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THE DIARY OF PRIVATE ALEXANDER HOBBS, 42ND MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT: THE LIFE OF A UNION SOLDIER IN TEXAS

by

JAMES VERNON MURPHY

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

THE DIARY OF PRIVATE ALEXANDER HOBBS, 42ND MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT: THE LIFE OF A UNION SOLDIER IN TEXAS

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Alexander Hobbs's diary records, from a Union perspective, the excitement of enlistment, impressions of southerners—both black and white—the confusion of combat, and the depression and helplessness of a prisoner of war. Hobbs, serving the Union as an infantryman in Louisiana and Texas, also preserves his experiences at a critical change in Civil War policy concerning parole and exchange. He is one of the last Civil War soldiers to be incarcerated as a parolee under the Dix-Hill Cartel by his own government. Never exchanged, he finally returns to Massachusetts.

Originally from Canada, Hobbs enlisted with the Forty-second Massachusetts Regiment in September 1862, fought in the Battle of Galveston on January 1, 1863, and was captured there. After being imprisoned in Houston, he was marched as a parolee from Texas to Louisiana, where he was held in a Union parole camp until discharged in July 1863.
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Page 239. Sketch of The Battle of Galveston, January 1, 1863. Unknown Artist, Rosenberg Library


PREFACE

In the last ten years there has been a significant renewal of interest in the American Civil War on the part of a large number of Americans. Authors such as James McPherson, Shelby Foote, and Ken Burns created a new interest in all aspects of the Civil War, especially the letters and diaries of the soldiers, and brought this profound event in American history alive for a new generation of Civil War enthusiasts. This renewed fascination is not only for the battles and leaders of the Civil War but also for the lives of the individual soldiers who lived, fought, suffered, and even died in the name of their country.

The quintessential work on the life of the Union soldier for the past forty years has been Bell Wiley’s *The Life of Bill Yank*. Bell Wiley described nearly every aspect of the Union soldier’s life. From his comprehensive survey of sources, he described who joined the Union Army, what motivated the typical Union soldier to join and fight, and what his life was like while in the army. Wiley depicted everything from what Billy Yank ate to what he thought of the enemy and the land he invaded.

In the 1980’s three more publications by influential historians confirmed and expanded Wiley’s description of the Civil War
soldier's experiences: Gerald Linderman's *Embattled Courage*, Reid Mitchell's *Civil War Soldiers*, and James Robertson's *Soldiers Blue and Gray*. Together they reevaluated previous estimations from Civil War letters and diaries. They questioned why soldiers North and South fought, what each sides' soldiers thought of their enemy, how northerners felt about slavery and the slaves they would eventually fight to free, and the events that shaped the soldiers' experiences.

In researching the life of Alexander Hobbs, my goal was to quantify and qualify the experiences of this single Massachusetts soldier, to place his Civil War experiences into the larger scholarship. How did he compare with the description of “Billy Yank” that Bell Wiley and the later historians had so brilliantly depicted? My object was to see how Hobbs's military experiences in Texas and Louisiana matched those of other soldiers, “blue and gray,” who fought at battlefields like Antietam and Shiloh.

In addition, Hobbs's diary provides documentation of events he experienced on his travels to Texas, his involvement in the Battle of Galveston, his life as a prisoner in Houston, and finally his experiences as a parolee near New Orleans.

The purpose of this thesis is to afford an interpretative scaffolding for a better understanding of those experiences that
Alexander Hobbs describes in his diary. The first chapters offer background about the common Union soldier so that this information can then be compared to Hobbs's life in the Union Army. Next it furnishes a description of the circumstance that brought Hobbs to Texas and the events that led up to and included the January 1, 1863, Battle of Galveston. Chapter 5 looks at Alexander Hobbs's life as a prisoner of war in Houston and extensively summarizes the changes in policy regarding the parole and exchange system of the Civil War. This chapter provides, as a contrast to Hobbs, a Description of the experiences of those prisoners who were never paroled and languished in prison camps like Andersonville. Lastly, before a transcription of the diary, the thesis will describe the final events of Alexander Hobbs's military career that brought him home and his final muster out of military service.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For the historian the best sources in researching past events are firsthand accounts of observers, for direct observations through letters, diaries, and other personal writings can furnish valuable information and insights. This thesis investigates the American Civil War from the viewpoint of Alexander Hobbs, a Union soldier and prisoner of war, as revealed by his diary. Although his life appears no more exceptional than any other person who lived in the mid 1800s, his diary documents new information about the Texas and Louisiana coast during the Civil War and events that have been overlooked. In addition, his autobiographical writings record a northerner's perspective on southerners, both black and white, on the Battle of Galveston, and on life as a prisoner of war in Houston, Texas, as a result of having been captured in Galveston.

Only this diary distinguishes Alexander Hobbs from the other members of his regiment. Regarding his life before and after enlistment, his biography exists as sketchy dates and family history. Born in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Canada, on April 10, 1841, Hobbs, at seventeen, moved to Boston in July of 1858. After working as a wheelwright in Dorchester from 1861 to 1862, he enlisted in the Massachusetts militia in answer to a nine-month call to service
on September 8, 1862. He married Margaret E. Templeton on September 11, 1862. He and other enlistees from his town formed Company I of the Forty-second Massachusetts Regiment, which was mustered into service on September 16, 1862. Having served more than eleven months, Hobbs was mustered out of service on August 20, 1863, and returned to Dorchester and his wife and former vocation. By 1867-68 he and his wife resided in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, where their first son was born. In Wisconsin he declared his intention to become a United States’ citizen. By 1880 he had five children, and his vocation had changed from wheelwright to jeweler. He obtained citizenship by October 28, 1884, while living in Milton, Massachusetts, his residence until his death on February 1, 1931, at the age of 89.¹

Through his diary, however, Hobbs achieved a place in history. In it, he recorded new and insightful details for the individual concerned with the events and conditions in Texas during the Civil War, as well as information on the attitudes and thoughts of a Canadian soldier during the American Civil War. The diary begins with the regiment’s transportation to Texas in November 1862 and

continues until his return home to Massachusetts in August 1863. In addition to the journey to and from Texas, it records details of the Battle of Galveston and of the incarceration of Hobbs and three companies of the Massachusetts' Forty-second Regiment. Even more significantly, it reveals not only the attitude of this particular northerner toward blacks, southerners, and Confederate soldiers, but also the feelings of Union soldiers in general to these events during 1862 - 1863.

To provide a historical context for Alexander Hobbs's observations, this thesis begins with descriptions of other Civil War soldiers. This material will attempt to compare Alexander Hobbs's experiences with those of the typical Union soldier, if it is possible to say there is a typical Federal soldier. After this, there is a section on the problems of nostalgia, or as it is termed now, major depression or melancholia, in an attempt to explain the feelings of and actions taken by Alexander Hobbs. Later, one chapter examines the events that occurred before Hobbs arrived in Galveston to provide a setting for Hobbs's military assignment. This background knowledge, although secondary in this thesis to Hobbs's account, reveals the reason that the men of the Forty-second Regiment were

Obtained from the United States National Archives.
sent to Galveston and the means by which they arrived. The diary, on the other hand, records events that occurred to Hobbs individually as a soldier in his first battle and as a prisoner of war in Houston in 1863.

Hobbs's diary supplies first-hand accounts of two additional topics that are important to the historian of this era: (1) his experience as a prisoner of war and his parole and (2) his record of the living conditions in Houston and of the contrasting perspectives or biases both of Confederates and of northerners, especially those concerning events in Houston. As a prisoner, Hobbs's observations on the daily routine and treatment of Union prisoners greatly contrasts to those of Union prisoners in such places as Andersonville, Georgia, and even Camp Ford, located in Tyler, Texas. On the other hand, he echoes the primary concern of almost every other prisoner of the Civil War for his freedom: when will he go home? It is Hobbs's going home that makes his experience as a prisoner distinctive. This thesis contains a section on the evolution of the parole and exchange system as it was practiced at the time that Alexander Hobbs was paroled and sent home. The American Civil War has the dubious distinction of bringing to a close the older system of parole and exchange of prisoners based on a concept of honor. Alexander Hobbs
was one of the last soldiers to be paroled in the war, and his not being exchanged may provide the reason he never returned to service. The other contribution of Hobbs's diary is his disclosure of the living conditions of Houstonians, as well as perceptive information about the attitudes of the Confederate citizens toward the North and about the attitudes of Union soldiers toward the conduct and appearance of people living in Texas. He also briefly recorded the feelings of northerners on issues such as slavery and religion.

Since much conflict remains about what actually happened during the Battle of Galveston, I have presented in this paper the information concerning that event as accurately as possible, using both expert descriptions of the battle by historians and accounts of the battle found in the letters of both Union and Confederate soldiers. In this composite of the events, my account of the battle will not agree in all particulars with some of the descriptions given by other narrators.

The final section of this thesis contains a transcription of Hobbs's diary to which the preceding chapters refer. The purpose of the thesis is to give the reader of the transcribed diary a better understanding of the immediate milieu in which Hobbs was writing.
during his stay in Texas, as well as the general conditions
surrounding him at the time of his writing in 1862 and 1863.
CHAPTER 2: THE COMMON SOLDIER OF THE UNION

WHO JOINED THE ARMY AND WHY

The experience of the Civil War soldier are as varied as the individuals who joined the military in 1862 and 1863. Motives for joining defied uniformity. Some joined for ideological motives while others enlisted for more practical concerns. Yet, for all these variances, some generic descriptions of the ordinary soldier can be made based on the letters and writings of the men who fought in the costliest war in American history.

The attack on Fort Sumter motivated such an overwhelming number of men to join the Union Army that many had to be turned away. They rushed to defend their flag and the republic for which it stood. Men from every northern community hurried, or were pushed, to join the army by a wave of enthusiasm that was not limited to men, but also to girls and to women who pressured their men to hurry and join.¹ These soldiers joined for glory, patriotism, adventure, and peer pressure. Many were aroused by the moving oratory, inspiring music, and the sight of a flag waving defiantly in

the breeze. To many Union soldiers the Republic so represented liberty that any attack on the Republic was an attack directly upon them and upon their home communities. Some northerners, though not many, joined to follow the example of John Brown and to attack slavery directly. That is not to say that the majority of northerners supported slavery, but that they fought for home and honor, not emancipation. Comparatively few northern soldiers displayed enthusiasm for fighting on behalf of slaves. For every Federal soldier who voiced sympathy for the plight of the slaves, a dozen disclaimers could be heard. The majority of soldiers in 1862 and 1863 saw emancipation as at best a war measure, and their acceptance of blacks was generally lukewarm. After 1863, the northern war aims broadened to include widespread support of ending slavery.

By 1862 the rush to arms had ended and Lincoln and the Congress had to threaten conscription to provoke men to join.

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4 Wiley, *Life of Billy Yank*, p. 40. Robertson, *Soldiers Blue and Gray*, p. 11. It would not be until after 1863, with the Emancipation Proclamation, that the war would become dedicated to freeing slaves. Alexander Hobbs joined on September 8, 1862, fourteen days
Though many soldiers still joined for the ideals of Union and honor, others enlisted in the army for other reasons. One inducement was the development of the bounty system, whereby a soldier was paid by the state government for joining a volunteer regiment. In 1862 the bounty for a private was $100, and as the war progressed, this amount rose much higher. The idea of an extra $100 to a person who would make only $13 a month while he was in service had to have had its desired influence. In addition to the $100, the steady $13 a month in times of widespread unemployment as existed in the North until 1863 prompted many to enlist.  

Yet the bounty system was not the only inducement to these men to join. Pride and peer pressure, especially that resulting from female admirers, induced many young men to join. Young women would favor boys who had already joined a volunteer regiment. Henry Mortan Stanly from Arkansas furnishes one extreme example of this goading. He had decided to sit out the war but reconsidered when he received a gift from a young woman he fancied: a pettycoat. Countless others joined as they followed the example of

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friends and associates.\(^6\) Many joined to avoid the taint of being a conscript. The popular conception of a conscript was one who lacked the honor or the courage to do his duty.

Alexander Hobbs does not tell us why he enlisted for a nine-month term of service in 1862, but he would have been eligible for one of the bounties offered by Massachusetts government. He may have been one of the many in 1862 who were young and unemployed and found the promise of a steady income a strong inducement to join the army. Having married Margrette Thomas just before leaving for the war, this extra money may have been needed to support his new family.\(^7\) There is no evidence in the diary that Hobbs joined the army to fight against slavery or to free the slaves. In fact, he joined before the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was issued. Perhaps he relented to the peer pressure or the patriotism of the time in his adopted country.

A distinctive characteristic of the men who joined the Union


\(^7\) Veterans Records of Alexander Hobbs. “Declaration For Widow’s Pension, February 21, 1931.” United States National Archives. Alexander Hobbs was married on September 8, 1862, three days before being officially mustered into service.
army is their diversity. Men of all classes, races, nationalities, occupations, educational levels, and social standings joined the army. Most enlistees were eighteen, but the next largest age representation was twenty-one. Soldiers were from all types of occupations, everything from gamblers to ministers, but the majority of the soldiers came from the fields, where they had worked as farmers or field hands. Surprisingly, a large number of these northern men were literate, with many having completed secondary education. ⁸

Soldiers in the northern army represented every state in the Union, as well as nearly every nation in the western world. The largest groups of immigrants serving were Germans and Irish. These two immigrant groups made up nearly one-quarter of the Union army. The third largest group of immigrant soldiers, Canadians, comprised approximately 50,000 soldiers. ⁹ Most immigrant soldiers were scattered among all the regiments of the North, but a few all-immigrant regiments were formed to serve in the northern army.

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⁸ Alexander Hobbs listed in the 1880 Census that he had completed secondary education.
⁹ Wiley, Life of Billy Yank, p. 303-309. German soldiers made up nearly 200,000 soldiers in the Union Army. Irish immigrants made up nearly another 150,000 soldiers. After Canadians the next largest group were English with approximately 45,000 soldiers.
The proportion of immigrants in the army increased as the war progressed. Immigrant groups were more susceptible to the financial inducements offered and less subject to the waning martial spirit among the domestic population.\textsuperscript{10}

The Union soldiers for all of their diversity in background shared some common characteristics. Above all, the Union soldier, like his southern counterpart, showed an incredible ability to adapt to his surroundings. He also became clannish and fiercely loyal in a rigid hierarchy expanding from first those men in his own mess, then in his company, and last in his regiment. Through all the hardship, disease, and death, the soldier managed to maintain a modicum of humor.\textsuperscript{11} Alexander Hobbs’s diary reveals that he represents the typical Union soldier, for he possesses many of these characteristics.

\textsuperscript{10} Wiley, \textit{Life of Billy Yank}, p. 303-309.
\textsuperscript{11} Wiley, \textit{Life of Billy Yank}, p. 339-341. Very often this humor could be cruel and perverse. One example is that of Sergeant Major Bosson from the Forty-Second Massachusetts Regiment. While in New Orleans he along with some other non-commissioned officers decided to play a practical joke on a peer. They told him of a new lodge they had made up and invited him to join, which he accepted. They then blind-folded him and forced him to hug a black man who they had forced to strip. They then allowed him to remove the blind-fold and allowed him to beat the black man whom they had forced to participate. Charles P. Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second Regiment Infantry, Massachusetts Volunteers, 1862 - 1864} (Boston,
Departure was often a sorrowful experience as many of these men and boys left home for the first time. Private Joseph Burt of the Forty-seventh Massachusetts Regiment expressed his loneliness most poignantly as he wrote his wife from New York:

May the winds and the waves carry us along and then may we return to those we love, to live and love together. No man knows the comforts of home till he is deprived of it or the smiles of a companion till he is separated from her he loves... As I write it makes me feel glad to think that you will soon look on the paper that I now stain with ink. I have no language to express my feelings.12

The departure from home was often marked by large celebrations and the presentation of the Regimental colors by the ladies of the community.13 Alexander Hobbs describes that leaving was a sorrowful event but says that they were sent off by “many friends who came not with standing the rain[.]” He must have felt the pride, exhilaration, and courage that so many other soldiers had felt as he watched his community rally to send him off.

1886). pp. 312 - 313.
13 Robertson, Soldiers Blue and Gray, p. 13. Hobbs Diary, November 21, 1862.
CAMP LIFE

Camp life came in two parts; first the initial camp of instruction, or what we would now call a “boot camp,” and then camp life as the troops moved from one location to another. In camp life soldiers came in contact with their first realities of what being a soldier was really like. They learned discipline and drill as well as methods of withstanding the hardships of sickness, boredom, poor food and severe weather.

In the early part of the Civil War, camp life, both in general and in training camps, was well known for its marked absence of military discipline. Volunteer officers and men lacked experience in the art of war and for that matter even in the rudimentary elements of drill. It was figuratively the case of the blind leading the blind. Often this initial camp of instruction was very brief, but for Alexander Hobbs he came into camp on August 26, 1862, and left November 21, 1862, making his instruction time much longer then most. Hobbs provides no description of his time in camp, beginning his diary the day he left camp.

Noticeably missing in the basic training of soldiers was the

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14 Wiley, Life of Billy Yank, pp. 54-55.
15 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 11.
rudimentary use of muskets, or the proper manner of fire in combat. In the case of Alexander Hobbs, the Forty-second Regiment were issued muskets as the soldiers were about to leave on board ship for Louisiana.\textsuperscript{16} Alexander Hobbs also does not describe his experience while encamped on Long Island while preparing to leave as a part of the Banks Expedition. Albert Edward of the Eighteenth New Hampshire Regiment, who was also there, described his time on Long Island as being drilled by regiment, company, and battalion each day, and then by participating in a dress parade each afternoon.\textsuperscript{17}

Often soldiers enlisting in 1862 viewed most of their comrades as inferior when they first met. One soldier at Camp Banks on Long Island was concerned that some of the men would desert. He stated, “Hard to tell who will go if they have a chance. I suppose they do not find a soldiers life as pleasant as they thought.” He felt no sympathy for the five men who had become sick, feeling that they should never have enlisted.\textsuperscript{18} Often this condescending opinion of fellow soldiers would include officers and chaplains.

\textsuperscript{16} Wiley, Life of Billy Yank, p. 50. Hobbs Diary, November 24, 1862.
\textsuperscript{17} Diary of Albert Edwards, November 13, 1862, Edward, [Albert] Papers (Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge).
\textsuperscript{18} Joseph Burt to his wife, December 11, 1862, Burt Papers.
For the most part, the men who joined the army were farmers, not accustomed to the regimentation of army life or the suppression of their will and freedom to someone else. Soldiers more willingly followed those leaders who they felt had earned their respect and admiration. Often respect resulted from demonstrations of heroics or courage on the battlefield. If an officer lacked the respect of his men, he could expect great difficulty in attempting to control them.\(^{19}\) This need for respect being earned was not just limited to officers, but also extended to chaplains. If men felt that the chaplain was hypocritical or failed to expose himself to the same challenges the enlisted men faced, the soldiers could make his life difficult and even drive him out of their regiment or the army.\(^{20}\)

To relieve boredom while inactive in camp, soldiers attempted to amuse themselves in many different ways to keep their spirits up. Soldiers often had days or weeks of free time while not actively campaigning. One soldier encamped at Camp Farr, located near New Orleans, stated that "when we are not in drill the men amuse themselves in going fishing and black berrying and shooting alligators. I have me one that was killed and stuffed, and if it is not

\(^{19}\) Linderman, *Embattled Courage*, Ch. 3.
to much trouble shall bring it home with me." This soldier was drilling only two hours a day, one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. Other soldiers near New Orleans included such activities as touring the city of New Orleans. More common forms of entertainment were reading, writing, playing cards, gambling, or just socializing.

One of the most important activities for any soldier, not just Civil War soldiers, is sending and receiving mail. Soldiers would wait anxiously for mail to arrive, and while waiting they often spent their time rereading letters or writing to friends and family. One soldier stationed at Roeshcow City, Louisiana, described the experience and importance of mail to his family back home. He stated, "You cannot imagine how much lighter it makes our hearts to get good news from home. Everything is laid to one side when the mail comes and the boys all huddle around the Capt. tent to get their letter. It is a pleasure to watch the crowd all look pleased and as each ones name is called they sing out and step forward."22

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21 Joseph Burt to his wife, April 17, 1863 and May 6, 1863, Burt Papers.
Camp life in many ways brought out the extremes of individual soldiers of the Civil War. Some turned to God to strengthen their faith in the face of death and hardship. Many tried to lead by example so as to instill faith and the need for Christian values in their fellows. One very religious soldier expressed his distaste for the swearing that goes on in camp life, stating, "There is much swearing in the Army and immorality but I have tried to set a good example." Devout soldiers would spend time preaching to mates, as well as spending their time reading the many religious tracts that were distributed among the armies. Many soldiers believed that the war and camp life was a test of their own moral strength, as well as that of the country. More common in camp life than religion was the growth of what many considered immoral acts or sin. Such sins as gambling, vulgarity, and intoxication became constant problems in camp life. Rarely spoken about were those sins involving sex and pornography. These acts tended to occur when soldiers were closer to towns or major cities.

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Wherever soldiers were encamped, sutlers hawked goods to the soldiers, often at exorbitant rates. The favorite items of purchase for the men of the Forty-second were tobacco, pipes, and liquor. The officers issued orders to the men and to the local sutlers to curb the sale of liquor, but with little enforcement, the orders had little effect.\textsuperscript{25}

More soldiers died from disease than from combat. The most authoritative figures show that in the Federal army 57,265 deaths occurred due to diarrhea and dysentery alone as compared to approximately 140,000 killed or mortally wounded in battle over the length of the entire war.\textsuperscript{26} Very few soldiers ever managed to leave service without being ill at least once during their time in uniform. Generally the worse months of the year for disease were July and August. For individual regiments, illness tended to be worse within the first few months of service when recruits were exposed to childhood diseases for the first time. These common illnesses were

\textsuperscript{26} Rod Gragg, \textit{Civil War Quiz and Fact Book} (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1985). p. 4. This number of 140,000 northern killed and wounded in battle is in contradiction to Bell Wiley’s figures that only 44,238 northern soldiers died in battle. I chose to use the larger figure because it appears to be a more realistic number when compared to the estimated 320,000 Union soldiers that died in the war. Wiley, \textit{Life of Billy Yank}, p. 124
more prevalent among rural recruits who had never been exposed before.\textsuperscript{27}

Two of the most widely complained ailments were diarrhea, and dysentery, commonly referred to as piles, the quick march, or flux. It was the uncommon soldier who did not contract this disease at least once in his service. Other diseases that where constant threats to soldiers were things like typhoid, malaria, and scurvy. Sickness near New Orleans appears to have been particularly severe. Many of the newly arrived soldiers camped at Camp Farr or the surrounding areas soon began to complain of illness.\textsuperscript{26} While encamped at Camp Farr, Hobbs was hospitalized with fever. It is likely that either here or on his march to New Orleans, he contracted malaria.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{26} Diary of Albert Edwards, November 13, 1862, Edward Diary. Joseph Burt to his wife, May 6, 1863, Burt Papers. Albert Edwards first became sick on January 13, which was two weeks after arriving and fourteen days after his first bath in the Mississippi River. He would be plagued by episodes of diarrhea for the remainder of his time in Louisiana. See Wiley, Life of Billy Yank, pp. 133 - 137.
\textsuperscript{29} National Archives. “Declaration for Invalid Pension, July 26, 1890.” In his Declaration for Invalid Pension Alexander Hobbs complained of continuing “chills and fever” as well as continuing “nervous Exhaustion” caused by the war.
Civil War soldiers' loudest and most widespread complaint resulted from their diet. Army rations of that day offered little nutritional sustenance and was often poor in quality, small in quantity, and very monotonous. For a Union soldier, the average diet consisted of hardtack (a hard biscuit or cracker), fried bacon or salt pork, and boiled coffee, with occasional beans and vegetables. If the soldier was held by Confederates his ration of coffee would be eliminated, for the Confederacy rarely had any. Cracked cornmeal would replace hardtack as a poor substitute. This cornmeal was coarse, unsifted, and often pan-fried in grease. The absence of fresh vegetables was the worst deficiency in Civil War rations. Scurvy and other vitamin deficiencies plagued soldiers throughout the war. Much of the sickness in army camps was a direct result of poor army rations. Diarrhea, dysentery, and malnutrition resulted from the steady diet of fried meat, hard bread or coarse cornmeal, strong coffee or its substitutes, and more than an occasional tainted or poisoned food.\(^{30}\)

In camp life, the soldiers' food rations often resulted in either feast or famine. It was not uncommon for soldiers to forage from the community or even from their own quartermasters. Private

\(^{30}\) Robertson, *Soldiers Blue and Gray*, pp. 64 - 71.
Joseph Burt of the Forty-seventh Massachusetts Regiment wrote home from Camp Banks, on Long island, that the “mush [was] not fit to give the hogs and so the boys went into the cook house and took everything there was in it and the officers did not blame them for it.” Alexander Hobbs describes in his diary a similar incident involving the Forty-second Regiment, but these men were not so lucky. On December 10, 1862, Hobbs relates that three men had been placed in irons by the captain who tore the stripes off a corporal, for having been involved in the theft of meal the night before. Only two days earlier Hobbs had complained that the men were “growling because they [could] not get enough to eat.” The day before the theft, Hobbs, in one of his jovial moods, stated that the “men had expressed the desire that the pirate Alabam may take us" in response to inadequate “grub,” except hard bread.  

A recurring concern for all men who traveled in the South was the weather. In their letters sent home, after the greeting and assurance that they were all right, they would almost always describe the weather. The men of the Forty-second Regiment, for example, were subjected to the worst weather that nature could

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31 Joseph Burt to his wife, December 11, 1862, Burt Papers.
32 Hobbs Diary, December 8 - 10, 1862.
bestow in the South. While in Texas on the march to Louisiana, they experienced what Texans affectionately call a “blue norther.” The temperature dropped from a comfortable point to below freezing in only a couple of hours. No doubt this sudden drop inflicted a great suffering on the men. At the other extreme, the men stationed in New Orleans during June through July awaiting exchange endured some of the hottest and most humid times of the year.

WHITTLING DOWN; MARCHING AND BATTLE

Those soldiers who made a long journey by coastal craft were often subjected to the extreme hardship of crowded quarters, inadequate provisioning, and rough seas. With soldiers “packed in a nasty hold so close they could scarcely lie down,” some compared the experience to that of slaves being transported from Africa. The journey of the “Banks Expedition,” which included Alexander Hobbs, was known for being a particularly harsh sea voyage. Not only were the ships generally in poor condition, but the weather was unusually violent. Many of the men feared they would not live to engage in their first battle. The merciless weather made the voyage especially cruel, and many men became stricken with seasickness and could not be moved to the upper decks because of the threat of their being washed overboard. The lack of provision, and the
overcrowding of the regiments exacerbated the problem.  

As farmers, Union soldiers often described the appearance of the land in the South. They were often less than unbiased as they compared the southern countryside to that of their well-groomed homes and fields. Generally, though, soldiers coming to Louisiana and Texas were favorably impressed with the terrain. Many found the region quite pleasing to the eye. Alexander Hobbs was impressed with the open prairie as "it stretched away as far as the eye could reach one level plain[..] [T]here were plenty of cattle and other animals grazing over it[..] [I]t was a handsome sight so level and without a tree except on one side[..]" During his march through Louisiana, he was impressed with the "well cultivated country" of "splendid cotton plantations and corn fields as far as the eye could reach..." Some found the region so beautiful and the people so fine that they swore that they would never return to the North, but this was not the standard. The majority of Union soldiers seemed to believe, as Hobbs did, that it was a nice place to visit, but they could not wait to go home. 

