and Identity in America, 1861–1865*, 9, 5.

11. Whitman, *Memoranda During the War*, ed. Coviello, 8.

12. Matthew Brown, "'BOSTON/SOB NOT': Elegiac Performance in Early New England and Materialist Studies of the Book," 322. The poem's regularity is also stressed by Helen Vendler, who describes the meter and rhyme as "a form of populist expression"; Betsy Erkkila, who notes Whitman's "artistic control" and desire to keep "Lincoln's death distant, contained, and safe"; and Ed Folsom, who underscores its "repetitive stability and predictability." See, respectively, "Poetry and the Mediation of Value: Whitman on Lincoln," 16; *Whitman the Political Poet*, 238; and "Lucifer and Ethiopia: Whitman, Race, and Poetics before the Civil War and After," 54.

13. See Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, 3: 23. The aesthetics of such photographic poems are also bound up with the aesthetics of war itself, since as Shirley Samuels points out, "the difficulty with war and photography alike is that the repetition of singular acts of appearance and identity blurs the singularity of choice" and conjures up the problem of a given experience's repeatability (or lack thereof). See *Facing America: Iconography and the Civil War*, 6.

14. Martin T. Buinicki also notes that information itself acquires a warlike quality in the poem, since it "is not imparted so much as it is deployed as if for battle": other than the word "columns," the "entire structure [of the opening lines] suggests someone observing the field of combat, [and] considering the divided forces." See *Walt Whitman's Reconstruction: Poetry and Publishing between Memory and History*, 93.

15. Max Cavitch, *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman*, 239. On these efforts at quantifying the war, see also James Dawes, *The Language of War: Literature and Culture in the U.S. from the Civil War to World War II*, 24–68.

16. Whitman, *Memoranda During the War*, ed. Coviello, 102–103.

17. See Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*, 3.

18. See Morris, *The Better Angel*, 130; Robert Leigh Davis, *Whitman and the Romance of Medicine*, 71; and Kerry Larson, *Whitman's Drama of Consensus*, 234.

1. See William H. Shurr, *The Mystery of Iniquity: Melville as Poet, 1857–1891*, chap. 1; Joyce Sparer Adler, *War in Melville's Imagination*, chap. 8; Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, chap. 9; David DeVries and Hugh Egan, "'Entangled Rhyme': A Dialogic Reading of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*"; Randall Fuller, *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature*, chap. 9; Faith Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave: American Poetry and the Civil War*, chap. 6; and Juana Celia Djelal, *Melville's Antithetical Muse: Reading the Shorter Poems*, chap. 3.

2. See Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, *God Is a Warrior*, and see also Marion J. Benedict, *The God of the Old Testament in Relation to War*, and Susan Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence*.

3. George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen People: A Religious History of the American Civil War*, 397. See also James H. Moorhead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War*; Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson, eds., *Religion and the American Civil War*; Steven E. Woodworth, *While God Is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*; Terrie Dopp Aamodt, *Righteous Armies, Holy Cause: Apocalyptic Imagery and the Civil War*; and Robert J. Miller, *Both Prayed to the Same God: Religion and Faith in the American Civil War*.

4. Marsena Patrick, quoted in Nelson Lankford, *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital*, 64–65. On the composition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," see Aamodt, *Righteous Armies, Holy Cause*, 81–86.

5. On Melville's reliance on *The Rebellion Record* for some twenty poems, see Frank Day, *Melville's Use of "The Rebellion Record" in His Poetry*. On *Battle-Pieces* and *Paradise Lost*, see Robin Grey, "Annotations on Civil War: Melville's *Battle-Pieces* and Milton's War in Heaven."

6. On the Battle of the Mississippi, see James M. McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, 418–422. On Melville's use of *The Rebellion Record* for this poem, see Day, *Melville's Use of "The Rebellion Record" in His Poetry*, 36–39.

7. Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al., 47. This edition of *Battle-Pieces* will hereafter be cited parenthetically in the text. All quotations from the Bible throughout this essay are from the King James Version.

8. McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*, 420.

9. On the assault by African American Union troops on Fort Wagner, see Stephen R. Wise, *Gate of Hell: Campaign for Charleston Harbor, 1863*, chap. 4. On the ensuing attack on Charleston, see chaps. 6–7. Frank Day notes that Melville got his idea for the poem from another poem of the same name by a writer identified only as "T.N.J." in *The Rebellion Record*; see *Melville's Use of "The Rebellion Record" in His Poetry*, 54.

10. See Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 260–261.

11. Brian Yothers, "Melville's Reconstructions: 'The Swamp Angel,' 'Formerly a Slave,' and the Moorish Maid in 'Lee in the Capitol,'" 65. An antithetical view of

the bombing of Charleston as depicted in "The Swamp Angel" can be found in a poem of the native South Carolinian William Gilmore Simms, "The Angel of the Church," which attacks the Union artillery's targeting of St. Michael's Church using religious imagery comparable to that found in Melville's poem: "Each impious hand that lights the torch / Shall wither ere the bolt shall fall; / And the bright Angel of the Church, / With seraph shield avert the ball!" See Simms, ed., *War Poetry of the South*, 290–294.

12. Lankford, *Richmond Burning*, 150. See chaps. 8–12 for an extended description of the fall of Richmond.

13. Anonymous handbill, quoted in ibid., 151. On the liberated slaves of Richmond singing "Babylon Is Fallen!," see Miller, *Both Prayed to the Same God*, 77. *The Independent*, quoted in Moorhead, *American Apocalypse*, 172. The *Richmond Evening Whig*, quoted in Lankford, *Richmond Burning*, 146.

14. George Templeton Strong, quoted in McPherson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*, 731.

15. Of Melville's two copies of the Protestant Episcopal Church's *Book of Common Prayer*, one was purchased in New York in May 1849 and the other given to him by his aunt Mary Melvill in September 1850. See the catalog (Sealts nos. 409 and 410) of Melville's books at www.melvillesmarginalia.org.

16. On the Miltonic imagery in "A Canticle," see Henry F. Pommer, *Milton and Melville*, 77–79. On Niagara Falls and the national sublime, see Elizabeth R. McKinsey, *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime*.

17. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 1: 11–12 (ll. 192–197).

18. See John P. McWilliams, Jr., "'Drum Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*: The Blossom of War"; Robert Milder, "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*"; Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 410–417; Ralph E. Hitt, "Melville's Poems of the Civil War Controversy"; and Paul M. Dowling, "Melville's Quarrel with Poetry."

19. See Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave*, chap. 6, and Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861–1865*.

<p style="text-align:center">9. "nearer to us in nature"</p>

1. Herman Melville, *Correspondence*, 656.

2. Herman Melville, *Piazza Tales and Other Prose Pieces, 1839–1860*, 520.

3. Hershel Parker, *Herman Melville: A Biography*, 2: 370.

4. Melville, "Authentic Anecdotes of Old Zach," *Piazza Tales*, 221.

5. Melville, *Piazza Tales*, 250, 324.

6. Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al., 7. This edition will hereafter be cited parenthetically in the text.

7. C. Vann Woodward, "The Irony of Southern History," in *The Burden of Southern History*, 193–194.

8. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*, 16.

9. In *Mardi*, King Media announces that he wishes to be buried with his spear

on one side and his pipe on the other: "so shall I be ambidexter, and sleep between eloquent symbols" (377). In a letter to James Billson on October 10, 1884, Melville suggests that his description of *Clarel* as "eminently adapted for unpopularity" was "ambidexter" as it might "intimidate or allure" (483). *Billy Budd* refers to an insane person's apparent use of reason as "an ambidexter implement for effecting the ir-rational" (28).

10. David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, 2.

11. Melville, *Clarel*, 461.

12. See Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War.*

13. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1860–61), 389; "toplofticality," quoted in Andrew Hudgins, "Walt Whitman and the South," 93. See also the special double issue on Whitman and the South, *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 29 (Fall 2011/ Winter 2012).

14. William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character*, 8.

15. Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 451.

