

# THE QUARTO

NO. 34

THE CLEMENTS LIBRARY ASSOCIATES

FALL-WINTER 2010

## THE CIVIL WAR REVISITED

April 12, 2011, marks the 150th anniversary of the firing on Fort Sumter that started the American Civil War. If the centennial events of 1961-65 are any indication, 2011-15 will produce a tremendous outpouring of interest in the war. When that happens, the Clements Library will attract an impressive level of attention, since the Civil War collections here are wide, deep, and magnificent. If we are not yet the research library for scholars of the conflict, as we surely are for the American Revolution, we've certainly attained the level of "an important Civil War library that researchers overlook at their own risk." Thousands of soldiers' letters, shelves that groan under the weight of regimental histories, photographs and other images of the war and its participants, maps of engagements from First Bull Run to the fall of Richmond, manuscript collections on the social and political issues that led to the secession of the Southern states, and a rich array of material on Reconstruction are already here. Complementary additions arrive every month, and the Clements is indeed a destination for anyone interested in the war and its era in America.

This issue of *The Quarto* reflects the strength of our Civil War holdings. Clayton Lewis writes about photography of the period and the myriad images from the cameras of Mathew Brady,

Alexander Gardner, and hundreds of their lesser-known contemporaries. In "Reading the Civil War," Emi Hastings describes our 1,500 regimental histories and the many personal narratives that provide first-hand recollections of the experiences of soldiers on both sides

from the battlefields. Each of these essays shines light on our collections in a "tip of the iceberg" way, since each discusses only a tiny fraction of our holdings in its subject area or type of material.

Last November the Library

published "*The American Historian's Raw Materials*": *Books Based on the Clements Library Holdings*. This 42-page pamphlet, generously printed for us by Inland Press in Detroit, lists some 500 scholarly books published since 1923 that have made significant use of our collections. The order is chronological, so readers can see that in our early decades nearly all researchers came here for our Revolutionary War and other pre-1860 treasures. That

began to change in the 1960s, reflecting the chronological growth of our collections into the nineteenth century, and the trend has accelerated since. In the last two decades, scholars have published dozens of books on the era of the Civil War that have relied on our holdings. As we continue to build the Schoff Civil War Collection, adding materials in all our divisions, visitation of students and scholars alike on Civil War topics will increase. We'll welcome that, and we'll look forward to the important research and scholarship on 1840-1877 America that will result.

— J. Kevin Graffagnino  
Director



*Confederate-held Fort Gaines and Fort Morgan guarded the entrance to Mobile Bay. Fort Gaines was besieged by Federal troops on August 4, 1864, as Admiral David Farragut's warships steamed past the guns of Fort Morgan during the Battle of Mobile Bay. Fort Gaines surrendered on August 8, and Captain John Cordon executed this oil on canvas of its interior soon after. In November he presented the painting to a Major Howell, in whose family it remained until donated to the Clements Library in 1953.*

of the conflict. Culinary curator Jan Longone illuminates the subject of food by examining the Crimean War work of Alexis Soyer and Florence Nightingale and its impact in America. Barbara DeWolfe, whose exhibit on the first year of the conflict will open on February 28, writes about the Library's resources that document the prelude to war in the months before Confederate guns opened fire on Fort Sumter. Terese Austin looks at two of our best collections on nurses, the letters of Helen M. Noye Hoyt and Cornelia Hancock, excellent examples of the resources here for the study of the American wartime experience away



## POINT OF NO RETURN

Of, in the months preceding the attack on Fort Sumter, one could identify the point of no return when the bombardment of April 12 became inevitable, it would be President James Buchanan's

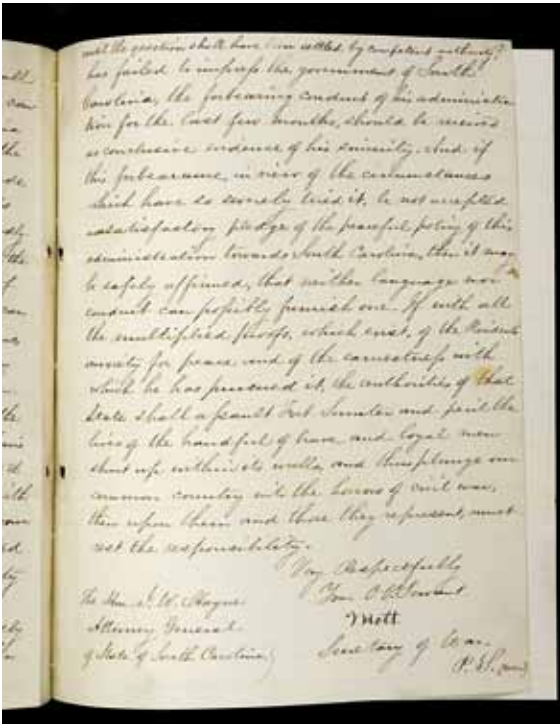
fire." Buchanan holds up both arms, as if to surrender, and replies, "Oh don't! Governor Pickens, don't fire! Till I get out of office." The print is undated, but it was probably published during the three weeks between the arrival of Pickens's emissary in Washington on January 12 and Buchanan's response to the ultimatum on February 6.

On January 11, Pickens had ordered Major Robert Anderson to surrender Fort Sumter, seen in the background of the cartoon, but Anderson would not submit. Instead, he suggested that Pickens go directly to the President with his demands. The following day the governor sent South Carolina's Attorney General Isaac W. Hayne to Washington with a written ultimatum. Hayne arrived on the evening of January 13 and met briefly with the President on the 14th; they discussed the nature of his visit, but Hayne did not deliver the letter. Buchanan informed Hayne that he wanted to see Pickens's appeals in writing, and thus began several weeks of procrastination as both parties consulted with senators and other advisors on how to proceed with this volatile issue. Buchanan wanted peace so that he did not have to deal with a crisis during the last days of his term. Pickens wanted peace because South Carolina, without the formal support of other southern states, did not have the strength to fight the United States alone. As the print suggests, Pickens is essentially shooting himself because he is under pressure from his state's ardent secessionists but fears the ultimatum will backfire and start a war for which South Carolina was not prepared. He is damned if he does, and damned if he doesn't.

Currier & Ives were New York printmakers with pro-Union sympathies

that were reflected in the more than two hundred Civil War prints they published. However, in *South Carolina's Ultimatum* they seem to be ridiculing both Pickens and Buchanan. Buchanan, though he is the chief executive of the United States, wants nothing to do with the issue of federal-owned property in the seceding southern states—Sumter was not the only fort in question—and Pickens, acting as a representative of southern honor, presents an ultimatum that would cast *dishonor* on South Carolina if this act ignited a war prematurely. The printmakers implied the impending explosion by placing the Peace Maker atop a carriage labeled "U.S.," in reference to a disaster that had occurred seventeen years earlier.

In February 1844, the U.S. Navy's new "Peacemaker" cannon, weighing 27,000 pounds, blew up aboard U.S.S. *Princeton* killing two members of President John Tyler's cabinet and four other passengers, one of whom was Tyler's valet, a slave by the name of Armistead. Others, including Senator Thomas Hart Benton were severely injured. The scene was horrifying: ruptured eardrums, spilled bowels, dismembered legs and arms, and blood and brains everywhere. The scene would be repeated many times between 1861 and 1865, but in this case, according to the



Secretary of War Joseph Holt's February 6, 1861, letter to Isaac Hayne made civil war unavoidable. The Clements Library is fortunate to have this very significant piece of Americana in the James S. Schoff Civil War Collection.

response to South Carolina's ultimatum of January 12, 1861. By that time, Buchanan and Francis Pickens, governor of South Carolina, were faced with choices that were not negotiable. Months of conciliations on Buchanan's part, communications, and diplomatic missions to Washington came to a head during the last weeks of January and the beginning of February.