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34 Hobbs Diary, January 2 and February 13, 1863. 
35 George H. Davis Letters to his Friend,. June 12, 1863, Davis
Union soldiers coming to the South often had very set ideas of what civilians in the Confederacy would be like. They tended to categorize southerners into two types; either aristocratic planters or "poor white trash." They believed that the war had been caused by wealthy slaveholders who fooled the poor whites into fighting for them. Union soldiers felt that southern civilians could not be trusted, whether poor or wealthy planters. Many Union soldiers refused to accept the idea that a southerner could be both friendly or kind to them and also be for the Confederacy. Hobbs describes the people he met on his travel to Alexandria as "generally friendly many of them are of northern birth [.]." When a woman near Orange, Texas, agreed to take care of a sick soldier, he attributes her compassion to her being from Massachusetts.  

Sergeant Charles Bosson of the Forty-second Regiment described the "few inhabitants to be met [as] well disposed, simple minded, honest people."  

[George] Paper 1862 - 1864 (Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge). At the time Davis was stationed as a guard at Algiers, Louisiana. In his opinion the community of Algiers was the "finest community to live in that I have ever saw." The question is if Davis saw the same Algiers that the men of the Forty-second saw for they had a very different opinion of the place.

36 Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, p. 112. Hobbs Diary, February 7, 1863.
Some historians have conjectured that New England soldiers had an inferiority complex, especially in their dealing with Confederate soldiers in Virginia. They conjecture that northern soldiers felt that their system of government, religious background, and economic made them feel that they were inferior to the cavalier background of the southerners.\textsuperscript{38} For the usual soldier of the Union Army, this attitude was atypical. Alexander Hobbs, like most northern recruits, never expressed the feeling that he was inferior to any southerner.

Many northerners opposed the idea of freeing the slaves or making emancipation a war aim. Some felt that to do this would prolong the war by causing the Confederates to fight longer and harder to preserve their peculiar institution. Others feared that if freed the slaves would come north and compete for jobs. Pure racism determined the issue for many. These racist whites opposed any equality with blacks, arguing that blacks were ignorant and

\textsuperscript{38} Michael C.C. Adams, \textit{Fighting for Defeat, Union Military Failure in the East, 1861 - 1865} (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992). Michael Adams makes a persuasive argument that in particular McClellan felt that he was inferior to the South and that he admired their way of life. This idea that his pessimism then filtered down through the ranks to all northern soldiers though is unsubstantiated and unpersuasive.
irresponsible.\textsuperscript{39} A startling example of this lingering racism was voiced by Stanton Humphries, while he was stationed in Louisiana in 1863. In a letter home, he described his attitude towards the “Negro Soldiers.” He writes, “I am inclined to believe that they will make good soldiers, better in fact in drill and discipline than whites. . . . It is certain that they fought well at Port Hudson . . . I saw negro soldiers pick up guns that white soldiers throw down and go forward into the fight.” What is startling is that in the next paragraph he describes seeing a group of “darkies skedaddle” and “thought at the time that I would give all the spare money I had to have had the privilege of shooting as many of the black rats as I could.”\textsuperscript{40}

Another soldier described blacks as “the losiest lot you ever saw. I have seen all the niggers I ever want to.”\textsuperscript{41}

In some instances those who had enlisted in the army to fight only for the Union experienced a change of heart after greater exposure to slaves. Abolitionists often became more intense in their hatred for slavery, and many mild opponents of the institution


\textsuperscript{40} Anonymous Civil War Soldiers Letters #3188, August 10, 1863, (Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge).

\textsuperscript{41} Anonymous Civil War Soldiers Letters #3188, March 12, 1863, Louisian State University Archives.
became strong advocates for emancipation. Attitude changes resulted primarily from these causes: shocking reality of slavery’s inhumanity; a growing admiration for the black people whom they met and saw fighting for their freedom; or for most, the growing realization that emancipation was an essential element for a northern victory.\footnote{Wiley, \textit{Life of Billy Yank}, pp. 42-44. Mitchell, \textit{Civil War Soldiers}, pp. 121 - 131.}

Alexander Hobbs appears to be one of those northerners who grew to oppose slavery as the war progressed and as he came into contact with blacks in the South. On January 15, 1863, Hobbs described six black men, who had been working on the Union ships, being taken away to be sold together. For Alexander “such acts only stir up a hatred to the entire institution of slavery.”\footnote{Wiley, \textit{Life of Billy Yank}, pp. 42-44. Mitchell, \textit{Civil War Soldiers}, pp. 121 - 131.} Hobbs newfound hatred to slavery was apparently based either on a growing admiration for blacks or on a realization of military necessity. On January 4, 1863, the blacks who were held prisoner in Houston with Hobbs were taken to “Galveston to build fortifications[].” Hobbs must have realized the value of slaves to the Confederate war effort. Beyond this, though, Hobbs, on the same day, made some interesting comments on African-American’s religious faith. He
states, "they held a prayer meeting last night in the yard and if
sincerity is anything I believe they had the presence of the blessed
master[.] I honestly believe there will be more slaves found in
heaven than southerners[.]"  

Northerner soldiers at the beginning of the war conceptualized
battle as a glorious experience in which they would be able to show
their courage and prove their masculinity. They accepted the
premise that if they were brave nothing could hurt them. The
glorified misconception was that only cowards were killed or, if an
occasional courageous man died, he died happy and with a smile on
his face. The soldier showed his courage and manhood by refusing
to show fear on the battlefield. One Union soldier outside Port
Hudson described his fear while waiting for battle. "Marched within
a few rods of the Rebel rifle pits and we stopped. I was in the front
rank and almost trembled waiting to hear the word forward march
but it did not come." This soldier refused to admit even to himself
that he was afraid. Soldiers often turned to God as their personal
protector, as well as to the idea that God would favor them with

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43 Hobbs Diary, January 15, 1863.
44 Hobbs Diary, January 4, 1863.
45 Linderman, Embattled Courage, pp. 62 - 64.
46 Diary of Albert Edwards, June 30, 1863, Edward Papers. See,
victory because their cause was true, and they were pious individuals. 47

Soldiers would learn that bravery and righteousness were no protection from a minnie ball, a cannon shot, or disease, and these realities would unravel the Union soldiers’ concept of courage. As the war progressed, soldiers learned that to charge into battle was futile, and that to dig a trench or hide behind a tree was not cowardly. 48

Northern perceptions of their southern enemy profoundly changed as the war progressed. The majority of Union soldiers, before going to meet their first Confederate in battle, felt that Johnny Rebs were dirty, ignorant, and cowardly traitors. Early in the war many northerners assumed that to be captured by the enemy was certain death because “the cruelty of the Rebels to our wounded has no parallel in history.” 49

As the war progressed and contact was made with the enemy, Union soldiers realized that they were more like the Confederate

Linderman, Embattled Courage, Ch. 2.
47 Joseph Burt to his wife, April 17, 1863, Burt Papers.
48 Linderman, Embattled Courage, Ch. 8.
soldiers than they had thought. When captured, Union soldiers were often surprised by the courteous treatment and respect paid to them by their capturers. Any abuse of prisoners late in the war was normally attributed to non-combatants and home guards who lacked the respect gained by the common experiences of battle.\textsuperscript{50}

It was not uncommon for soldiers, after the heat of battle, to call a truce in order to remove the dead and wounded from the battlefield. During these brief truces soldiers from each side would often come into contact with each other and strike up conversation and other informal agreements. What seems amazing is the amount of camaraderie and fraternization that went on among the individual soldiers. Sergeant Albert Edwards of the Eighteenth New Hampshire Regiment described the calling of an informal truce on June 16, 1863, outside the trenches of Port Hudson. "Rebs came out this afternoon and told our boys if they would not fire they would not so they had quite a talk." This visit was just two days after they had been shooting at each other in a battle which killed three of

\textsuperscript{24.}
Edward's men.\textsuperscript{51}

Alexander Hobbs was himself surprised by the kind treatment he received while a captive of the Confederate army. Hobbs described the Confederate soldiers he met as looking as bad as "rag pickers" and "beggars" but he noted that they had "treated us kindly[,] much better than we expected."\textsuperscript{52} All of these changes in perceptions and loss of ideals caused a tremendous strain on the mental state of Union soldiers.

**NOSTALGIA, MELANCHOLIA, AND DEPRESSION IN THE CIVIL WAR**

The official records of the Union Army during the Civil War indicated that 5,213 cases of nostalgia resulted in 58 deaths from the years 1861 to 1866. It documents the largest numbers of cases occurring in the year ending June 30, 1863, with 2,057 cases and 12 deaths reported. For each year of the war after that, the number of reported cases declined; but the number of deaths steadily increased. Army surgeons of the time generally felt that younger recruits were more susceptible to the disease, and, therefore, doctors generally recommended increasing the age of enlistment

\textsuperscript{51} Diary of Albert Edwards, June 16, 1863, Edwards' Diary.
\textsuperscript{52} Hobbs Diary, January 1, 1863.
from eighteen to twenty. One possible explanation for the decreasing numbers of soldiers diagnosed with nostalgia after 1863 may be a more realistic view of the duration of the conflict. Another possible explanation for the decline may be the change in the character of soldiers being enlisted in the army. After 1863 increasing numbers of foreign-born soldiers enlisted. The traumatic effects of the war may have been less traumatic for these individuals since they had already experienced the personal stress of dislocation.

By investigating the modern psychiatric symptoms and standards of depression, mood or affect disorder, and melancholia among Civil War soldiers I do not mean to imply that all Civil War soldiers were mentally ill. This examination partially explains the reasons why so many soldiers were homesick or nostalgic, as surgeons of the time called it. Being depressed may also explain why many were fatalistic in their actions and perceptions by the end of the war. A person is considered to have a mood disorder

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54 Gerald Linderman’s Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War; he describes a change in the Civil War soldiers from their idealism of courage during 1861 - 1862, to a
disease, of which major depression or melancholia are examples, when the symptoms seriously interfere with the normal functioning of the individual. In the case of Alexander Hobbs, the problem of depression or melancholia may help to explain the reason he stopped writing in his diary from March 10 until July 17, 1863, while he was held near New Orleans as an unexchanged prisoner, unable to provide any aid to the army and unable to go home.

The Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, edited by Kaplan and Sadock, provides detailed information regarding depression. Depression can manifest itself in various ways autonominously, viscerally, emotionally, perceptually, cognitively, and behaviorally. It is a natural reaction to life events and a person experiencing sadness or unhappiness may not meet the criteria for clinical depression. Most people experience brief episodes of a low or depressed mood, demoralization, pessimism and decreased energy following a disappointment or loss. For the majority of people, a fatalistic outlook on the war during 1864 - 1865. Bell Wiley devotes an entire chapter to the rise and fall of the spirit of the Union soldier in Life of Billy Yank. James Robertson's Soldiers Blue and Gray describes extensively the problems of homesickness as breaking "the moral fiber of countless numbers of Civil War participants. But none of these prominent Civil War historians looks at the problem from a psychiatric perspective of the causes and symptoms.
coping skills, resilience and support systems help alleviate these brief states of depression and prevent them from becoming chronic. Chronic stress, repeated failure and recurrent negative life events may set the stage for what is described in the psychiatric literature as learned helplessness. An actual depressive disorder is diagnosed when the state of depression markedly impairs an individual's social, occupational and other important areas of functioning.\textsuperscript{55}

In the classic psychoanalytic theory reviewed in the \textit{Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry}, Freud emphasized that in melancholia the individual suffers a shattering fall in self-esteem that can be caused by an actual loss or a perceived loss of someone, something or a symbolically important need. Depression normally occurs in the face of real or fantasized disappointments or disillusionments. Depression may even become psychotic when the ego feels incapable of fulfilling its aims and aspirations, but these aims persist as desired goals. With depression or melancholia, the ego is thus thrown into a state of continuing and total helplessness. These mechanisms of depression are set into operation by

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frustration and loss in life. The person with melancholia is not conscious of the losses. The Civil War soldier lost his ideals regarding combat, courage, honor, and home as he went off to war. Unlike soldiers of later wars, the Civil War soldier did not have the same coping skills to deal with these losses. He could not relate these concerns to his comrades, for to do so would suggest that he was not in control of himself or even worse, that he was afraid.

Recognizable features of depression include feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and hopelessness, often described as the expectation that no person and nothing can help or is likely to help in the future. Persons with depression may be preoccupied with the gloomy side of life or the feeling that everything is valueless and futile. The individual may also show signs of irritability, anger, blame, remorsefulness, self reproach, apathy, or even suicidal ideation. They may exhibit physical signs of depression such as appetite disturbances, hypersomnia or insomnia, loss of libido, constipation, or uncontrollable crying spells. Signs of severe mental depression can include suicidal attempts or other self destructive behaviors, such as self mutilation and repeated unnecessary risk

56 Kaplan and Sadock, Comprehensive Textbook, p. 392.
57 Ibid., p. 888.
In three out of four cases of depression, persons feel guilt. They feel responsible for their feelings of depression. They will look back on their lives and find some appropriate sin or mistake to explain their feelings. As the condition worsens the person’s feeling of guilt may become delusional in their effort to find a life experience to explain their depression. The person may point to some prior wickedness or sinfulfulness to justify his or her feeling of punishment by depression. The depressed individual may show a lack of interest in activities, a difficulty concentrating, and/or a general loss of energy, which in extreme cases leads to a sense of complete exhaustion.\textsuperscript{59}

A form of depression called existential depression results when individuals no longer find meaning in their activities and lose their sense of purpose. The loss of a sense of meaning may occur in primary depression or in response to major disappointment and unfortunate life situations. Reactive depression is a type of depression that is precipitated by psychological stressors. The precipitating stress may have occurred as long as three or even six

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., p. 896.
months before the onset of symptoms. Traumatic life events have been demonstrated to result in major depression, but it is still unknown what percentage of individuals experiencing major life events become clinically depressed. Both social status and age influence the risk and severity of major depression. A person from a low social class has twice the risk of major depression than does a person from a higher social class. The peak age ranges for the onset of major depression are twenty to thirty and fifty to sixty. Civil War soldiers ages range primarily from seventeen to twenty-one.

Beyond conditional factors that can cause depression or signs of depression are other biological and medical conditions. The most common cause for the symptoms that mimic major depression is vitamin deficiencies like those so widespread in the Civil War soldiers' diet. Deficiencies in the Vitamins B12, B2, C, folate, niacin, and thiamine have all been known to cause symptoms similar to depression. Medical disorders such as thyroid and adrenal disorders can also create the appearance of depression symptoms. Some infections, such as mononucleosis and neurosyphilis, have been

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59 Ibid., pp. 575, 896 - 898.
60 Ibid., pp. 864 - 865, 893 - 894.
known to cause symptoms similar to those found in depression.\textsuperscript{61}

Early in 1863 the assistant surgeon general, Dr. Dewitt C. Peters, described nostalgia as "... a species of melancholy, or mild type of insanity, caused by disappointment and a continuous longing for the home ... and is daily met with in its worst form in our military hospitals and prisons, and especially marked in the young subjects." The stigma of classifying nostalgia as a mild form of insanity, inhibited all except the most severely depressed from seeking medical treatment for their ailment. From the 1850's on, personal accounts of victims being forcibly committed to an insane asylum by greedy relatives and suffering horrible indignities, appeared in the press and print regularly.\textsuperscript{62}

Dr. Peters listed the symptoms of nostalgia as a "great mental dejection, loss of appetite, indifference to external influences, irregular action of the bowels, and slight hectic fever. As the disease progresses it is attended by hysterical weeping, a dull pain

in the head, throbbing of the temporal arteries, anxious expression of the face, watchfulness, incontinence of urine, spermatorrhea, increased hectic fever and a general wasting of all the vital powers.” If untreated, Peters maintains that the disease will run into “cerebral derangement, typhoid fever, or any epidemic prevailing in the immediate vicinity.”

This last observation conveys the realization that a person afflicted with nostalgia, or major depression as the term is used today, is more susceptible to camp diseases due to a weakened constitution brought on by depression. This idea was made clear by J. Theodore Calhoun, assistant surgeon of the U.S. Army, when he stated, “The very existence of nostalgia, presupposes a state of mental depression, extremely favorable to the contraction of disease. . . . The state of mental depression that is co-existent with nostalgia acts as a predisposing cause of these diseases, or . . . is co-existent with them. Sometimes the nostalgia is, on the contrary, produced by the other diseases.”

It is probable that this problem of major depression was a contributing factor in many deaths that were

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attributed to disease, though it would be impossible to determine, with any accuracy, how many or to what extent it contributed.

During the Civil War people generally thought that two types of individuals were more susceptible to nostalgia than others. The first class was defined as "young men of feeble will, highly developed imaginative faculties and strong sexual desires." The second group were "married men who for the first time were absent from their families."65 The explanation for this designation may have been that young men had higher ideals for the war than single older men, and men with families had greater anxiety concerning their role as a provider for their family. Alexander Hobbs fell within both of these groups. At the time he enlisted he was young, only being twenty-one, and he was newly married.

Soldier accounts are replete with the stories of youthful, fresh volunteers who left home with grand ideals of a soldier's life. In a short time, the novelty of camp life wore off. The long marches, guard duty, and the various hardships associated with military life blighted their naive romanticism of war. As the prospect of

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adventure and glory diminished, these men's thoughts turned homeward to sweethearts, mothers, friends and wives.

Honor, glory, and courage were important ideals for the Union soldier as he marched off to war. A member of the color guard for the Massachusetts Forty-seventh Regiment stated that he was "willing to live or die for the glorious old flag . . . which I had the honor to bear before we started out for the war. . ."66 The loss of these ideals was a traumatic experience for these men.

During times of inactivity the problem of nostalgia, melancholia, or homesickness -- as the men often described it -- appeared to increase. During these times, men reflected more intensely on the losses they had sustained. It was widely believed during the war that hard work was the best cure for "homesickness". Infantry soldiers tended to be affected by depression more often than cavalry or artillery units. The reason for this could have been two fold: first, cavalry and artillery soldiers had to care for animals and the horses or animals provided them with comfort. Second, these soldiers experienced more mobility and freedom of movement.

66 Horace P Miller letter to friend John, April 15, 1863, Miller [Horace] Papers (Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge). This letter was written from Camp Farr also known as Bayou
being on horseback and therefore were less confined to camp.\textsuperscript{67}

Homesickness, foul weather, filth, lack of privacy, stern discipline, and general discomfort combined to produce a pessimistic disposition of a soldier life and the loss of their ideals. Soldiers lost their sense of freedom as they were subjected to the discipline of army life. They often compared their experiences to that of slaves. The filth of army life only added to this sense of loss, as soldiers were invaded by vermin resulting in the loss of dignity. Being in prison exacerbated these problems because of the increased rigidity in routine and the tedium of military life.\textsuperscript{68}

Soldiers lost even their concern for how they lived or died as disease swept through and killed so many. Since twice as many soldiers died of disease as from combat, often disease provided a soldier’s first experience with death. Disease was an impersonal killer, not the “savage southerner” that they had come to fight. No valor or courage could fight it. When so many died from disease, it became the anonymous death, that was no longer mentioned but

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\textsuperscript{67} Anderson, “Nostalgia and Malingering in the Military during the Civil War,” pp. 159 - 160.
\textsuperscript{68} Robertson, Soldiers Blue and Gray, p. 60. Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, Ch. 3.
always present in soldiers’ minds.  

Death constantly weighed on the minds of servicemen in the Civil War. After witnessing the funeral of a fallen comrade, each survivor knew “the chances were that any one was as likely in a short time to be an inhabitant of the same ground as the one just left behind.” Sickness, consequently, was the great fear of all soldiers.

Union soldiers often turned their thoughts to home as an anchor against the traumatic changes they felt in themselves. The letters of Union soldiers often contain pleas and/or demands for family and friends to write them. When they felt that the people at home were not doing enough, soldiers would chastise them for not supporting the war. If a soldier failed to receive letters he would often swear that he would not send any more letters home, but then shortly after he would write home expressing his keen disappointment. One soldier confided in a letter that in his opinion “families would stay up nights if they saw the disappointment”

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69 Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, Ch. 3.
70 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 249.
71 Miller letter to friend John, April 15, 1863, Miller Papers.
from the failure to receive a letter from home.\textsuperscript{72} As soldiers felt they were no longer in contact with home, they became anxious that they were losing their sense of themselves and their ideals and those at home could not understand their experiences. As soldiers perceived that they had changed, they came to feel that their home communities should also change to meet their new ideas. The failure of family members to write, or talk in the North about peace, became accepted as proof of their abandonment by the homefolks.\textsuperscript{73}

Occasionally cases of suicide or death due to nostalgia or apparent depression emerge in the accounts of the Civil War. One case involved the death of a color bearer for the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Regiment. At a small battle in Louisiana in June 1863, in order to protect the regimental colors from capture he was ordered to the back where he could not see the battle. Soldiers ran by telling him that the battle was lost and that they must flee, so he did. Later he learned that his side had not lost, and he felt disgraced at running. After he died in September, his comrades believed that "He felt the disgrace keenly, suffered mental agony, and died from the effect upon him." Despite their reassurances, the flag bearer

\textsuperscript{72} Civil War Soldier Letters #3188, May 15, 1863, Anonymous Civil War Soldier Letters.
was unable to believe he was neither to blame nor a coward.\textsuperscript{74} It was widely felt that some men just gave up the will to live, and died because of depression.

Sergeant Foster from the Forty-second Regiment, from the same home town as Hobbs, Dorchester, was found dead in his apartment in New Orleans from a self inflicted shot to the head. Foster had been attached to the quartermaster's office and had an apartment above the custom house. His friends knew that he had not been in good health for some time and that he had been despondent and acting strange.\textsuperscript{75}

Some diseases, such as scurvy, syphilis, and mononucleosis can appear to mimic or have symptoms similar to major depression. During the war there were a reported number of 46,931 cases of scurvy, which is caused by a vitamin C deficiency. Most fruits and vegetables are high in vitamin C, but as discussed earlier, both of these were lacking in the diet of these soldiers. There were 73,382 cases of syphilis in the war that were never properly treated.\textsuperscript{76} The lack of antibiotics allowed infections to run rampant ultimately

\textsuperscript{73} Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, Ch. 3.
\textsuperscript{74} Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 305.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., p. 249
\textsuperscript{76} Wiley, Life of Billy Yank, p. 135. Lowery, The Story the Soldiers
affecting both the physical and psychological conditions of the soldiers.

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*Wouldn't Tell*, p. 104.
CHAPTER 3: PREPARATION FOR BATTLE

FORMATION AND TRANSPORTATION

The Forty-second Massachusetts Regiment was mustered into service on September 16, 1862, at Camp Meigs, in Reidville, Massachusetts, under the command of Colonel Isaac Burrell. The regiment consisted of 933 enlisted men and nine officers.\(^1\) The call for recruits had come from Governor John A. Andrew on July 1, 1862, to fill a quota of 3,000 men for a nine-month tour of service set by President Lincoln.\(^2\) The Forty-second was formed around the remainder of the Second Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, an older state militia organization that needed to be raised to full strength.\(^3\) Company I was one of those newly formed to provide the needed men. In November the Forty-second prepared to leave training camp to proceed to the war.\(^4\)

On November 21, 1862, orders came for the men of the Forty-second ordering them from camp to the train to transport them first to Boston and then by ship to New York to serve under Major General

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Nathaniel P. Banks in New York, and to wait until their final orders arrived. Those orders would send the men to New Orleans as a part of what became the Banks Expedition to the Gulf coast. The men of the Forty-second, however, had to remain in New York for eleven days awaiting transport to New Orleans. During that delay the men were camped on Long Island, the staging area for all the regiments awaiting service under General Banks in Louisiana.

Since no ship was available to transport all ten companies, the men separated into smaller groups. Companies D, G, and I (Hobbs's company), including Dr. Ariel I. Cummings, regimental surgeon, and Colonel Burrell made the journey on the fastest and safest ship, the Saxon. On December 5, 1862, the commander and those three companies departed for New Orleans, making two stops in the voyage at Key West, Florida, and Ship Island, Alabama, for coal and fresh water. After twelve days of heavy seas and inclement weather, the ship arrived at New Orleans on December 17. ⁵

The remainder of the regiment was not as lucky in securing transportation. The other ships were neither as fast nor as safe as

the Saxon. The first ship to arrive in New Orleans after the Saxon was the Charles Osgood, carrying three more companies of the Forty-second arriving on December 29, 1862. Colonel Burrell and the Saxon had already been sent to Galveston before the Charles Osgood arrived. It too was dispatched to Galveston, but it would arrive too late to aid in the coming battle.\(^6\) The remaining two ships carrying the four other companies did not reach New Orleans until after the first of the year.\(^7\)

Two days after arriving in New Orleans, Colonel Burrell and the three companies received orders from General Banks to travel to Galveston. On December 21, the Regiment was ready to travel.\(^8\) Colonel Burrell was instructed that before departure for Galveston he would receive precise written orders from Banks detailing their mission in Texas. Unfortunately, Banks could not be found, and no written copy of the orders could be located. Colonel S. B. Holabird, chief-quartermaster of the Department of New Orleans, related to Colonel Burrell what he could remember hearing from Banks: Burrell should consult with Commodore William P. Renshaw upon arrival in Galveston and remain under the protection of the naval forces until

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reinforcements arrived and further orders were provided. Burrell learned that he would be joined by reinforcements consisting of the remainder of the Forty-second, which would be sent to Galveston upon arrival in New Orleans, an additional regiment of infantry, a regiment of Cavalry, and a battery of light artillery.\(^9\)

The official orders were quite different. They indicated that Colonel Burrell was to make no extended movement into Galveston but was to form a command post to protect civilian areas and to attempt to recruit Texans for Union service. Burrell was to allow no trade or commerce through the port of Galveston and to recognize General Hamilton as acting governor, but to take orders only from Banks. Most of all, though, Colonel Burrell was not to engage the enemy in any way until reinforcements arrived.\(^10\) A second set of orders was sent with the men on the Charles Osgood, instructing Burrell, when reinforcements arrived, to create a fort that could command the bridge connecting Galveston with the mainland at Virginia Point; unfortunately, those orders never arrived

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\(^8\) Ibid., p. 61.
\(^11\) Ibid., pp. 68-69.
in time for Colonel Burrell to read them.\textsuperscript{12} Meanwhile the \textit{Saxon}, carrying the 360 men and Colonel Burrell, arrived in Galveston on December 24, 1862, and the colonel set about constructing a defensive position.\textsuperscript{13}

**FIRST BATTLE OF GALVESTON**

The initial Union capture of Galveston had taken place on October 4, 1862, by four Federal gunboats (the \textit{Westfield}, the flagship having eight heavy guns; the \textit{Harriet Lane}, the fastest and heaviest ship, which also had eight guns and which was under the command of Commander Richard M. Wainwright; the \textit{Owasco}, a screw propeller vessel with six guns, commanded by Lieutenant Commander H. Wilson; and the \textit{Clifton}, a converted ferryboat carrying seven guns, under the direction of Lieutenant Commander Robert W. Law)\textsuperscript{14} that were a portion of the blockading fleet in charge of Texas, under the command of Rear Admiral David G. Farragut. Commodore William P. Renshaw commanded the four ships involved in the assault on Galveston.\textsuperscript{15} The port was under the command of Confederate

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 69.
\textsuperscript{14} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 70.
\textsuperscript{15} Alwyn Barr, "The Texas Coastal Defense 1861-1865," \textit{The}
Brigadier General Paul O'Hebert, who was in command of the district of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona; the actual defense of the city was left to Colonel Joseph Cook.\textsuperscript{16}

Not much of a battle took place because Confederate General O'Hebert believed that Galveston harbor was indefensible and that "in the event of a large-scale naval landing it would be folly to attempt resistance."\textsuperscript{17} To him the only defense against an attack on Texas was to fight a land battle on the mainland. His plan was to fortify Virginia Point, the point of crossing from Galveston Island to mainland Texas.\textsuperscript{18} By October, General believed that an attack would be launched on Galveston Harbor at any time and he ordered Colonel Cook to remove all of the artillery pieces but one, a ten-inch rifled gun which was left to defend the harbor at Fort Point at the northern most entrance to the bay. O'Hebert ordered that all other ordinance


\textsuperscript{17} William Curtis Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray} (Hillsboro, Texas: Hill Junior College Press, 1968), p. 103.

be moved to Virginia Point. The remaining empty positions for gun
carriages were to be replaced with "Quaker guns," wooden replicas
of cannons, in the hope that they would scare off any attack on the
harbor.