16. Herman Melville, *White-Jacket; or, The World in a Man-of-War*, 141. In *White-Jacket*, Dick Dash is "a chivalric young gentleman" with an "ardent Southern temperament" (348), another naval officer from Virginia is "good-natured" (119), and the Purser is described as a "jovial" southern "gentleman" (200).

17. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*, 107, 106, 16.

18. Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson, "Fahrenheit 1861: Cross Patriotism in Melville and Douglass," 345, 346.

19. Melville, *Clarel*, 402.

20. Gideon Welles, "Lincoln and Johnson"; Melville, "Lee in the Capitol," *Published Poems*, 165.

21. *Boston Traveler*, September 8, 1866, quoted in Parker, *Herman Melville*, 2: 617.

22. See also *Published Poems*, 59, 65, 82, 112, and 119.

23. "Blame not, then, the North; and wisely judge the South. Ere, as a nation, they became responsible, this thing was planted in their midst" (*Mardi*, 534).

24. Melville, "Supplement," *Published Poems*, 182, 184; "Belial's wily plea" is from "The Armies of the Wilderness," *Published Poems*, 70.

25. Nathaniel Hawthorne, letter to Horatio Bridge, May 26, 1861, in *Tales, Sketches, and Other Papers*, 12: 543.

26. Abraham Lincoln, "Inaugural Address."

27. "*Feudal fidelity*" is from "The Armies of the Wilderness," *Published Poems*, 70.

28. Walt Whitman, "I saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing," *Leaves of Grass* (1867), 134. In *The Confidence-Man*, Melville describes a denizen of a "houseless landing" by the rife riverbank of the Mississippi as having emerged from the "dusk, matted foliage" with "his beard blackly pendant, like the Carolina-moss, and dank with cypress dew" (85). The destruction of manliness by violence in *Battle-Pieces*

is registered by the "streaming beard" of the hanged John Brown in "The Portent" and the "haggard beards of blood" of soldiers fighting in "Malvern Hill" (*Published Poems*, 7, 49).

29. Melville viewed the "Cyprus" (*sic*) as both a manly exaltation and a symbol of death in his trip to the eastern Mediterranean. In Istanbul, he had witnessed the practice in Turkish cemeteries of planting cypress trees above the dead (*Journals*, 65). He reprised these memories in his poem about the Southern prison camp of Andersonville, "On a Natural Monument in a Field of Georgia," by referencing the "old turbaned head-stones and cypresses in the interminable Black Forest of Scutari" in his note (*Published Poems*, 666–667).

30. The 1866 printed version of the poem ends with a dialogue: "'Fortune went with the North elate,' / 'Ay, but the South had Stonewall's weight, / And he fell in the South's vain war.'" Melville had forgotten his Southern perspective and later altered the word "vain" to "great" on a copy of the proofs now at Harvard (*Published Poems*, 642).

31. Jackson is reported to have cited this verse from 2 Corinthians 4:17: "But for our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." See Robert Lewis Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson*, 329, 589.

32. In the Harvard Copy C of *Battle-Pieces*, Melville penciled in a revision to this line, changing it to "Forebear to wreak the ill you reprobate" (*Published Poems*, 692).

33. "Nature grappled Honor, intertwisting in the strife—," Melville confessed in "Bridegroom Dick," "But some cut the knot with a thoroughgoing knife" (ibid., 204). In *Clarel*, he would again confess that such a decision amply allowed for "honest doubt; / And which, in end, a stubborn knot / Some cut but with the sword" (*Clarel*, 402).

34. See Anne S. Rubin's *Through the Heart of Dixie: Sherman's March and American Memory* for the panoply of ways that Sherman's March has been remembered.

35. See Melville's note in *Published Poems*, 176–177.

36. The refrain that Melville includes in "The Armies of the Wilderness"—*"In this strife of brothers / (God, hear their country call), / However it be, whatever betide, / Let not the just one fall"*—ambiguously leaves open what constitutes the country that was calling and which dedication comprised the just one (*Published Poems*, 69). Deak Nabers suggests that Melville's own principled devotion to (a higher) justice here transcended his allegiance to the Union state and remained relative and ideal. See "Victory of Law: Melville and Reconstruction," 7.

37. Carolyn L. Karcher, "White Fratricide, Black Liberation: Melville, Douglass, and Civil War Memory," 362. Karcher also notes that "*Battle-Pieces* all but eliminates African Americans from its dramatization of the Civil War as a tragic conflict between white brothers" (359); "African Americans never come on stage in *Battle-Pieces* as embodied, speaking individuals" (360); and "*Battle-Pieces* renders African American soldiers invisible" (360).

38. Lincoln, "Inaugural Address."

39. Elihu Vedder describes how he became friends with Jackson, whose "meekly

bowed head and . . . look of patient endurance and resignation touched my heart." He notes that her son was "a fine tall fellow . . . fighting in the Union army." See *The Digressions of V.*, 234.

40. Strategies of displacement, deterritorialization, temporization, and gradualism characterize Melville's portrayal of African Americans throughout his works—think of ingenious Babo's "dusky comment of silence" and irrecoverable Senegal home in "Benito Cereno" (*Piazza Tales*, 87), the fact that Stubb and Ishmael make Pip into an Alabama boy even though he is from Connecticut (*Moby-Dick*, 412, 413, 435), and the way his African Handsome Sailor is transposed into the white body of Billy Budd (*Billy Budd*, 3–4). While in the south of Vivenza, the Mardians investigated whether the enslaved "serfs" in the "tribe of Hamo" had souls and learned from a black man that he saw himself only as an angel in his dreams (*Mardi*, 532).

41. See Langston Hughes, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

42. *New York Times*, August 27, 1866. This review was "one of the most sympathetic that the book would receive." See Robert J. Scholnick, "Politics and Poetics: The Reception of Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*," 422.

43. *New York Independent*, January 10, 1867, in Parker, *Herman Melville*, 2: 617–618.

44. Horace Greeley, quoted in Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 126.

45. Melville, *Clarel*, 430.

46. C. Vann Woodward, "A Southern Critique for the Gilded Age," in *The Burden of Southern History*, 116.

47. Lincoln's quote is from his second annual message to Congress on December 1, 1862, when he argues that "in *giving* freedom to the slave, we *assure* freedom to the *free*." And see Melville, *Clarel*, 460, 458.

48. Melville, *Clarel*, 366. Some small recognition that his writing was not in vain is expressed in his ostensibly centennial poem, "The American Aloe on Exhibition," which celebrates the fugitive loneliness of the "Century-Plant in flower" that sighs, "'But, ah, ye Roses that have passed / Accounting me a weed!'" (*Billy Budd*, 103).

10. MELVILLE'S HISTORICAL IMAGINATION IN "THE HOUSE-TOP"

1. Samuel Otter, *Melville's Anatomies*, 4. In the backdrop is Robert Penn Warren's comment on a "doubleness" in Melville's poems: "Man is doomed to exert will to control events, but even when he seems to act effectively, the process in which his will operates may be only a mask for a secret process of which he has suspected nothing." See Robert Penn Warren, "Introduction," in Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, 18.

2. Herman Melville, *Correspondence*, 191.

3. Edgar A. Dryden has made a similar point more generally in his *Monumental Melville: The Formation of a Literary Career*, 77.

4. William H. Shurr, *The Mystery of Iniquity: Melville as Poet, 1857–1891*, 39–40.

5. Larry J. Reynolds, "Kings and Commoners in *Moby-Dick*," 110. Robert Milder has argued that Melville's "distrust of ungoverned human nature, Northern and Southern alike," leads to a pattern in which "righteous exultation" undercuts "North-

ern lawlessness"; see "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," 183. Dennis Berthold convincingly writes about the "limitations democracy placed on art" and Melville's privileging of art over class struggle; in a footnote, he states that in light of Melville's political context, a "literal reading" of "The House-top" "seems inescapable"; see "Class Acts: The Astor Place Riots and Melville's 'The Two Temples,'" 431–432, 455. Gary Grieve-Carlson has argued that the "state-sanctioned violence … does not have the power to redeem or to reconcile"; see "'The House-top': Melville's Poem of Force," 6. He wisely notices Stanton Garner's misreading of the syntax of the final lines of the poem and applauds Helen Vendler's argument that Melville seemed dismayed by both the government and the rioters. See Vendler, "Melville and the Lyric of History."

6. Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 255, 278.

7. David DeVries and Hugh Egan, "'Entangled Rhyme': A Dialogic Reading of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*," 20. Megan Rowley Williams quotes Garner in support of the claim that the poem features "forces in conflict, combination, or contradiction"; see "'Sounding the Wilderness': Representations of the Heroic in Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*," 148.

8. Adrian Cook, *The Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863*, 63.

9. See Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 9–10.

10. James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, 231.

11. Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 21–22.

12. For a more detailed account of the ethnic makeup of the rioters, see Leslie M. Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626–1863*, 279–288.

13. Cook, *The Armies of the Streets*, 31.

14. See Frank L. Klement, "Catholics as Copperheads during the Civil War."

15. Matthew Arnold, *Poems*, 172. A digital facsimile is available at *Melville's Marginalia Online*, http://melvillesmarginalia.org. A few pages later, in Arnold's "To a Republican Friend," Melville underlined the first line of the passage condemning "The barren optimistic sophistries / Of comfortable moles" (176). Melville acquired Arnold's *Poems* in 1862 and probably consulted it while composing *Battle-Pieces*.

16. See Sealts, no. 62, *Melville's Marginalia Online*. See also the explanatory notes to "The House-top" in Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al., 643. All references to "The House-top" in the text are to this edition.

17. Melville, *Published Poems*, 64.

18. Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville*, ed. Hennig Cohen, 248.

19. See Robert A. Duggan, Jr., "'Sleep No More' Again: Melville's Rewriting of Book X of Wordsworth's *Prelude*."

20. Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 250; Cook, *The Armies of the Streets*, 5, 9.

21. John Milton, *The Poetical Works of John Milton*, 1: 261–263.

22. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*, 491.

23. The editors of *Published Poems* first pointed out similarities between "The House-top" and *The Curse of Kehama* (643). Melville owned two books by Southey, one of which was annotated (Sealts, nos. 481 and 482). He also owned and marked an edition of Henry Kirke White's poems, with Southey's biographical essay (Sealts, no. 556).

24. Robert Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, 8–9.

25. Ibid., 10.

26. Ibid., 42.

27. Milton, *Poetical Works*, 2: 63.

28. Melville noted that *Lycidas* was a poem "of the first order of merit" that nevertheless suffered from "the intrusion of partisan topics and feelings of the day" (ibid., 2: 277; *Melville's Marginalia Online*).

29. Melville, *Published Poems*, 9.

30. Also quoted in David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War*, 554–555.

31. Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 256.

32. Melville, *Published Poems*, 7.

33. Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," 227.

34. Melville, *Published Poems*, 99, 54, 5.

35. Cody Marrs, "A Wayward Art: *Battle-Pieces* and Melville's Poetic Turn," 100.

36. Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 191.

37. Hershel Parker, *Herman Melville: A Biography*, 1: 742–743.

38. See Thomas J. Heffernan, "Melville and Wordsworth." Melville's copy of Wordsworth's *Complete Poetical Works* (Sealts, no. 563a) is also available at *Melville's Marginalia Online*.

39. See also Hershel Parker, "Melville and the Berkshires: Emotion-Laden Terrain, 'Reckless Sky-Assaulting Mood,' and Encroaching Wordsworthianism."

40. See Merton M. Sealts, Jr., *Melville's Reading: Revised and Enlarged Edition*, 227, n. 563a.

41. Melville, *Published Poems*, 894.

42. Hershel Parker, *Melville: The Making of the Poet*, 181–182.

43. William Wordsworth, *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, 394; also at *Melville's Marginalia Online*.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., 414.

46. Ibid., 421.

47. Ibid.

48. Melville, *Published Poems*, 64.

49. Thomas Carlyle, orig. pub. 1837, *The French Revolution: A History*, 261.

50. Wordsworth, *Complete Poetical Works*, 439.

51. Ibid., 485.

52. Melville's revised copy of *Battle-Pieces* is housed at the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

53. Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 277. For a thorough discussion of the tension between the declaratory and regulatory dimensions of Wise Draco, see Deak Nabers, *Victory of Law: The Fourteenth Amendment, the Civil War, and American Literature, 1852–1867*, 147–148.

54. Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 70.

55. Rosanna Warren, *Fables of the Self*, 221.

56. Wordsworth, *Complete Poetical Works*, 130.

57. John Keats, *The Letters of John Keats*, 1: 387.

58. In 1862, Melville purchased a three-volume set of Cowley's *Works*, which he marked and annotated (Sealts, no. 160a). For an account of Wordsworth's allusions to Cowley and Milton, see Christopher Ricks, *Allusion to the Poets*, 95–98, 103–104.

59. Milton, *Poetical Works*, 2: 150; also at *Melville's Marginalia Online*. See also the recent findings in Melville's marginalia to Milton in Steven Olsen-Smith, Peter Norberg, and Dennis C. Marnon, "Newly Recovered Erased Annotations in Melville's Marginalia to Milton's *Poetical Works*."

60. Milton, *Poetical Works*, 1: 230; also at *Melville's Marginalia Online*.

61. Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots*, 259.

62. See Mona Domash, "Those 'Gorgeous Incongruities': Polite Politics and Public Space on the Streets of Nineteenth-Century New York City."

63. Hennig Cohen notes that "cynic kings" may be a reflection of the Cynic philosophers, who, apropos Sirius the hunting dog, "took the dog as their badge"; see *Selected Poems of Herman Melville*, 248.

64. Melville, *Published Poems*, 116.

11. MELVILLE'S RECONSTRUCTIONS

1. For a wider discussion of the relationships among religious difference, race, and nation in *Battle-Pieces*, see chapter 4 of my book *Sacred Uncertainty: Religious Difference and the Shape of Melville's Career*, on which this essay draws, as well as a longer version of the present essay, "Melville's Reconstructions: 'The Swamp Angel,' 'Formerly a Slave,' and the Moorish Maid in 'Lee in the Capitol.'" On Reconstruction, see Eric Foner's magisterial *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877*. On the literature of the Civil War, see Randall Fuller, *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature*; Daniel Aaron, *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War*; Timothy Sweet, *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union*; and Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War*.

2. Carolyn L. Karcher, "White Fratricide, Black Liberation: Melville, Douglass, and Civil War Memory," 362.

3. Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson, "Fahrenheit 1861: Cross Patriotism in Melville and Douglass," 346. That Melville moved from a youthful critique of racism and a wider political radicalism to increasing conservatism and conventional racial ideas later in life has become a critical commonplace. Carolyn Karcher offers a compelling version of this argument in *Shadow Over the Promised Land: Slavery, Race, and Violence in Melville's America* and "The Moderate and the Radical: Melville and

Child on the Civil War and Reconstruction." Stanton Garner in *The Civil War World of Herman Melville* suggests that Melville was concerned more with disunion than with race in *Battle-Pieces*. More recently, the "Supplement" has figured in Robert S. Levine and Samuel Otter, *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation*, in the pages of which Karcher elaborates on what she views in her earlier arguments as Melville's affinities for reconciliation ("White Fratricide, Black Liberation"), and Russ Castronovo and Dana Nelson advance a similar interpretation of "Lee in the Capitol" ("Fahrenheit 1861"). Maurice Lee, in contrast, sees the "Supplement" as representative of Melville's broadly "fallibilist sensibility" in relation to questions of knowledge ("Melville, Douglass, the Civil War, Pragmatism").

For critical discussions of race, nation, and aesthetic form in *Battle-Pieces*, see Helen Vendler, "Melville and the Lyric of History"; Faith Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave: American Poetry and the Civil War*; William H. Shurr, *The Mystery of Iniquity: Melville as Poet, 1857–1891*; Cody Marrs, "A Wayward Art: *Battle-Pieces* and Melville's Poetic Turn"; and Rosanna Warren, "Dark Knowledge: Melville's Poems of the Civil War."

4. Herman Melville, *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*, ed. Robert C. Ryan et al., 185. This edition will hereafter be cited parenthetically in the text.