The Clements Library owns a Currier & Ives lithograph entitled *South Carolina's "Ultimatum"* that presents the issue in graphic form. In the cartoon, Pickens holds a lit fuse over a cannon labeled "Peace Maker" that is pointed directly at him, while saying, "Mr. President, if you don't surrender that fort at once, I'll be blown if I don't





printmakers, Pickens was going to light the fuse that would cause the explosion.

The lithograph represents the dilemma as it appeared during the weeks before Hayne formally delivered Pickens's letter to Buchanan on January 31. Prior to that, he communicated with senators and again with Pickens. On January 15, senators representing the seceding states urged Hayne to delay delivering Pickens's letter, and, two days later, Hayne agreed. This communication and subsequent letters between the senators and Hayne were passed on to Buchanan, who responded to the senators on January 22 through his secretary of war, Joseph Holt. Holt wrote that the intent of the President was to preserve peace and prevent bloodshed. He would not order any hostile action against South Carolina unless its forces acted aggressively. As proof of this, he reminded them that Buchanan had not countered with hostility when South Carolina fired on the steamer *Star of the West*, sent in early January with provisions for the garrison at Fort Sumter. However, the President had to protect federal property, and if the safety of the men in the fort were in jeopardy, he would be forced to send reinforcements.

Buchanan believed that his refusal to accede to Pickens's demands via Holt's letter of January 22 would end the matter. On January 23, the senators informed Hayne about the contents of the letter but again urged him not to do anything rash unless the other southern states were to support South Carolina. Hayne, in turn, reported this to Pickens, who wrote a long reply on January 26 in which he stated that he expected a concession from the President. He even offered to buy the fort. He told Hayne to negotiate for Sumter as property and to offer compensation for it "and its appurtenances and contents, to the full extent of the money value of the property of the United States." The January 12 demand to surrender Fort Sumter had turned into an offer to buy it, but the ultimatum stood: should the sale be denied, South Carolina would take it by force. Pickens claimed that the fort fell under eminent domain, and therefore the state had a right to it one way or another,



*Fort Sumter under fire. This image is in The Myriopticon; A Historical Panorama: The Rebellion, a scrolling series of views of important Civil War events produced by Milton Bradley & Co., ca. 1866–90.*

and the sending of reinforcements would be construed as a declaration of war.

On January 31, Hayne wrote his own letter to Buchanan communicating South Carolina's position and also finally submitted Pickens's ultimatum of January 12. Though Pickens gave lip service to preserving the peace, he warned that the continued occupation of Fort Sumter would lead to a "collision of arms, and the prevalence of civil war." The affair was ultimately an emotional rather than a rational one for South Carolinians, and no amount of logic on the President's part would change their minds. The presence of a U.S.-owned fort in their "new country" was an affront. But to Buchanan belonged the last diplomatic salvo.

On February 6, 1861, the President again instructed Secretary of War Holt to write on his behalf to Isaac Hayne, a document that is part of the Clements Library collection. The nine-page response begins: "The President of the United States has received your letter of the 31st Ultimo and has charged me with the duty of replying thereto." To the issue of Pickens's claim of eminent domain, Holt responded that the fort was more than property; it also had "political relations to it, of a much higher and more imposing character than those of mere proprietorship." South Carolina had peacefully seceded from the Union and had no right of eminent domain in the United States any more than "Maryland can assert it over the District of Columbia." The President

further stated that he had no constitutional right to surrender the fort under the limits of his powers as chief executive; it could only be given up by an act of Congress. He argued that the fort was there as a defense against foreign aggression and only existed to protect South Carolina.

The President repeatedly assured Hayne that he wanted peace. "The forbearing conduct of his administration for the last few months should be received as conclusive evidence of his sincerity," Holt wrote. If South Carolina did not accept this forbearance "as a satisfactory pledge of the peaceful policy of this administration," then nothing else would convince them. The President had proven his desire for peace, and if South Carolina attacked Fort Sumter and endangered the lives of the "brave and loyal men shut up within its walls," precipitating "the horrors of a civil war," then the burden of responsibility was on South Carolina and "those they represent."

This response and not Pickens's ultimatum lit the fuse that, over the next two months, burned slowly toward the explosion that followed. Holt's letter enraged Hayne; it was the highest insult. He returned to South Carolina and urged Pickens to take the fort immediately. But Pickens was not ready; he ordered his troops to organize for attack—in fact, South Carolina had been preparing for a military encounter since the day Abraham Lincoln was elected President—but he wanted to wait

until he could get the Confederate government to authorize it. South Carolina could not fight the United States alone, and many of Pickens's southern colleagues, including Jefferson Davis, were urging him to wait.

On February 12, the newly formed Confederate States of America agreed to take over the responsibility for all federal property within its declared jurisdiction. Pickens finally got his support, and all that remained was to decide when to attack. Jefferson Davis appointed P.G.T. Beauregard as the first brigadier general of the Confederate States Army and sent him to Charleston to oversee military operations there. Beauregard surveyed the harbor fortifi-

cations, made changes in battery positions, secured more ordnance, and planned his strategy.

Meanwhile, Lincoln had assumed office on March 4 and spent the next few weeks embroiled in discussions regarding Sumter. Some, including General Winfield Scott, believed surrender to be the only option. Others thought it would demonstrate weakness to back down. Lincoln opted to show strength and maneuvered the decision-making in favor of reinforcing Anderson. Finally, on April 4, Lincoln ordered food, supplies, and troops to be shipped aboard a civilian steamer, accompanied by three other ships. Though bad weather kept the vessels

from entering Charleston Harbor before the attack began, the President's message was clear: we will not back down. But neither would the Confederacy. At 4:30 a.m. on April 12, Confederate batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter.

The course of events between February 6 and April 12 could have been different—Lincoln could have surrendered the fort. However, by doing so, the United States would have compromised its authority and recognized the legality of the Confederacy, an unacceptable option for a president charged with the responsibility of preserving the Union.

— *Barbara DeWolfe*  
*Curator of Manuscripts*

## WARTIME PHOTOGRAPHY

The overwhelming social upheavals of the Civil War era coincided with a rapid series of technical breakthroughs for recording and distributing visual images. Advances in the printing of illustrated newspapers, broadsides, and color lithographs made pictures of current events more attractive and more widely available. The American appetite for visual media increased as pictures transformed print culture. In terms of social impact, the most significant advances were in photography, and they were made just prior to the war. New photographic processes enabled vivid narrative retelling of events that were then reproduced and distributed with industrial-age efficiency. Battlefield violence was virtually transported into parlors with compelling immediacy. Handsome but inexpensive portraits of the war's charismatic leaders and participants were easily obtained. Photograph collecting became a national craze.

In the daguerreotype era, from 1839 to the late 1850s, photographs had been mostly unique, private, personal objects that influenced visual and literary culture without dominating it. With the rise of paper photography and then



*The carte de visite was a popular and inexpensive format for distributing photographic images of prominent individuals. Mathew Brady took this autographed portrait of General George B. McClellan about 1862, when he commanded the Army of the Potomac.*

the mass-production methods of the 1860s, photographic media could still be personal when appropriate but also very, very public. Through giant photo publishing houses a single photographic image could become familiar to the population at large, and thereby very influential. Abraham Lincoln was reported to have stated, "Brady and the Cooper Institute made me President," referring to his widely distributed portrait photograph taken by Mathew Brady and his successful speech in New York during the election of 1860.