On October 4, 1862, the Union fleet, under command of
Renshaw, entered Galveston Bay. But beyond this fact the course of
events becomes hazy, depending on which side of the war the
narrator supports. According to the Confederates, the Union fleet
sailed into the harbor under a flag of truce; but when no one came
out to meet them, they realized the weakness of the defenders. Then
the Union ships lowered their flags of truce and opened fire on Fort
Point. The reports go on to say that the Federal guns were able to
strike the gun carriage of the single remaining artillery piece, thus
forcing the Confederates to withdraw to Virginia Point. A
separate Confederate account states that the single gun at Fort
Point fired a warning shot at the Union ships, which were coming
under a flag of truce over the bar, and into the bay. Then the Owasco
opened fire while still under this flag of truce and destroyed the

22 Ibid., p. 113-114.
carriage of the Confederate gun.²³

The Union account of the original Union capture of Galveston as related by the sailors involved to the men of the Forty-second Regiment upon their arrival is different. The sailors of the Harriet Lane recounted that as the ships were crossing over the bar, the Clifton had accidentally fired a single shot, which by chance struck the carriage of the Confederate ten-inch gun, thus disabling it. In the aftermath of this single shot, "The garrison became panic struck at the effect of this chance shot and fled."²⁴

Regardless of differences in the various accounts the result of the battle remains the same. Colonel Cook was left with no choice but to evacuate the city and to surrender it to the Union fleet. Without a real battle, the city of Galveston fell to the Union forces. Without a landing force to occupy the city, Commodore agreed to the Confederate request for a four-day truce in which the Confederates could evacuate any civilians wishing to leave. In return, Renshaw demanded that he be allowed to raise the Union flag over the city’s custom house.²⁵ The city aldermen, unable to guarantee the safety of

²³ Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph., October 30, 1862.
²⁵ Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph., October 13, 1862. A.J.H.
the flag over an extended period of time, agreed to allow the flag to be raised for thirty minutes each day. On October 4 and each day thereafter until the Forty-second Regiment arrived, Commodore Renshaw "with pompous ceremony hoisted the stars and stripes upon the custom house and hauled them down some thirty minutes afterwards" before returning to his ship.\footnote{Duganne, \textit{Twenty Months In The Department Of The Gulf} (New York: 1865), p. 232.} Because Renshaw did not have enough men to occupy the city, he in effect, held it by proxy until enough men arrived physically to occupy the city. With this quick victory Renshaw sent a celebratory message to Admiral Farragut requesting troops be sent as soon as possible to occupy the city. He believed that his fleet could control the town, but at least a few hundred men would be required to patrol the city and provide guard duty.\footnote{Duganne, \textit{Twenty Months}, 232.}

According to reports, 90 percent of the inhabitants were gone by the time the Federal landing force arrived.\footnote{Donald S. Frazier, "Sibley’s Texans and the Battle of Galveston," \textit{Southwestern Historical Quarterly}, 99 (Oct., 1995), pp. 175 - 176.} According to some eyewitnesses, Galveston exhibited "such a moving as there is now going on here... that most every house is emptied to Houston or

\footnote{Tri-Weekly Telegraph., November 28, 1862.}
Liberty." It appears that most people relocated to Houston. A newspaper there reported that Galveston’s mayor begged the city of Houston to aid the refugees newly located in the city. The town of Galveston, according to the account of an unknown Union soldier's diary reprinted in the Galveston Tri-Weekly News, was on December 27 "the most deserted looking place [he] ever saw."

As for the conditions of the city upon the arrival of the Forty-second, on December 25, the outlook appeared grim for the remaining inhabitants, numbering approximately 3,000, who were mostly women and children unable to obtain wagons to escape during the truce. In an attempt to refuse aid to the Federal forces, the Confederates prevented food traffic from reaching the island, causing "much suffering among the poor." Burrell wrote to General Banks on December 29, 1862, describing the condition of the city, the "people are almost entirely destitute of the means of

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30 Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph, October 20, 1862.
31 Galveston, Texas Tri-Weekly News, January 17, 1863.
subsistence, as the enemy will not allow anything to be brought over from the main-land thinking doubtless to make them disloyal by starvation."\textsuperscript{34} The Forty-second, as well as ships' personnel, tried to relieve some of this suffering by sharing a portion of their supplies with the civilians on the island. In a final message to New Orleans on December 29, Colonel Burrell requested that supplies be sent and then sold to the civilians at army cost, and he requested that he be allowed to institute martial law so he could take from the rich in the area to give to the poor and destitute.\textsuperscript{35}

Only one incident of violence occurred in the time between the capture of the city and the arrival of the Forty-second Regiment. In an argument with a Federal sailor located on Kuhn's Wharf on December 2, a Confederate civilian shot a pistol at the sailor, but did not hit him. Other Federal sailors fired back at the man, causing the men on the ships to believe the city was under attack. The Union naval fleet then opened fire with a barrage of about forty artillery rounds that lasted approximately thirty minutes. Although little actual damage was sustained by the city, an emotional uproar

\textsuperscript{34} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, 204.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, 204.
General O'Hebert's surrender of Galveston on October 4, 1862, without a fight so incensed many Texans that they petitioned Richmond for his removal. To replace O'Hebert, the Confederate command chose General John B. Magruder to be the new commander of the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. John Magruder was a West Point graduate of the class of 1830, who had finished one year behind both General Robert E. Lee and General Joseph E. Johnston. Before arriving in Texas, Magruder accumulated an extensive and prestigious service record, having fought in the Mexican war where he was promoted three grades to the rank of lieutenant colonel. With the outbreak of the Civil War, he resigned his commission in the U.S. regular army and offered his services to the Confederates, who made him a full colonel and placed him in charge of troops along the Virginia Peninsula. It is reported that he led his men exceptionally well at Big Bethel (May 10, 1861), the Peninsula Campaign (April-July, 1862), and at Yorktown, where he defeated Union forces under General McClellan, who outnumbered his

36 Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph, December 8, 1862
37 Nunn, Ten Texans In Gray, p. 103.
troops by ten to one.\textsuperscript{39} Magruder was promoted to major general, but
as a result of a misunderstanding with General Lee he was
transferred to the Texas district.\textsuperscript{40} Magruder arrived in Texas to
succeed O’Hebert in late November 1862. \textsuperscript{41}

Texans welcomed Magruder for they felt more confidence in
him than in O’Herbert. He "brought a fresh breath of fighting spirit
to Texas in the Fall of 1862."\textsuperscript{42} Charles W. Trueheart, who was
living in Virginia, wrote to his sister in Texas, revealing some
personal reservations about Magruder’s character based on personal
experience, but acknowledging the excitement of Texans at the
arrival of Magruder:

I am glad that Major General Magruder is so much liked by
our Texans; and really seems to deserve no little credit
for the energy and enterprise displayed at his new post.
He is not one of our great Generals. In these parts he is
considered only a second rate general.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{39} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{40} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 103-105. Fraizer, "Sibley’s Texans,”
p. 177. There is a conflict over whether Magruder was sent to this
backwater of the war, called Texas, because of an alleged drinking
problem or because of alleged mistakes made by him during the
Seven Days Battle.
\textsuperscript{41} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{43} Trueheart, Charles W.; Letter to Mother In Houston, Texas,
February 21, 1863 Trueheart Papers.
For Texans, though, General Magruder was a boost for their fighting spirit. Upon his arrival, Magruder found much of the coast of Texas under the control of Union forces, so he immediately began making plans to drive them out. His original plan was to make his first assault at Sabine Pass with land and sea forces that were to be raised from the Houston area. After learning on December 26 of the arrival two days before of a landing force consisting of the 260 men of the Forty-second at Galveston and hearing rumors that many more were on the way, he shifted his plan to make a preemptive attack on Galveston before Union reinforcements arrived with the intention of driving all Federal forces from the area and effectively reopening the harbor for trade.

THE FORTY-SECOND REGIMENT ARRIVES

On December 24, 1862, the transport ship Saxon, carrying the men of the Forty-second, arrived at Galveston Harbor to find the ships that had participated in the original capture of the harbor, plus four other transport ships, the three sailing barks -- the Arthur, the Cavallo, and the Elias Pike, loaded with coal, -- and the steamer Mary Boardman, loaded with hay and horses, in full control of the

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situation. Upon entering the harbor, Colonel Burrell met with Lieutenant Commander Law and was transported to the *Westfield* to speak with Commodore Renshaw to determine the proper course of action and to maximize the protection of the small arriving force. Colonel Burrell suggested that they land and set up camp on the small island of Pelican Spit until reinforcements could arrive, but Renshaw felt that this course was not forceful enough. He ordered that men to land on Kuhn's Wharf, located at the end of 18th street. Commodore Renshaw assured Colonel Burrell the men of the Forty-second would be safer on Kuhn's Wharf under the protection of the naval guns, since Pelican Spit lacked enough fresh water for the men. Commodore Renshaw felt it would have been too much trouble for him to supply water to the men if they occupied Pelican Spit. The final agreement stipulated that Colonel Burrell and the men of the Forty-second would occupy a wooden warehouse located at the end of the wharf, and in case of an attack, the *Owasco* and the *Clifton* would take up positions to the right and left of the wharf to

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give supporting fire. 50 "Assurances were also given that the troops could be taken from the wharf in five minutes time if it became necessary to do so."51

With these assurances, the men of the Forty-second put ashore on December 25, 1862, at Kuhn's Wharf to begin their exciting but short-lived occupancy of Galveston. The wharf was about 400 feet long and 20 feet wide, with a two-story cotton warehouse, a wooden building that was for the most part empty, located at the farthest end of the wharf. After landing, the men began immediately to prepare the location for occupancy. They made the second floor into barracks, and the first floor into a hospital and a quartermaster's warehouse. 52

In preparation for a possible assault against him, Burrell reinforced his position. When the men were ashore, a company was set to work tearing up a fifty-foot section of the wharf located about fifty feet from the shore, and the wood was used to build a breast-work for the men. 53 The breast-work was built with half-

52 Ibid., p. 72.
53 Ibid., p. 72.
inch planks placed two deep and one on top of another, forming a barricade about four feet high.\textsuperscript{54} A cotton bale or a huge sack of cotton seed, placed at the opening of the breast-works, could block any entrance to them.\textsuperscript{55} The men also reinforced the barracks by placing barrels of plaster found in the warehouse along the exposed walls on both floors.\textsuperscript{56} On December 30, a second fifty-foot section of the wharf was torn up and used to create a second breast-work, identical to the first, this time much closer to the barracks. A single board was left extending across the gap in the wharf connecting them to the shore.\textsuperscript{57}

On December 27 the crew brought the remaining supplies that were aboard the \textit{Saxon} ashore: they then discovered, that in the haste to leave New York, much of the ammunition for their rifles had been inadvertently placed on one of the other transport ships that was still en route. As a result, each man had only eighteen rounds of ammunition and was under orders to fire only by commande.\textsuperscript{58}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[54] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 85.
\item[55] Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 209.
\item[56] Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 73.
\item[58] Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 74.
\end{footnotes}
For protection, pickets were sent out each day to take up positions on the Strand, Market Street, and at locations to the left and right of the wharf so that the Union soldiers positioned on the wharf would have a warning of an attack. By night, these pickets positioned themselves much closer to the wharf for their greater protection. Men of the Forty-second varied in their estimates of the strength of the Confederate troops from a high of 12,000 in the Houston-Galveston area down to 2,000. Colonel Burrell believed about 2,000 troops held both Virginia Point, which controlled the mainland end of the bridge, and Eagle Grove, which was a Confederate fort with three heavy guns located on the Galveston end of the bridge connecting the Island to the mainland.

On December 29, two more ships arrived in the harbor, bringing the total number of ships, including the transport Saxon, to eleven. The Union soldiers hoped that the ships contained reinforcements and the misloaded ammunition, but they were disappointed. The screw propeller Sachem, having five guns, and the schooner Corypheus, with one gun, had come to Galveston to repair a boiler of

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59 Ibid., 73. Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 208.
60 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 73. Scott, War Of The Rebellion, pp. 204, 208.
61 Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph, January 30, 1863.
the *Sachem* that had been damaged in a heated duel with Confederate blockade runners near Corpus Christi. The officers and men of the Forty-second understood their vulnerable position and were very anxious for the remainder of the regiment and the promised reinforcements to arrive. Colonel Burrell, feeling that a well-directed assault could destroy the Union forces, and lacking faith in Commodore Renshaw's ability to protect them, ordered Burrell's nephew, Quartermaster John Burrell, to board the *Saxon* on December 29. Quartermaster Burrell was to return to New Orleans to discover when the remaining portion of the regiment and reinforcements would arrive. The ship never made it out of the harbor, for the Confederates attacked two days later.

**RECONNOITERING**

Both sides actively sought intelligence about the other side's plans, activities, and positions. The Confederates profited from darkness because of the inability of the Federal troops to maintain pickets very far from the wharf at night. In a letter to be

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62 Scott, *War Of The Rebellion*, p. 204.
sent back with Quartermaster Burrell to Banks, Colonel Burrell stated that "during the day we control the city, but at night, owing to our small force, I am obliged to draw in the pickets to the wharf. .." The Confederates were most interested in discovering the exact location and strength of the Federal forces. On December 29, 1862, a Confederate cavalryman wrote that he "saw a plenty of Ab[olitionist]s . . . and they scattered about considerably as we galloped two or three blocks to the south of them." On the night before the attack, Magruder paid a nocturnal visit to survey the scene, spending some hours within sight of the Federal garrison. By the time of the attack, the Confederates had discovered the location of all of the Federal land and naval forces.

By day, though, the Forty-second could travel as they pleased within the city limits and made contact with some people who were sympathetic to the Union. They discovered vital information as well as foraged for whatever materials they required. On occasions refugees loyal to the Union informed the Federal troops that the

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66 Ibid., p. 204.
67 Nunn, Ten Texans In Gray, p. 105.
68 H.M Trueheart letter Mary M. Joseph, January 22, 1863, Trueheart Papers.
Confederate forces were preparing to attack any day.\textsuperscript{71} These sources disclosed that a Confederate flotilla was being prepared and that a land force was amassing at Virginia Point for the purpose of attacking the Union Forces.\textsuperscript{72}

Not long after his arrival, Burrell, with Commander Wainright and Commodore Renshaw, scouted the island and jointly concluded that they needed to destroy the bridge connecting the island to the mainland.\textsuperscript{73} On only one occasion did the reconnoitering Federal troops come into contact with Confederate troops before the battle. On December 26 a group of Union soldiers searching for a stove came across a group of twelve Confederate cavalry men offering a flag of truce and wishing to speak with the British Counsel located in Galveston. Colonel Burrell decided to let them speak to the Counsel, but no further incursions by Confederate troops into the city would be allowed. If any other soldiers entered city, they would be fired on as spies.\textsuperscript{74}

\begin{thebibliography}{74}
\bibitem{71} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 78.
\bibitem{73} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, pp. 76-77.
\end{thebibliography}
Although Colonel Burrell made some preparations for a possible assault against his men, he could have done much more if Commodore Renshaw had helped him better secure his position. The bridge that connected the island to the mainland was never destroyed, nor was any attempt made to try to destroy it.\textsuperscript{75} This bridge, a vital two-mile link to the island, allowed the Confederates to scout the Union positions at will, and it allowed them easily to transport a large numbers of men and supplies needed for the assault upon the Federal position on the island.\textsuperscript{76} Commander Renshaw refused to destroy the bridge, feeling that it would have starved out the remaining civilians on the island.\textsuperscript{77} Later, naval officers who had been in Galveston at the time of the initial surrender of the city in October admitted that "The Navy could have sent up boat crews and destroyed it because. . . . the enemy had abandoned everything."\textsuperscript{78} Major W. M. L. Bret reported to Banks:

The railroad bridge from the mainland to Galveston, which had never been cut by us and which was in the full control and use of the Rebels, furnished them an easy and rapid means of transportation and attack and was undoubtedly one of the prime causes of the

\textsuperscript{75} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{76} Duganne, \textit{Twenty Months}, p. 233.
\textsuperscript{78} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 76.
disaster.\textsuperscript{79} Beside requesting the destruction of the bridge, Burrell also requested the use of two captured 12 pounder howitzer field guns and three hundred rounds of ammunition be landed for his defense, both aboard the \textit{Corypheus}, where they were of no use. Renshaw, however, refused to release them and did not explain why.\textsuperscript{80} Even with advanced warning of a naval operation by the rebel forces against his fleet, Renshaw failed to undertake any additional steps to prepare for an attack, feeling that the Confederate ships were unimportant.\textsuperscript{81} Renshaw added to the lack of preparation as well by ordering the Forty-second to take up an exposed position on the wharf, meanwhile assuring the troops he could protect them from any attack.

\textbf{CONFEDERATE PLAN OF ATTACK}

As mentioned, General Magruder’s original plan of attack was to be launched against the Union forces at Sabine Pass, but when he learned of the arrival of the ground forces at Galveston, he altered his objective. His overall plan was to try to remove all Federal personnel from the Texas coast so that he could open needed supply

\textsuperscript{79} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 204.

\textsuperscript{80} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 83.
and trade routes with Cuba and Europe. As he was deciding what to do, Magruder received reports that the Federals had a land force of 950, with 350 men already ashore. Rumor had it that another 5,000 men were on the way. Thinking it more important to repel any land forces, Magruder made final preparations to attack Galveston.

The operation was to be a coordinated two-part attack, consisting of a land assault to be led by Magruder himself and a naval action to be led by Major Leon Smith. Magruder had first met Smith during the Mexican War in California and knew him to be a fine riverboat captain. When Magruder arrived in Houston, Smith was not in the Confederate Army, but Magruder, knowing of his skill, asked him to help. Upon Smith's acceptance Magruder appointed him a major in charge of the naval forces to be used in the attack. The plan was that Major Smith would prepare four ships to assault the Union naval forces, while General Magruder would have a land force of 3,000 men and twenty-one guns to attack the land force, as well

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81 Ibid., p. 84. Duganne, Twenty Months, p. 233.
82 Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 122.
83 Galveston, Texas Tri-Weekly News, December 26, 1863.
84 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 212.
86 Jones, Civil War At Sea, p. 319. Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p.212.
as to bombard the Union fleet in the harbor.\footnote{Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 122.}

Upon receiving his command, Smith ordered crews in Houston to work night and day to prepare four ferry boats for the attack. Knowing that they would be no match for the Union ships in an open fight, he ordered two of the ships to be fitted with rams for a boarding type assault. The other two ships would serve as tenders, carrying supplies and fuel.\footnote{Neuman, Emil. Letters to sister, January 4, 1863, Trueheart Papers.} The two rams, the Bayou City and the Neptune, had their decks loaded with cotton bales to protect the Confederates manning the boat in the attack. These ships were henceforth named "Cotton Clads" after their more advanced cousins the Iron Clads.\footnote{Scott, War Of The Rebellion, 212.}

The first ship, the Bayou City, was fitted as the flagship under the command of Captain Henry Lubbock and Major Leon Smith, and was fitted with one rifled, heavy, six-inch gun.\footnote{Robert Morris Franklin, Battle Of Galveston (Galveston: San Luis Press, 1975) p. 4. Frazier, "Sibley’s Texans," p. 178.} The other vessel, the Neptune, after being fitted with cotton bales, had two smaller gunnery.
twenty-four pounders.\textsuperscript{92} To aid in the boarding, each ship was also fitted with two twenty-five-foot-long gangplanks and grappling hooks to fasten themselves to the enemy ships.\textsuperscript{93} Then each ship was loaded with a 100 to a 150 men of Sipley's Texas Cavalry Brigade, each of whom was armed with Enfield rifles brought by Magruder from Richmond, and with double barreled shotguns. These Confederate soldiers loaded aboard the ships were affectionately named by Magruder as his "Horse Marines."\textsuperscript{94}

Smith's orders were to proceed down Buffalo Bayou, to arrive at Galveston at exactly 1:00 A.M. on January 1, and, upon hearing the signal from the land forces, to launch his attack and to catch the Federals off-guard. The strategy was to "thus force the Federals to oppose the Confederates on two fronts," both land and sea.\textsuperscript{95} The exact order as given by General Magruder to Major Smith read, "I will attack from the city about one o'clock; take boats as near as you can to the enemy's vessels, without risk of discovery, and attack when signal gun is fired from the city. The Rangers of the Prairie send

\textsuperscript{94} Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 5. Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p.105.
greeting to the Rangers of the Sea."\textsuperscript{96}

The Confederate land assault was to consist of a two-part attack, an artillery action against the ships in the harbor, and a land assault of 500 men on the Union forces located on Kuhn's Wharf.\textsuperscript{97} To transport men and materials to the city quickly, Magruder needed the bridge and the railway system into the city to place his materials as close as possible to the Union forces and as quickly as possible under the cover of the night.\textsuperscript{98}

The main purpose of the twenty-one field artillery pieces was to attempt to drive the Union ships from the harbor, but their secondary function was to soften up the troops on the wharf for the coming attack. The Confederate guns consisted of fourteen field pieces, some smoothbore and others rifled, six heavy siege guns, and one eight-inch Dahlgren mounted on a railway flat car. Magruder ordered the Dahlgren placed within a few hundred yards of the Harriet Lane.\textsuperscript{99} Both the field pieces and the siege guns were placed

\textsuperscript{95} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p.105.
\textsuperscript{96} Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{98}Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 212.
throughout the city streets, where they could have a good field of fire on the harbor, and two pieces were placed in the second story of a warehouse targeting the wharf.\textsuperscript{100} Three additional heavy guns were transported to Fort Point with six companies of infantry to have a better command of the mouth of the harbor.

Five hundred men led by Colonel Scurry and formed from parts of Cook’s and Pyron’s Regiments were to carry out the land attack on the wharf. Equipped with fifty scaling ladders they were to bypass the portions of the wharf that had been torn up\textsuperscript{101} and to wade out chest-deep into the water, past the breastworks, and to scale the side of the wharf.\textsuperscript{102} The remainder of the land force, consisting of about 2,500 men, was to be ready with entrenchment tools and cotton bales for an extended battle in the case that the assault failed. The transportation of the land forces to the island was set to start at about 7:00 p.m., and the attack was to commence when the signal cannon shot was fired by General Magruder.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{100} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 213.
To maintain as much of the element of surprise as possible, it was Magruder's intention to warn the civilians of the assault just hours before the attack was to begin. Ambulances were supplied to transport as many civilians as possible away from the city to a safer location. The only group refusing to be evacuated was a group of nuns at the Ursuline Convent; instead they chose to remain behind and to aid in the forming of a field hospital for the anticipated casualties.¹⁰⁴

CHAPTER 4: THE BATTLE OF GALVESTON

In every way, the victory of the New Year's Day Battle of Galveston should have gone to the Union side. Although the Union forces were heavily outnumbered in land forces, the Union personnel had the advantages of being forewarned of the attack, greater artillery power, time to fortify, and greater mobility; but they still lost decisively.\(^1\) Part of the problem was the lack of preparation on the Union side, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Throughout the battle, right up to the time of the retreat of the Union ships, there was a consistent lack of proper judgment by the Union commander. The single factor that appears to have been the deciding one for the Confederate forces was the level of leadership that helped them here as in many other occasions during the Civil War.

There can be no question of the bravery or gallantry of the fighting men on both sides, in spite of their lack of experience in actual armed conflict. Both sides spoke highly of the bravery and honor that the other side exhibited in the battle.\(^2\) The Confederates showed their admiration of the Union men's bravery by burying the dead of the Harriet Lane with full military honors in the city.

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\(^1\) Nunn, Ten Texans in Gray, p. 105.
\(^2\) Duganne, Twenty Months, p. 234.
There is a great deal of questioning of the conduct of both sides, especially regarding proper rules of combat concerning the use of flags of truce. Both sides accused the other of breaking these rules, and clearly both sides did break the rules. But one must understand that by late 1862, the rules of war were changing as well as the way that the war was being fought.

**THE BATTLE BEGINS**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Union commanders were well informed of the coming attack. On December 29 civilians in the area had told the Union commanders of the preparations by the Confederates for the attack.³ Commodore Renshaw was warned of the attack by the commander and the men of the *Harriet Lane* just the day before it actually occurred, but he chose to take "no additional preparations."⁴ Again, at the last moment the Union forces were alerted of the coming attack, the result of a minor mistakes by the Confederate forces.

The Union ships first sighted by the light of a full moon the

Confederate ships in the harbor when they approached too close to the Union vessels. According to Captain Lubbock, who was aboard the Bayou City, the Confederate ships "arrived at southwest Pelican Island a few minutes after 12 o'clock," where they "stopped and waited some minutes for General [Magruder] to open the fight" and while all the time "the Federals were continually signaling through their fleet, . . . we retired in obedience to written orders."5 Fearing that the Union ships would cut them off, the Confederates withdrew to a safer location up the bayou.6 They thought the attack had been called off by General Magruder.7

At this point having received warning of the nearness of the opposing Confederate flotilla, Commodore Renshaw attempted to move his ship, the Westfield, behind the Confederate ships in order to cut them off from retreating up the harbor. It was then that Renshaw ran the Westfield aground on a sand bar at Pelican Spit. Finding himself unable to back off the sand bar, he then attempted to signal the Clifton to come pull him from the beach.8 It was at this

6 Franklin, Battle Of Galveston, 6.
8 Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense," p. 16. Duganne, Twenty Months,
time that the men of the Forty-second were ordered out of their barracks to take up position for a feared attack. When the land attack did not come the men were ordered back to the barracks to get some sleep.\(^9\)

A second signal of the coming attack at about 4:00 A.M., this time by the pickets of the Forty-second Massachusetts who were located around the wharf protecting the men from a surprise attack.\(^10\) They rushed in to inform Colonel Burrell that they had heard the rumbling of artillery pieces being brought into the city.\(^11\) Colonel Burrell ordered all the men to take cover behind the second set of breast-works that they had built the day before.\(^12\) They also signaled the Union ships that the enemy was at hand and was preparing to attack.\(^13\)

The men of the Forty-second did not have to wait long, for at

\(^{9}\) Hobbs Diary, January 1st, 1863.
\(^{12}\) Jones, *Civil War At Sea*, p. 321.
4:30 A.M. General Magruder fired the first shot of the battle and said, "I've done my duty as a private, now I will attend to my duties as a general." After this opening shot, the artillery and infantry opened fire on the wharf-bound men of the Forty-second, as well as on the ships in the harbor. The Confederates presumed that the men ashore were under the cover of the warehouse, so they concentrated all of their fire there, but because of Colonel Burrell's forethought, the men were safe behind the Union breastworks as the majority of bullets, canister and cannon balls screamed overhead. Dugan records, "when the fray was over, there could not be found a spot of two feet square [within the warehouse] which was not perforated with bullet holes."

Shortly after General Magruder fired the first shot, the Union ships, the Sachem, the Coryphæus, and the Harriet Lane, opened fire on the city. Because of the darkness, the ships were unable to

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17 Duganne, Twenty Months, p. 239.
target the enemy artillery pieces and fired blindly for some time.\textsuperscript{19}

As the artillery duel continued, Union naval forces were able to ascertain the Confederate locations by the flashes of artillery fire and finally suppress them.\textsuperscript{20}

The second part of the plan for the Confederate land troops, as mentioned before, was for Colonel Joseph Cook to take 500 men with fifty scaling ladders to assault the Forty-second Massachusetts Companies on the wharf. At approximately 5:30 A.M., the shelling of the wharf stopped and Cook ordered his men into the warm Gulf water to reach the Forty-second.\textsuperscript{21}

The Forty-second suspected an attack when the shelling ceased and prepared for an assault.\textsuperscript{22} Upon seeing the Confederates wading chest deep through the water toward them, Colonel Burrell ordered his men to open fire with “buck and ball,” killing an unknown number of Confederates.\textsuperscript{23} Their gunfire was not what stopped the

\textsuperscript{19} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{21} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 214.
\textsuperscript{22} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 94.
attack; instead, the attack failed because the Confederate's ladders were not long enough to reach from the sea floor to the deck of the wharf.\textsuperscript{24} Under the deadly fire of the Forty-second, as well as the shelling from the Union ships at the foot of the wharf, Colonel Cook had no choice but to order his men to retreat to the safety of the city buildings.\textsuperscript{25}

The Confederates then endeavored to place a twenty-pound smoothbore cannon on one of the adjoining wharves, but they were forced to abandon the artillery piece because of the deadly and accurate fire of the Union sharpshooters.\textsuperscript{26} This aborted attack left the two opposing land forces at a stalemate until daylight came.