5. Ed Folsom, "'That Towering Bulge of Pure White': Whitman, Melville, the Capitol Dome, and Black America," 97.

6. See "Melville's Marginalia in *The New Testament* and *The Book of Psalms*," *Melville's Marginalia Online*, http://melvillesmarginalia.org, 65. For discussions of Melville's markings in *The New Testament* and *The Book of Psalms*, see Mark Heidmann, "The Markings in Herman Melville's Bibles"; Wilson Walker Cowen, *Melville's Marginalia*; James Duban, "'Visible Objects of Reverence': Quotations from Goethe in Melville's Annotated *New Testament*"; and Brian Yothers, "One's Own Faith: Melville's Reading of *The New Testament and Psalms*."

7. See Merton M. Sealts, Jr., *Melville's Reading: Revised and Enlarged Edition*.

8. Robert Southey, "The Lover's Rock," 109–113.

9. Washington Irving, *The Alhambra*, 2: 446–457.

12. WALT WHITMAN, HERMAN MELVILLE, AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR POETRY ANTHOLOGY

1. Stanton Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 443–444.

2. Cynthia Wachtell, "The Battle of Fredericksburg Revised: Whitman's and Melville's Poems in Draft and Final Form," 4.

3. See Faith Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave: American Poetry and the Civil War*, 281–282.

4. Walt Whitman, "Reconciliation," in *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, 23.

5. Herman Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, 269.

6. See Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave*, 6–7.

7. See Coleman Hutchison, *Apples and Ashes: Literature, Nationalism, and the Confederate States of America*, 46–49.

8. See Barrett, *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave*, 9.

9. Ibid., 187–188.

10. Hutchison, *Apples and Ashes*, 141.

11. William Gilmore Simms, ed., in *War Poetry of the South*, v.

12. Hutchison, *Apples and Ashes*, 5–10.

13. Francis Fisher Brown, ed., in *Bugle Echoes: A Collection of Poems of the Civil War, Northern and Southern*, viii.

14. Ibid., vii. Brown included "Beat! Beat! Drums!," "Bivouac on a Mountain Side," "Come Up from the Fields Father," "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," "O Captain! My Captain!," and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."

15. George Cary Eggleston, ed., in *American War Ballads and Lyrics*, 3–4.

16. See Jerome Loving, *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself*, 304.

17. Henry James, Jr. (unsigned in original), "Mr. Walt Whitman."

18. Anonymous, "Review of Drum-Taps," *The Independent*, December 7, 1865, *The Walt Whitman Archive*, ed. Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price, https://whitman archive.org.

19. William Dean Howells, "Drum-Taps."

20. See Cody Marrs, *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*, 26–27, 58.

21. William Dean Howells, untitled review, *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1867, in Brian Higgins and Hershel Parker, eds., *Herman Melville: The Contemporary Reviews*, 526–528.

22. See Marrs, *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*, 90.

23. Anonymous, untitled review, *New York World*, October 1866, in Higgins and Parker, eds., *Herman Melville: The Contemporary Reviews*, 523–524.

24. Anonymous, untitled review, *San Francisco Alta California*, October 1, 1866, in ibid., 521.

25. See Garner, *The Civil War World of Herman Melville*, 440.

26. Andrew Delbanco, *Melville: His World and Work*, 271.

27. Herman Melville, "Letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, June [1?] 1851," in *The Life and Works of Herman Melville*, http://www.melville.org/letter3.htm.

28. See Ed Folsom, "'That Towering Bulge of Pure White': Whitman, Melville, the Capitol Dome, and Black America," 117.

29. See Loving, *Walt Whitman*, 7.

30. Ibid., 40.

31. See Whitman's "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night" and Melville's "Inscription for the Dead at Fredericksburg."

32. Lee Steinmetz, ed., *The Poetry of the American Civil War*, 9.

33. Daniel Aaron, *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War*, xvii, 7, xv.

34. David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, 1–3.

35. Ibid., 219.

36. Ibid., 383.

37. See Catherine Gander, "Muriel Rukeyser, America, and the 'Melville Revival,'" 761.

38. Muriel Rukeyser, *The Life of Poetry*, 68–86.

39. Robert Penn Warren, "Introduction," in Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, 26.

40. Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War*, ix.

41. Ibid., 466, 503, 479.

42. Hutchison, *Apples and Ashes*, 100.

43. Aaron, *The Unwritten War*, 5–6, 67.

44. Ibid., 68, 88, 77.

45. See David Hibler, "*Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*: Melville and Whitman on the Civil War," 146.

46. Vaughan Hudson, "Melville's *Battle-Pieces* and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*: A Comparison," 82, 92.

47. R. Scott Kellner, "Whitman, Melville, and the Civil War: A Sharing of Mood and Metaphor," 102.

48. Jerry A. Herndon, "Parallels in Melville and Whitman," 108.

49. Kent Ljungquist, "'Meteor of the War': Melville, Thoreau, and Whitman Respond to John Brown."

50. See Herndon, "Parallels in Melville and Whitman," 101, and Edgar A. Dryden, *Monumental Melville: The Formation of a Literary Career*, 75.

51. Richard Marius, ed., "Introduction," in *The Columbia Book of Civil War Poetry: From Whitman to Walcott*, xviii, xiii.

52. J. D. McClatchy, ed., "Introduction," in *Poets of the Civil War*, xxvi–xxvii.

53. Faith Barrett and Cristanne Miller, eds., "Introduction," in *"Words for the Hour": A New Anthology of American Civil War Poetry*, 18–19.

54. Folsom, "'That Towering Bulge of Pure White,'" 87.

55. The Melville Society, Ninth International Conference: "Melville and Whitman in Washington: The Civil War Years and After," June 4–7, 2013, http://melville society.org/conferences/international-melville-conference/9th-international -melville-conference-melville-and-whitman-in-washington/.

Bibliography

Aamodt, Terrie Dopp. *Righteous Armies, Holy Cause: Apocalyptic Imagery and the Civil War*. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2002.

Aaron, Daniel. *The Unwritten War: American Writers and the Civil War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973.

Adler, Joyce Sparer. *War in Melville's Imagination*. New York: New York University Press, 1981.

Allen, Gay Wilson. *The New Walt Whitman Handbook*. New York: New York University Press, 1975.

———. *The Solitary Singer: A Critical Biography of Walt Whitman*. New York: New York University Press, 1967.

Anastaplo, George. "Walt Whitman's Abraham Lincoln." In *Lincoln's American Dream: Clashing Political Perspectives*, ed. Kenneth L. Deutsch and Joseph R. Fornieri. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005.

Appendix to Diplomatic Correspondence of 1865: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln, Late President of the United States of America, and the Attempted Assassination of William H. Seward, Secretary of State, and Frederick W. Seward, Assistant Secretary, On the evening of the 14th of April, 1865; Executive Documents printed by order of the House of Representatives, during the First Session of the Thirty-Ninth Congress, 1865–'66. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866.

Arnold, Matthew. *Poems*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1856.

Barnard, George. *Photographic Views of Sherman's Campaign*. http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rubenstein_barsi01001/.

Barnett, Teresa. *Sacred Relics: Pieces of the Past in Nineteenth-Century America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Barrett, Betty. "'Cavalry Crossing a Ford': Walt Whitman's Alabama Connection." *Alabama Heritage* 54 (Fall 1999): 6–17.

Barrett, Faith. "Inclusion and Exclusion: Fictions of Self and Nation in Whitman and Dickinson." *Emily Dickinson Journal* 5, no. 2 (1996): 240–246.

———. "'They Answered Him Aloud': Popular Voice and Nationalist Discourse in Melville's *Battle-Pieces*." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9, no. 3 (2007): 35–49.

———. *To Fight Aloud Is Very Brave: American Poetry and the Civil War*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012.

——— and Cristanne Miller, eds. *"Words for the Hour": A New Anthology of American Civil War Poetry*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005.

Barthes, Roland. *Image, Music, Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana Press, 1977.

Basler, Roy P., et al., eds. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. 9 vols. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953.

Benedict, Marion J. *The God of the Old Testament in Relation to War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1927.

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010.