As photography shifted from the daguerreotype to paper, the medium gained its narrative and cultural power. It was never practical to produce and distribute daguerreotype images in series, but it was quick and inexpensive to mass-produce card-mounted photo prints. These sets could record events over time and allow an examination of the ground from multiple points of view, recreating the experiences of the actual participants. When war commenced, commercial photographers were ready, literally on the scene with new tools to record the unfolding story with graphic detail and emotional power. Never before had events in human history been so vividly and frequently recalled.

Civil War America was entranced



by the grisly battlefield photos in three-dimensional stereographs and portraits of celebrated heroes in cheap little *carte de visite* format. These published photographs were available in sets at national mail-order houses and individually from local photographers, stationers, and booksellers. The North was fascinated with the Southern secessionists, whose photographic portraits sold every bit as well as those of Union leaders.

Civil War photography was almost exclusively the domain of commercial operators. The conflict created and destroyed careers. Many photographic artists left their local studios to join the military, their absence filled by former assistants or wives. In the blockaded South, photographic supplies quickly disappeared, as most came from Northern sources. Itinerant portrait photographers found lucrative business outside the camps of the armies in the field. Newly paid soldiers often had to run a gauntlet of “camp-follower” photographers hawking quick tintype portraits. Demand was high, but competition kept prices and profits low. Out of the war came stereotypes of the heroic battlefield photographer defying bullets whizzing overhead and the itinerant huckster portraitist, slick-talking war-weary soldiers into spending their last dollars on a photo to be mailed home. Only a very few photographers secured military contracts, but many likely dreamed of a huge payoff by selling out to the government.

For wartime photographers, the greatest cost was in getting bulky equipment and talented operators into the field to capture views of the armies. The most profit, however, was from the sale of portraits, both those taken in the camps of ordinary soldiers and those taken of major figures in urban galleries. Of the 3,000 photographers working during the Civil War, none invested more or were better equipped than Mathew Brady (ca. 1823-96). The premier portrait photographer of his day, Brady put everything he had into documenting the participants and the scenes of the conflict. “Brady of Broadway” bragged that he had “men in all parts of the army, like a rich newspaper.” He and his teams of photographers distributed images nationally through the Edward A. Anthony Company as well as through his own New York and Washington, D.C., galleries. His



Confederate Dead Near Allsop's House, Spotsylvania, a May 1864 shot by Timothy H. O'Sullivan (1840–82). Such images exposed civilians to the harsh realities of war.

photographic display of “The Dead of Antietam” coincided with the publication of engraved versions of his photos in *Harper's Weekly*. The display and the public reaction to it made national news. In spite of, or because of, this high profile, the cost of obtaining and promoting his battlefield photographs ruined Brady financially.

The audience that craved somber battlefield photographs early in the war would shun them later. By the end of the conflict, heroic and brightly colored lithographic prints of the battles were far more likely to be hung on the walls of veterans' parlors. The popular audience for Civil War photographs had largely moved on. However, two massive visual narratives of the war appeared in 1866 in the form of published, limited-edition albums with spectacular, large-format photographic plates. Alexander Gardner's *Gardner's Photographic Sketchbook of the War* and George Barnard's *Photographic Views of Sherman's Campaign* were offered for the enormous prices of \$150.00 and \$100.00, respectively. All indications are that they sold well during the immediate post-war years.

Gardner, a former Brady employee and official photographer to the Army of the Potomac, added a romanticized,

somewhat fictionalized text to accompany each image in his lush, leather-bound, brass-clad, two-volume set. Gardner also broke from Brady's practices by crediting each individual photographer who contributed. He included the most widely reproduced images from the Gettysburg battlefield. Historian William A. Frassanito's research has demonstrated that the photographers working for Gardner relocated bodies and added props to enhance these famous photographs. Barnard, who was employed as photographer for the Military Division of the Mississippi, completed his narrative of Sherman's campaign by revisiting battle sites and enhancing his images by double-exposing cheerfully sunny skies with puffy clouds over the rubble and ruins of the South.

The willingness of nineteenth-century photographers to manipulate their images can be disturbing in our era of journalistic standards. But it is important to consider that the nineteenth-century audience was not seeking impartial facts as much as spiritual, sentimental meanings and evidence of the moral cost and justification of the war. Photographers were seeking journalistic truths but not at the expense of what they saw as greater aesthetic and moral truths. As historian Keith F. Davis has



Above: *The Stars and Stripes flies above the Confederate capitol and the devastated city of Richmond. Views of the ruins became available in every photographic format after Northern photographers flocked to the city following its fall in April 1865.*

Below: *George Barnard's 1864 photograph of captured Confederate fortifications at Atlanta, Georgia. Action scenes of actual battle could not be captured with the cameras of the time, so images of the aftermath of fighting were the best alternative. The dramatic cloudscape was added later by double exposure.*



written, the narrative concept also extends the meaning of these images into a statement on grieving and valor that would not have failed to register with nineteenth-century viewers.

The craze for *carte de visite* portrait collecting continued through the war and ultimately redefined celebrity status in visual terms. By 1865 it was expected that any public figure—political, theatrical, or criminal—would make photographic portraits available to the public. The photograph album evolved into a fascinating social construct representing the ordering of family and the status of friends. Frequent inclusion of commercial photos of national leaders consciously highlighted political and religious values, literally collated into the family.

All this activity was fueled by an intense public interest in visual documentation of the war. Interest continues to be high 150 years later. The Clements's collection of Civil War photos contains great examples of all the major formats and all the major photographers. Researchers have access to excellent prints of many the most widely published images as well as great rarities.

— Clayton Lewis  
Curator of Graphic Materials



# “LEARNING HOW TO COOK AND KILL AT THE SAME TIME” COOKERY IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

## THE ALEXIS SOYER AND FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE CONNECTIONS

Virtually the only cookery manuals distributed on the battlefields and in the hospitals of the Civil War were compilations, in whole or in part, of recipes authored by Alexis Soyer (1809–58). Of the dozen or so published in the North and in the South, nearly all were based on *Soyer's Culinary Campaign* (London, 1857), his reminiscences of service in the Crimean War (1853–56). Thus, soldiers on both sides of the American Civil War relied on recipes devised by a Frenchman to save British lives in an earlier conflict. Sadly, many of these manuals failed to acknowledge Soyer as the source, and some of the recipes are even erroneously attributed to Florence Nightingale (1820–1910).

No central camp mess or corps of trained cooks existed in the early days of the Civil War. Soldiers were issued rations and prepared their own food or pooled it for larger-scale but not-yet-institutionalized cookery. Often, several men were arbitrarily assigned to serve as cooks. It was not until 1863 that the U.S. Army introduced company messes with trained cooks, although cooking by squads and individuals continued. In addition, there was no adequate system to care for the enormous number of casualties caused by the weapons of 1861–65.

The horrors of the Crimean War were a recent memory, and the work of the British Sanitary Commission and of Alexis Soyer and Florence Nightingale was well known in America. American camp and hospital manuals relied almost entirely on their experiences in the Crimea.