In the daylight, the Confederates no longer had the advantage of the darkness to obscure their location from the Union Navy's heavy artillery.\textsuperscript{27} According to one of the Confederate infantrymen, "As day had dawned, affording the Federals an opportunity of getting

\textsuperscript{24} Scott, War Of The Rebellion, 214.
\textsuperscript{25} Federal Writers Project. Nunn, Ten Texans In Gray, 106.
\textsuperscript{27} Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense," p. 16. Galveston, Texas Tri-Weekly
the exact positions of our batteries, the storm of grape, canister, and shell and shot, was more than a mortal man could stand." He continued, "to fight gunboats carrying the heaviest metal with light artillery, was a severe test of raw troops... [and] at this awfully trying moment, some of the men left their guns and broke for the beach." The retreat was worse than this Confederate soldier admitted, because it had turned into a full scale rout of the Confederate positions. A detachment of Xavier Debray’s Twenty-sixth Texas Cavalry was ordered to round up the retreating men to force them back into the battle. Colonel Scurry was able to rally some of the reserve forces of Sibley’s Brigade and lead them back to retrieve the guns that had been deserted.

General Magruder was left with no choice under the circumstances but to order the retreat of the attacking forces.

"Preparations were then ordered for the immediate fortification and permanent occupation of the city" by the Confederates with the idea

News, January 17, 1863.
28 Emil Neuman letters to sister in Houston, January 4, 1863, Trueheart Papers.
29 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 215.
of laying siege to the wharf. These orders never needed to be carried out because at that exact moment the naval assault began with the attack of the Confederate make-shift rams on the Harriet Lane. This attack proved to be the deciding event of the battle, determining who would be the victor and who would be the vanquished.

The Confederate naval ships, after steaming some distance back up the bayou toward Houston, heard the cannon fire and proceeded back towards Galveston. Upon entering the harbor, the two transport ships dropped off while the other two Confederate ships, the Bayou City and the Neptune, located the Union ship, the Harriet Lane, and decided to attack it. In the open water, the

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32 Nunn, Ten Texans In Gray, p.106.
33 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 215. In a 1991 book entitled by Alvin M. Josephy there is a number of factual errors regarding the Battle of Galveston. First, the author states that Magruder intended to retreat from Galveston after the initial land assault failed, when in fact he intended to lay siege to the harbor and the men on the wharf. He also states that the Westfield ran aground after the Harriet Lane was captured, when it ran aground before the battle ever began. Lastly he presents that the warehouse on the wharf was brick, when it was wood, and that the battle began at 5:00 A.M., when it began at 4:30 A.M.. Alvin M. Josephy, The Civil War in the American West (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1991), pp. 165 - 167.
35 Franklin, Battle Of Galveston, p. 6. Jones, Civil War At Sea, p. 322.
Confederate ships would have been no match for the faster and more heavily armed *Harriet Lane*. That the *Harriet Lane* was located well up the harbor in shallow water, on orders from Commodore Renshaw, worked to the advantage of the Confederate naval forces. Major Leon Smith knew he had no chance in a naval duel and decided that the only hope for his inferior ships was to carry the enemy by boarding. As a result, all subsequent maneuvering was designed to carry out that aim.\(^37\)

The remainder of the Union fleet was unable to come to the aid of the *Harriet Lane*, since they were engaged at other locations in the harbor.\(^38\) The *Westfield* and the *Clifton* were busy trying to excavate the *Westfield* from Pelican Spit, where it had run aground, and the other ships were busy repelling the land assault on the Forty-second. At this time Renshaw ordered the *Clifton* to proceed to the wharf to aid the other Union ships engaged in bombarding the city.\(^39\)

The *Bayou City* was the first to reach and then ram the *Harriet* 

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\(^38\) Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 124.

Lane. It, however, did no damage to her, but, instead, caused the 
boarding plank to be lodged in the wheel house of the Bayou City, 
forcing the Bayou City to steam into the harbor out of control. The 
Bayou City was able, though, to fire two shots with its heavy thirty- 
two pounder. The first shot hit the Harriet Lane, putting a hole in 
her but inflicting no critical damage. The second shot exploded 
aboard the Bayou City, killing three men. However, the rifle and 
shotgun fire from the Bayou City had been enough to force the men of 
the Harriet Lane to seek cover below decks momentarily.

While the men of the Harriet Lane were returning to deck and 
the captain was trying to bring her around for a deadly broadside 
against the Bayou City, the Neptune attacked, ramming into the side 
of the Harriet Lane. The Neptune had been attempting to fire its 
smaller cannons, the two twenty-four pounders, but did little 
damage other than to "bore small round holes into the hull of the 
Harriet Lane." The Neptune's ramming also did little real damage, 
bu, it did cause the anchor and thirty feet of chain to go overboard,

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41 Jones, Civil War At Sea, p. 322.
43 Duganne, Twenty Months, p. 240.
effectively securing the Harriet Lane to its position.\textsuperscript{45} The Neptune, a less sturdy ship, did not fare as well; it was effectively crippled.\textsuperscript{46} Then the Harriet Lane was able to fire a single shell at the water line of the Neptune, causing it to sink in eight feet of water.\textsuperscript{47}

In the time that the Harriet Lane was involved with the Neptune, the crew of the Bayou City repaired the minor damage to its wheel house and returned for a second attack. The "horse marines" aboard the Bayou City again drove the men of the Harriet Lane below decks. The Confederate riverboat once more attempted to ram the Harriet Lane, this time striking her under the wheel guard and forcing the iron paddlewheel into the deck of the Bayou City, effectively locking them together.\textsuperscript{48} The "horse marines," led by Major Smith, stormed aboard the Harriet Lane and subdued the remaining Union crew members.\textsuperscript{49}

In this final assault, Captain Wainwright was shot in the head by Smith while still at his post and yelling to the Confederates that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{44} Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Jones, \textit{Civil War At Sea}, p. 322.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense," p. 18. Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 8.
\end{itemize}
he would never surrender. His second-in-command, Lieutenant Commander Edward Lea, was also mortally wounded in the assault while still at his commander's side and at their post. The men of the Harriet Lane, it was said, fought gallantly, surrendering only when all the officers aboard were dead and there was no other choice.

In one of the strange twists of fate surrounding the American Civil War, where occasionally brother fought brother and father apposed son, the father of Lieutenant Commander Lea, who was a major in the Confederate army, heard on his way from Tennessee to San Antonio that the Battle of Galveston was to take place. He asked General Magruder if he could be present during the attack. Confederate Major Lea knew that the Harriet Lane was in Galveston harbor and that his son was aboard. He hoped to be reunited with his son, whom he had not seen in many years. He reached the ship shortly after the Harriet Lane had been captured and found his son mortally wounded in the abdomen. There, in his father's arms,

49 Ibid., p. 9.
51 Franklin, Battle Of Galveston, 9.
52 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, 215.
Edward Lea died after bidding his father good-bye.\footnote{Galveston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly News}, January 3, 1863.} The next day, Major Lea buried his son, along with his commander, with full military honors. His final comments praised the honor that the officers of the \textit{Harriet Lane} deserved for fighting so gallantly.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.} Edward Lea is still buried in the Galveston cemetery, but his commander was removed shortly after the war and returned to his home in the North. Inscribed on Edward Lea's tombstone is the words "My Father Is Here."}

The remainder of the Union fleet, who witnessed the \textit{Harriet Lane}’s boarding and capture, attempted a rescue by sending the \textit{Owasco} to attack the Rebel ships. Coming into range of the Rebels the \textit{Owasco} began to open fire on the \textit{Bayou City} as well as at the \textit{Harriet Lane} but had to cease when Major Smith forced the remaining crew of the \textit{Harriet Lane} on deck.\footnote{Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 105. Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 124. Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p.9.} Fearing they would harm their fellow sailors or be executed by the Confederates, the \textit{Owasco}, under heavy fire from the shore batteries\footnote{Emil Neuman letters to sister in Houston Texas, January 4, 1863.} as well as the rifle fire from the "horse marines," was forced to disengage and to return to where the remainder of the fleet was located.\footnote{Barr, "Texas Coastal Defense," p. 18. Frazier, "Sibley's Texans," p.189.}
FLAG OF TRUCE

When the Owasco returned to the other Union ships, Major Smith, in a bold and deceptive move, ran up a flag of truce and sent a small boat over to the Clifton to call for the immediate surrender of the remaining Federal ships.\(^{58}\) The Federal ships, seeing this flag of truce, also raised theirs, as did Colonel Burrell, who had no information about what was going on. Lieutenant Commander Law, the ranking officer aboard the Clifton, was dictated the terms by which the Confederates would accept the surrender of the Union forces.\(^{59}\) The crews of the Union ships would be allowed to transfer to one ship and to depart, but all the other ships and cargo would be the bounty of the Confederates.\(^{60}\) The Union forces would have three hours to take the terms over to Commodore Renshaw aboard the Westfield and surrender.\(^{61}\) Commander Law was told that if they did not surrender, the Confederates would turn a fully functional Harriet Lane on them, and "the result would be the complete annihilation of all the Federal Forces."\(^{62}\) The Union officers had no way of

\(^{59}\) Jones, Civil War At Sea, p. 323.
ascertaining the present condition of the Harriet Lane, which was hopelessly locked with the Bayou City, effectively crippling both vessels.  

Not knowing the actual condition of the Harriet Lane, and with his own ship, the Westfield, helplessly grounded, and noting that the Owasco had taken many casualties in its assault of the Harriet Lane, "Renshaw became slightly panic-stricken and decided not to surrender but to withdraw his remaining ships from the contest."  

This decision to withdraw was taken against the advice of the remaining officers on the ship, as well as that of Commander Law. Unable to remove his ship from where it was grounded, Commodore Renshaw also decided to blow up the Westfield and transfer his flag to the Clifton to escape the harbor.  

This decision was against the better judgment of the other officers of the fleet, who preferred that the remaining ships either form a protective barrier around the Westfield until the tide rose and lifted it from the sand bar, or that the ships that were still operational be used to attack and destroy

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64 Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 126.  
both the *Bayou City* and the *Harriet Lane*.66

While the Federal officers were discussing their options, much activity was taking place with the men on the shore. Colonel Burrell, who commanded the men of the Forty-second Massachusetts Regiment on Kuhn’s Wharf, not knowing why flags of truce were being shown on the ships, had one of his men, Adjunct Davis, take a small boat out to the *Clifton* to investigate, and if possible, urge *Clifton* to come and take them off the wharf.67 When Davis reached the *Clifton*, he was told that he must wait for the return of Commander Law, who was by then already aboard the *Westfield* with Renshaw.68 Meanwhile, Colonel Scurry of the Confederate land forces had advanced to Kuhn’s Wharf and demanded the immediate surrender of the regiment.69 Colonel Burrell responded that he wished to have as much time, about three hours, as the ships had to confer with the commander of the naval forces, who he was hoping would extricate his men from the wharf. Colonel Scurry’s response was, "If you can stand the fire of my batteries that length of time,

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67 Ibid., p. 207.
68 Ibid., p. 207.
you can have it, but other wise."\textsuperscript{70} Colonel Burrell had no choice but to surrender, since "the ships were no longer in position to give support fire and since he was greatly outnumbered."\textsuperscript{71} Moreover, the Confederates by then reoccupied all of their previously abandoned artillery locations.\textsuperscript{72} The reoccupying of the abandoned artillery locations -- while the ships were under the truce flag -- was a clear violation of the rules of war as commonly accepted at that time.

The soldiers of the Forty-second, having no other option but to surrender, was then ordered by Colonel Scurry to stack their arms and to collect all personal belongings. They had three hours to do this before they were to leave the wharf.\textsuperscript{73} Colonel Burrell then offered his sword in surrender to Colonel Scurry, who refused to take it and stated with great honor, "Keep your sword Colonel, a man's done what you have deserves to wear it."\textsuperscript{74} Nothing but the highest regard was spoken concerning the conduct of Colonel Burrell in this fight. Later, the men stated, "He walked the wharf during the entire time the action continued... [and] while risking his own life

\textsuperscript{70} Galveston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly News}, January 3, 1863.
\textsuperscript{71} Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 128.
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 127.
in this manner to be able to observe all that was taking place, he
kept his men under shelter as much as possible."

In another violation of the status quo created by the truce, the
Confederates had chosen to move the artillery into more effective
locations by which to cover the ships lying in the harbor."
According to Confederate Private Emile Neubauer in a letter to his
family in Houston, "Major Don Harten ordered me to take my gun to
the Iron Battery near which the Clifton and Owasco was lying with a
white flag hoisted on them, this happened after the H. L. [Harriet
Lane] was taken, soon after all the guns were pointed to the O.
Owasco] and C. [Clifton] to prevent any treachery." In a final
violation of the status quo, the men of the Forty-second
Massachusetts Regiment were marched off the wharf, with the
Confederate excuse that the truce entered into by the naval forces in
the harbor did not pertain to the ground forces.

While the three companies of the Forty-second were being
marched off the wharf, Commodore Renshaw, still against the advice

76 Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 127.
sister in Houston Texas, January 4, 1863.
of his officers, made preparations to transfer his crew to the Clifton and to ignite the weapons' stores of the Westfield in order to blow up his ship.\textsuperscript{78} The officers attempted to convince him that the Confederates had no ships with which to attack, but Renshaw remained obstinate. He ordered all the ships of the Union fleet to escape from the harbor after the explosion of the Westfield, even though under a flag of truce, another blatant violation of the rules of war concerning the proper conduct under a flag of truce.

After all the men of the Westfield had been transferred to the Clifton and the Sachem, Commodore Renshaw ignited the fuse leading to the powder kegs intending to destroy the ship, but something did not go as planned. The kegs did not explode as expected, and when Commodore Renshaw returned to the Westfield to try again, either as he was reboarding the ship or after he had reignited the kegs, at 8:45 A.M. they exploded, killing Commodore Renshaw, second-in-command Lieutenant Zimmerman, and a crew of nine men who would have taken Commodore Renshaw to the Clifton.\textsuperscript{79}

Lieutenant Commander Law, now in command, witnessed the

\textsuperscript{78} Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 126.
explosion and carried out his last orders to take the ships from the bay. The remaining ships then proceeded slowly from the harbor in order to escape. General Magruder had left orders with the gunners of the Confederate artillery not to fire at the ships until the truce was over, believing that the ships would not dare to break the flag of truce.\textsuperscript{80} As the ships began to creep away, Colonel Scurry sent word to General Magruder that the ships were beginning to escape, but Magruder did not believe it.\textsuperscript{81} After he finally witnessed it with his own eyes, he "sent a swift express on horseback to Colonel Scurry, directing him to open fire."\textsuperscript{82} By then it was too late, for the ships were already out of effective range, being over a mile away from the Confederate guns. It was reported that another ship, the Sachem, was damaged at this time by the Confederates and had sunk outside the bar, but this was in fact not true, because all the remaining ships were able to escape safely over the bar into open waters.\textsuperscript{83} Lieutenant Commander Law, fearing that the Confederates would try to pursue, ordered all the ships to sail for New Orleans.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{80} Franklin, \textit{Battle Of Galveston}, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{81} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 216.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 216.
\textsuperscript{83} Houston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly Telegraph}, January 14, 1863.
\textsuperscript{84} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, 203.
This order effectively lifted the blockade of Galveston Harbor.\textsuperscript{85}

**AFTERMATH**

"Our disaster at Galveston has thrown us back and done more injury to the navy than all of the events of the war."\textsuperscript{86} This was the reaction of Federal Admiral David Farragut, who was in charge of all Union naval forces. Although an exaggeration, his reaction describes the feeling of northerners in the aftermath of the defeat at Galveston. Even though neither side suffered tremendous losses in actual numbers of men or materials, the northern loss of pride and the subsequent increase of the fighting spirit among Texans made this battle a costly affair for the Union cause.\textsuperscript{87} The one man who should have answered for this defeat--Commodore Renshaw--never had to; he died in the destruction of his ship.\textsuperscript{88} If the Union forces had held out one more day, or if they could have delayed the attack, they would have received reinforcements, for troops were en route to aid in the defense. Instead, these additional soldiers were almost captured by the Confederates in a trap laid for any unsuspecting Federal ships entering Galveston Bay.

\textsuperscript{86} Jones, *Civil War At Sea*, p. 330.
\textsuperscript{87} Nunn, *Ten Texans In Gray*, p. 109.
The Union losses of men and materials were very slight when compared with the tremendous losses in battles such as those at Shiloh or Antietam; the real loss for the Union troops was in pride. The casualties of the Forty-second were 5 killed and 15 wounded, and the losses of the naval forces were 20 killed and 21 wounded.\(^{89}\) The Union also lost 237 men from the Forty-second and 110 sailors from the Harriet Lane as prisoners. In terms of war ships, the Union lost the Harriet Lane, which was used as a Confederate blockade runner for the remainder of the war, and the exploded Westfield, from which the Confederates were able to salvage guns for future use in defending the harbor. The Union navy also forfeited three transport vessels, the Cavalle, the Elias Pike, and the Arthur, as well as all the materials that were aboard them. These ships were unable to escape with the remaining fleet because of the lack of wind—this was still in part a sailing navy. With these losses also came the loss of material including commissary supplies for 250 men for three months, tents, medical supplies, arms and ammunition, entrenching material for a force of 500 men, and, most humiliating to the men of the Forty-second,

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\(^{88}\) Duganne, *Twenty Months*, 242.

\(^{89}\) Adjutant General, *Massachusetts Soldiers*, p. 190.
two regimental flags.\textsuperscript{90}

This damage, although insignificant in terms of needed supplies, was more detrimental to the Union's sense of prestige and morale than the material costs would indicate. Correspondingly, this victory boosted the spirit of the Confederates in their cause, especially in Texas.\textsuperscript{91} Nevertheless, an editorial in the \textit{New York Times} called the Battle of Galveston "a waste of men and supplies on an unimportant place."\textsuperscript{92}

In direct opposition to this Union assessment, the Confederate "victory at Galveston heartened people throughout the Confederacy."\textsuperscript{93} Considering the number of men involved in the assaults on the ships and on the land troops, the Confederate losses in man power were remarkably low, with only 26 dead and 117 wounded.\textsuperscript{94} The loss of the \textit{Neptune} was a small cost compared to the number of Union ships captured and to the amount of other war materials that were gained. The Confederacy's greatest gains were the prestige of a victory, the opening of

\textsuperscript{91} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 109.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{New York Times}, January 19, 1863.
\textsuperscript{93} Nunn, \textit{Ten Texans In Gray}, p. 109.
Galveston harbor, and the men and supplies that could now be sent to other fronts as they were no longer needed in Texas. Being able to point to this victory with pride, helped to mediate the many other battlefield defeats such as the Union capture of New Orleans and later the Confederate loss of Mobile.

All the wounded from the battle were taken to the Ursuline convent, where the Sisters of Mercy nuns had hastily prepared a hospital during the battle. These nuns had chosen to remain behind, instead of evacuating with the rest of the civilian population, in order to render assistance. After the battle, "Surgeons in blue and gray worked side by side to save the wounded of both armies." The diary of Private Alexander Hobbs raises a serious question as to Commodore Renshaw's loyalty based on Renshaw's actions leading up to and during the battle. Alexander Hobbs describes Commodore Renshaw as "very strange[.] he lay within a mile of the fight without offering aid. . ." and "it was him who ordered the Harriet Lane up the river and after the fight was over he

94 Ibid., 109. Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 216.
96 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 218.
97 Federal Writers Project
blew his own ship up when he could have escaped[.]"\textsuperscript{98} Although Hobbs had no way of knowing that Renshaw's ship, the \textit{Westfield}, had run aground, he was not the only person to question Renshaw's loyalty, for even before the battle had commenced some of the Union commanders had raised questions as to Commodore Renshaw's competence or loyalty.\textsuperscript{99} In a conversation with Commander Wainwright, Colonel Burrell commented that he "could not remain quiet with the conviction forced upon his mind that Renshaw was not acting in such a manner as to warrant confidence." As discussed previously, Renshaw neglected preparations that could have ensured the safety of the land forces. His main mistake was the decision to make no attempt to destroy the bridge connecting the Galveston Island with the mainland.\textsuperscript{100} This omission allowed Magruder to bring as many forces as he could muster into the city in the shortest amount of time.\textsuperscript{101} Renshaw, in defense of his decision not to destroy the bridge, felt that his forces' ships took too much water to get into range, so he decided not to try to destroy the bridge.

\textsuperscript{98} Hobbs Diary, January 1, 1863.
\textsuperscript{99} Duganne, Twenty Months, p. 233.
\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 232.
\textsuperscript{101} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 233, 237.
Even when the men of the Forty-second had arrived and the rumor had spread that the Confederates were going to attack, Commodore Renshaw still failed to prepare.\textsuperscript{102} Colonel Burrell had wished to land and set up camp on Pelican Spit, since he felt that it was a safer location than the wharf. Burrell, however, was overruled by Commodore Renshaw and was told that he must camp on Kuhn's Wharf.\textsuperscript{103} In addition the question remained, during the preparation for the defense, about Commodore Renshaw's not allowing the Forty-second the use of the two field artillery pieces that were lying unused aboard the \textit{Corypheus}. Commodore Renshaw never provided an explanation for this, or, if he did, that justification never surfaced after the war.\textsuperscript{104} Lastly, as to the deployment of the fleet, Renshaw's decision to place the heaviest ship, the \textit{Harriet Lane}, in the shallowest portion of the harbor raises questions, if not doubts about Renshaw's competence and/or loyalties.\textsuperscript{105}

Even more mistakes were made during the battle that caused people to speculate about Renshaw's conduct. The first

\begin{footnotes}
\item[102] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 234.
\item[103] Cumberland, "Loss and Recapture of Galveston," p. 118.
\end{footnotes}
questionable act was the grounding of his own ship onto Pelican Spit. Though it is hard to believe that Renshaw would do this on purpose, the fact remains that it did happen and that it greatly aided the Confederates, since they then had one fewer ship with which to contend.\textsuperscript{106} Another decision to debate would be the one not to attack the \textit{Harriet Lane} after it had been boarded. Renshaw should have known by then, if he did not already, that he commanded a superior force capable of destroying the remaining Confederate ships, even with the \textit{Westfield} disabled and the \textit{Harriet Lane} captured. "The \textit{Clifton} and the \textit{Owasco}, at a word from Renshaw's lips, might have cut the \textit{Harriet Lane}, with Smith and all the Horse-marines."\textsuperscript{107} Another choice available to Renshaw was to wait for the tide to come in and then to use the \textit{Westfield} to recapture or to destroy the \textit{Harriet Lane}. Instead of electing one of these strategies, which were suggested by the commanders of the \textit{Owasco} and the \textit{Clifton}, Commodore Renshaw chose to blow up his own ship and to have the remaining ships escape under the flag of truce. These were not popular decisions, as demonstrated in the letter of a Confederate soldier describing the Union officers' opinion. He writes, "The Yankee officers denounced the movement

\textsuperscript{106} Duganne, \textit{Twenty Months}, p. 235.
of their vessels leaving the harbor, and all in command of them for not coming to the assistance of the Lane."¹⁰⁸

No official investigation into the conduct of Commodore Renshaw ensued for the obvious reason that he died in the explosion of the Westfield. Consequently no one knows if Renshaw's decisions were the result of poor judgment based on ignorance and arrogance or if he was actually a traitor to his country. It is unlikely that Renshaw was a traitor despite the questions raised by the other participants of the battle. The Battle of Galveston is one of the example of a battle where everything just went wrong.

Meanwhile, the reinforcements promised to Colonel Burrell on his departure from New Orleans were en route to Galveston while the attack was being carried out. The Union transport ship, the Cabria, carrying Texas refugees to be used as a cavalry brigade, arrived off the bar of Galveston Bay on January 2, not knowing that the city had already been lost.¹⁰⁹ Three other ships, the Charles Osgood, the Honduras, and the Che-Kiang, carrying the remainder of

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 241.
¹⁰⁸ H.M Trueheart letters to Mary M. Joseph, January 22, 1863, Trueheart Papers.
the Forty-second's men, as well as an artillery battery, were met by the Clifton en route to New Orleans after the battle and all the ships were informed to return to New Orleans.

Also unknown to the Union ship captain aboard the Cabria, Magruder had set a trap for any Union ships attempting entry into Galveston harbor not knowing that the battle had occurred. Magruder had ordered that Union flags be raised on all the ships to lure unsuspecting Union ships into the harbor where he either could capture them by using the weapons on board the Harriet Lane, or could destroy them with the guns placed at Fort Point. The Cabria arrived, but was unable to navigate the bar in order to enter the harbor. It chose to wait for a pilot to come out and help navigate the bar. When no pilot was sent out immediately, the captain became suspicious and sent in a small boat filled with Texas refugees, who claimed to know the area.

One of these refugees, Nicaragua Smith, had been a soldier in Cook's Confederate Regiment and had deserted. He was recognized

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110 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 219.
111 Franklin, Battle Of Galveston, p. 3. Jones, Civil War At Sea, p.326.
112 Scott, War Of The Rebellion, p. 205.
113 Ibid., p. 205.
as he came aboard the Harriet Lane, which was still flying the Union flag. Nicaragua Smith and the rest of the refugees were taken prisoner and, therefore unable to warn their ship. Smith, because he was a special case as a deserter from the Confederate Army, was held for court-martial; he was found guilty and executed two days later.\textsuperscript{114} In what seems to be a strange case of admiration for the courage of "this bad man," many people described in great detail how Smith, while sitting on his coffin, beat time with his foot to the band that accompanied him to his firing squad.\textsuperscript{115}

The next day, Magruder, in an attempt to lure the Cabria into the bay, sent a small boat out with a pilot to bring in the ship. However, because the man would not immediately come aboard and was acting very unusual, the captain became suspicious.\textsuperscript{116} Some of the refugees aboard recognized the man as a Confederate officer, and the man had no choice but to expose the plot. He was then ordered to come aboard as a prisoner, and the remainder of the crew of the small boat was sent back, allowing more time for the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[114] Ibid., pp. 219-220. Houston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph, January 14, 1863.
\item[115] Emil Neuman letters to sister in Houston Texas, January 11, 1863.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Cabria to escape.\textsuperscript{117} This ship was the only one to be so treated before word went out that Galveston had fallen to the Confederacy.

So that the city would be better protected from any further attack by Union forces, General Magruder called for 2,000 slaves to be leased for the purpose of building fortifications around the city and the harbor.\textsuperscript{118} Along with the slaves leased from masters in the area, the other blacks captured at the battle -- those serving on board the Harriet Lane and the two working as servants with the Forty-second -- were also sent along to help build the new fortifications.\textsuperscript{119} By the orders of Proclamation Number 111, issued by Jefferson Davis, these captured blacks were considered runaway slaves and returned to slavery. According to reports, each of the slaves connected with the Forty-second were later sold in the area for $500 apiece.\textsuperscript{120}

General Magruder believed that if the fortifications were impressive enough, anyone with ideas of attacking the city again would be too intimidated to try. By the time a new blockading

\textsuperscript{116} Scott, \textit{War Of The Rebellion}, p. 205.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., p. 206.
\textsuperscript{118} Galveston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly News}, January 17, 1863.
\textsuperscript{119} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 175.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p. 175.
force had arrived, the city was already well on its way to becoming a secure location. Magruder attempted a trick he had learned during his duty in the Wilderness Campaign by placing wooden replicas of cannons, called "Quaker Guns," in the spaces where he did not have enough cannons. These preparations may have been effective, for no further attack was made on Galveston after the fortifications were complete.
CHAPTER 5: PRISONER OF WAR

After their surrender of Kuhn's Wharf, the Massachusetts Volunteers of the Forty-second Regiment found themselves taken prisoner, a new and frightening experience. Neither Union or Confederate soldiers had any idea of how the other side would act toward prisoners of war, or of what to expect from the other, yet both possessed misconceptions about the other. Many of these misconceptions concerning the barbarity of the enemy were laid to rest when the two sides actually came into contact.¹ With "acts of kindness exchanged between foes... men were sometimes surprised to find that their preconceptions did not always match reality."²

Hobbs and his fellow Union soldiers captured in Galveston and taken to Houston were able to witness the conditions of Houston during the war. They were able not only to see the way residents of Houston lived, but also to come into personal contact with them, learning about their attitudes towards northerners.