Bernstein, Iver. *The New York City Draft Riots*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Berthold, Dennis. "Class Acts: The Astor Place Riots and Melville's 'The Two Temples.'" *American Literature* 71, no. 3 (1999): 429–461.

Blight, David W. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Bradford, Adam. *Communities of Death: Whitman, Poe, and the American Culture of Mourning*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2014.

———. "Re-collecting Soldiers: Walt Whitman and the Appreciation of Human Value." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 27, no. 3 (Winter 2010): 127–152.

Brown, Francis Fisher, ed. *Bugle Echoes: A Collection of Poems of the Civil War, Northern and Southern*. New York: White, Stokes, and Allen, 1886.

Brown, Matthew. "'BOSTON/SOB NOT': Elegiac Performance in Early New England and Materialist Studies of the Book." *American Quarterly* 50, no. 22 (June 1998): 306–339.

Buell, Lawrence. "Melville the Poet." In Robert S. Levine, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Buinicki, Martin T. *Walt Whitman's Reconstruction: Poetry and Publishing between Memory and History*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011.

Burke, Edmund. "Reflections on the Revolution in France." London: James Dodsley, 1791.

Burroughs, John. *Notes on Walt Whitman, as Poet and Person*. New York: American News Company, 1867.

———. "Walt Whitman and His 'Drum-Taps.'" *The Galaxy: A Magazine of Entertaining Reading*, December 1, 1866.

Cady, Joseph. "*Drum-Taps* and Nineteenth-Century Male Homosexual Literature." In *Walt Whitman: Here and Now*, ed. Joann P. Krieg. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Carlyle, Thomas. *The French Revolution: A History*. Orig. pub. 1837. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Cartier-Bresson, Henri. *The Mind's Eye: Writings on Photography*. New York: Aperture Foundation, 1999.

Cashin, Joan E. "Trophies of War: Material Culture in the Civil War Era." *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1 (September 2011): 339–367.

Castronovo, Russ, and Dana D. Nelson. "Fahrenheit 1861: Cross Patriotism in Melville and Douglass." In *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation*, ed. Robert S. Levine and Samuel Otter. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Cavitch, Max. *American Elegy: The Poetry of Mourning from the Puritans to Whitman*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

Ceniza, Sherry. *Walt Whitman and Nineteenth-Century Women Reformers*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998.

Coale, Samuel. "Whitman's War: The March of a Poet." *Walt Whitman Review* 21 (September 1975): 85–101.

Cohen, Hennig. "Introduction." In Herman Melville, *The Battle-Pieces of Herman Melville*, ed. Hennig Cohen. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963.

Cook, Adrian. *The Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1974.

Costa, Dora, and Matthew Kahn. "Forging a New Identity: The Costs and Benefits of Diversity in Civil War Combat Units for Black Slaves and Freemen." *Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 4 (2006): 936–962.

Cowen, Wilson Walker. *Melville's Marginalia*. 2 vols. New York: Garland, 1987.

Cushman, Thomas. "The Reflexivity of Evil: Modernity and Moral Transgression in the War in Bosnia." In *Evil after Postmodernism: Histories, Narratives and Ethics*, ed. Jennifer L. Geddes. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Dabney, Robert Lewis. *Life and Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. Thomas J. Jackson*. New York: Blelock and Co., 1966.

Davis, Robert Leigh. *Whitman and the Romance of Medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Dawes, James. *The Language of War: Literature and Culture in the U.S. from the Civil War to World War II*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Day, Frank. *Melville's Use of "The Rebellion Record" in His Poetry*. Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University Digital Press, 2002.

DeGruccio, Michael. "Letting the War Slip through Our Hands: Material Culture and the Weakness of Words in the Civil War Era." In *Weirding the War: Stories from the Civil War's Ragged Edges*, ed. Stephen W. Berry. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011.

Delbanco, Andrew. "The Civil War Convulsion." *New York Review of Books*, March 19, 2015.

———. *Melville: His World and Work*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005.

Derrida, Jacques. *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

DeVries, David, and Hugh Egan. "'Entangled Rhyme': A Dialogic Reading of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9, no. 3 (2007): 17–33.

Djelal, Juana Celia. *Melville's Antithetical Muse: Reading the Shorter Poems*. València: Universitat de València, 2013.

Domash, Mona. "Those 'Gorgeous Incongruities': Polite Politics and Public Space

on the Streets of Nineteenth-Century New York City." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88, no. 2 (June 1998): 209–210.

Douglass, Frederick. *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*. 1892; rpt. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2003.

Dowling, Paul M. "Melville's Quarrel with Poetry." In Herman Melville, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*. 1866; rpt. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2001.

Dryden, Edgar A. *Monumental Melville: The Formation of a Literary Career*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Duban, James. "'Visible Objects of Reverence': Quotations from Goethe in Melville's Annotated *New Testament*." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9, no. 2 (2007): 3–23.

Duggan, Robert A., Jr. "'Sleep No More' Again: Melville's Rewriting of Book X of Wordsworth's *Prelude*." *Transatlantic Romanticism: A Special Issue of Romanticism on the Net* 38–39 (May 2005), https://ronjournal.org/articles/n38-39.

Eggleston, George Cary, ed. *American War Ballads and Lyrics*. New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1889.

Eicher, David J. *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001.

Eiselein, Gregory. *Literature and Humanitarian Reform in the Civil War Era*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.

Erkkila, Betsy. *Whitman the Political Poet*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Fahs, Alice. *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South, 1861–1865*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. New York: Vintage Books, 2008.

Feldman, Mark B. "Remembering a Convulsive War: Whitman's *Memoranda During the War* and the Therapeutics of Display." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 23, nos. 1 and 2 (Summer/Fall 2005): 1–25.

Finch, Annie. *The Ghost of Meter: Culture and Prosody in American Free Verse*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993.

Finseth, Ian. "On *Battle-Pieces*: The Ethics of Aesthetics in Melville's Civil War Poetry." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 12, no. 3 (2010): 71–89.

Folsom, Ed. "Lucifer and Ethiopia: Whitman, Race, and Poetics before the Civil War and After." In *A Historical Guide to Walt Whitman*, ed. David S. Reynolds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

———. "'That Towering Bulge of Pure White': Whitman, Melville, the Capitol Dome, and Black America." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 16, no. 1 (2014): 87–120.

———. *Walt Whitman's Native Representations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877.* New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

Fuller, Randall. *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Gander, Catherine. "Muriel Rukeyser, America, and the 'Melville Revival.'" *Journal of American Studies* 44, no. 4 (2010): 759–775.

Gardner, Alexander. *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War.* New York: Dover Publications, 1956.

Garner, Stanton. *The Civil War World of Herman Melville.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993.

Genoways, Ted. "Civil War Poems in 'Drum-Taps' and 'Memories of President Lincoln.'" In *A Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed. Donald D. Kummings. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006.

———. "The Disorder of *Drum-Taps*." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2006/Winter 2007): 98–116.

———. *Walt Whitman and the Civil War: America's Poet during the Lost Years of 1860–1862.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Glicksberg, Charles I., ed. *Walt Whitman and the Civil War: A Collection of Original Articles and Manuscripts.* New York: A. S. Barnes, 1963.

Grey, Robin. "Annotations on Civil War: Melville's *Battle-Pieces* and Milton's War in Heaven." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 4, nos. 1 and 2 (2002): 51–70.

Grieve-Carlson, Gary. "'The House-top': Melville's Poem of Force." *War, Literature, and the Arts* 24, no. 1 (2012): 1–10.

Grossman, Allen. "The Poetics of Union in Whitman and Lincoln: An Inquiry Toward the Relationship of Art and Policy." In Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Michael Moon. New York: W. W. Norton, 2002.

Harman, Graham. "The Well-Wrought Broken Hammer: Object-Oriented Literary Criticism." *New Literary History* 43, no. 2 (2012): 183–203.

Harris, Leslie M. *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626–1863.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Harvey, Eleanor Jones. *The Civil War and American Art.* New York and New Haven: Smithsonian American Art Museum and Yale University Press, 2012.