These manuals were usually small pocket booklets

meant for individual soldiers learning how to cook and kill at the same time. They were given to the troops by civic, sectarian, and quasi-governmental aid societies. It is surprising that Soyer's contributions to army cookery have gone unrecognized. This is due less to infrequent attribution than to the fact that such manuals are virtually unknown today. Few appear in culinary bibliographies. All are rare, and in several cases only a single copy is known. Absent from cookery collections, they are buried in Civil War archives. How many were actually in circulation and what use they had is impossible to say. They were wartime ephemera that maimed

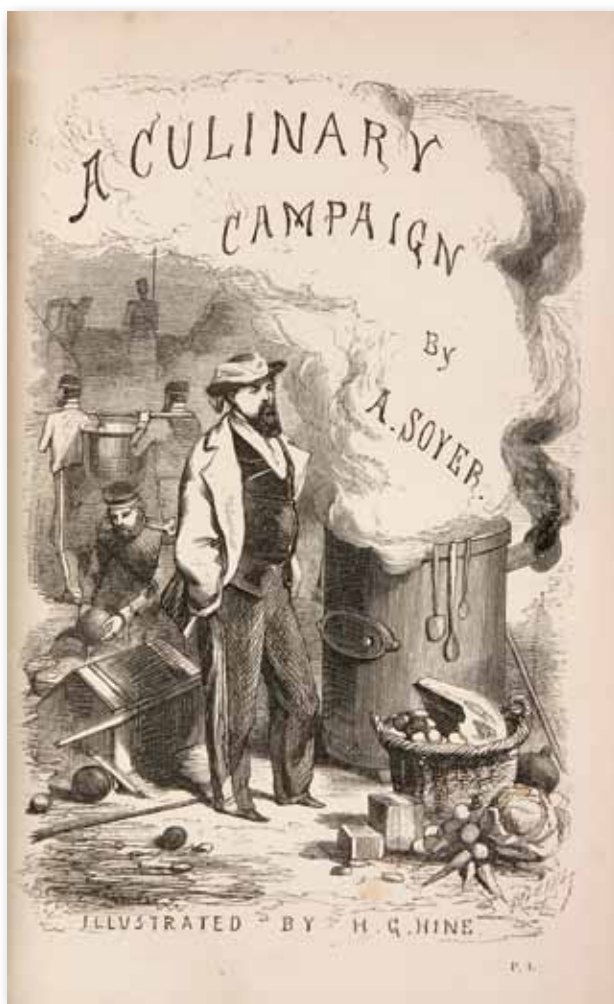
and dazed young men were unlikely to treasure and retain after returning from the war.

Alexis Soyer was a public figure in England. He was the renowned chef at London's Reform Club, who helped to design its vast kitchens and ingeniously introduced all manner of labor-saving and food-conserving methods. Soyer's genius for organization began with his work during the Irish potato famine of the 1840s, when he set up a soup kitchen in Dublin that served many thousands a day. The Crimean War was the first conflict to be covered by photographic and telegraphic reporting.

When news of the deaths of soldiers from “Crimean fever” and starvation in filthy hospitals appeared in the British press, the public outcry was deafening. The government responded by sending Florence Nightingale to reform the care of the wounded. Shortly thereafter, Soyer volunteered to go to the Crimea, at his own expense, to help improve the food for all soldiers in hospital, in camp, and on the battlefield.

Born in France, Alexis Soyer was a flamboyant, self-promoting personality caricatured by Thackeray as the French chef, Mirobolant, in *Pendennis*. When he died of fever contracted in the Crimea, Florence Nightingale wrote, “His death is a great disaster. Others have studied cooking for the purpose of gourmandizing, some for show, but none but he for the purpose of cooking large quantities of food in the most nutritious manner for great numbers of men. He has no successor.”

On Soyer's return to England, with his health undermined by Crimean fever, he wrote *Soyer's Culinary Campaign*. In addition to 512 pages of first-person narrative, this book contains substantial



*Alexis Soyer's culinary memoir of the Crimean War influenced both Union and Confederate military cooking.*



Florence Nightingale, seen here in the frontispiece to her *Notes on Nursing*, was often incorrectly credited as the author of Soyer's recipes. Her contributions to Civil War nursing are without question.

addenda on "Hospital Diets," "Army Receipts," and "Receipts for the Needy." The last includes recipes little changed from their original form in *Soyer's Charitable Cookery; or, The Poor Man's Regenerator* (London, 1847), a compilation of his soup recipes from the Irish famine. These three groups of receipts represent the reservoir from which the Soyer-based recipes of American Civil War-era manuals were derived.

The contributions of Florence Nightingale to modern nursing, hospital administration, sanitation, and public health education are legendary. Her work during the Crimean War was credited with dramatically reducing the mortality rate of soldiers. What is less known is her influence on the American Civil War. When fighting broke out, the U.S. Secretary of War called on her for advice. Nightingale suggested the appointment of sanitary commissions. English historians proudly boast, "the colossal labours and unprecedented success of the U.S. Sanitary Commissions grew naturally from the seed which Florence Nightingale sowed in the death-stricken fields of the Crimea."

In 1859 Nightingale published her pioneering *Notes on Nursing: What It Is, and What It Is Not*, reprinted in Boston in 1860. Two chapters on "Taking Food" and "What Food?" were often

included in Civil War manuals and in official governmental and medical documents. These often had Soyer's recipes, sometimes credited to him, sometimes to Nightingale, and sometimes printed without attribution. The changes made by the American authors are fascinating.

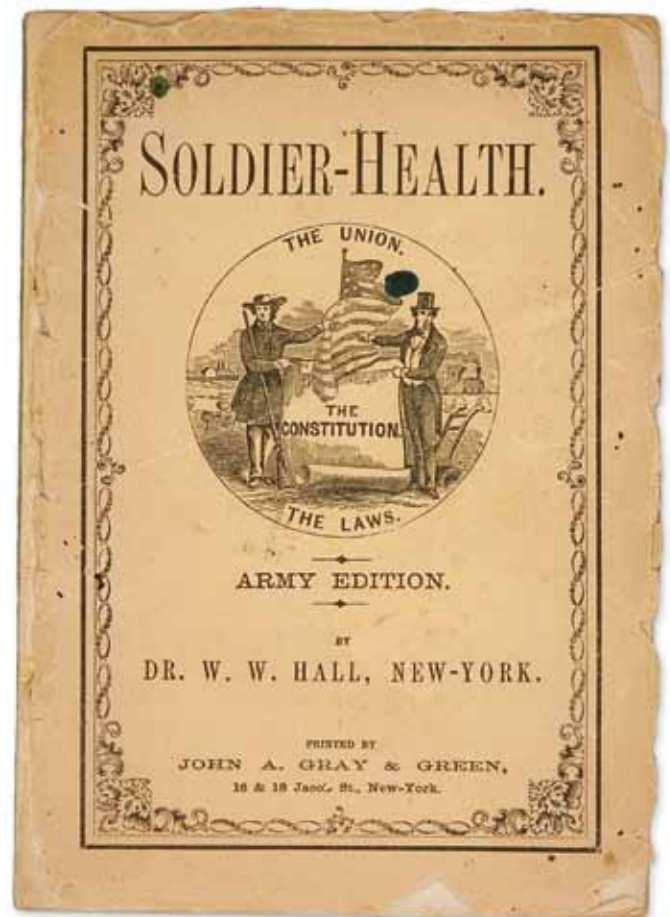
For example, the 1861 Richmond edition of *Directions for Cooking by Troops, in Camp and Hospital, Prepared for the Army of Virginia . . . with Taking Food & What Food?* cites Nightingale as the author. However, the recipes are all from Soyer. When Nightingale mentioned groats in discussing "What Food?" an editor felt the need to explain that perhaps "groats" was a misspelling; what was meant was "grits." Perhaps he was not familiar with groats (buckwheat), which would require much different preparation than grits (corn).