Alexander Hobbs's diary captures the lifestyle of a Union soldier waiting to be paroled back across enemy lines and provides a

¹ Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, p. 25.
² Ibid., p. 37.
better understanding of what it was like to be a prisoner of war. The diary describes the conditions in which the soldiers lived and the attitudes of the men toward their captors. Hobbs's point of view makes possible a comparison between the experiences of prisoners of war in the early years of the war and those in the later period, after the exchange system was halted, when prisoners were warehoused in places like Camp Ford, Texas, and Andersonville, Georgia.

LIFE IN HOUSTON

After stacking their arms and gathering all of their personal belongings, the men of the Forty-second were quickly marched away from the wharf because the Confederates feared that the Union forces might commence a counterattack at any moment. For the men of the Forty-second this was their first personal contact with Confederate soldiers.

Even immediately after the heat of battle, the Union captives were not ill treated. Reid Mitchell has written, "Most soldiers came out all right in their dealings with front line enemy soldiers immediately after capture," because of the bond created by their

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3 J.W. Lockhart Letter from Galveston, Texas, January 7, 1863,
sharing of a common experience between soldiers of both sides.⁴ Throughout the war, prisoners generally were treated with respect and kindness by their captors. One Galveston eyewitness reported that the Confederate soldiers "preserved silence and treated them with respect."⁵ Confederate forces took Hobbs and the men of the Forty-second to the outer edge of town and kept them in empty homes to await the end of the battle: then they transferred them to Virginia Point where they boarded a train for Houston.⁶ According to one description of the Forty-second being moved through Galveston, they "were marched past headquarters [where] our men were disposed to hiss [at] them, and it might have given to something worse, had it not been checked by Major Matkins."⁷ Another observer commented, "that they looked pretty well dressed, neat and clean dressed in blue, their Colonel a middle-aged gentlemen, with his head bowed, walked in front and the men marched four abreast behind him."⁸

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Lockheart Papers.
⁴ Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, p. 43.
⁵ J.W. Lockhart letter from Galveston, Texas, January 7, 1863, Lockheart Papers.
⁷ H.M Trueheart letters to Mary M. Joseph, January 22, 1863, Trueheart Papers.
⁸ J.W Lockhart letter from Galveston, Texas, January 7, 1863,
At about one o'clock on the afternoon of January 1, 1863 a transport arrived to take the soldiers of the Forty-second to Virginia Point, where they had to wait twelve hours for a train to take them to Houston. In the meantime, they were well treated and well fed by the Confederate soldiers. Many of the men were able to catch up on some sleep lost from the previous night. While they were waiting there for the train, the 110 sailors of the Harriet Lane joined the other captives of the Forty-second awaiting passage to Houston. When the train of flat bed cars arrived at about 1:00 A.M. on January 2, the soldiers and sailors were loaded and proceeded on their way. That ride was the first opportunity for many of the men to view such wide-open prairie land with cattle roaming free wherever they looked.

When the men of the Forty-second and the Harriet Lane arrived in Houston at about twelve o'clock in the afternoon of January 2, they became the focal point for a large crowd of people waiting to see the newly captured Federals. The train stopped about a half mile from the depot, where the men were let off and marched, under

Lockheart Papers.
9 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 130.
11 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 188.
guard, down Main Street, through the heart of Houston, to their quarters in a "cotton warehouse of Allen and Fulton on the north side of the bayou."\(^{13}\) As the Union soldiers and sailors were marched through the city, some reported that the crowd was very high spirited but that they "conducted themselves with becoming moderation towards the prisoners, occasionally a boy or two would toot, but aside from this they were not molested during the whole march."\(^{14}\) The men of the Forty-second did become "very upset over the capture of [their] flag and flying it under the Confederate flag---[they] wanted to do something but cool counsel prevailed."\(^{15}\) The officers were separated from their men and confined in Kennedy Building at the corner of Travis and Congress Streets.\(^{16}\)

Each side in the Civil War had its own opinion of the other which was often based first on appearances and second on the actions of the other side. For the most part, the Confederates felt that the men of the Forty-second should be treated with the respect due a fellow soldier. The *Galveston Tri-Weekly News* reported that "The officers and soldiers are generally a fine looking body of men,

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 130.
\(^{13}\) Galveston, Texas *Tri-Weekly News*, January 3, 1863.
\(^{14}\) Galveston, Texas *Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, January 3, 1863.
well clothed and shod, and from the general bearing we judge them
to be native of the North."  

The Houston Tri-Weekly Telegraph
printed, "They were all remarkably well dressed and all were
healthy, but [had a] rather down cast look." It is quite interesting
that one Confederate soldier commented almost enviously that he
thought the men of the Forty-second were lucky for being captured:

The prisoners of the Forty-second Massachusetts are
lucky fellows. They enlisted four months since for nine
months. They have had to stand fire but once, are well
clothed and will be well fed. By the time they can be
exchanged their time will be up. They will have spent
their winter in the South, and will be back home again in
time to enjoy a northern Summer.  

General Magruder paid the highest compliment to the Forty-second
and in doing so demonstrated his attitude about them when he called
them a "well disciplined efficient troop," and this, he continued, was
how they were able to "accomplish the stubborn defense of Kuhn's
Wharf." He paid his enemy this compliment to demonstrate to his
own troops the way they should act. 

The civilian population came from all over to see the

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16 Ibid., p. 130.
18 Galveston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph., January 3, 1863.
19Ibid.
prisoners, but, as mentioned before, they did not all have the same respectful opinion of the Union soldiers that the Confederate soldiers had. Many of the soldiers received from the Houstonians "the compliment of being a fine looking body of men, who ought to be ashamed of themselves for volunteering their service in the villainy of trying to subjugate a chivalrous people."\textsuperscript{21} For the most part, the citizens were civil but referred to the soldiers as "the northern Barbarians," and on one occasion a soldier overheard a small girl comment to her mother, "why, mother, they haven't got any horns; you said they had!"\textsuperscript{22}

The Union opinion of the Confederate soldiers tended to be less favorable than the opinion the Confederate soldiers had of the Union soldiers. The Confederate soldiers were not as well dressed, were poorly fed, and, as a result, tended to look desperate. This difference disposed the Union soldiers to generally judge the Confederates as some kind of "Scoundrels."\textsuperscript{23} The men of the Forty-second were often amused by their guards, who were members of a dismounted cavalry company known as Captain Clipper's Company. The Federals would laugh at the unsoldierly conduct and the lack of discipline of their

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 131.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 175.
Confederate captors. The general feeling of the Union men seems to be that the Confederate forces under Magruder were "poorly armed and equipped, indifferently officered, without honor, discipline, or esprit de Corps."²⁴ This final statement by Colonel Burrell, upon arriving home from his stay as a prisoner, perhaps best describes the misconceptions the Union men had of the Confederate soldier, as well as that of the Confederate civilian population held by the Union people. Burrell said:

I have enjoyed much opportunity of communication with men from all parts of the Southern Confederacy, and I believe that you entertain an erroneous opinion of them. You believe that there exists among the masses an extended Union sentiment. It is not so. They go into this war with all their heart and soul. The little Union feeling among the class of poor whites amounts to nothing. They are opposed to us, man, women and child. They are fighting with the spirit of '76, for their rights, homes, and liberties. They put up with every privation to sustain their army and every man is in the army.²⁵

The conditions in Houston, as in many cities of the South during the Civil War, were generally poor, with shortages in much-needed food items and runaway inflation, often exacerbated by hoarding and profiteering. The large incoming population of refugees

²³ Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, p. 37.
²⁴ Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 175.
²⁵ Ibid., p. 420.
exacerbated these problems.\textsuperscript{26} As Sergeant William Hunt of Company I of the Forty-second related to the \textit{New York Times} upon arriving home, "the prices were enormous as will appear from the following: molasses 50\$ to 65\$ a quart, bread 25\$ to 50\$ a loaf [white] in Boston 4\$, butter at $1.25 a pound made of goat's milk, and army shoes such as given to our soldiers at $1.87 a pair are sold at $8.00 to $9.00. A good pair of boots bring $35.00."\textsuperscript{27} By 1861, prices in Houston, as much of the rest of the South, had already risen by as much as 300 to 400 percent.\textsuperscript{28} Coffee, when it could be found, was over $2.25 a pound and cheese was more than $3.00 a pound.

The shortage of supplies in the city was the result of the Union blockade of the Texas coast. Articles were written in the two city papers instructing the people to conserve what they had but not to hoard commodities that were needed by the rest of the civilian population or by the army.\textsuperscript{29} Articles also instructed women how to make candles and soap out of materials that were readily available. Corn was much needed and always scarce. In response to a nearby

\textsuperscript{29} Galveston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly News}, January 6, 1863.
farmer planting cotton, the *Houston Tri-Weekly Telegraph* editorialized, "we appeal to the patriotism of the country to plant CORN! CORN! CORN!!! Let us have corn to feed the soldiers, to feed the people. Let cotton alone while our soldiers are hungry."  

The price of corn then was over $5.00 a bushel.

In spite of the many problems, the people still possessed a genuine enthusiasm for the war; they did as much as possible to aid in the war effort. Efforts were constantly under way to raise money for the war, as well as to collect supplies such as cartridges, socks, shoes, or anything else a soldier might need. In a demonstration of their enthusiastic war spirit, Houstonians held a large rally in the honor of General Magruder to present him with a sword for his victory at Galveston. Almost the entire city turned out to see the victorious general receive his sword and to listen to the people give speeches. General Magruder stated that the sword he was given "would never be sheathed while the enemy trod on Confederate soil," but in a sad commentary of the condition of the city, the sword had to be given back to the city, for it had been borrowed from a Mexican.

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War veteran only for the duration of the ceremony.\textsuperscript{32}

The conditions for the enlisted men of the Forty-second were not at all bad, considering that the men were prisoners of war in a city where conditions were unpleasant for anyone. For the most part, the men of the Forty-second were given the same food as the Confederate soldiers and their living conditions seem to be the best that could be expected.\textsuperscript{33} They seemed to be relatively free from material concerns, with the only real concern being the date when they would be allowed to return home to Massachusetts.

The diet of the Union prisoners consisted of a type of hard cornbread called "corn dodgers," burned corn mixed with hot water to create a type of coffee, and an allotment of salt beef.\textsuperscript{34} They ate this monotonous diet day after day, but the food was better than what they expected to receive as prisoners. Many men complained of the diet as being very hard to get used to, and it caused some of the men to come down with diarrhea. For the most part, however, the diet seemed to have been adequate.\textsuperscript{35} The men also could buy other food with the money they were able to raise by selling articles of

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 53.
\textsuperscript{33} Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., p. 173.
clothing that were in high demand with the Confederate people, as well as small bone rings that they created from the leftover beef bones from their food.\textsuperscript{36}

The men of the Forty-second did as much as they could to entertain themselves while being held prisoners. As mentioned previously, they spent much time and ingenuity preparing the small bone rings to sell to the local population. As was the norm for all prisoners during the war, from both the North and South, they spent the majority of their time playing cards, singing, and attempting to obtain news about the conditions of the war.\textsuperscript{37} Whenever they could get their hands on a local, or if possible, a northern newspaper, they felt a welcome relief. The prisoners not only looked to the paper to discover the condition of the war, but also for any information regarding if or when they would be exchanged. Going home was 'constantly their chief interest.'\textsuperscript{38}

The men and officers of the Forty-second, as well as those of the \textit{Harriet Lane}, were afforded a relatively unfettered existence while they were being held prisoners in Houston. The officers were

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., pp. 416-417.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p. 174.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 174.
allowed to travel freely through the city on what was called a "parole of honor." This freedom resulted from a bargain struck, as was often arranged during the early part of the war. The captured Union officers promised that they would not attempt to escape or to serve their government in any way if they could be free to roam the city as they pleased. The officers were also allowed to visit the enlisted men several times while they were all in Houston. For the most part, though, the officers stayed indoors, since they feared that their appearance on the street might cause an incident with the excitable Texans.

The enlisted men accompanied by a guard were able to leave the confines of the warehouse, where they were kept, in groups of three or sometimes four. During this time they could buy newspapers, clothing, or food. This freedom to move around was stopped only for a short time after the tenth of January, when a new Union fleet arrived to reestablish the blockade of Galveston and bombed the city for thirty minutes. The Confederates felt that, "Such a cruel method of carrying on war only tends to embitter ill

38 Ibid., p. 417
39 Ibid., p. 415.
40 Ibid., p. 415.
41 Jager, "Houston Texas," p. 75.
will and the hatred already existing, and can have no decisive
influence on the great result of the war." To secure the safety of
the men of the Forty-second from the civilian population and to
alleviate the fear that they would aid the fleet in Galveston during a
feared invasion, the officers and men were confined to their
quarters and were allowed out one-at-a-time and under guard.
These added restrictions lasted only a few days and then everything
went back to the normal routine.

One event that greatly upset the Union prisoners was their
separation from the few blacks that had been with the unit. After
these men were removed, they were either sold into slavery at
auction or were sent to the Huntsville penitentiary as convicts. The Federals viewed these acts as barbaric and believed the
Confederates behavior was an improper and a cruel way to treat
prisoners of war. However, they could do nothing to stop the
Confederates' harsh behavior toward the black prisoners of war.

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42 Galveston, Texas Tri-Weekly Telegraph, January 14, 1863.
43 Jager, "Houston Texas", p. 75.
PAROLE AND EXCHANGE AND THE CREATION OF PAROLE CAMPS

Over 200,000 men were captured during the course of the Civil War, but only a fraction of them were ever paroled or exchanged. The constant concern of most prisoners of war, no matter where they were held or when they were captured, was when they would be paroled and exchanged so that then could go home.\textsuperscript{45} The soldier would search each newspaper and bulletin for word of their parole, regardless of whether they were held in Houston, Texas, Andersonville, Georgia, or anywhere in between.\textsuperscript{46} By the time the Forty-second had entered the war, though, paroles and exchanges were becoming a very complicated system used by each side to force concessions from the other.\textsuperscript{47}

In the developing practices of the use of prisoners of war, three options remained open for those who would have to set such policies during the Civil War. One method was that prisoners could be exchanged by local military agreement or by a centralized national agreement that would set standards of exchange. Under this system, men were notified that they had been exchanged and then

\textsuperscript{45} Mitchell, \textit{Civil War Soldiers}, p. 48.


\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 500.
were free to resume fighting. Another method was for men to be released on parole with an oath not to aid the enemy in any way. These paroled men would either remain civilians for the duration or wait to be notified of their being exchanged before they could return to the fighting. The final option was to hold captives in prison camps for the remainder of the war. Alexander Hobbs would be one of the last groups of prisoners to be released under this second option in February of 1863.

The first prisoners of the Civil War were taken before the opening shots at Fort Sumter, which forced both the North and the South to resolve the problem. These first prisoners were taken in San Antonio, Texas, on February 16, 1861, when United States General David E. Twiggs surrendered 2,648 officers and men of the department of Texas to Texas state officials. These men will be described in greater detail later since the soldiers of the Forty-second met them when the Federals were turned over to the Union forces.

The prevailing question at the outbreak of the war in regard to parole and exchange of prisoners was the Union's refusal to recognize the Confederacy as a belligerent nation but only as a
rebellion. Union authorities feared that the drawing up of a formal
greement on the subject of prisoner exchange would constitute de
facto recognition of the Confederacy as a belligerent sovereign
power, and the federal administration would not concede this.\textsuperscript{48}

Local commanders were left to make informal arrangements
with corresponding commanders of the opposing army for the
exchange of captured men.\textsuperscript{49} United States General U. S. Grant
initially refused any exchanges in the West because he did not wish
to recognize the South, and he believed that he might be able to
recruit men from the southern army to join his army.\textsuperscript{50} He was also
against the southern practice of paroling prisoners immediately
when captured, because he did not know what to do with the paroled
men sent back to him. The practice of the time was to discharge
men who had been paroled, but not immediately exchanged. These
men were then allowed to reenlist, if they chose, after they were
notified of being exchanged.\textsuperscript{51} Grant did not like this system; he felt

\textsuperscript{48} George G. Lewis and John Mewha, \textit{History of Prisoner of War
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid}., pp. 25-27.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid}., p. 129.
that he lost too many men by giving them the choice of reenlisting. Alexander Hobbs may be one example of this concern coming true as he never did reenlist after returning home, and there is no evidence he ever attempted to reenlist.

Union prisoners in the South who were not informally exchanged wrote letters, especially to their state representatives, or whomever they felt would listen demanding exchange, which the southerners gladly passed through the lines so that pressure would be applied on the federal administration for de facto recognition of the Confederacy. 52 Union POWs also wrote letters to their local newspapers describing the horrible conditions and rampant disease that existed in southern prison camps. Officials began to worry that negative publicity would result in decreased enlistment in the army. They recognized that men would be less inclined to enlist if they feared that their government would allow them to die in a southern prison if they were captured. 53

By January 1862, Lincoln realized that the current practice was not satisfactory to the electorate or the Congress. In January,

Lincoln ordered that the men captured by General Ambrose Burnside at Roanoke Island and by General Henry Halleck in St. Louis be released for exchange as soon as possible. These orders were the first official instructions to come from the administration, as well as the first recognition that exchanges were taking place.\textsuperscript{54}

The Confederacy pressed the matter further by ordering that all informal exchanges be ended until arrangements could be made for a formal agreement. The South did this because they knew that the Union administration would have to give in to public pressure for the release of Union prisoners. On June 23, 1862, the New York Times insisted that, "Political necessity should yield to humanity; our government must change its policy our; prisoners must be exchanged." Even General Mc Clellan expressed to Lincoln the need of a general exchange to bring home the men held in these prisons.\textsuperscript{55}

On July 12 Lincoln acquiesced and appointed General John A. Dix to negotiate an exchange agreement with the Confederate commissioner, David H. Hill, being careful not to include anything in the agreement that would be considered recognition of the South. On

\textsuperscript{53} Marvin, Prisoner of War Exchange, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., pp. 47, 55.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p. 87.
July 22, 1862, an agreement was signed for the exchange of future prisoners of war.\textsuperscript{56} They agreed to an exchange of prisoners of unequal rank based on equivalents of:

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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
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<tr>
<td>General-in-Chief</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant General</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major General</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Brigadier General</td>
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<td>Colonel</td>
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<td>Second Lieutenant</td>
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They also agreed that each side would release all additional prisoners that could not be exchanged on parole within ten days of their capture, to be then transported to an agreed location along the battle frontier between the two sides. [For a copy of the Dix-Hill Cartel refer to appendix A.] With the new agreement, each side appointed permanent exchange agents to work out details of all exchanges. By August 3, 1862, the first exchange took place with more than 3000 men from each side.\textsuperscript{57}

Soon both sides paroled such large numbers of men that another problem developed. In the past, men mustered out of service

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p. 88-89. Hesseltine, \textit{A Study in War Psychology}, p. 31.
were allowed to return home to await notice of exchange. Now northern commanders, such as General U. S. Grant, recognized that many of these men were not reenlisting after notice of exchange; thus the most experienced veterans were being lost from service. This problem became particularly acute after the battles of Shiloh and the Peninsula Campaign in April and May 1862, when large numbers of Union soldiers were released on parole with no plan of ever rejoining the army.\footnote{Marvin, \textit{Prisoner of War Exchange}, p. 74.}

While he was in command near Nashville, Tennessee, in April 1862, General Don Carlos Buell tried to solve this problem. He refused to muster out of service 1500 of his captured men, hoping that they could quickly be exchanged and then returned to duty. Major General Henry Halleck forced Buell to discharge these men, as was the normal procedure of the time. This action pointed the way for the next development in the practice of parole and exchange, and deeply effected Hobbs’s course of service in the Civil War.\footnote{U.S. War Department. \textit{The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and the Confederate Armies}, volume 4 (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), p. 94. noted as \textit{O.R.}, 4: 94. Hesseltine, \textit{A Study in War Psychology}, 74.}

\footnote{Marvin, \textit{Prisoner of War Exchange}, p. 102.}
Secretary of War Stanton, realizing the need to hold veteran soldiers in the army, on June 28, 1862, ordered the establishment of "Camps of Instruction" to hold paroled men. Stanton proposed that these camps provide needed pay and proper clothing as well as keep an accurate record of men that had been paroled. Camp Parole was the name of the camp established at Annapolis, Maryland. Camp Chase was located at Columbus, Ohio, Camp Douglas in Chicago, Illinois, and Benton Barracks in St. Louis, Missouri. Smaller camps were established to meet temporary needs and circumstances. Camp Farr, where Alexander Hobbs was held in New Orleans, is an example of one of these temporary camps used to hold parolees. By September 17, 1862, over 12,000 men were being held in what were in effect prisoner of war camps.\(^{60}\)

Union soldiers deeply resented being sent to these Camps of Instruction. To make circumstances worse, often no preparations were made to accommodate the new parolees. No equipment, cooking utensils, clothing, or tents were made ready to handle these men who, for the most part, lost everything in the South. To go along with the material problems, there was also a lack of officers to organize and discipline the soldiers. The commander of Benton

Barracks, General Thomas J. McKeen, was reported by some to be a drunk with only a few men under his command to provide for the needs of the paroles. Within the first month of men being stationed at Benton Barracks, over 400 men escaped from the camp and began to terrorize the countryside.\textsuperscript{61}

Something that was to become a sticking point for almost the entire time of the use of the parole camps was the question of which duties the parolees could be forced to perform. Early in the war, as inmates arrived they were ordered to perform guard and police duty at their own camp. The paroled troops felt that these jobs were a violation of the parole of honor agreement to which they had sworn, vowing not to aid the Union in any form.\textsuperscript{62} General Halleck, one of President Lincoln's leading authorities on international law, ruled on June 28, "that paroled prisoners of war must do guard, police, and fatigue duty in their camps, explaining that such an obligation was 'not military duty in the belligerent sense of the word,' rather duty simply for their own order, cleanliness and comfort."\textsuperscript{63} Secretary of War Stanton proceeded to reverse Halleck's decision and ordered

camp officers to force no duty that might be contrary to the parole oath. His decision was later expanded to allow enlisted men to be drilled, but strictly for discipline purposes. These rules were applied to Hobbs, preventing him and the men of the Forty-second Regiment from performing any activities, exacerbating their problems of boredom and depression.

A second problem that would plague the Union army as long as the parole system was observed was the soldiers' voluntary surrender to escape military duty. This problem further gave emphasis to use Camps of Instruction to remove the incentive to surrender and go home. The first official word of this problem came to the War Department from General Buell while he was at Huntsville, Alabama, during August of 1862. He reported that men were straggling near the Confederate lines in the hope of being captured, released on parole, and sent home so that they could gain a "little rest from soldiering." To put a halt to this, Buell required all men captured to gain the signature of their superior officer before being allowed to give their parole oath. Buell rescinded this order after the Confederate commander opposing him pointed out

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that the Dix-Hill Cartel stated that all paroles had to be made within ten days of capture.\textsuperscript{66}

Governor David Todd of Ohio felt that "the freedom in giving paroles by our troops in Kentucky is very prejudicial to the service and should be stopped. Had our forces at Richmond, Kentucky, refused to give parole it would have taken all of Kirby Smith's army to guard them." Stanton agreed that this was a serious problem and ordered 1,500 men placed in close quarters at Camp Chase, ordering them drilled every day as punishment.\textsuperscript{67} A citizen of Columbus, Ohio, wrote Stanton in September of 1862:

I have seen enough of the paroled prisoners and heard enough of them talk to know that unless the paroling system is abandoned we will be beaten by the number of paroled prisoners we shall have. It is an inducement not only for cowards, but for men discontent with their officers, or even homesick to surrender. . . An order ending all paroling of officers and men will force the South the necessity of feeding or releasing our soldiers, and if our men understand positively that they are to be prisoners in the South if taken they would strike with more energy and desperation.

Stanton admitted that large numbers of men had surrendered at Richmond in August and at Mumfordsville in September of 1862 for

\textsuperscript{65} Hesseltine, \textit{A Study in War Psychology}, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{O.R.}, 4: 360, 414-5, 457.
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{O.R.}, 4: 499.
the sake of getting home.\textsuperscript{68}

The problem had grown to serious levels by January 1863, as soldiers were finding any way to leave the battlefield and return home. General Buell informed Stanton that many of the men were forging their parole certificates and then wandering off to a parole camp. While at Camp Parole, Colonel Sangster wrote that he felt that three-fourths of the men at Annapolis were stragglers and cowards.\textsuperscript{69} Soldiers who had fought with honor and courage must have felt disillusioned at the realization that their superiors had such a low opinion of them.

Stanton concluded that a General Order was needed to set forth a consistent practice for all Union armies that would help to end the dangerous practice of men voluntarily surrendering. Consequently he had the Assistant Adjutant-General issued General Order number 49 on February 29, 1863, declaring that all future paroles to be binding must be consistent with articles four and seven of the Cartel. He included only a commissioned officer could give parole for his men and that this could not be done during or immediately after a battle.

\textsuperscript{69} \textit{O.R.}, 5: 169, 194.
Finally, the engagement in which the person was captured had to be recognized by the government as being against a legitimate belligerent force. This last part of the order was written in order to attempt to end the practice of guerrilla commanders capturing forces and then releasing them on parole.  

This order was subsequently restated in General Order number 100, which was officially submitted to the Confederate officials as the future Union policy concerning parole of soldiers. It did manage to force Confederate commanders to bring captured prisoners into possession and require them to guard and transport them. This was a major inconvenience for General Robert E. Lee after the battle of Gettysburg. He had asked the men captured to give their parole of honor, but they had refused to give it, knowing that it would have only benefited the South and having heard of General Order 100. The Confederate forces at Houston were forced to comply with this order in the exchange of the men of the Forty-second Regiment. This practice would not be used long, for the end of the use of parole and exchange for Civil War prisoners of war was quickly coming to a close.

70 O.R., 5: 239.  
The parole camps were used not only to hold Union parolees but to contain Confederates awaiting to be exchanged or being held for a special reasons. Confederate prisoners reported that the Union parolees often arrived "sick and in tatters and were driven to Camp Chase like so many cattle, and when they got there they were lucky to find an open shed to lie in." They went on to say that the men arriving in the spring of 1863 arrived barely clothed, with no officers to oversee their welfare, and were provided with no rations for a number of days. They concluded by saying "This condition of affairs lasted for some time; and the paroled prisoners, hungry, half-naked, and disgusted at the treatment accorded them; plundered the tents of their more fortunate comrades."\(^7^2\) By the time the men captured at Harpers Ferry arrived, Camp Douglas was still being used as a prison for Confederate and political prisoners. The enlisted men were held in the front portion of the prison and were separated by a fence from the Confederate prisoners held in the rear.\(^7^3\)

In addition to the problems at Camp Chase, Camp Douglas experienced hardship and unrest. These problems are best seen by

the treatment of soldiers arriving after being captured at Harpers Ferry. They were in terrible condition, having been forced to ride in railroad cattle cars without water or sanitation facilities. Many of the men deserted along the trip. On the first day of their arrival the men were forced to sleep in the cold without blankets, tents, or food. The men were finally quartered in what had once been a horse stable; but they were glad to get it as shelter, for they felt it was not as dirty as the barracks.