Harvey, Nancy Lenz. "Whitman's Use of 'Arms' in *Leaves of Grass*." *Walt Whitman Review* 18, no. 4 (December 1972): 136–138.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Tales, Sketches, and Other Papers.* Ed. George Parsons Lathrop. *The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne.* 13 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1883.

Hayes, Kevin. *The Cambridge Introduction to Herman Melville.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Heffernan, Thomas J. "Melville and Wordsworth." *American Literature* 49, no. 3 (1977): 338–351.

Heidmann, Mark. "The Markings in Herman Melville's Bibles." *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1990): 341–398.

Henry, Barbara. *Walt Whitman's Faces: A Typographic Reading*. Jersey City, N.J.: Harsimus Press, 2012.

Herndon, Jerry A. "Parallels in Melville and Whitman." *Walt Whitman Review* 24, no. 3 (1978): 98–108.

Hibler, David. "*Drum-Taps* and *Battle-Pieces*: Melville and Whitman on the Civil War." *Personalist* 50, no. 1 (1969): 130–147.

Higgins, Brian, and Hershel Parker, eds. *Herman Melville: The Contemporary Reviews*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Hitt, Ralph E. "Melville's Poems of the Civil War Controversy." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 2 (1969): 57–68.

Howe, Daniel Wait. *Political History of Secession*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1914.

Howells, William Dean. "Drum-Taps." *The Round Table*, November 11, 1865.

Hudgins, Andrew. "Walt Whitman and the South." *Southern Literary Journal* 15, no. 1 (Fall 1982): 91–100.

Hudson, Vaughan. "Melville's *Battle-Pieces* and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*: A Comparison." *Walt Whitman Review* 19, no. 3 (1973): 81–92.

Huffstetler, Edward. "The American South." In *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*, ed. J. R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings. New York: Garland, 1998.

Hughes, Langston. *Montage of a Dream Deferred*. New York: Holt, 1951.

Hutchison, Coleman. *Apples and Ashes: Literature, Nationalism, and the Confederate States of America*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012.

Irving, Washington. *The Alhambra. The Works of Washington Irving*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1840.

Jalal, Mustafa. "*Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, The Novelist as Poet: A Study in the Dramatic Poetry of Herman Melville." *American Studies International* 39 (June 2001): 71–85.

James, Henry, Jr. "Mr. Walt Whitman." *Nation*, November 16, 1865.

Kaplan, Justin. *Walt Whitman: A Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980.

Karcher, Carolyn L. "The Moderate and the Radical: Melville and Child on the Civil War and Reconstruction." *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 45, nos. 3 and 4 (1999): 187–257.

———. *Shadow Over the Promised Land: Slavery, Race, and Violence in Melville's America*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980.

———. "White Fratricide, Black Liberation: Melville, Douglass, and Civil War Memory." In *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation*, ed. Robert S. Levine and Samuel Otter. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Keats, John. *The Letters of John Keats*. Ed. Hyder Edward Rollins. 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Kellner, R. Scott. "Whitman, Melville, and the Civil War: A Sharing of Mood and Metaphor." *American Notes and Queries* 13 (March 1975): 102–105.

Kete, Mary Louise. *Sentimental Collaborations: Mourning and Middle-Class*

Identity in Nineteenth-Century America. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000.

Kinney, Katherine. "Making Capital: War, Labor, and Whitman in Washington, D.C." In *Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*, ed. Betsy Erkkila and Jay Grossman. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Klement, Frank L. "Catholics as Copperheads during the Civil War." *Catholic Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (January 1994): 44–45.

Kramer, Aaron. *Melville's Poetry: Toward the Enlarged Heart*. Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1972.

Kramer, Lawrence. "Introduction: *Drum-Taps*, *Leaves of Grass*, and the Civil War." In Walt Whitman, *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*, ed. Lawrence Kramer. New York: New York Review of Books Poets, 2015.

Kummings, Donald D., ed. *A Companion to Walt Whitman*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006.

Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits*. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007.

Lankford, Nelson. *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital*. New York: Viking, 2002.

Larson, Kerry. *Whitman's Drama of Consensus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Lee, Anthony W., and Elizabeth Young. *On Alexander Gardner's "Photographic Sketch Book" of the Civil War*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Lee, Maurice. "Melville, Douglass, the Civil War, Pragmatism." In *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation*, ed. Robert S. Levine and Samuel Otter. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust Was a Neuroscientist*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

Levine, Robert S., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

——— and Samuel Otter, eds. *Frederick Douglass and Herman Melville: Essays in Relation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Leyda, Jay. *The Melville Log: A Documentary Life of Herman Melville, 1819–1891*. 2 vols. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1951.

Lincoln, Abraham. "Inaugural Address." March 4, 1865, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25819.

———. "Second Annual Message to Congress." December 1, 1862, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29503.

Ljungquist, Kent. "'Meteor of the War': Melville, Thoreau, and Whitman Respond to John Brown." *American Literature* 61, no. 4 (1989): 674–680.

Lloyd, Phoebe. "Posthumous Mourning Portraiture." In *A Time to Mourn: Expressions of Grief in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Martha V. Pike and Janice Gray Armstrong. Stony Brook, N.Y.: Museums at Stony Brook, 1980.

Longman, Tremper, III, and Daniel G. Reid. *God Is a Warrior*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1995.

Loving, Jerome. *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Lowenfels, Walter, ed. *Walt Whitman's Civil War*. 1960; rpt. Boston: Da Capo Press, 1989.

Mancuso, Luke. "Civil War." In *A Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed. Donald D. Kummings. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006.

Marius, Richard, ed. *The Columbia Book of Civil War Poetry: From Whitman to Walcott*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Marrs, Cody. *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

———. "A Wayward Art: *Battle-Pieces* and Melville's Poetic Turn." *American Literature* 82, no. 1 (2010): 91–119.

Martin, Doug. *A Study of Walt Whitman's Mimetic Prosody: Free-Bound and Full Circle*. New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004.

May, Henry. *Speeches of the Hon. Henry May, of Maryland, Delivered in the House of Representatives, At the Third Session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress*. Baltimore, Md.: Kelly, Hedian, and Piet, 1863.

McClatchy, J. D., ed. *Poets of the Civil War*. Washington, D.C.: Library of America, 2005.

McKinsey, Elizabeth R. *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

McPherson, James M. *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

———. *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964.

McWilliams, John P., Jr. "'Drum Taps' and *Battle-Pieces*: The Blossom of War." *American Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1971): 181–201.

Melville, Herman. *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1866.

———. *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: A Facsimile Reproduction*. Ed. Sydney Kaplan. Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1960.

———. *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*. 1866; rpt., with a new introduction by Lee Rust Brown, Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 1995.

———. *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*. Ed. Richard H. Cox and Paul M. Dowling. 1866; rpt. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2001.

———. *The Battle-Pieces of Herman Melville*. Ed. Hennig Cohen. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1963.

———. *Billy Budd, Sailor and Other Uncompleted Writings*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Alma MacDougall Reising, G. Thomas Tanselle, and Robert Sandberg. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 2017.

———. *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Alma MacDougall Reising, Hershel Parker, G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1991.

———. *The Confidence-Man: His Masquerade*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel

Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1984.

———. *Correspondence*. Ed. Lynn Horth. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1993.

———. *Journals. The Writings of Herman Melville*. Ed. Howard C. Horsford and Lynn Horth. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1989.

———. *Mardi and a Voyage Thither*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1970.

———. "Melville's Marginalia in *The New Testament* and *The Book of Psalms*." In *Melville's Marginalia Online*, ed. Steven Olsen-Smith, Peter Norberg, and Dennis C. Marnon, http://melvillesmarginalia.org.

———. *Moby-Dick, or The Whale*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1988.

———. *Piazza Tales and Other Prose Pieces, 1839–1860*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Alma A. MacDougall, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1996.

———. *The Poems of Herman Melville*. Ed. Douglas Robillard. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2000.

———. *Published Poems: Battle-Pieces, John Marr, Timoleon*. Ed. Robert C. Ryan, Harrison Hayford, Alma MacDougall Reising, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 2009.

———. *Selected Poems of Herman Melville*. Ed. Hennig Cohen. New York: Fordham University Press, 1991.