*Camp Cookery and Hospital Diet, for the Use of U.S. Volunteers, Now in Service* (New York, 1861) contains the full text of Soyer's "Hospital Diets" and "Army Receipts." The publisher, with an eye to the home front, also included recipes from Soyer's "Receipts for the Needy," "for the benefit of the families left at home in distressed circumstances." Thus, cheap recipes for the Irish refugees of 1847 were offered to the New York distressed of 1861; indeed, some of the needy could well have been present at both times. Deleted from the New York manual are two "Needy receipts"—conger eels and stewed mussels, both plentiful in American waters but never well appreciated.

The rare *Camp Cookery, Prepared for Massachusetts Volunteers* (Boston, 1861) is part of a regimental history collection. It has a hurried look to it, perhaps printed hastily for the early wave of Massachusetts troops. It is all Soyer but in a hodge-podge. No attribution is given; even subtle references

to the Crimean War have been deleted. Some recipes are abbreviated, others truncated, and overall the appearance is of cut-and-paste. Soyer's text has been changed in several places to make the language less intimidating. His corn "puree" becomes corn "mush;" "maitre d'hotel butter" becomes "butter;" and "Poor Man's Potato Pie" becomes, simply, "Potato Pie." Finally, although this manual is the least physically imposing of the books examined, it is closest to the battlefield, ending with an abrupt reminder of the real business at hand: "If a man bleeds badly from a wound in his arm or leg, a handkerchief should be tied round the limb."

*Soldier-Health. Army Edition* (New York, 1864) was published by Dr. W.W. Hall, editor of *Hall's Journal of Health*. His preface decries the loss of life due to poor sanitary conditions during the Crimean War and concludes: "A sick soldier is not only useless himself, but adds to the encumbrances of the army; hence, a true and wise patriotism requires that each man for himself should study how to preserve his own health in the highest possible condition." Hall included Soyer's "Army Receipts" and "Hospital Diets," little changed.







This carefully staged scene shows Army of the Potomac commissariat staff issuing bread and bacon near Fairfax Courthouse, Virginia. Note the stack of loaves at left. Photo by Timothy O'Sullivan.

One useful recipe was for “Boiled Rice Semi-Curried,” for the “Premonitory Symptoms of Diarrhea.”

*Regulations for the Medical Department of the C.S. Army* (Richmond, 1863) is a recent addition to the Clements Library. This particular copy belonged to Surgeon Thomas H. Fisher, in charge of General Hospital No. 3, Lynchburg, Virginia. All of its recipes are attributed to Soyer, including “Mutton Stewed and Soup for One Hundred Men” and “Crimean Lemonade.” This book is not a field manual for soldiers but rather one of a number of official documents issued for use by professional medical personnel.

The inclusion of Soyer’s recipes—attributed or not—and of Nightingale’s advice continued for many years. Soyer’s influence is apparent as late as the 1896 *Manual for Army Cooks* published by the U.S. Commissary General of Subsistence. The book is thoroughly Americanized, but there are Soyer recipes for Turkish Pillau and Crimean Kebabs. A 1945 work, *Catering and Cooking for Field Forces*, produced for Allied land forces in Southeast Asia, even includes a recipe for “Date

Barm,” which requires a “Soyer Stove.”

The subject of what and how soldiers ate during the Civil War cannot be told as a single story; circumstances and experiences varied widely. The printed literature tells us one tale, diaries present another view. Lawrence Van Alstyne of the 128th New York Volunteers kept a diary throughout the war, laid it away upon his return, and, 45 years later, decided to publish it. His *Diary of an Enlisted Man* (New Haven, 1910) offers a poignant view of Civil War cookery:

“I will say something about our kitchen, dining room and cooking arrangements. Some get mad and cuss the cooks, and the whole war department, but that is usually when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we swallow anything that comes and are thankful for it. The cook house is simply a portion of the field we are in. A couple of crotches hold up a pole on which the camp kettles are hung and under which a fire is built. Each company has one, and as far as I know, they are all alike. The camp kettles are large sheet-iron pails. . . . If we have meat and potatoes, meat is put in one, and potatoes in the other. The one that

gets cooked first is emptied into mess pans. . . . Then the coffee is put in the empty kettle and boiled. The bread is cut into thick slices, and the breakfast call sounds. We grab our plates and cups, and wait for no second invitation. We each get a piece of meat and a potato, a chunk of bread and a cup of coffee with a spoonful of brown sugar in it. Milk and butter we buy, or go without. We settle down, generally in groups, and the meal is soon over. Then we wash our dishes, and put them back in our haversacks. We make quick work of washing dishes. We save a piece of bread for the last, with which we wipe up everything, and then eat the dish rag. Dinner and breakfast are alike, only sometimes the meat and potatoes are cut up and cooked together, which makes a really delicious stew. Supper is the same, minus the meat and potatoes. The cooks are men detailed from the ranks for that purpose. . . . I never yet saw the cooks wash their hands, but presume they do when they go to the brook for water.”

— Janice Bluestein Longone  
Curator of American Culinary History

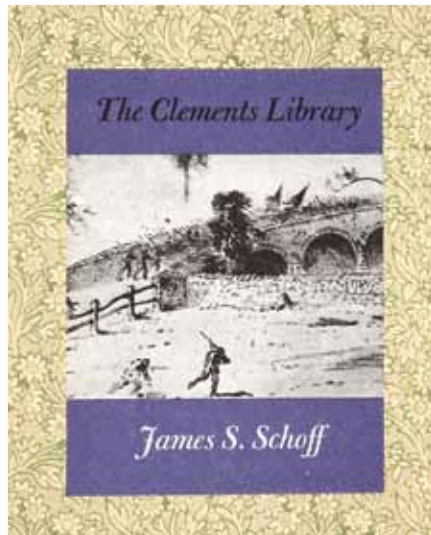
## READING THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War has been the subject of more publications than any other event in American history. Even before the conflict had ended, books on the war had begun to appear. Tens of thousands have been written in the years since then, evidence of Americans' enduring fascination with this topic. The war had touched the lives of common citizens far more than any previous conflict. Participants felt a strong impulse to share their stories in print. At the same time, rising literacy rates and a publishing boom in the late nineteenth century provided greater opportunities for common soldiers to publish their memoirs and histories.

Soldiers' accounts have been invaluable primary sources for historians and genealogists. Veterans of the war penned hundreds of books, including memoirs, collections of correspondence, and histories. One of the most prevalent genres was the regimental history, usually written by one or more veterans of the unit, which recounted its wartime service. Regimental histories usually describe the process of enlistment and the military engagements and campaigns in which the unit participated. They often include rosters, biographical sketches, and anecdotes about military life. One historian, Stephen Z. Starr, called the regimental history "the characteristic literary by-product of the Civil War" and "a peculiar literary species with its own canons and, above all, its own special flavor."

The Clements Library has significant holdings of regimental histories and personal narratives in the James S. Schoff Civil War Collection. When Mr. Schoff made his donation to the Clements Library in 1973, it included nearly 700 books and pamphlets, of

*Captain James H. Baker of Lansing, Michigan, had a custom slipcase constructed to protect his cherished copy of C.A. Stevens, Berdan's United States Sharpshooters in the Army of the Potomac (St. Paul, 1892). Inset on the spine of the case are his post-war membership medals from the Grand Army of the Republic (top) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.*



*The distinctive bookplate for the James S. Schoff Civil War Book Collection.*

which about 400 were regimental histories. Since that initial donation, the Library has continued to add to the collection, which now contains almost 1,500 titles. These include regimental histories, biographies, memoirs, and published letters and diaries representing 37 states and territories on both the Union and Confederate sides. In the past year alone the Library has added nearly one hundred books to the Schoff Collection, through both purchases and gifts. The Civil War is a particularly



active collecting area for the Book Division, especially in light of the upcoming sesquicentennial in 2011. Our focus, as with all acquisitions, is on primary sources written by participants in the events that they recount.