Discipline among the men located at these camps were particularly bad as they refused to be organized into regiments and resisted doing any type of duty. The enlisted men being held at Camp Douglas, like most northern parolees, felt justified refusing to perform any duties until they had been formally exchanged. They believed, that having given their parole, they were no longer under the authority of the Union army. Camp commander Brigadier General Daniel Tyler informed Stanton that all the regiments at

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73 Ripley. Vermont General, p. 44.
76 O.R., 4: 569-71.
77 Ripley. Vermont General, pp. 46-8.
Camp Douglas were insubordinate and mutinous.\textsuperscript{78} Being forced to work, as well as not being paid, the parolees were unable to replace needed materials such as socks and gloves, and this led them becoming mutinous.\textsuperscript{79} On the evening of October 18 the inmates began a riot that was not brought under control until October 23, and then only under force of arms. During the riot three barracks were burned to the ground, and fourteen other barracks were torn down to prevent the entire camp from burning.\textsuperscript{80}

The situation of Camp Parole in the eastern part of the country was no better if not worse than that of the two western camps. Reports were circulated of parolees being poorly treated and because of this poor treatment being in weakened condition. The men had not been provided with enough food, and for two weeks at Annapolis they had no shelter during the cold October nights. In addition, it was reported that nothing was being done to provide medical care for these sick men.\textsuperscript{81}

A northern official felt that the camp was unsanitary because

\textsuperscript{78} Hesseltine, \textit{A Study in War Psychology}, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{79} Ripley, \textit{Vermont General}, pp. 52-3.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{O.R.}, 4: 689.
it only had one latrine, but he believed that this was a problem of not having a sufficient staff, as well as having paroled officers who refused to perform required duties.\textsuperscript{82} Others disagreed with this opinion, writing instead about the obsessive drinking, fighting, robbery, gambling, and even murder that were constant serious problems. In a report on December 7 by camp commander Colonel George Sangster to Stanton, Sangster admitted that all the complaints were true except for the murders. Sangster recommended that all the problems could be solved if a larger guard force could be provided.\textsuperscript{83} A conflicting report was submitted by the men of the Twenty-first Illinois Regiment who felt that they were being given harsh treatment upon arrival at Annapolis. They reported that they were made to wait thirty-six to forty-eight hours for rations and that they were not provided with blankets, quarters, or clothing for at least two days after arrival. The men felt that the treatment could only have been due to careless and incompetent officials.\textsuperscript{84}

In a report made by Captain Henry Lazelle concerning the conditions of Camp Parole and College Green Barracks, he reported

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{O.R.}, 4: 692-3.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{O.R.}, 4: 727, 749, 771.
that the facilities were sufficient to meet the needs of the men but that the camp was inefficiently operated. He pointed out that the camp was often forced to handle between a few hundred to several thousand parolees without any prior notice. The newly arrived men were often in a destitute state, being diseased, hungry, and covered with lice.\textsuperscript{85}

Lazelle also describes many facets of the camp and its shortcomings. He felt that those on guard duty were very unruly and too few in numbers to handle the large population of parolees. The condescending guard staff felt that they were doing a favor by guarding them; they not only performed their duty carelessly, but often totally neglected it. A greater problem was the lack of discipline among the inmates. They refused to perform any latrine duty, leading to very unsanitary conditions with the men refusing to use even the one latrine, deciding instead to relieve themselves wherever the urge struck them. The problem of the men's lack of discipline, Lazelle felt, was that one active officer was assigned for approximately 3,000 men.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{84} O.R., 5: 232, 255.
\textsuperscript{85} O.R., 5: 303, 326-7.
\textsuperscript{86} O.R., 5: 329-31.
Besides the formidable and material impediments in maintaining any type of military camp accommodating such large numbers of troops during the Civil War, were the resulting psychological problems of being held in such a prison camp. Many of the paroled troops sent to the camps complained that they would have preferred to remain a prisoner in the South than to be sent to a northern parole camp. Some of the men held at Benton Barracks lamented that they had received better treatment in Confederate prison than they did in the North. The Governor of Pennsylvania, Andrew Curtin, commented "That the paroled Pennsylvanians would rather have remained in Richmond, Virginia[,] than to undergo the hardship they experienced at Annapolis." The only way that this can be explained is to look at the psychological effects of being held a prisoner by one's own country. Alexander Hobbs related this same feeling in his diary, stating that "it is as dull as being a prisoner in the hands of the rebels[,] almost[.]"

To the northerner's way of thinking, prison was a place to separate those members of society that were deviant and did not match the main-stream middle-class values of the society. Prisons

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87 O.R., 4: 297.
88 O.R., 4: 620.
were a place to separate the foreign-born portion of society that
was different from the idealized concept of an American, not to hold
the flowering youth who were standing up to protect the nation their
forefathers had created. The prison in the northern mind was a place
to hold the bottom of society, and the soldier could not understand
why he was being mistreated this way.\textsuperscript{90}

For the soldier, the psychological anxiety of being treated as a
common criminal was devastating, for some even more devastating
than battle. An officer being held at Camp Chase captured the
anguish by writing that to place a soldier in one of the parole camps
was to "steal an individual's freedom and you take his natural joy;
you plunder legitimate buoyancy of spirit; and you pile upon him a
load to twist him emotionally and cripple him physically, if not
 crush him."\textsuperscript{91} A soldier could understand being held by the enemy, for
that was a legitimate reason for incarceration, but these men could
not see how they could have been a threat to the side for which they

\textsuperscript{89} Hobbs Diary, March 10, 1863.
decline of institutions such as the prison or the insane asylum in the
mind of the American people.
\textsuperscript{91} Bernard Domschcke. \textit{Twenty Months in Captivity: Memoirs of a Union Officer in Confederate Prisons.} (Edited by Frederic Trautmen.
had been fighting.

Northern civilian officials, as well as soldiers, felt that the treatment they received was inconsistent with the noble cause for which these men were fighting. The soldiers made very clear that they felt upon returning North that they should have been "bountifully supplied by government officials, but they received [instead] attention which [was] under the circumstances more disheartening than while in rebel hands."\(^{92}\) These conditions of physical and psychological hardship are what led to the men being so difficult to control and discipline.

Given the terrible conditions, both physical and psychological, of the camps, the lack of discipline or order, and the inadequate supervision that was maintained in them, it is interesting that only 38 percent of soldiers sent to these camps deserted. The total number of parolees reported to be incarcerated by September 17, 1863, was 31,306 men, and of this number 11,951 were missing.\(^{93}\) The fact that this number did manage to simply leave the camps suggests the ease with which it was done, but the question must be

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\(^{92}\) *O.R.*, 5: 239.
asked why it was that the remaining 62 percent did not desert? According to Gerald F. Linderman, these men stayed because of their sense of honor. The soldiers had given their word of honor not to fight until exchanged, and they also pledged to do their duty for their country. These prisoners did not think it outrageous "that their personal pledges should cost their freedom and expose them to severe, and sometimes fatal, treatment in the midst of an altogether friendly and sympathetic population."94 This loss of freedom though must have had an effect on their mental state, increasing their sense of being deserted by the society for which they were fighting, and increasing the general feeling of depression.

An issue that changed the outlook of the war, and which also had a profound effect on the course of prisoner parole and exchange, was the Emancipation Proclamation and the use of black troops by the North. In an attempt to prevent the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation, Jefferson Davis ordered an end of all exchanges of Union officers until it was rescinded. Just as the issue of recognition of the Confederacy overshadowed all actions concerning exchange leading up to the Dix-Hill Cartel, the issue of

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the use of black soldiers by the North influenced all future
exchanges.\textsuperscript{95}

A separate order was needed to end the exchange of enlisted
men, and the difficulty of keeping track of the numbers of exchanged
men provided the excuse for issuing it. In the release of 16,000 men
at the battle of Vicksburg, General Grant had directed that these
men were only to be paroled and sent home. The South, therefore,
claimed that because the prisoners had not been sent through a
central location by Grant, they were illegally paroled and released
from their oath of parole. The South returned these men to full duty,
and they were subsequently used in the battle of Chattanooga in June
1863. Outraged by this action, the North ordered all exchanges and
paroles to cease.\textsuperscript{96} Alexander Hobbs was one of the last prisoners
paroled under this agreement in February 1863, but he would never
be exchanged under it.

\textsuperscript{95} Hesseltine, \textit{A Study In War Psychology}, p. 99. Davis, in Executive
Order \#111, proclaimed that all officers that were taken in the
command of colored troops would be prosecuted by the states as
inciting slave insurrection, and all colored troops would be sold into
slavery.

\textsuperscript{96} James M. McPherson, \textit{Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War And
felt that he was justified in releasing these men based on the fact
that he had made arrangements for the parole of those men before
the official surrender of Vicksburg with the Confederate commander
With the end of all exchanges, the number of prisoners reached 39,000 by December of 1863. The South, unable economically to care for this many prisoners, pressed for a renewal of the Cartel for the exchange of whites only. Stanton refused to hear of any new exchanges that did not include the parole and exchange of black troops and their officers thus putting an end to any formal exchanges until just before the end of the war.97

Although minor battlefield exchanges continued, for the most part exchanges came to a halt. The termination of exchanges kindled an increase of protests in the North in reaction to the atrocious conditions in southern prisons and of the numbers of deaths in places such as Andersonville, Georgia. Many in the northern press felt that to end exchange because of a few blacks and a minor quibbling of a few parolees was not sufficient reason to sacrifice the lives of those soldiers held in Confederate prisons.98

By September 1864 the conditions in the South had deteriorated to the point that the South was willing to give in on the

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98 Marvin, Prisoner of War Exchange, pp. 258-259.
question of the exchange of black troops, as well as whites, if only the North would agree to a general exchange of all troops. The South desperately needed men to place into the field, and they also did not have the resources to take care of the large numbers of northern prisoners that they were holding.\textsuperscript{99} General Grant blocked such ideas of a general exchange at this point but did agree to an idea put forth by General Butler for an exchange of invalids. An invalid was considered anyone who would not be ready for service within sixty days of release. On November 6, 1864, an agreement was completed for the exchange of 4,500 Federal sick and wounded men in return for 3,000 Confederates of like condition.\textsuperscript{100} Humanitarian concerns played a major part in this decision, but this was also just before the 1864 presidential election, and the administration wanted to do whatever was necessary for those held as prisoners.

As the end of the war seemed to appear close at hand during the period of December 1864 to January 1865, General Grant began to ease his policy concerning prisoner exchange. In January he agreed to allow General Butler to arrange exchanges for those prisoners held in close confinement on both sides, which was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{99} Marvin, \textit{Prisoner of War Exchange}, p. 282.
\item \textsuperscript{100} Marvin, \textit{Prisoner of War Exchange}, p. 273.
\end{itemize}
something he had refused to allow a few months earlier.\textsuperscript{101}

On February 2, 1865, General Grant informed Secretary Stanton that he favored a general exchange of 3,000 men a week until one side or the other ran out of prisoners. Always the military pragmatist, he wanted to first exchange those southern prisoners captured in the West, feeling that they would be less willing to enter into the Confederate army in the East. From February through April, when the war came to a conclusion, almost 1,000 soldiers a day were exchanged.\textsuperscript{102}

The event that most affected the parole of the men of the Forty-second was a controversy over the use of black soldiers and an incident that supposedly occurred under the command of General Butler during the original capture of the city of New Orleans.\textsuperscript{103}

Though the Forty-second had no black soldiers in the regiment, they were directly affected by the decision to form black regiments. The controversy over the northern decision to use black troops did lead to the breakdown of the exchange system. The North demanded that

\textsuperscript{101} Marvin, \textit{Prisoner of War Exchange}, p. 284.
\textsuperscript{102} McPherson, \textit{Ordeal By Fire}, p. 457.
\textsuperscript{103} Novins and Richardson. \textit{The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy 1861-1865}. Proclamation #111; December 24, 1862.
black soldiers be treated as prisoners of war after they were captured. The South, however, insisted that the blacks be treated as runaway slaves and that any officer who led them was to be treated as a criminal in the process of leading a slave revolt, which was a crime punishable by death.\textsuperscript{104}

In the eyes of the Confederates, the men of the Forty-second were under the direct command of General Butler and were therefore responsible for any act that he committed.\textsuperscript{105} After the fall of New Orleans, Butler hanged a Confederate civilian for allegedly tearing down a Union flag before the fall of the city. Jefferson Davis issued, in the same proclamation where he had dealt with the question of the black soldier, a statement that General Butler and all officers under his command were to be considered "criminals deserving death, and that they and each of them be whenever captured reserved for execution."\textsuperscript{106}

In Executive Proclamation 111, Jefferson Davis exonerated the enlisted and non-commissioned officers so that they might be paroled. He stated that these men, because they were not free to

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., December 24, 1862.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., December 24, 1862.
\textsuperscript{106} Galveston, Texas \textit{Tri-Weekly Telegraph}, January 14, 1863.
make decisions of their own, were not responsible for the actions of their government or of the commanders that led them; they, therefore, when captured were to be treated as prisoners of war and paroled as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{107} To the men of the Forty-second, this decision offered great relief and hope of a quick exchange.

**PRISON LIFE**

The living conditions in prison for Alexander Hobbs and the men of the Forty-second were far better than those for soldiers in such prison camps as Andersonville or Libby that sprang up later in the war. In these later prisons the death rate was often as high as 15 to 20 percent annually. Of the 126,950 Union soldiers taken prisoner, 22,576 died. The conditions for a southerner taken prisoner in the North was not much better; of the 220,000 taken prisoner, 26,435 never returned.\textsuperscript{108} Union prisoners in places like Andersonville suffered from a severe lack of food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and sometimes even proper drinking water.\textsuperscript{109} The South was desperately short of food and medical supplies; this, more

\textsuperscript{107} Galveston, Texas *Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, January 14, 1863.
than cruel intent, caused the shocking conditions at Andersonville.\textsuperscript{110}

Prisoners were often forced to fend for themselves to obtain the shelter, clothing, or medical care they needed to keep themselves healthy in the horribly unsanitary conditions of the prisons. They were often forced to build their own shelters, and when shelters were built, they were often overcrowded.\textsuperscript{111} The places built were often ill-suited for the cold of the winter or the heat of the summer. As for clothing or medicine required to remain healthy, the men were forced to provide for themselves, either through care packages from home or by what they could buy from merchants.\textsuperscript{112} They often sold what little clothing they had to buy medical supplies at the extraordinarily inflated prices of the South. Even though the men also could hope for a package of supplies to reach them from their family back home these were often stolen before they ever reached their destination.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{110} Though Confederate Captain Henry Wirtz was tried for war crimes for alleged cruelty to Union soldiers at Andersonville its is generally felt that he did not intend to kill so many but was hampered by the circumstances from providing necessary care for the prisoners.

\textsuperscript{111} U.S. Sanitary Commission, \textit{Narrative of Privations and Suffering of United States Officers And Soldiers While Prisoners Of War In the Hand Of The Rebel Authorities}, (Philadelphia: 1864), p. 35.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., p. 37.

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., p. 35.
The food and water that these prisoners of war received were often very poor, lacking in both quantity and nutritional value. In Andersonville it was reported that the men received "eight ounces of bread [corn] and two ounces of beef or pork," and these amounts were "very irregular in kind, quality and amount."\footnote{Ibid., p. 36.} Many men complained of the poor quality of the cornbread since it was made of "portions of the cob and husk,"\footnote{Ibid., p. 37.} and it only irritated the dysentery that most men already had. "At Point Lookout the prisoners sometimes ate rats to supplement their diet."\footnote{Mitchell, \textit{Civil War Soldiers}, p. 46.} The water in places such as this was often extremely polluted, with only slow-moving or stagnant rivers to use for drinking or bathing.

Quite often the guards who were put in charge of these camps were bitter, cruel men who had little or no compassion for the prisoners. They, unlike the front-line soldiers who had a mutual respect for each other, had no respect for these men whom they looked upon as barbarians coming to sack their civilization. There are accounts of Confederate militia guards firing into open windows of barracks for no other reason than because a soldier had come to
close too the window. 117 Most prisoners agreed that their captors
became contemptuous after the prisoners were passed back into the
hands of the guards of the prisoner of war camps.118

Often the men remained in these prison camps for as long as
two or three years. In both the length of time imprisoned and the
living conditions of the average prisoner of war, the three weeks
that the men of the Forty-second spent in Houston lacks any real
comparison in hardship. The Forty-second enjoyed an adequate supply
of food, drinking water, and shelter from the Houston area. The
Confederate soldiers and the men of the Forty-second shared the
same food and water that was also used by the civilian population.
As for clothes, the men of the Forty-second were never held long
enough to need new ones. The experiences of Hobbs as a prisoner of
war could never compare to the experiences of men held in other
prisons of the South or North in the period after 1863.

117 U.S. Sanitary Commission, Narrative of Privations, p. 34.
118 Mitchell, Civil War Soldiers, p. 44.
CHAPTER 6: TO LEAVE TEXAS

On January 22, 1863, at 5:00 A.M., Hobbs and the men of the Forty-second began the last portion of their adventure to the South. The order was finally given for the enlisted men of the Forty-second and of the Harriet Lane to prepare to move out of Texas for the purpose of being paroled. They were to be transported to New Orleans to wait until formal exchanges could be arranged. The wounded and sick, numbering nine men, remained in Houston until they were well enough to travel. The officers of the Forty-second also stayed behind as prisoners of the Confederacy, a result of the controversy over General Butler's execution of a civilian in New Orleans and Jefferson Davis's Proclamation Number 111. The officers were held in Houston until April 29, 1863, when they were removed to a more permanent location as prisoners. All the officers, except Burrell, were allowed to visit the men one last time to say good-bye. This scene was described as being a very touching and tearful occasion.

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1 Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 175.
2 Ibid., p. 176.
3 Wilson, "Diary Of A Union Prisoner", p. 104.
5 Ibid., p. 174.
General Magruder decided that the Forty-second would have to march the entire distance to New Orleans and warned that the majority would never survive. They were told that most of them would die because of the impossible terrain they would have to cover. General Magruder's entire officer staff protested, feeling that this was cruel and inhumane. General Magruder changed his mind, and it was then decided that transport would be provided for part of the way and have the men march the remainder of the distance.⁶

The soldiers and sailors of the Forty-second and the Harriet Lane were to be guarded by soldiers from the Fourth Texas Cavalry, commanded by Lieutenant W.J. Horton. Bosson describes Lieutenant Horton as a “pompous, overbearing individual, without military knowledge or manners.” Even so, the march to the Federal lines under guard occurred generally without incident, as the guards and men treated each other with mutual respect.⁷

The prisoners and guards left Houston by train at 2:00 P.M. on the eighty-three mile trip that would take them to Beaumont. Traveling at an average speed of four miles an hour, the train arrived

at 4:00 P.M. the next day. The men remained in Beaumont for six days in order for the weather to clear so they could begin the march to New Orleans and then home. While in Beaumont, they secured all the food they wanted by buying or bartering from local merchants and farmers who had an abundant supply. The soldiers of the Forty-second sold extra articles of clothing and equipment to obtain money to purchase coffee, milk, flour bread, and other luxuries while in Beaumont. The selling of these extras served not only to provide them with extra food but also to lighten their load for the upcoming march through the Louisiana swamp country. In Beaumont, the men of the Forty-second were quartered throughout the community. Hobbs was quartered with five other men in a carpenter's shop. While in Beaumont, Hobbs made further observations regarding the civilian population and industry of the South. He felt that the machinery of the South was old and undependable. Yet he could not complain about the kindness of its people and described a “kind lady” who brought five blankets and comforters to keep Hobbs and his comrades warm when a sudden cold front brought freezing

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8 Ibid., p. 180.
9 Ibid., p. 181.
weather for three days.¹⁰

Hobbs and the other enlisted men learned about the South, southerners, and the war from first hand observations. While in Beaumont they saw the results of General Banks's second attempt to bring the war into Texas. About one hundred sailors, from the ship the Morning Light, marched through Beaumont on their way to Houston after being captured at Sabine Pass when their ship was boarded by rebel troops when it passed too close to shore. The sailors reported that the ship had been boarded by two rebel steamers and then burned when further Union gunboats appeared.¹¹

On January 29 the men of the Forty-second were loaded on board the steamer Roebuck for transport from Beaumont to Orange, Texas along the Sabine River. Alexander considered himself fortunate to have acquired berth in one of the cabins. The steamer was extremely crowded, having been intended to carry sixty but instead was carrying near four hundred, including guards. It was on this leg of the journey that Alexander Hobbs first encountered the death of one of his comrades. While en route to Orange, Texas, two men died and were buried along the way. The first, on February 2, 1863 was

¹⁰ Hobbs Diary, January 25, 1863.
¹¹ Ibid.
Private David Chapin of Company I. He was only nineteen when he
died of typhoid fever and was buried at Starks Ferry Landing, Newton
County. His coffin, made from rough boards, was buried in a grave at
a “beautiful spot about fifty yards from the banks of the Sabine
River and beneath the branches of some large pine trees.” The
procession to the site of the grave included the coffin carried by six
pall bearers, a detachment of the guards with reversed arms, and the
three companies of the Forty-second. The procession marched to the
music of a single bugle as it formed ranks around the open grave.
The chaplain spoke to the men “in words of exhortation” and then
read from chapter fifteen of 1st Corinthians. The guards then fired
off the usual salute. Alexander Hobbs not only described this scene
in his diary but also in his Bible.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, February 3, 1863. Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 181.}

The second death occurred after reaching Orange, Texas, but
before they had begun their march across the Louisiana swamps to
Alexandria. This victim was Private Henry Seller, of Company D, and
he too died of typhoid fever. He was buried at the family plot of a
Mrs. Barr, believed to be originally from Springfield, Massachusetts.
She had provided quarters for Private Seller during his last night.
Alexander Hobbs did not describe this burial as extensively as the first, perhaps because he did not know Sellers as well, given that they were in different companies. What is most noticeable from his account of the burial is the description of the chaplain’s sermon after it. The chaplain spoke at length about the “happiness of the other world” to which Hobbs commented in his diary, “which he seemed to think all would enjoy.” There is the appearance that Hobbs harbored some bad feelings towards the chaplain. Until this time Hobbs always had nothing but kind words for the chaplain. The men accused the chaplain of neglecting his duties in providing for the ill or of somehow currying favor with the Confederate guards in such a manner to lead them to believe he was “deficient [in] is manly bearings.” During this march to their lines Hobbs never wrote what the chaplain did, or did not do to upset the men. After the men finally rejoined their regiment there would continue to be hard feelings between the men and the chaplain.

Shortly after the Forty-second arrived at Orange, Texas, they began the long arduous march to Alexandria, located along the Red River in Louisiana. Bosson describes the conditions of the march as

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difficult but not impossible, in opposition to what the guards in Houston had told them. The men were permitted to march in a disorderly manner as long as they maintained a decent pace. On most days the men would set out at 6:30 or 7:00 A.M. and march seventeen to twenty miles per day. Few of the men had tents or other shelter, so at night they slept out in the open or under trees. For the most part the march was through pine-covered terrain, but in at least one place the men were required to march seven miles through a knee-high swamp without a rest.\textsuperscript{15}

Many of the soldiers and sailors became sick during this march. At first, those unable to walk rode in the wagons carrying provisions, while the men well enough to march but unable to carry their knapsacks deposited their packs in the wagons. Hobbs was one of these men who was too sick to march, and he had to be carried on the wagons for the first day. For some unknown reason this practice of helping the sick by allowing them to be carried or have their gear carried by the wagons was stopped after the first day.\textsuperscript{16}

Surprisingly, the men did not complain about the food during

\textsuperscript{14} Bosson, \textit{History of the Forty-second}, p. 250.  
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 182.  
their trip. During this time they apparently ate better than any other time while on their march. One sergeant from the Forty-second wrote jokingly in his diary, “some of the boys felt as if they had eaten so much beef there were ashamed to look a cow in the face.” Alexander Hobbs recorded that he obtained chicken, sweet potatoes, molasses, and corn meal from two of his mess mates who were successful foragers. When Hobbs returned to his own lines and went back to eating hard tack, all he could do was complain about it after having lived “on the delicacies of the sunny south.” 17

When the Forty-second reached the Red River, their journey by foot was over. On February 15 the men were loaded on board the General Quitman, which carried them down to Alexandria, Louisiana. 18 While they were in Alexandria, the soldiers of the Forty-second met some of the first prisoners of the war, 278 men of the Eighth Infantry Regiment of the United States Regular Army. The Eighth Regiment, along with five or six of their wives and two children, had been captured at San Antonio when their commander, Major General David E. Twiggs, surrendered the garrison on February

18 Ibid., 181-183.
16, 1861, without offering any resistance.\textsuperscript{19} At first they were going to be released and allowed to be transported to the North by ship, but Texas officials decided that they might be able to persuade these men to join the Confederate Army, so they were kept marching around Texas for the next two years. Few of the men ever joined the Confederacy, however, and those who did not join were eventually paroled with the men of the Forty-second.\textsuperscript{20}

On February 19, 1863, the soldiers of the Forty-second received their official parole papers and were excited to be heading home. The journey was delayed for three more days due to the delayed shipment of wood needed to fuel the steamer. From Alexandria the men would travel by boat down the Mississippi River, heading for Baton Rouge. On their journey they passed the fortifications at Port Hudson, which had not been taken by the Union forces yet. Hobbs saw a glimpse of what the war was going to

\textsuperscript{19} B.P. Gallaway (editor), \textit{Texas: The Dark Corner of the Confederacy: Contemporary Accounts of the Lone Star State in the Civil War}. Third edition (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), pp. 242 - 245. General David Twiggs, a Georgian by birth, had attempted to resign his commission before turning over all of the Federal forts and outposts in Texas, but as of the date of surrender, he had not done so. He was not completely to blame for his action since as he lacked any instructions from President James Buchanan. Twiggs's garrison in the Alamo and his headquarters outside the city was surrounded the day before he surrendered.
become, and it saddened him. South of Port Hudson, he witnessed the ruins of the plantations and towns that had lined the Mississippi River, burned out so that "nothing remaining but the chimneys of the houses [to] mark the spot where they stood [.]."  

The Forty-second reached their own lines, at Baton Rouge, on the morning of February 24, 1863. They spent one day there looking for friends in other regiments before taking up quarters for the night at the U.S. Arsenal. From Baton Rouge they were transported by river boat to New Orleans, arriving on February 25, 1863, exactly two months after arriving in Texas. They were not permitted to disembark the first night back with comrades and friends but were held under guard on board the ship until arrangements were made the next day. Though not allowed off the ship, the men heard a concert and jokes from those on the shore that lifted their spirits.  

On February 26 the parolees were ordered to continue to Camp Bayou Gentilly, also known as Camp Farr, just outside of New Orleans, to await word of being exchanged, or discharged to go home.  

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21 Hobbs Diary, February 19 - 24, 1863.  
regiment and greeted by a band playing “Old Lang Sine.” Lieutenant Colonel Steadmen welcomed them back, and the men enjoyed their first night back with friends. Camp Gentilly, where they would spend the next five months, is located three miles north of the city of New Orleans along Gentilly Road headed towards Fort Macomb on Lack Pontchartrain. The Battery Gentilly was located just up the road from their camp and was one of the defensive redoubts for the city. The Battery was fitted with four heavy guns and extensive earthworks.