———. *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*. Ed. Robert Penn Warren. 1970; rpt. New York: David R. Godine, 2004.

———. *White-Jacket; or, The World in a Man-of-War*. Ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle. *The Writings of Herman Melville*. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1970.

Menand, Louis. *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.

Milder, Robert. *Exiled Royalties: Melville and the Life We Imagine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

———. "The Rhetoric of Melville's *Battle-Pieces*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 44, no. 2 (1989): 173–200.

Miller, Cristanne. "*Drum-Taps*: Revisions and Reconciliation." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 26 (Spring 2009): 171–196.

Miller, James E. *Walt Whitman*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

Miller, Randall M., Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson, eds. *Religion and the American Civil War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Miller, Robert J. *Both Prayed to the Same God: Religion and Faith in the American Civil War.* Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2007.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost.* Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. Indianapolis: Odyssey Press, 1962.

———. *The Poetical Works of John Milton.* 2 vols. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, 1836.

Mitchell, W. J. T. *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Moon, Michael. *Disseminating Whitman: Revision and Corporeality in "Leaves of Grass."* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Moorhead, James H. *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1978.

Morris, Roy, Jr. *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Morton, Timothy. "Sublime Objects." *Speculations* 2 (2011): 207–227.

Mullins, Maire. "Stopping History in Walt Whitman's 'Drum-Taps.'" *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 17 (Summer/Fall 1999): 4–14.

Murray, Martin G. "Responding Kisses: New Evidence about the Origins of 'Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night.'" *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 25, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 192–197.

Nabers, Deak. "Victory of Law: Melville and Reconstruction." *American Literature* 75, no. 1 (March 2003): 1–30.

———. *Victory of Law: The Fourteenth Amendment, the Civil War, and American Literature, 1852–1867.* Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Neely, Mark E., Jr. "Whitman and the Civil War: A Response to Helen Vendler." *Michigan Quarterly Review* 39 (Winter 2000): 25–35.

Niditch, Susan. *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Niebuhr, Reinhold. *The Irony of American History.* 1952; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Nussbaum, Martha. *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Olmsted, Frederick Law. *Hospital Transports: A Memoir of the Embarkation of the Sick and Wounded from the Peninsula of Virginia in the Summer of 1862.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1863.

Olsen-Smith, Steven, Peter Norberg, and Dennis C. Marnon. "Newly Recovered Erased Annotations in Melville's Marginalia to Milton's *Poetical Works.*" *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 17, no. 2 (June 2015): 59–73.

Orvell, Miles. *American Photography.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Osiel, Mark. *Mass Atrocity, Collective Memory, and the Law.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1997.

Otter, Samuel. *Melville's Anatomies.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Parker, Hershel. *Herman Melville: A Biography*. 2 vols. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, 2002.

———. *Melville: The Making of the Poet*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2008.

———. "Melville and the Berkshires: Emotion-Laden Terrain, 'Reckless Sky-Assaulting Mood,' and Encroaching Wordsworthianism." In *American Literature: The New England Heritage*, ed. James Nagel and Richard Astro. New York: Garland, 1981.

Pollak, Vivian. *The Erotic Whitman*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

———. "Whitman Unperturbed: The Civil War and After." In *Walt Whitman: The Centennial Essays*, ed. Ed Folsom. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1994.

Pommer, Henry F. *Milton and Melville*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1950.

Rable, George C. *God's Almost Chosen People: A Religious History of the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Reynolds, David S., ed. *A Historical Guide to Walt Whitman*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

———. *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.

Reynolds, Larry J. "Kings and Commoners in *Moby-Dick*." *Studies in the Novel* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1980): 101–113.

Ricks, Christopher. *Allusion to the Poets*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Rogin, Michael Paul. *Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

Rossetti, William Michael, ed. *Poems of Walt Whitman*. London: John Camden Hotten, 1868.

Rubin, Anne S. *Through the Heart of Dixie: Sherman's March and American Memory*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Rugoff, Kathy. "Opera and Other Kinds of Music." In *A Companion to Walt Whitman*, ed. Donald D. Kummings. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006.

Rukeyser, Muriel. *The Life of Poetry*. New York: A. A. Wyn, 1949.

———. "Whitman and the Problem of Good." In *Walt Whitman: The Measure of His Song*, ed. Jim Perlman, Ed Folsom, and Dan Campion. Duluth, Minn.: Holy Cow! Press, 1998.

Samuels, Shirley. *Facing America: Iconography and the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Scholnick, Robert J. "Politics and Poetics: The Reception of Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*." *American Literature* 49, no. 3 (1977): 422–430.

Sealts, Merton M., Jr. *Beyond the Classroom: Essays on American Authors*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996.

———. *Melville's Reading: Revised and Enlarged Edition*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.

Shreve, Grant. "The Shadows of Reconstruction: Marriage and Reunion in Melville's 'The Scout toward Aldie.'" *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012): 9–23.

Shurr, William H. *The Mystery of Iniquity: Melville as Poet, 1857–1891.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1972.

Simms, William Gilmore, ed. *War Poetry of the South.* New York: M. T. Richardson and Co., 1866.

Southey, Robert. *The Curse of Kehama.* Ed. Daniel Sanjiv Roberts. *Robert Southey: Poetical Works 1793–1810.* London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004.

———. "The Lover's Rock." In *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey.* New York: D. Appleton, 1839.

Steinmetz, Lee, ed. *The Poetry of the American Civil War.* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1960.

Steinroetter, Vanessa. "'Reading the List': Casualty Lists and Civil War Poetry." *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 59, no. 1 (2013): 48–78.

Sweet, Timothy. *Traces of War: Poetry, Photography, and the Crisis of the Union.* Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Sychterz, Jeff. "'Silently Watch(ing) the Dead': The Modern Disillusioned War Poet and the Crisis of Representation in Whitman's *Drum-Taps.*" *Discourse* 25, no. 3 (2003): 9–29.

Szczesiul, Anthony. "The Maturing Vision of Walt Whitman's 1871 Version of *Drum-Taps.*" *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 10, no. 3 (Winter 1993): 127–141.

Tarbell, Roberta. "Whitman and the Visual Arts." In *A Historical Guide to Walt Whitman*, ed. David S. Reynolds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Taylor, William R. *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character.* 1961; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Thomas, M. Wynn. *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Thornton, Tamara Plakins. "Sacred Relics in the Cause of Liberty: A Civil War Memorial Cabinet and the Victorian Logic of Collecting." In *New England Collectors and Collections*, ed. Peter Benes. *Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife.* Boston: Boston University Press, 2004.

Traubel, Horace. *With Walt Whitman in Camden.* 3 vols. Boston: Small, Maynard and Co., 1906.

Tuggle, Lindsay. "'Specimens of Unworldliness': Walt Whitman and the Civil War." In *Remaking Literary History*, ed. Helen Groth and Paul Sheehan. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2010.

Vedder, Elihu. *The Digressions of V.* London and Boston: Constable and Houghton Mifflin, 1911.

Vendler, Helen. "Melville and the Lyric of History." *Southern Review* 35, no. 3 (1999): 579–594.

———. "Poetry and the Mediation of Value: Whitman on Lincoln." *Michigan Quarterly Review* 39 (Winter 2000): 1–18.

Wachtell, Cynthia. "The Battle of Fredericksburg Revised: Whitman's and Melville's Poems in Draft and Final Form." *Mickle Street Review* 21 (2016): 1–41.

Ward, Geoffrey C. *The Civil War: An Illustrated History*. Bournemouth: Pimlico Publishing, 1992.

Warner, Michael. "Civil War Religion and Whitman's *Drum-Taps*." In *Walt Whitman: Where the Future Becomes Present*, ed. David Haven Blake and Michael Robertson. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008.

Warren, Robert Penn. "Introduction." In Herman Melville, *Selected Poems of Herman Melville: A Reader's Edition*, ed. Robert Penn Warren. 1970; rpt. New York: David R. Godine, 2004.

Warren, Rosanna. "Dark Knowledge: Melville's Poems of the Civil War." *Raritan* 19, no. 1 (1999): 100–121.