Several useful bibliographies describe, organize, and analyze the avalanche of books on the Civil War to guide researchers in their reading about the conflict. For regimental histories and personal narratives, the essential reference guide is Charles E. Dornbusch's four-volume *Military Bibliography of the Civil War* (New York, 1961-87). This provides the most comprehensive listing of all known regimental histories, biographies, and memoirs. Clements Library cataloging practice is to note the Dornbusch number in the record when available; currently, more than 900 books in the Schoff Collection have Dornbusch citations.

Other bibliographers of the Civil War have offered selective critical appraisals of books, helping readers sift through the massive volume of works to find the true gems. The 1970 publication *Civil War Books: A Critical Bibliography*, sponsored by the U.S. Centennial Commission, provides brief evaluations of 6,000 major works of the Civil War. For example, the opinion on James Bradley's 1894 *The Confederate Mail Carrier, or, From Missouri to Arkansas Through Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee: An Unwritten Leaf of the "Civil War": Being an Account of the Battles, Marches, and Hardships of the First and Second Brigades, Mo., C.S.A.: Together with the Thrilling Adventures and Narrow Escapes of Captain Grimes and his Fair Accomplice who Carried the Mail by "Underground Route" from the Brigade to Missouri*: "Not as exciting as its lengthy title implies."

Regimental histories are more prevalent for Union than for Confederate units, perhaps because of higher literacy rates in the North and a less prosperous economy in the South. One notable Confederate account is Richard Washington Corbin's *Letters of a Confederate Officer to his Family in Europe, During the Last Year of the*

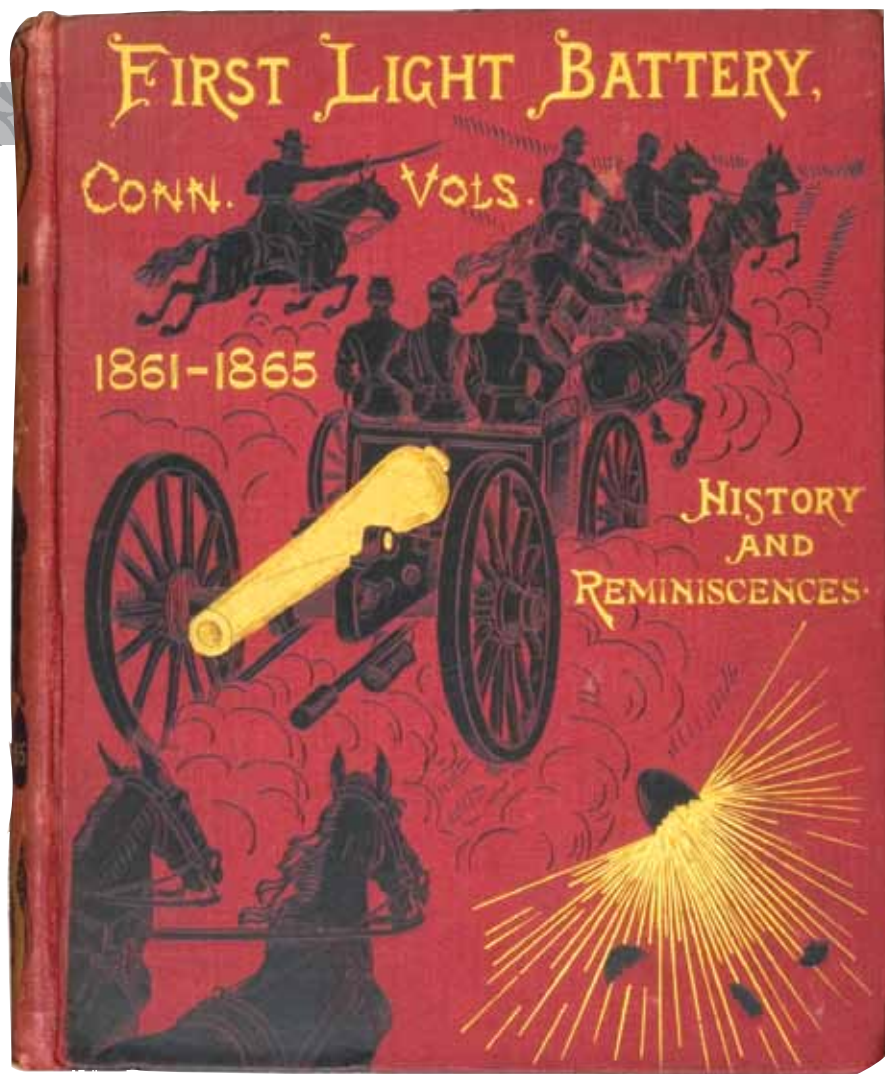


*War of Secession* (Paris, 1902), featured in the Library's summer 2010 exhibit, "Fine Tuning a Great Collection." This book is unusual for having been one of the few Confederate titles published in Europe.

The Schoff Collection documents the Civil War from a variety of perspectives, including those of soldiers and civilians from all walks of life. A landmark publication among these was the first military history of African Americans, written by William Wells Brown in 1867. A prominent abolitionist and former slave, he wrote *The Negro in the American Rebellion: His Heroism and Fidelity* (Boston, 1867) to ensure that the contributions of black soldiers would not be forgotten. Subjects represented in the Schoff Collection include campaigns, battles, prisons, hospitals, spies, and many other aspects of the war, providing a wealth of information for the researcher.

Former owners personalized a number of books in the collection with signatures, bookplates, annotations, and even photographs. In the Library's copy of J.V. Hadley's *Seven Months a Prisoner* (New York, 1898), an account of the author's experience as a prisoner of war, a veteran who served with Hadley wrote inside the book: "H.H. Lyman, Oswego N.Y.—I was well acquainted with Lieut Hadley during the Gettysburg Campaign and subsequently while he was on Gen. Rice's staff as well as while a prisoner from May 5th 1863 until time of his escape. . . . The book gives a faithful acct. of prisoners life as I saw it. H.H.L."

George W. McKey pasted his portrait inside his copy of Charles H. Lothrop's *A History of the First Regiment Iowa Cavalry Veteran Volunteers* (Lyons, Iowa, 1890). He had served as a sergeant in Company A. A note above the photograph reads, "For his son, Geo. Francis McKey." From a biographical sketch in *History of the State of Kansas* (1883), we learn that "[Mr. McKey] is a genial gentleman and a self-made man, being a great observer of men and facts, and takes a lively interest in his town and county. He was married in January, 1867, to Miss Ruth A. Kay, of Mt. Vernon, Ohio; they have two children—Mary E. and George F." The photograph and inscription show how the book as an artifact held meaning for the McKey family.



A particularly dramatic and colorful cover design graces Herbert W. Beecher's 1901 history of the First Light Battery of Connecticut Volunteers.

The first edition of William A. Fletcher's *Rebel Private: Front and Rear* (Beaumont, Texas, 1908), has been regarded by booksellers as "one of the most desirable and rarest of all Civil War books." A 1924 fire destroyed most of the unsold inventory of the first edition, and the few copies that survived all show traces of smoke damage. Particularly rare are undamaged copies sold before the blaze, and the Clements is fortunate to possess one of them. Jehu Franklin Keith purchased his copy only two weeks after it first became available in Beaumont and inscribed his name and the date inside the front cover.