Before the war, Camp Farr had been a horse track. Many of the Union soldiers who were stationed in New Orleans were encamped there. White planters had abandoned the area surrounding the camp, and now only a few blacks remained, working their gardens and making charcoal for use in New Orleans. For the men of the Forty-second, this place did not help raise their morale. Sergeant-Major Charles Bosson described Camp Farr as a “flat spot of land with nothing to relieve the eye but a mass of trees situated in the swamp, their limbs covered with light moss, had a depressing effect on the spirits of some men, who began early to show signs of homesickness.” The camp had two buildings located on it, one used as a headquarters, hospital, and sutlers shop, and the other used as a
quartermaster’s warehouse.23

By the time Hobbs reached New Orleans, the exchange cartel had ceased and the three companies of the Forty-second who were paroled were forced to remain at Bayou Gentilly until July 17, 1863, at which time the order was given to send the regiment back to New York to be mustered out of service. The camp laid out for them was about seventy yards from the main camp where the rest of the regiment was held. Their camp was kept very neat and in good order, with a separate brick oven for cooking that was built from materials of a nearby abandoned sugar house. The men of the Forty-second came to be nicknamed the “Pet Lambs.” As Sergeant Bosson described their condition, “their military life was one of inglorious ease, much to their disgust.” Hobbs described his encampment at Camp Farr as “dull as being a prisoner in the hands of the rebels almost.” This was not at all how Hobbs believed his military career would end, being labeled a “Pet Lamb.”24

While being held prisoner at Camp Farr, the paroled members of the Forty-second were allowed to go about where they pleased, but they were not permitted to perform any military or related

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activities by the terms of their parole. The only other information we have from Hobbs from March 10 until July 17, 1863, is that on June 18 he entered the hospital at Camp Farr. For how long or for what, we do not know. This period of four months is the longest that Alexander Hobbs failed to write in his diary. He described this period of time as having “passed slowly ... in which few have escaped a sever jist of sickness and much misery and suffering. ...”

There are two possible reasons why Alexander Hobbs chose not to write in his diary. The first, and in my opinion the least probable, is he wanted to conserve the paper in his diary until he was on his way home. But being so close to the city of New Orleans, and having free movement, he could easily have bought a second diary. The second reason for not writing may be that he had no energy, as the strain of the march across Louisiana, his own sickness, the death of comrades by sickness, and the thought of remaining at Camp Farr until discharged, with no hope of action, took its toll on his mind and body. Alexander Hobbs may have slipped in to a state of melancholia, or nostalgia.

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24 Ibid., 195-196, 378.
26 Hobbs Diary, July 17, 1863.
There was plenty of activity around the camp about which to write. In June the remainder of the regiment not paroled was sent up near Port Hudson for active duty. These men were involved in a skirmish at Bayou Boeuff and at Brasher City. At Bayou Boeuff a portion of the regiment was badly routed, and forty-one of the men were captured and informally paroled back to Union lines. These forty-one were then sent to join their fellow paroolees at Bayou Gentilly on July 6, 1863. Hobbs mentioned none of this.\footnote{Bosson, History of the Forty-second, pp. 269 - 305.}

The sick rolls remained high during this entire time. On March 21, eleven days after arriving at Bayou Gentilly, another man from the regiment died, and again on April 22 yet another man died of fever, without so much as a line by Hobbs. On May 6 one of the men from the paroled camp wandered into the swamp after having delirium tremors. He was found seven days later holding on to a tree and was so badly decomposed that they had to hire a local black man to put the body in a coffin for burial. On June 5 there was another death, and although the official cause of death was chronic diarrhea, the surgeons felt that the soldier suffered more from homesickness than from disease. Each month more fell sick, and at least one, some times more, would die. Yet, Hobbs remained silent, although before
this he had listed the death of each man carefully.\textsuperscript{28}

For all of the men who had been paroled this must have been a time of incredible boredom and misery. They were not allowed to participate in the two small skirmishes in which the regiment was involved. They were not even permitted to participate in company, regimental, or brigade drills that were occasionally held. Where the men of the Forty-second who had not been paroled had the hope of activity, the paroled men had none. All they could do was sit and watch their friends and comrades slowly die and wonder whether their next illness would be their last.

Their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Stedman, described the condition of the paroled men in a letter he wrote to the commander of the defenses of New Orleans in an attempt to obtain their transport home. He stated that, “these men have had nothing to do or to engage their attention, and as a consequence they have become very low spirited and much reduced in bodily vigor. Several of them have lately died very suddenly, and several are daily taken sick.”\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., pp. 207, 237, 247.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p. 319.
In the last days of service, discipline became a difficult problem for the parolees of the Forty-second. By July the guard house at Algiers was constantly full of men who had became drunk or, worse, had threatened mutiny. Part of the problem of despair among these men may have been due to the confusion over when their official discharge date was. These men had signed up for nine months of service, but the problem was in determining the official start date of their service. The men believed that their individual muster dates were the starting date, but the government had other ideas. They set the day as being the date of muster of the last company mustered into service. In this case Company K had not been mustered until October 14, 1862, making their discharge date July 14, 1863.\(^\text{30}\)

On July 17 the men of the Forty-second were ordered to march from their camp at Bayou Gentilly to Algiers to await transport home to Boston. They would wait there until August 1, 1863, when they were ordered aboard the steamship *Continental* for the journey home. As they left, the band played the “Star Spangled Banner” and “Home Again.”\(^\text{31}\) The homebound journey was all that Hobbs could

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\(^{31}\) Hobbs Diary, August 1, 1863.
desire of the ship they were on. The only incident that Hobbs described during this trip was the death of three more comrades who were aboard. These three men were not a part of the group that was paroled, and Hobbs never mentioned their names; describing that they were simply “sewed” into their blankets and buried in the ocean: These soldiers had become for Hobbs simply anonymous combatants, the very thing that so many feared during the war. He had become hardened as he watched them “dropped into the ocean and quickly disappeared from view[.]”

Alexander Hobbs wrote of his homecoming only that he had arrived in New York on the 7th of August, and he proceeded onto Boston on the same day, arriving home on August 9, 1863. He failed to describe the final incident that happened to the Forty-second before being mustered out of service. On the trip from New York to Providence, Rhode Island, the ship they were travelling on ran aground on the rocks at Point Judith. There was no danger that the ship would sink, but the men had to be transferred to a new ship by row boat. It is possible that Hobbs did not proceed with the rest of the regiment by ship, instead going by some other means, but that

32 Hobbs Diary, August 6, 1863. This was the last entry he would make despite having space to write more.
is unlikely. On August 10, 1863, the Forty-second was welcomed home by the prominent citizens of Boston and marched to the Parade Ground of the Boston Commons. There they were released with orders to report to Reidville on August 20 to be officially mustered out of service.

The officers of the Forty-second were not allowed to travel with the men because of Proclamation Number 111. 34 Colonel Burrell attempted to persuade General Magruder that the officers were not under the command of General Butler but under the command of General Banks. However, Magruder would not listen; and Colonel Burrell was unable to prove his contention, for he did not have any orders from General Banks. 35 The officers were held in Houston until April 29, 1863, when orders were received from Richmond that they were to be taken to a more permanent location. It was decided to take the men to the Huntsville State Penitentiary. 36 They arrived there on May 1, 1863, and were treated very well. They were kept separate from the other prisoners and were treated with complete respect. They remained only two months because the state

33 Hobbs Bible, p. 3.
34 Novins, Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis, December 24, 1862.
government protested having to take care of prisoners of war in a state prison.\textsuperscript{37}

On June 27 the officers began being transported to a new prisoner of war camp, Camp Groce, near Hempstead, northwest of Houston, which had been an abandoned Confederate training camp. The men arrived there on June 30 to begin an almost six-month stay.\textsuperscript{38} The water supply was so tainted that sickness ran rampant, but the shortage of personnel left no one to care for the sick.\textsuperscript{39} "The location of Camp Groce was decidedly unhealthy and had been abandoned by Confederate troops. . . for this reason."\textsuperscript{40} Information arrived on November 16, 1863, that the few remaining enlisted men, the ones who had been too ill to travel in January, were to be paroled.\textsuperscript{41} The officers were hopeful that they too would be paroled soon. Instead, on December 11, 1863, they were transferred to the newly created prison camp, Camp Ford, at Tyler, Texas.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p. 418.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 419-421.
\textsuperscript{39} Bosson, History of the Forty-second, p. 423.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 423
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 425
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p. 425.
After a twelve-day march to Camp Ford, the officers arrived to find a place with no barracks or structures of any kind. There were very few other officers there when they arrived.\(^{43}\) The men set to work creating a barrack for themselves that was to later be called the "42nd Mansion" by prisoners who arrived after the Forty-second.\(^{44}\) Life for the officers was poor, though health conditions as compared to Camp Groce were greatly improved. The men were able to obtain drinkable water from a nearby stream and wood for building barracks.\(^{45}\) In March, April, and May of 1864, the conditions of Camp Ford greatly worsened with the arrival of nearly 6,300 new prisoners.\(^{46}\) These overcrowded conditions continued until July 1864, when special arrangements were made between General Magruder and General Banks for the parole and exchange of most of the prisoners each side held.\(^{47}\) Among these men to be paroled were the officers of the Forty-second. By July 22, the men of the Forty-second were exchanged across the Mississippi River and taken back to Massachusetts by ship. On August 9, 1864, the officers arrived

\(^{43}\) Ibid., p. 427-428.
\(^{47}\) Ibid., p. 434.
home at Boston where they were reunited with the remainder of the regiment they had not seen since their stay in Houston.\textsuperscript{48}

Alexander Hobbs never reenlisted in the army after he returned home on August 9, 1863, perhaps because he was never officially exchanged and was not eligible for service. Or he could have been so fed up with war and camp life that he decided not to have anything else to do with the war. Alexander Hobbs’s experiences in the “Great War between the States” were not exactly heroic or filled with manly adventure. He had been captured, held as a prisoner not only by the Confederacy but also by his own country, witnessed many of his friends die of disease, and was ill much of his time in service. He could have felt that he had done his duty.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 435-439.
CHAPTER 7:  TRANSCRIPT OF DIARY

The Hobbs Diary provides an interesting and fresh view of the life of a private in the Union army as well as the conditions that existed in Texas during the Civil War. The diary itself is located in the Woodson Research Center of the Rice University's Fondren Library, in Houston, Texas. For a document of its time and for the events that occurred around it, it is currently in excellent condition, with only minor damage to the bindings. Having been recorded in pencil, the diary has diminished in legibility to some extent but not as much as would have been expected.

It would appear, from the way that the diary was kept, that Alexander Hobbs was a fairly educated individual who fancied himself a writer. This can be inferred by the occasional attempts at literary flamboyance.

During that time, the practice among many people was not to use punctuation in writing as casual as a diary or a letter, so I have inserted punctuation and paragraph breaks where I felt Hobbs would have intended them to be. I have placed these punctuation marks in brackets to indicate editorial intrusion. I have placed in italics my best guess about any words that were illegible. To keep some of the
original flavor of the diary, I have also preserved Hobbs's individualistic spelling.

The diary provides a vivid first-person account of the Battle of Galveston and reveals the thoughts of a common Union soldier entering the Civil War in 1862. Hobbs began his diary on the day he left his camp of instruction at Reidville and, except for the one break while a parolee, he kept it consistently. Private Hobbs was an eyewitness to history and his penciled jottings help us understand the events through which he lived as he experienced them.

**NOVEMBER 21ST 1862**

After waiting impatiently for several weeks the order came at last[,] and we bid a sad farewell to our many friends who came notwithstanding the rain to see us off[,] our regiment numbers nine hundred and eighty nine and we leave the state well equipped except our guns which have not yet been given out[.]

4 P.M. passed through Providence and on through Stomington reaching Grifton at 9 P.M. where we embarked on bord the steamer Commodore and left at[. . . .]

Nov 22 3 Oclock A.m. arriving at New York at 11[,] the day
pleasant and we had a fine view of the Steamship Grate Eastern as she lay at the entrance of the harbour and of the harbour itself with the publick buildings and C. We were not allowed to land until 5 P.M.[] the citizens of Williamsburt gave us acollation after which we took up our line of march for East New York[,] a distance of 9 miles through the mud as no arrangements had been made[,] we even forced to occupy some sheds after turning out the horses[,] we suffered considerable from the cold.[]

NOV 23 Sunday the sun was clear but by no means warm[,] after getting what they called coffee and bread we set to work pitching our tents.[]

NOV 24 Monday recieved our guns (second hand smooth bores except Companies G. and C. which got Springfield Rifles) and settled down to drill.[]

NOV 27 Thanksgiving day got a furlough and went to the city[,] had a good dinner of Turkey[,] Chicken and plum poooding[,] at 3 P.M. went too see the sights at Barnums Museum after getting tea left for camp which we reached at 8 Oclock[,] our time passed pleasantly untill the order came for us to march[.]
DEC 2 Tuesday 2 P.M. left camp and marched to Brooklyn halting only once a five minutes arriving after dark[.] we could not go on bord the transport[,] part of the regiment were quartered in an armory and part were scattered over town[,] enough cannot be said in praise of the good people of Brooklyn who took the men in[,] kept them all night and breakfasted them in the morning[,] gentleman stood at the corner of the streets too see that no soldier went hungry some even giving money[,] one good man gave a number of us our dinner at a salone[.]

DEC 3 At 5 P.M. went on bord the transport Steamer Saxon with three other Companys[,] but being too crowded Co A. was removed too the Quincy[,] the regiment all embarked on thair steamer the Saxon[,] Quincy[,] Osgood[,] and Chetucket[,] two of the steamers were old and did not look safe[,] one company refused to be put on bord the Chetucket and after considerable excitement were finally tranferred to the Saxon[.]

DEC 5 At 8 1/2 Oclock A.M. the Pilot came on bord when we weighed anchor and steamed down the harbour past Sandyhook and out too sea[,] we are in Bank Expedition and sail under sealed orders but expect to go to Fortress Monroe[.]
DEC 6 Blowing a gale with a heavy sea most of the men are sick and as the ports had too be closed it was very disagreeable to stay below and too cold to stay on deck.

DEC 7 A rough night wind still blowing passed Cape Haterak about 1 A.M. the men still sick turned them on deck and cleaned the ship. we are in the Gulf Stream and the water is almost a blood heat but the wind blows very cold. The orders were opened this morning and we find our destination to be Ship Island.

DEC 8 The weather is growing mild and the men are recovering from the sea sickness with an appetite which threatens to devour every thing at one meal. most of them are growling because they can not get enough to eat and the cooks are mad and swair that stove will not draw.

DEC 9 The weather is delightful and every thing goes on well except the grub. they do not give up enough of any thing except hard bread and that we cannot eat. many of the men express the desire that the pirate Alabam may take us.

DEC 10 Weather warm and pleasant three men in irons today for stealing meal last night our Capt. tore the stripes off a corporal for being concerned in the robbery and disobeying orders.
made land on the cost of Florida and saw a gun boat[

DEC 11 Passed a wreck on the shore with a tug boat discharging her cargo[] at 5 P.M. anchored Key West to get coal and water[] Key West is now used by the U.S. Government to store provisions[] it is a small village and to us who had never been at the south the trees and fruit looked really pleasant[]

The men worked all night taking on bord coal and water[] some of boys went on shore and got oranges[,] Lemons[,] and Cocanuts[]

DEC 12 Left this morning for Ship Island in company with two other transports[] a fair wind and pleasant weather[]

DEC 14 The weather continues delightfull the men are in high spirits except at meal time[] they have not yet got acostomed to living on army rations[] we get mush sometimes which we consider a great luxury[] the men who have money to spare go to the second table in the cabin[] they have thair every delecacy that can be got on land[] we have on bord the Col. (I.G. Burrell) and quite a number of the staff officers[] they probably thought this the safest ship and she has so far been all we could wish[] she is the same as was used by Gen Butler as his Flag Ship in his expidition to New Orleans[]
DEC 15  Arrived at Ship Island this morning[.] was brought to
last night by a blast from a gun boat[.] a Lieutenant came on bord and
examined our papers[.] Ship Island is a low sandy place with a few
government storehouses[.] Gen Butler took it from the Rebels last
winter we see the forts where he found the wooden guns. Three of
Four reg. are encamped on the Island waiting transportation[.] the
ship that brought them from Fortress Monroe being too large to go up
the Mississippi[.] 4 P.M. after getting coal we left for New Orleans[.]

DEC 16  1 A.M. arrived at the entrance of the Mississippi after
a very stormy and disagreeable night[.] lay too for some hours waiting
for day light to take a pilot[.] the entrance of the river is through
low marshy land which extends for (I think) twenty miles from the
entrance[.] the river is about three quarters of a mile wide and is
very hansome[.] we see the remains of many of the fire rafts sent
down by the rebels to burn Gen Butlers fleet[.] passed fort St. Phillip
and Jackson which our gun boats took on their way too New Orleans[.]
the marks of our shot could be plainly seen on the walls it is now
garrisoned by a Massachusetts Regt. stopped their until the medical
officer came on bord[.] he found us all well and allowed us to
proceed[.] came to anchor at dark within twenty yards of the bank
and within twenty miles of the city of New Orleans[.] the scenery on
the bank of the river for the most part has been delightful[.]

beutifull groves of orange trees which hung full of the golden fruit
looked to us very inviting[.]

DEC 17 Started this morning and arrived at the city at day
light[.] we was all eager to see the "Cresent City" and enjoyed a fine
view from the deck of our vessail[.] their is little to see however as
there is but little buisness done now[.]

We had scarcely anchored before boats came off with fruit[,] peas[,] cake and bread[,] the city is under marsall law but the poor
are much better off than before it was taken by the Federals[,] flour
which than sold for forty five dollars now sells from seven to ten
dollars and other things in proportion[,] we expected to land here but
orders came for us to go up the river nine miles to a town called
Carrelton[,] accordingly in the evening we ran up the river[,] but not
knowing where to stop[,] we went two miles further than we
intended and stopped for the night beside a river steam boat made to
carry cotton with a salone for passangers in the second story[,] she
is now laid up to dry and is used as a hospital[.]

DEC 18 Left and steamed down the river two miles and landed
at Carrelton at 12 N[,] marched half a mile and piched our tents on a
low wet pieces of land bounded on two sides by graveyards[.] one a rebel and the other the last resting place of Union Soldiers who had been camped in that vicinity[.] there was near four hundred from Maine, Mass, Vermont, New York, New Hampshire and some other states[.] there was two hospitals in the town full of sick soldiers and it was a sad sight to see some each day carried to the grave without a friend to shed a tear over thare remains[.] doubtless many tears will be shed when the sad tidings are wafted across the ocean to the home they left so lately[.] I have wandered through grave yards before but never see so sad a place as this[.] the graves are only dug two or three feet deep and are imediatly fill with water[.] the poore people praise Gen Butler and well they may[.] some of the Ladies say all manner of bitter things about us "yankies" and scoff at the idea of the union ever being restored[.]

DEC 19 Friday gave all our clothes to the washer women not expecting to leave here soon[.] a few hours afterward the orders came to strike our tents and go again on bord the transport[.] we did not know where to find our clothes but after hunting all over the town we returned to camp in dispair[.] the order was countermand and we again piched our tents[.] officers and some of our boys found thair clothes and before we left they were all recovered[.]
DEC 21  Broke camp at daylight and marched to the bank and embarked on bord the good ship Saxon who was hauled along side the bank[,] stopped a few hours at New Orleans and than proceeded down the river on our way to Texas[,] the day was very fine and we had a fine view of the twenty miles passed in the night time on our way up anchored at night in the river and proceeded toward morning on our voyage[,] after three days sail with a fair wind and a smooth sea we arrived off Galveston and was brought too by a shot across our bow from a United States gun boat who spoke [to] us and then signaled for a pilot[.]

At 2 PM the pilot came on bord but we were obliged to wait two or three hours for the tide to rise[,] towards night we started in across the bar and struck several times but got across in safety[,] we found in the harbor three gun boats[,] the largest of which was the Harriut Lane who carried six guns[,] also two ferry boats fitted up with some heavy guns and calculated for the harbour service as they drew only six or seven feet of water[,] the town is built on an island connected to the main land by a bridge about two miles long[,] the town formerly contained about fifteen thousand inhabitants but nine out of every ten have gone away since it has been occupied by hily by our gun boats[.]
Dec 25 the steamer hauled along side the warf and we disembarked and took up our quarters in a large ware house on the out end of the warf[.] we housted the glorious stars & stripes over our quarters and gave three cheers a little louder then ever before[.] we than tore up the plank and built a kind of barricade under the superintenddance of our Civil Enginere who came from New Orleans with us[.]

Dec 26 A detachment of one hundred men with Col. Burull and Capt. Wenright of the Harriet Lane went through the town recunoitering[.] we examined the cotton press where it was proposed we should quarter on the arrival of the remainder of the expedition also the new court house[,] a fine brick building not yet finished[,] there are a dozen splendid buildings in the town but they are closed up now[,] a general gloominess is over everything[,] we had a weary march over the island and under a burning sun[.]

Dec 27 Posted our pickets up town[,] many of the citizens profess to be union but are not to be trusted[,] Some speak their secession sentiment openly[,] the man who gave me this book spoke strongly in favor of the southern confederacy and the hopelessness of trying to subdue them[.]
Dec 28  We have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of more transports[.] our position is rather unpleasant as they could destroy us in a five minutes from the streets by a well directed fire[.] we do not dred them much as our gun boats could shell them out of the city[,] at least we think so[.] we are prepared to do what little we can in case of an attack which we expect every night[,] we are obliged to sleep on our arms which is extreemly disagreeable[.]

Dec 29  things go on about as usual[,] our pickets fired on some egerly last night and then retreated to the warf[,] we were all in our place behind our barricade and ready for action but was not attacked. There is something very exciting in being turned out in the night by the sound of a siren and expect every moment to be attacked[,] the other evening while I was on duty up town I see the outer pickets running[,] running in I joined them and we all run double quick and drew up in line of battle at the head of the warf[,] the long roll was beat and the men sprang to thair arms and pretty soon two companies filed up the warf and went double quick up town to look after a party who were out foraging for a stove[,] while we were away they returned having pressed two or three dray-men into there service[,] we all came back not having as we expected met the rebels another time[,] we were up town filling our canteens when a party of
rebels came down the warf[.] we ran helter skelter and found an
officer with a flag of truce[.] the rest of the party stopped a little
way behind. as soon as more men arrive we expect to go and hold the
bridge to prevent the rebels from scouting round the town as they do
now[.]

DEC 30 things pass about as usual[.] the steamer Saxon is
discharging our stores and preparing to leave for New Orleans
tomorrow[.] our quartermaster is going with her to represent our
condition to Gen[.] Banks[.] she takes with her our letters and a large
pile of them there is[.] We feel very anxious about the remainder
of our regiment as nothing has yet been heard from them[.]

DEC 31 The last day of the old year[.] we do not fail to
remember the distance we are from our dear homes and the merces
of a kind Father during the year that is past[.] we feel that goodness
and mercy have followed us all our days but especially have we been
favoured the last year[.] may we always remember our obligations
and show our gratitude by serving him faithfully[.]

[THE BATTLE BEGINS]

JAN 1, 1863
I have moved to chronicle an event which will be remembered by us all while we live[.] at 4 A.M. we were turned out by the firing of our pickets and we had not more than got out of the building on the warf when a shot came whissing over our heads[.] red and blue lights were burned as signals[.] the moon had set and it was quite dark[.] we fired several rounds up the warf where we thought the rebels were stationed but as it was almost impossible for us to do any good by firing and by doing so we were showing our position[.] I do not pretend to describe what followed the next three hours[.] the shot and shell which came from twenty or thirty guns within a few hundred yards of us tearing and crashing through the barricade within a few feet of our heads and going through the building we occupied as barrack a scattering the splinters in all directions[.] the cries of the wounded and the noise of the broad side after broad side which went from our gun boats the shot striking the buck walls and passing through one after another and then bursting is something that requires a smarter pen than mine to describe[.] we laid flat on the warf and listened with out being able to do any thing The heavy guns were accompanied by the firing of small arms and the balls went ripping by us as thick as hail[.] the rebels run out in the water to get nearer to us but we fired on them
killing several and making them retreat in a hurry[.] We wished for
day light but when it came it only made our position more dangerous
for four rebel steamers have in sight the guns on the shore which
had twice been diserted now began with redoubled hurry[.] two of
the steamers bore down on the Harriet Lane[.] she had been ordered
the night befor to a position up the river where she had not enough
water so that when she tried to back to prevent the rebels from
bording her she grounded[.] two [of] the enemies steamers struck her
with out doing any damage and glanced off passing asturn[.] a well
directed shot from the Harriet Lane sunk one of them but the other
returned and bordered her[.] reports do not agree as too the number
of men on bord the Bayou City some of them have told me there was
three or four hundred and some between two and three hundred[.] there was probably three hundred men[.] there was in all about eighty
on the Harriet Lane and many of these belong to the engineers and
firemans department[.] She carried six guns[.]

the rebel steamers were built up with cotton bales which
served as a protection to them while they poured down showers of
bullets on the deck of the Harriet Lane[.] I omitted to state before
that the rifled gun carried by the Bayon City was disabled before
she came up[.]
When the Harriet Lane was boarded Capt Wainright was shot and also Lieutenant Lee[,] the latter lived long enough to see his father (a Major General in the rebel army) come on bord[,] the Harriet Lane was surrendered after all her officers had been killed and the white flag run up the other gun boats now dropped a stern and our position being so exposed a flag of truce was hoisted on the warf and both parties agreed to cease hostilities for three hours[,] we stacked our arms on the warf and went in the building to get our knapsacks[,] we found it riddled with shot and shell[,] the clothing that hung where we slept was cut to pieces we probably owe our lives to the fact that that the enemy thought we were in the building and not on the warf[.]

The conduct of Commodor Renshaw was very strange[,] he lay within a mile of the fight without offering aid to the other gun boats although they signaled to him for help[,] it was him who ordered the Harriet Lane up the river and after the fight was over he blew[,] his flag ship (the Westfield)[,] up when he could have escaped[.]

We marched up town and were escorted to a large building whose owner had probably left for the interior staid here only a few
hours when we took up our line of march for Virgina Point a distance of seven miles[.] the people treated us kindly much better than we expected[.] they were dressed in all kinds of clothing[.] no two being alike[.] if you could gather all the rag pickers and beggars that are in New England they could scarcely compare with the Texan soldiers[.]. We arrived at virgin Point in the afternoon and unslung our knapsacks to wait for the train which was to take us to Houston[.]. I went around to the rebel camp and they set the darkies at work and made ho-cake and fried bakon[.]. The food and the circumstances under which it was eat made it one of the most interesting New Year meals I ever enjoyed[.]. We than lay down and slept until one o'clock when we were ordered to fall in and go on bord the cars[.]. they were platform cars but most of us slept untill morning[.]. they did not travel far in the night on account(as they said) of the bad roads[.]. but we believe to make a show of us[.].

Jan 2 Most of us see a prairie this morning for the first time[.]. it streched away as far as the eye could reach one level plain there were plenty of cattle and other animals grazing over it[.]. it was a handsome sight so level and with out a tree except on one side[.]. every where we stopped the soldiers crowded around us to admire our good clothes[.]. we were everywhere called the finest
looking men they had ever seen and certainly there was a contrast between us[.] they offered all sorts of prices for our clothes in confederate money[.] some of which was taken[.] I see one man change off a pair of boots with a rebel and get twenty dollars in the bargain[.]

the cars stopped before we got to the depo and we were landed amid an immense number of men[,] women[,] and children who followed us through the town to our prison[.] I doubt that Jeff Davis could have called such an escort[.] they did not use much insulting language to us however but hooled like evil indians[.]

The quarters assigned us were large and commodious[,] it was formerly used as a cotton warehouse[.] The negroes cooked us our rations of Hoe cake and a substitute for coffee made by burning the corn meal[.] I forgot to state that in passing through the town we see our regimental flag flying from the window union down and underneath the stars and bars of the confederates[.]

Jan 3 We get plenty of corn bread and beef three times a day with beans[,] occasionally the citizens and confederate soldiers pay extravagant prices for any article of clothing and the boys buy flour bread at twenty five cents a bag (about the size of a five cent bag in
eggs at 85 cents to $1.00 a doz[,] tobacco at at $4.50 a pound and everything in proportion[.] the soldiers seem heartily tired of the war[.] the most of them are conscripts and would get clear if they could but I am satisfied that their leaders have the power to hold them and carry on the war[.]