———. *Fables of the Self.* New York: W. W. Norton, 2008.

Welles, Gideon. "Lincoln and Johnson." *The Galaxy: A Magazine of Entertaining Reading* 13 (April 1872): 526.

Wells, Cheryl. *Civil War Time: Temporality and Identity in America, 1861–1865.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005.

Wert, J. Howard. *Complete Hand-Book of the Monuments and Indications and Guide to the Positions on the Gettysburg Battle-Field*. Harrisburg, Penn.: R. M. Sturgeon and Co., 1886.

Whitman, Walt. *The Correspondence*. Ed. Edwin Haviland Miller. 6 vols. *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman*. New York: New York University Press, 1961–1977.

———. "Democratic Vistas." In *Two Rivulets*. Camden, N.J.: New Republic Print, 1876.

———. *Drum-Taps*. New York: Peter Eckler, 1865. In *The Walt Whitman Archive*, ed. Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price, https://whitmanarchive.org.

———. *Drum-Taps: The Complete 1865 Edition*. Ed. Lawrence Kramer. New York: New York Review of Books Poets, 2015.

———. *Leaves of Grass*. Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860–61. In *The Walt Whitman Archive*, ed. Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price, https://whitman archive.org.

———. *Leaves of Grass*. New York: Wm. E. Chapin and Co., 1867.

———. *Leaves of Grass*. Boston: Osgood, 1881.

———. *Leaves of Grass: A Textual Variorum of the Printed Poems*. Ed. Sculley Bradley, Harold W. Blodgett, Arthur Golden, and William White. 3 vols. New York: New York University Press, 1980.

———. *Leaves of Grass: Comprehensive Reader's Edition*. Ed. Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley. New York: New York University Press, 1965.

———. *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*. Ed. Michael Moon. New York: W. W. Norton, 2002.

———. "Memoranda During the War." In *Two Rivulets*. Camden, N.J.: New Republic Print, 1876.

———. *Memoranda During the War*. 1875; rpt. Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, n.d.

———. *Memoranda During the War*. Ed. Peter Coviello. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

———. *Notebooks and Unpublished Prose Manuscripts*. Ed. Edward F. Grier. 6 vols. *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman*. New York: New York University Press, 1984.

———. *Prose Works 1892*. Ed. Floyd Stovall. 2 vols. *The Collected Writings of Walt Whitman*. New York: New York University Press, 1963–1964.

———. *Selected Letters of Walt Whitman*. Ed. Edwin Haviland Miller. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990.

———. *Sequel to Drum-Taps*. Washington, D.C., 1865–66. In *The Walt Whitman Archive*, ed. Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price, https://whitmanarchive.org.

———. *Walt Whitman's Drum-Taps and Sequel to Drum-Taps: A Facsimile Reproduction*. Ed. F. DeWolfe Miller. Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1959.

Williams, Megan Rowley. "'Sounding the Wilderness': Representations of the Heroic in Herman Melville's *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 45, no. 2 (2003): 144–172.

Wilson, Christopher Kent. "Winslow Homer's *Thanksgiving Day—Hanging Up the Musket*." *American Art Journal* 18 (Autumn 1986): 77.

Wilson, Edmund. *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the American Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Wilson, Henry. *History of the Antislavery Measures of the Thirty-Seventh and Thirty-Eighth United-States Congresses, 1861–65*. Boston: Walker, Fuller, and Co., 1865.

Wise, Stephen R. *Gate of Hell: Campaign for Charleston Harbor, 1863*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994.

Woodward, C. Vann. *The Burden of Southern History*. 1960; rpt. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993.

Woodworth, Steven E. *While God Is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001.

Wordsworth, William. *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*. Philadelphia: James Kay, Jun. and Brother; Boston: James Munroe and Co.; Pittsburgh: C. H. Kay and Co., 1839.

Yothers, Brian. "Melville's Reconstructions: 'The Swamp Angel,' 'Formerly a Slave,' and the Moorish Maid in 'Lee in the Capitol.'" *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 17, no. 3 (2015): 63–78.

———. "One's Own Faith: Melville's Reading of *The New Testament and Psalms*." *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 10, no. 3 (2008): 19–39.

———. *Sacred Uncertainty: Religious Difference and the Shape of Melville's Career*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2015.

Contributors

Kyle Barton is a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Iowa and former managing editor of the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*.

Peter J. Bellis is professor of English at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the author of *No Mysteries Out of Ourselves: Identity and Textual Form in the Novels of Herman Melville* (1990) and *Writing Revolution: Aesthetics and Politics in Hawthorne, Whitman, and Thoreau* (2003).

Adam Bradford teaches nineteenth-century American literature and culture at Florida Atlantic University. His work on Whitman has appeared in journals and collections, most recently in *Walt Whitman in Context* (2018). He is also the author of *Communities of Death: Whitman, Poe, and the American Culture of Mourning* (2014).

Jonathan A. Cook is the author of *Inscrutable Malice: Theodicy, Eschatology, and the Biblical Sources of "Moby-Dick"* (2012) and coeditor, with Brian Yothers, of *Visionary of the Word: Melville and Religion* (2017). He is the chair of the English Department at Middleburg Academy in northern Virginia.

Ian Faith is a Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Iowa, where he researches and teaches literature, new media, and media cultures. His previous work has appeared in the *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* and *First Person Scholar*.

Ed Folsom is the Roy J. Carver Professor of English at the University of Iowa, where he edits the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, codirects *The Walt Whitman Archive*, and edits the Iowa Whitman Series for the University of Iowa Press.

Tyler Hoffman is professor of English at Rutgers University–Camden and editor of the Whitman studies journal *Mickle Street Review*. He has published four books on poetry, including *American Poetry in Performance: From Walt Whitman to Hip Hop* (2011) and *Teaching with "The Norton Anthology of Poetry": A Guide for Instructors*.

Timothy Marr is associate professor of American studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (2006). He coedited *Ungraspable Phantom: Essays on "Moby-Dick"* (2006) and has published often on Melville, most recently in the 2017 Norton Critical Edition of *Moby-Dick*.

Cody Marrs is associate professor of English at the University of Georgia and the author of *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War*

(2015), editor of *The New Melville Studies* (2019), and coeditor of *Timelines of American Literature* (2019).

Christopher Ohge is lecturer in digital approaches to literature at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, and a contributing editor to the *Melville Electronic Library* and *Melville's Marginalia Online*. His essays have appeared in *American Literary History*, *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies*, and elsewhere, and his *Publishing Scholarly Editions* is forthcoming.

Vanessa Steinroetter is associate professor of English and codirector of the Center for Kansas Studies at Washburn University. Her scholarship has appeared in edited collections and journals, including the *New England Quarterly* and *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance*, where she published an article on casualty lists and Civil War poetry.

Christopher Sten is professor of English at George Washington University and the author of *The Weaver-God, He Weaves: Melville and the Poetics of the Novel* (1996) and *Sounding the Whale: "Moby-Dick" as Epic Novel* (1996), editor of *Savage Eye: Melville and the Visual Arts* (1992), and coeditor of *"Whole Oceans Away": Melville and the Pacific* (2007).

Sarah L. Thwaites is an independent scholar researching the methods and philosophies of early photography and the relationships between nineteenth-century American literature and technologies of light. Her previous work has appeared in the *Journal of Design History* and the *European Journal of American Culture*.

Brian Yothers is the Frances Spatz Leighton Endowed Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Texas at El Paso and the author of *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790–1876* (2007) and *Sacred Uncertainty: Religious Difference and the Shape of Melville's Career* (2015) and coeditor, with Jonathan Cook, of *Visionary of the Word: Melville and Religion* (2017).

Index

Page references for illustrations and figures are in *italics*.

THE IOWA WHITMAN SERIES

Whitman and Dickinson: A Colloquy,
    edited by Éric Athenot and
    Cristanne Miller
*Whitman East and West: New Contexts
    for Reading Walt Whitman,*
    edited by Ed Folsom

*Whitman Noir: Black America
    and the Good Gray Poet,*
    edited by Ivy G. Wilson
*Whitman's Drift: Imagining
    Literary Distribution,*
    by Matt Cohen