Works written by veterans and others after the war represented an early effort to gain historical perspective on this important event in American history. Some regimental histories and personal narratives are full of colorful anecdotes and stirring accounts, while others are simply dry recitations of names, dates, and official reports. These books are indispensable to historians for their detailed information about particular regiments and individual soldiers, although their objectivity and accuracy are often questionable. Researchers must carefully and critically evaluate

these works as sources, recognizing both their strengths and weaknesses. To construct a coherent narrative of combat, historians must unscramble chaotic battlefield memories recorded by the soldiers themselves. The writers may also have omitted controversies or incidents unflattering to surviving veterans. As one author, Charles Hubert, noted in the introduction to his book, "the history should contain nothing that would in the least justly offend the name or memory of any member of the regiment." Historian Andrew F. Sperry observed, "To judge from these works, every Union regiment was officered by gallant gentlemen who never made tactical mistakes or issued unjust orders, and the rank and file consisted of simple, patriotic boys who cheerfully did whatever was asked of them." Indeed, these books tell us as much about Americans in the late nineteenth century as about the war itself. Through the many words penned by veterans and civilians on both sides of the conflict, we can understand the powerful place of the Civil War in American memory.

— Emiko Hastings  
Curator of Books

## ANGELS OF THE BATTLEFIELD

Civil War soldiers' letters held by the Clements Library provide evidence that many women were as passionately engaged in the conflict as were the husbands, brothers, or fathers they corresponded with. But women had few avenues of participation in the great political and social upheavals the war entailed. Nursing was one of the few paths that enabled women to make a direct contribution to the war effort, and those who pursued this route faced many obstacles, both personal and societal. Some who wished to serve found themselves prevented by their domestic situations—managing a household and caring for children or other relatives were duties that did not allow extended time away. Also, many families were unwilling to allow their daughters or wives to travel long distances—certainly not alone—to engage in work that was perceived as morally perilous. Spending time in close contact with men from such different backgrounds was considered inappropriate for the gently bred. Although these attitudes loosened over the course of the war, they were nonetheless signif-

icant deterrents for many. The Clements has the letters of two remarkable women who managed to let slip their domestic bonds to carve out a meaningful role for themselves in their nation's struggle, broadening their personal experience while making a significant social contribution—the Cornelia Hancock Papers and the Helen (Nellie) M. Noye Hoyt Papers.

Helen M. Noye was born into a well-to-do family in Buffalo, New York. In August 1863, when she was nineteen, she traveled to the Naval Academy Hospital in Annapolis to assist with nursing duties. Helen never explained what motivated her. She had a brother who died early in the war, which might have inspired her to serve, and she also professed a duty to instill Christian values in her patients. Religion played a large part in the “entertainment” provided by the nurses. They read scripture, distributed religious tracts, and organized prayer meetings and sing alongs. Helen frequently despaired of the lack of Christian virtues in the soldiers she encountered. “The work here is often more discouraging than it is possible to

imagine, it is so difficult to approach the boys upon religious subjects, and the frequent proof we have that profanity is withheld only from respect to a lady's presence and not from fear or love of God, is painful in the extreme,” she wrote on October 28, 1863. But after several months at the hospital, as her experience of the soldiers' lives and suffering deepened, she was less willing to judge their lack of faith: “I do not wonder at the infidelity of soldiers. They have much reason to question. The mortality in our section has been great.”

Helen's letters to her family, full of reassurances regarding her health and safety, reveal their concerns about her presence in a masculine, military environment. She emphasized that although the setting was nontraditional, the work itself was satisfying and comfortingly familiar: “It is a noble, womanly work.” She relished the opportunity to feel useful while living a more active life: “I am afraid it should be very hard to change this striving out-of-door life so full of excitement for the sedentary one I led before.” Her perspective was also broadened by contact with soldiers from



*Helen Noye cared for wounded soldiers at the Naval Academy Hospital in Annapolis. This photograph from her papers shows medical tents pitched on the campus.*







*Cornelia Hancock (third from right) photographed with troops of the Second Corps, Army of the Potomac.*

the Union Army or who lived in territory under Federal control). Cornelia's letters illuminate a little-known corner and consequence of the war, the plight of these desperate migrants living in squalid conditions, vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Washington was a mecca for freed and fugitive slaves, who flooded into the city expecting government assistance in starting their new lives. They arrived destitute, injured, and often ill from their long journeys and were taken for treatment to the Contraband Hospital, where staff and medical supplies were grossly inadequate. Cornelia wrote of a woman who arrived with two small boys, one with a broken leg and the other with leg injuries so severe as to require amputation. Both children had been injured when the exhausted mother became dizzy and dropped them on the road.

The soldiers and other inhabitants of Washington resented this influx of "colored people," and contrabands were often considered to be outside the protection of the law. "It is not uncommon for a colored driver to be pounded nearly to death by some of the white soldiers," Cornelia wrote on November 5, 1863. The hopeless conditions prompted her to wonder what had happened to the abolitionists with their talk of freedom, now that the freed slaves were in need of material assistance. She had no sympathy for contrabands who did nothing to help themselves, but she was aware of the obstacles faced by enter-

prising individuals. "Those who are industrious and do labor we find much neglect on the part of employers in paying them consequently there is much less inducement for them to labor than there otherwise would be." The army was one of these employers, using contrabands as a source of cheap or free labor—as servants, cooks, launderers—and whose treatment of the contrabands prompted Cornelia to object to a form of "second-hand slavery."

Although she was an ardent supporter of the contrabands, Cornelia's first priority was aiding Union soldiers. She accepted an invitation to join the Second Corps hospital at Brandy Station, Virginia, in February 1864. From there, she traveled with the soldiers, overseeing the set-up of hospitals at White House Landing and City Point and organizing the care and feeding of the wounded. In gratitude, the soldiers built her a log house to live in for the winter, an unusual luxury in the field. She joined them on the march from Fredericksburg to Washington, and her wagon was shelled in the action around Petersburg in June 1864. At the end of the war, the army escorted her into Richmond—one of the first Northern women to enter the fallen rebel capital.

Like Helen Noye, Cornelia was not entirely free of the burden of social anxiety about her physical and moral well being in a masculine, military environment. She responded firmly to the concern of family and friends: "Sarah [Sinnockson?] wrote me a letter expressive of great concern for my way of living. I wrote her a letter that she will not forget soon. They cannot expect everyone to be satisfied to live in as small a circle as themselves in these days of great events." She maintained that she was treated with respect by the soldiers, and perceived only emotional—not physical—peril. "There is no danger from anything in the army except an unsophisticated individual might possibly have their affections trifled. But as I have long since found I had no affections to be trifled with I am the very one to be here."

Although the collection focuses on her Civil War service, Cornelia's

interest in contrabands revived after the war, and she established the Laing School for Negroes in Pleasantville, South Carolina. After ten years, she moved back to Philadelphia and continued her work as an agent of social reform in the Society for Organizing Charity and the Children's Aid society. She remained active in charitable and social reform work until her death in 1926 at the age of 87.

Civil War nursing provided a small but significant number of women exposure to the social and political crosscurrents of the day and an escape from the circumscribed world of domestic cares. Whether this participation was temporary or a step toward a life of social activism, it gave these women a venue to demonstrate commitment and competence, both to themselves and to the larger society, at a time when the public sphere was largely closed to them.

— Terese M. Austin  
Library Assistant



*"Lizzie," a female contraband sketched at City Point in 1864, was among the thousands of fugitive slaves who made their way to the Union army. Cornelia Hancock tended to the needs of some of them at the Contraband Hospital in Washington, D.C. This drawing is from the Jayne Papers.*



## DEVELOPMENTS

The acquisition of the Henry Strachey Collection was one of the Library's most important accomplishments of the past year, and it was made possible by the support and generosity of the Clements Library Associates. From all of us at the Library, and from the researchers who will scour these documents in the future, our heartfelt gratitude. It all began with a \$150,000 challenge match from an anonymous donor with a deep and abiding interest in American history. In just five months we exceeded that challenge, illustrating the dedication of our members. In October, with these funds and the support of the University, we were able to purchase this remarkable collection.

The papers of Henry Strachey represented a once-in-a-decade opportunity to enhance the Library's collection. It is rare today to see a large cache of American Revolution-era manuscripts come on the market, and adding the Strachey material to the voluminous primary sources already at the Clements makes the Library even more attractive as a destination for Revolutionary War researchers.

We have also reinvigorated our membership programs. We initiated a new series, "Collecting Americana," with Wes Cowan of "Antiques Roadshow" and "History Detectives" as our first speaker. We also instituted "An Afternoon with the Curators," a series of discussions that complement the exhibits in the Great Room. Watch for the next one, which will focus on the Civil War exhibit opening February 28, 2011. Upcoming programs will include Curator of Books Emi Hastings speaking about women book collectors and Kelly Sisson Lessens, University of Michigan Ph.D. candidate, giving a talk titled "King Corn in the Kitchen, 1877-1918." Our Founder's Day lecture on March 31 will feature Peter Wood, Professor Emeritus of History, Duke University, discussing his new book, *Near Andersonville: Winslow Homer's Civil War*.

A gift from the Frederick S. Upton Foundation has allowed the Library staff to design a new website, which will help

users better navigate our collections and learn about our services. The site should be up and running by the spring of 2011, and it will greatly enhance our ability to reach our members and patrons.

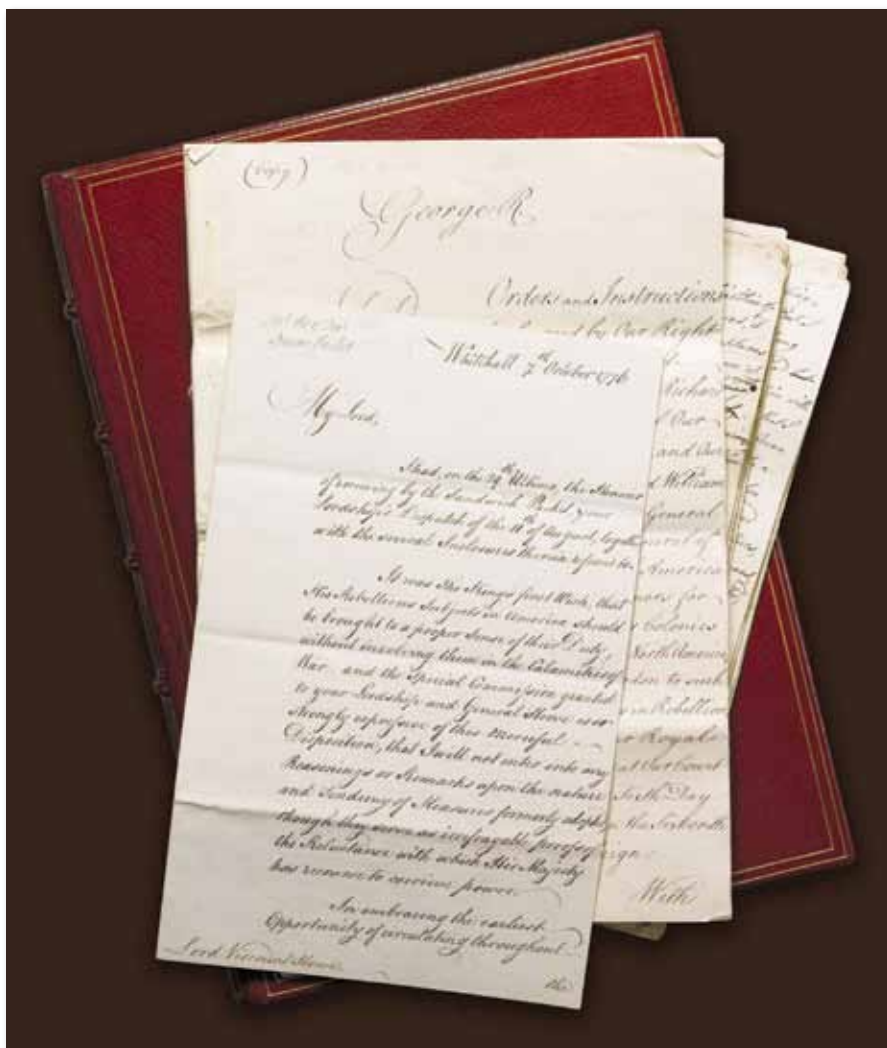
The Library also has a new publication, *"The American Historian's Raw Materials": Books Based on the Clements Library Holdings*, that dramatically highlights how our collections have shaped four generations of early American historiography. Please contact me if you would like to have a copy of this important volume.

In December, we sent an appeal to our Associates to renew their memberships. To all who have responded, thank you for continuing to support this wonderful institution. If you would like

more information about renewing your membership, please contact me at [annrock@umich.edu](mailto:annrock@umich.edu) or (743) 358-9770.

For 87 years, the Library has enriched the lives of historians around the world. Since 1947, the Clements Library Associates has been the backbone of our acquisitions program and the core of our most loyal support. And our success is increasing. In the last year, our membership has grown by more than 100 as people learn about all that the Library has to offer. The Clements is a special place, and the support of our Associates ensures that each year will bring further success to our efforts.

— Ann Rock  
Director of Development



A small sampling of the Strachey Papers. Photo courtesy of Sotheby's.



This 1863 sheet music celebrated General William S. Rosecrans (1819–98), who then commanded the Union Army of the Cumberland. He did not prove quite so victorious as the title suggests.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**October 18, 2010 – February 18, 2011:**  
Exhibit: “Sugar in the Atlantic World: Trade & Taste.” Weekdays, 1:00-4:45 p.m.

**February 3, 2011:** Lecture by Curator of Graphic Materials Clayton Lewis: “Architecture, Art, and Artifacts at the Clements.” 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**February 28, 2011 – June 3, 2011:**  
Exhibit: “Opening Guns: The First Year of Civil War.” Weekdays, 1:00-4:45 p.m.

**March 3, 2011:** Welcome event for the Strachey Papers. 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**March 17, 2011:** Lecture by Curator of Books Emi Hastings: “Women in the Rare Book Field.” 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**March 31, 2011:** Founder’s Day Program. Peter Wood will speak on his book *Near Andersonville: Winslow Homer’s Civil War*. 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**April 14, 2011:** “An Afternoon with the Curators” featuring the exhibit “Opening Guns: The First Year of Civil War.” 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**April 28, 2011:** Lecture by Kelly Sisson Lessens: “King Corn in the Kitchen, 1877–1918.” 4:00-6:00 p.m.

**May 3, 2011:** Clements Library Associates Board of Governors Meeting.

**May 22, 2011:** Ann Arbor Antiquarian Book Fair. Michigan Union Ballroom, 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Proceeds benefit the Clements Library.

**June 13, 2011 – October 7, 2011:**  
Exhibit: “Nineteenth Century American Sport.” Weekdays, 1:00-4:45 p.m. Closed Fridays, June – Labor Day.



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Clements Library Associates share an interest in American history and a desire to ensure the continued growth of the Library’s collections. Funds received from Associate memberships are used to purchase historical materials. Annual Membership Contributions: Student \$5, Donor \$40, Associate \$75, Patron \$100, Fellow \$250, Benefactor \$500, Contributor \$1000 and above. Contributions are tax deductible in accordance with current federal and state law and may be made by check or credit card.

Published by the Clements Library • University of Michigan  
909 S. University Avenue • Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1190  
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