The folk come far and near to see us[,] one would imagine it was a great sight to see a live yankee[,] They all praise us for our good looks and good behavior[,] all agree in calling us the best looking set of men they ever see[,] they seem surprised that "yankees" can be gentlemen[,] I imagine both parties are surprised for certainly I did not expect such kind treatment from Texans[,] they do every thing for our comfort[.]

Jan 4 Sunday morning our Col. and Chaplain preached a beautifull sermon[,] quite a number of the citizens came in to listen[,] this is the first time I have heard our chaplain preach[,] Our negroes have gone to Galveston to build fortifications[,] they held a prayer meeting last night in the yard and if sincerity is anything I believe they had the presence of the blessed master[,] I honestly believe there will be more slaves found in heaven than southerners[.]
Jan 5  our lives have promises to be tedious although we have
town at a time with a guard we are allowed the full liberty of a
large yard and can go down to the river which runs past our
quarters[.]

The newspapers tell extravagant stories about the late fight
call it one of the greatest achievements of the war[.] their papers
are printed on all kinds of paper some on the worst brown wrapping
paper[.] they cost twenty cents for two columns of reading[.]

a collection was taken for our Capt. and our boys I think gave
most a hundred dollars[.]

Jan 6  Some ladies came they say seventy five miles to see
us[.] Gen Mc Gruder has issued a proclamation declaring the port of
Galveston open and inviting all nations to trade "big thing"[.]

Jan 9  A number of gun boats have appeared off Galveston and
given the folks untill three oclock to leave the city so say reports[.]
the guards are more strict today only letting three men out at a
time[.] they seem rather gloomy[.]

Jan 11 Thursday morning again the days pass swiftly but we
are weary of being prisoners[.].  when the church bells pealed forth on the still morning air it made our thoughts wander across the ocean to our dear homes and all that is near and dear to us[.].  we long for the [time] when we shall be permitted to answer the summons of our own church bells and worship our heavenly father quietly in what ever way we wish

All our officers came here this morning[.].  They have all been paroled to go where they please through the city[.].

Our chaplain preached an elegant sermon from from 1st Mark 10 ch 4 - 50 verse[.].  I am sure he never had a more attentive and interested audience[.].  We are not allowed to talk to citizens nor do we get much news[.].

Jan 12  The papers to day contain Jeff Davis proclamation thare is lies enough to choke him it gives us some encouragement as it orders the release (on parole) of all privates[.].  the boys occupy most of thair time making bone rings thair are some handsome specimens to be found here  made doutineless when the thought of the workers were in New England[.].  Our corn meal for the past few days is nothing but cracked corn the same as is used for feed at home[.].  it is extreemly hard to get down and harder to digest but we are only
prisoners[.]

Jan 15  Six colored men have been taken away to prison four of them belonging to the Harrit Lane and two was Col Lingeons boys[.]. all but one or two were free born but all are now to be sold together[.]. such acts only stir up a hatred to the entire institution of slavery

our chains begin to gall[.]. we were never born to be held captive but our prospects of liberty is as small as ever[.].

A cold northern came menced last night and today thair is a sharp cold wind with a sprinkling of snow[.]. went up town to buy bread and mulassas saw the officers at thair quarters[,] they appear comfortable but like us sigh for liberty and home[.].

Jan 18  Sunday again the past week has slipped away any past-part-of-it-has been very cold and disgreable[,] our officers told us last night that a transport had been sent for us and our paroles were all ready when she arrived[.].

our Chaplain came with all the officers at 11A.M. and preached from the text "casting all thy care upon his for he careth for the" 1st Peter 5 chapter & 7 vr.[.]
Jan 21  Two months ago today we left Reidville[.] it seems more like six to us we have seen so many changes[.]

the writer has been sick for three days[.] many of our boys suffer from the diarrhea caused by the cracked corn which they continue to give us to eat[.]

[LEAVING HOUSTON]

Jan 22  At daylight orders came for us to be ready at ten to start for Vicksburg[.] we are loath to believe that they will take us so fare when our blocade [blockade] is so near[.] we shall have to march 180 miles through the worst part of the country at the worst season of the year[.] some of the soldiers who have been parolled by our government and have come here lately tell us that it is one continued swamp[.] deep enough in some places to swim thair horses[.]

At two o'clock PM we were drawn up in line and the roll called by Leut. Tudd (Brother of Mrs Lincoln) they were very carefull in counting us to see that all were thair[.]

4PM we got on bord the cars they are platform cars with seats fixed up[.] we are very much crowed[.] Thair are fifty caverly with four baggage wagons going with us[.]
5 1/2 Oclock Pm started our Chaplain with three of the Engineers of the Harrit Lane with their Surgeon on the cars with us[.] they occupy a baggage car[.]

Jan 23 3PM arrived at Beaumont being most twenty four hours comming eighty miles[.]

Jan 25 Sunday it has been raining for twenty four hours steady as it only can rain in Texas[.] the boys are all quartered in some mills and sheds up town[.] five of us stopped here in a carpenters shop[.] we have been much more comfortable here[.] we have been able to buy good coffee and milk with flour bread and other luxuries[,] but we pay an extravagant price for every thing[,] they pay equally large price for our clothes and we don't want to carry onely as little as possible on our back through the Lousianna Swamps of which we hear hard accounts[,] About one hundred sailors passed through here on their way to Houston[,] they were taken at Sabine Pass from the ship Morning Light[,] she got be calmed near the shore and was taken by two rebel steamers our gun boats[,] comming in sight they burnt her with out having taken little or nothing from on bord[,]
The steamer that is to take us to Orange was gone with the
horses and wagons[.] we expect to go on her return lickly tomorrow[.]
we are all anxious to get on the march to our own lines[.]

JAN 28 The seamer has not yet arrived that is to take us on
our journey[.] every thing in the shape of machinery in these parts is
old and cannot be depended on[.]

five of us continue to live in the carpenters shop away from
the rest of the company[.] we have to buy our food paying 60 cts a
pound for flour and 15cts for corn meal it is high living at least in
one scence[.]

yesterday the wind came round to the north and the cold
became very disagreeable[.] a kind lady sent us five blankets and
comforters which kept us warm during the night[.] I think those
northerners as they are called are the most quatum of the climate[.]
in two hours the temperature falls from hot to freezing the cold lasts
three days[.]

JAN 29 At noon packed our knapsacks and went on bord the
Steamer Roebuck[.] she is only intended to carry about sixty
passangers but she has now near four hundred including the guard
that goes through with us[.] My good luck follows me here and I am
quartered in the cabin[

FEBRUARY 2 The writer has been unable to write since the last
date on account of sickness[.] that has been little worth describing
however[.] we are still on the boat steaming up the river[.] the boat
is kept continually turning corners and as the river is narrow it
takes considerable time[.] it is one continued swamp on both sides of
the river[.] the deck of the steamer had broke down in several
places and it is thought she will not live long enough to go back to
Wilelo Bluff an bring the cattle[.] so two men were dispatched back
this morning to have them drove across the country to our landing
place[.] three of the wagons and some of the mules are with us[.] one
of the sailors hired a state room and invited me to stop with him so
that I have now good quarters and the luxury of a bed to sleep on[.]

One of our number David Chapin from Dorchester has been taken
sick with a fever[.] since we came on bord he has failed verry fast
and has been delerious almost ever since[.] the surgeon of the H. Lane
has been verry attentive but has scarcely any medicine to treat his
disease which is Tiphoid Fever[.] we have no hope of his recovery[.]

FEB 3 David Chapin died about midnight last night[.] we had
stopped at a small clearing for the night[.] our boys bought some
bords and made a rough coiffine[..] this morning we laid him away in
the grave it was a beautifull spot about fifty yards from the banks
of the Sabine River and beneath the branches of some large pine
trees[..] the prossesion formed at nine Oclock six of his friends
carrying the coiffine and followed by a detachment of our guard with
reversed arms[..] than came our three Comp, Co. I marching nearest the
corpse and the sailors bring up the rear[..] we marched to the music
of a single bugle and while we formed round the open grave the voice
of our Ch. arose in words of exortation[..] part of the 15th ch. of 1st
Corenthisants was than read and prayer offered[..] the guard fired the
usual salute the grave was filled up and in a short time we were
steaming up the river on our way toward our dear New England[..]

FEB 4 In the afternoon the boat arrived at Pikes ferry where
we were to land[..] it rained all day but had ceased for a while[..] we
landed and marched about half a mile and were given some pighouses
to sleep in[..] most of the men declined however and camped in the
woods[..] the weather is cold and dissaagreeable and their is no supper
for us tonight as some of the boys have stolen a few pounds of meal
from the boat and the commissiary says we can have no more untill
that is found[..]
FEB 5  The weather continues cold[.] most of the men are busy
building camps with pine bows[.] we expect to stay here untill the
wagons arrive[.]

FEB 6  A cold night but the sun has arose clear and warm[.] we
areamped in a grove of pines and are quite comfortable but anxious
to be on the march to our own lines[.] Another man has taken the
fever and his recovery is doubtfull[.] to day he was carried on a
litter to a home where he will receive good attention[.]

FEB 7  The teams have not arrived yet but are expected today
it is likely we will start monday no matter how soon[.]

The boys are off every day buying sweet potatoes this is about
all that can be bought[.] some of them are fortunate enough to buy
sugar molasses and the people are generally friendly[.] many of them
are of northern birth[.] another of our comerades died this afternoon
of Tiphoid Fever[.] he was a young man about nineteen years of age
named Seller from Roxburg[.]

FEB 8  Thursday we attended the funeral of our comerade at 11
A.M.[.] the services were verry impressive[.] we were drawn up
round the piassa of the house where he died[,] our chaplin spoke at
some length about the happiness of the other world (which he
seemed to think all would enjoy[,] than followed reading the scriptures[,] and prayer with singing[,] the corps was than carried to the family burying place in the corner of the plantation where we burred him[,] three of our boys sang the hynm "No Sorrow Thair"[,] after the funeral we returned to the house and herd a sermon[,] 

Two our tents company went foraging yesterday and brought back chicken[,] sweet potatoes[,] molasses[,] meal and today we are living high[,] we dined on chicken[,] beef stake[,] boiled beef[,] sweet potatoes[,] corn bread[,] and all the delicacies of the season[,] we are under marching orders again our teams have all arrived and the lieutenant in charge often says we are going to be put through faster than we will like[.] 

FEB 9 At 3 A.M. we were up and eat our corn doger and coffee[,] at 6 oclock a full ration of caths from the Leut we started on our journey[,] The writer had the good fortune to be an invalid and with seven others had six mules to haul us[,] the wagon had no springs and we were jollied [jouelled] in a very disagreeable manner[,] in the afternoon we were obliged to walk and give place to others who gave out[,] we were all glad at about five P.M. when we reached our camp ground[,] we soon laid down with the broad heavens
for our covering and slept only as men which have marched fifteen or
eighteen miles with a load on their back can sleep[.]

FEB 10  At 6 A.M. got started on our journey[.] the mules were
loaded with fodder so that the sick must march or stay[.] even the
knapsacks that belonged to the sick were thrown out after they
started[.] the writer being unable from sickness to carry his pack
was obliged to leave it behind[.] a friend taking a few necessary
articles it was a long hard march[.] many of the men were "used up"
when we halted at sun down in the forest beside a brooke where we
bathed our wearied limbs[.] After getting a mush supper we lay
down by our campfires to rest and never was rest more exceptable[.]
tired as I am I cannot refrain from writing but nature now says stop
and my willing hand drops the pen to lay myself down beside my
comerades who are already enjoying "naturis sweet repstons"[.]

FEB 11  The bugle sounded before day light and as soon as light
we were on our journey[.] all day we traveled through the forest up
hill and down[.] The scenery was wild and interesting[.] I wish I had
time and to give a more detailed account of our march but like the
last time I wrote it is by the flickering light of the camp fire[.] we
halted at sun down tired and foot sore and after a supper of mush we
are ready to lay down and rest[.]

FEB 12 We were awoke this morning at three Oclock by the rain pattering on our heads[.] it soon commenced to pour in earnest wetting our blankets and clothes to the skin[.] we stood and took it untill daylight when we started on our journey[.] the road for four miles lay through a swamp the rain had over flown the road and part of the time we were up to our knees in water and mud[.] one bridge we had to stop and repair[.] the rain ceased about ten and at noon we halted and built fires to dry our selves cook a pot of mush[.] after halting about two hours we started again and halted at sun down having made nineteen miles today[.] notwithstanding our wet clothes and the bad conditions of the road[.] our camp ground is better than usual and we can lye undersheds if we please but the night is fine and we choose the open air[.]

FEB 13 after a good night rest we are again on our way[.] the dist. to Alexandria is nineteen of twenty miles the Leut. said we should go to within a few miles of thair and halt for the night[.] I guess he changed his mind for night found us at the end of our march[.] it has been the hardest days march yet made so by the condition of the road[.] it being red clay which when we stepped in it
would almost pull our boots off[.] we were marched faster too than usual[.] when we arrived here we were marched on bord a steamboat even we had comfortable quarters[.] we had no dinner and had too lay down without any supper it being late and nothing too cook[.] our march has been through a well cultivated country[.] for the last eighteen miles splendid cotton plantations and corn field as far as the eye could reach almost but the land is verry low and wet[.]

FEB 14  We felt the knowings of hunger keenly this morning and breakfasted on a dish of mush[.] the Leut. says we start tomorrow for Fort Henderson on the Mississippi but we have learned not too believe anything we hear in the southern Confederacy[.]

FEB 15  Sunday at 3 A.M. we were awoke and ordered to be ready to leave the boat at a moments notice[.] at daylight another boat took us on bord and steamed up the river[.] the story is that two Federal gun boats have come up the river within eighteen miles of Alexandria[.] we have come up the river only a few miles to wait and see if the gun boats get past the forts[.]

All the steamers were steaming up too be ready to leave and a general excitement seems to prevail[.]
4 P.M. a dispatch came that one of the federal gun boats had been taken[.] we immediately steamed down the river to the city and took on board our wagons and mules with feed for man and beast[.]

FEB 16 We had to go supperless to bed last night (we slept among the horses) and as the boat started down the river before day we had no chance to cook until most noon and than not half enough[.] at 2 P.M. we passed the Queen of the West taken by the rebels[.] she is an old river boat and was first captured by our gun boats and used for to act as army boat having sharpshooters on board they took only eleven prisoners with her[.] We had passed the fort about a quarter mile when two shots came through the woods after us[.] the boat put about and went back in a hurry[.] after a consultation between our Leut. and the commander of the post we proceeded on our way down the river[.] at 10 P.M. came to for the night[.]

FEB 17 Early this morning the Rebel gun boats passed us on their way up the river[.] they communicated some startling intelligence for our boat steamed up and followed them quick[.] 11 A.M. we reached the forts[.] we find the folks living here loading their goods for a start preperations are being made for an attack[.] no less than six steamers are here beside our own[.] some are built
up with cotton and carry guns[.] among them is the famous William H Webb[.] a large raft built of heavy logs is constructed to be put across the river[.] It seems the iron gun boat Essex with two other are comming up the river[.] toward night a steamer that had gone down the river blowed her whistle which was answered by the guns on bord the steamer Grand Du[ke][.] we got under weigh and proceeded up stream[.] the guard drove us all in while passing the fort but it did not prevent us from seeing that these gun boats had taken their postion ready for an attack[.] we have stopped within a half mile of the fort so that we shall hear if not see the fun[.]

FEB 18 At noon a steamer came down the river with more prisoners[.] they were put on bord our vessail and turned out to be U.S. regulars numbering about three hundred men taken in San Antonio at the commencement of the war[.] they have been prisoners most of two years during which time they have travelled over three thousand miles on foot[.] they have lived twenty days on beans alone[.] some of them have thair wives and children with them[.] I have no room too write of thair suffering as my book is getting most filled up and paper cannot be bought here[.] The rebels have detained them all this time expecting them to join the south but with the exception of a few they have been true too thair country[.] most of
them are foreigners Irishmen and Germans[.] they are all under Parole[.] With them was the eleven men taken on bord the Queen of the West also under Parole[.] They state that a grate excitement prevailed at Alexandria last night on account of our gun boats being in the river and expected up[.]

Immediately on the arrival of the additional prisoners the boat started up stream to a landing where our teams were taken out with a number of bales of cotton which were on bord[.] our paroles are now being made out which make our boys feel well as it gives us the prospect of speedy dilerverance[.]

Another steamer came up with nine more of the Queen of the West men who could not make their escape[.]

FEB 19 While I write our men are getting their paroles[.] we expect to leave immediately for Vixburg under a flag of truce which is now flying over us[.] a boat came along side last night and said a load of wood would be here before morning[.] she has not yet arrived[.]

FEB 20 The Queen of the West passed down the river this morning[.] it was unfortunat that she fell into rebel hands but this is only the fortune of war[.] We have miserable quarters here and very
much crowded[.] the boys are all anxious to leave here but no wood
has come yet[.] this is said to be all that we are waiting for[.]

FEB 21 A boat came down the river this morning with wood[.]
he had part of it on bord when two other came up the river and took
it from us[.] our captors seem little disposed too send us into our
own lines[,] perhaps they want to learn us to live on corn bread[,] I do
not often write the reports circulated here if I did my book would be
filled with nothing else[.]

FEB 22 Washingtons birth day finds us still without any signs
of departure[,] but we live in hopes[,] trying always to look on the
bright side of the picture[,] There never was a better place too study
human nature and learn who is your friend than here[.]

FEB 23 A boat came down the river last night with wood and
this morning we were off at daylight on our way down the river[,] the
report now is that we are bound to Baton Rouche[,] 2 P.M. passed into
the Mississippi and at five came too under the batteries of Port
Hudson[,] the Rebels have a strongly fortified position the river is
narrow and the bank high[,] a large number of men lined the banks[,] it
was reported that sixteen thousand men were in the garrison[,] another boat came up the river and ran in along side us[,] she had on
bord a number of rebel prisoners who had just been exchanged and come up from Baton Rouche[,] some of them cheered for Jeff Davis[.] this started our boys and a shout went up for Abe Lincon which drowned the voices of the rebels completely[.] After comferring with the General on shore our Leut. came on bord and we ran a few miles down the river and came too for the night[,] and the boys went on shore too cook[.]

FEB 24 At daylight we were under weigh and steaming down the river[,] passed an iron clad on her her way up stream[,] she looked like a house sunk down in the water too the roof[,] our boys cheered her heartely but[,] little attention is now paid to the guard indeed but has ever been paid them[,] especially by the regulars who do as they please abord ship[,] We were glad to get into the Mississippi again it seems almost like home too us[,] the water is much better than that of the red river which was most half clay and dirt[,] we see the sad effect of war[,] all around towns destroyed nothing remaining but the chimanes of the houses too mark the spot where they stood[.]

At 1 A.M. Baton Rouch have in sight[,] our steamer was stopped and a boat with the dear old stars and stripes floating from her
stern and a white flag from her bow came on bord[]. I need scarcely say we cheered them with a will[]. They report half our Reg here and half at New Orleans doing guard duty[]. they also state that Galveston has been captured and Mc Gruder taken prisoner [Alexander Hobbs wrote over the top of this last statement, "False report", and underlined it[]. At 2 P.M. the steamer came along side the Levee[]. we were than marched on shore and the roll called by a major of the U.S. army[]. we than marched down to the city and quartered in the U.S. Arsenal[. we are near the ground where the battle was fought at the taking of the city from the Rebels[]. all around is seen the marks of cannon balls[]. it is now Gen Banks head quarters and is quite lively[, there being over thirty regiments here[]. many of our boys found friends in the three Mass regiments who took them too thair quarters and gave them a good dinner[]. the writer not finding any friends meerly received the hard tack given out by the company[]. it certainly went down hard enough for it must be remembered we have been living on the delicacies of the of the suny South lately[]. I have now the priviledge of writing what I dare not before[]. A union man who came to our quarters in Galveston for protection and who was with us in the fight there being no way for him too escape[, and to be caught thair would be death[]. so he took a uniform and knapsack
and passed himself off as one of us[,] having shaved off his beard he was never discovered although the roll was called nearly every day and the greatest pains was taken in counting our members[,] with the help of our boys he was always passed by never was a man more glad than he when he found himself safe inside our lines[.]

The boat that brought us here has losted many men by desertion that she is unable to get back up the river[,] four negroes[,] two deack hands[,] one engineere[,] and three of our escort are reported too have left[,] 9 P.M. the order came to pack up for another start and less than an hour we were again on the water going too New Orleans[.]

[ARRIVE NEW ORLEANS]
FEB 25 At 7 A.M. arrived at New Orleans[,] our boat was small and very much crowded so that we passed a very uncomfortable night but we did not complain[,] Five Co. of our regiment are here and two other at Carolton and not at Banton Rouche as reported[,] soon after our arrival one Co. came down off the Levee and gave us nine rousing cheers[,] never was brothers happier at meeting than we[,] in the afternoon our letters arrived most of them was written in Dec 1862 but were recieved with grate satisfaction[,] We are under guard and
not allowed on shore with the prospect of passing another night of board the boat[.] the sailors have been put on bord a receving ship[.]

FEB 26 We were entertained last night by a concert given by the regulars[.] the musick was from two violens and a Tamboreen[.] during the evening two Ceononderums were proposed they were these[.] "Why are the Soldiers of the southern Confederacy like unpacked cotton[?] Because they both had too be pressed before they were fit for the yankels[.]" "Why are the porks in Cincinatty wating to be Killed like our ourselves at this time[?]" "Because we are both extencively corn fed[.]." This morning we went on shore and quartered in the new custom house for a few hours untill part of our regt arrived who were to escort us too our quarters[.] they arrived about two P.M. when we were greeted by the band with "Old Lang Sine[.]" the 47 Mass were also drawn up too receive us[.] they than took up our line of march for our quarters about three miles distance[.] The camp ground is on a race cource and the cituation is good[.] never were men prouder when meeting frends than we[.] our tents were soon piched and we enjoyed a our supper of coffee and soft bread exceedingly[.] our tents are outside the lines and we are free to go where we please[.] I have not written how our regt. cheered us on our arrival here[.] it can better be imagined than described[.] Leut Col.
Stedman welcomed us in the name of the Commisioned[,] non
commissioned and privates of the Regt.[.] only five Comp of which are
here the rest are scattered[,] one Co. are overseeing negroes build a
fortification another is doing Provost duty in the city of New
Orleans[.]

FEB 27 Rained most all night and as the land is low some of
the tents are flooded as they have not yet got floors[.]

FEB 28 John Barter from Dorchester now on bord the U S
supply ship “Fear-not” came and passed the night with us[.] we were
glad to see him as he had been absent from home for most two
years[.] It is thought we will not be exchanged as our Government
will not give three years men for us as our time is most out[.]

MARCH 1 Orders came to strike our tents and remove inside
the lines which we did and floored them over[.] the rain has made
this ground a perfect bog but it is nothing new for us to sleep off
damp ground[.]

MARCH 2 Orders came again to strike our tents and remove
outside the lines[.] the boys growl some at being moved so often[.]

MARCH 10 We are still encamped with our regiment at Camp
Farr waiting to be exchanged or discharged as the U.S. government pleases[.] it is as dull as being a prisoner in the hands of the rebels[,] almost[.] we get good from[.] and plenty of it with the priviledg of going about where we please[.]

JULY 17 After waiting here since February 25 waiting to be exchanged we are at last under orders to move[,] the time has passed slowly and death has taken away a number of our comrades[,] were few have escaped a sever fit of sickness and much misery and suffering has been the consequence[,] our time which should have been up in June has been lengthened out to July 14 and even that is past and but little prospect of being sent home[.]

5 P.M. arrived in Algiers and piched our tents on the bank of the river to await transportation[.]

JULY 31 Orders came be ready to go on bord the Steamship Contentenal at 6 A.M. tomorrow[.]

AUGUST 1st Went on bord the transport and steamed up the river to Bull-head to take on bord Gen Grover and staff[,] were detained untill afternoon by Leut Col Stedman who was making efforts to have some horses removed from the boat[,] After
considerable exertion he succeeded and at 4 P.M. we started down the river[,] our band playing "Home Again" and the "Star Spangle Banner[.]"

This sail down the river was delightfull and the beautifull river scenery never appeared to better advantage[,] at 12 M arrived at the bar and came too untill day light[.]

AUG 2  4 A.M. crossed the bar and proceeded to sea[.]

AUG 5  Our steamer has proved all that could be desired and so far the voyage has been a pleasant one[,] A member of Co h died and was buried in the ocean[.]

AUG 6th  Two more deaths occured last night and two more funerals this morning[,] one was a member of Co F and the other of Co A[,] in the morning they were sewed in their blankets and placed on a bord and while the chaplain was praying they were dropped into the ocean and quickly disappeared from view[.]
BIBLE ENTRIES

The NEW TESTAMENT provided by the American Bible Society 1861. [This copy of the New Testament was carried by Alexander Hobbs along with his Diary.]

[Page 1]

Nov 21 left reidville

Nov 22 arrived New York and camped on L. Island

left New York 5th arrived key west 11th left for High Island

12th

15th arrived at L. stand

17th arrived at New Orleans

21 left for Texas

22 arrived at Texas

Jan 1 taken prisoner

2 arrived at Houston

22 left for Vicksburg
23 arrived at Beaumont

29 left Beaumont

Feb 4 arrived at Bins Ferry

9 left for Alexandria

13 arrived Alexandria

16 left Alexandria

25 arrived New orleans

July 17 left camp farr

[Page 2]

Rev. I Martin

Galation 6ch 13 v

Chaplain John 7ch 27 v

Mark 10 ch 5 v  [!] 1st Peter 5ch & 7v

1ch __________

John 4ch 7 & 8 v
17 arrived at Algiers

August 1st embarked on bord the steamer Continental and left for N.Y.

15th O Day died

16th Poole & Fisher died and were buried in the ocean

7 arrived at New York left for boston

9 arrived at boston for home

Entered the Hospital June 18

Discharged July 5th 1863 Gentility

David Chapin Died Feb 2nd 1863

One on our comrades died about midnight last night[.] he has been sick four or five days with Typhoid fever[.] most of this time he has been delirious[.] This morning we laid him away in the grave[.]
the line of precession was formed at nine o clock[,] six stout men
carried the coffin and followed by a detachment of our guard with
reversed arms[.] The grave was dug in a grove of pines on the bank of
the Sabine River[,] our Chaplain read part of the 15th ch. of 1st
Corthiants prayed and spoke briefly[.] The guard fired the usual
salute over his grave and pretty was we were on our journey[.]
CONCLUSION

Alexander Hobbs's experiences parallel those of Bell Wiley's "Billy Yank," despite Hobbs's fighting in a battle far away from the major engagements of the Civil War. Hobbs exhibited many of the same characteristics of other soldiers of his age and that time. Like thousands of foreign-born Americans, Hobbs demonstrated through his diary the exhilaration of battle, the adventure of seeing a new land, and the depression and sense of loss felt by most soldiers in the Civil War.

In his short service, Hobbs experienced being in a Union training camp, being transported to an exotic land, enduring the heat of battle, being a prisoner of war, suffering the hardships of a long march and sickness, and being a prisoner/parolee of his army. He witnessed and was deeply affected by the anonymous, rather than heroic, death and burial of comrades from home.

Hobbs's diary provides a composite of the common attributes ascribed to Union soldiers. For example, Hobbs complained about the food, weather, and living conditions, the same complaints that other soldiers made in countless letters home. He was fascinated by the landscape and the new and different people that he was exposed to in
Texas. He provided a description of the living conditions in Houston, as well as the attitudes of Houstonians regarding both the war and northern soldiers. He came to realize, as did General Sherman and Colonel Burrell, that the majority of southerners fully supported the war, despite the hardships it had caused them.

Despite all the hardship and suffering that he experienced, Hobbs was able to maintain his spirits, and at times even a sense of humor. Hobbs offers insight into the uncertainties of being a prisoner of war at a time when the system of parole and exchange was collapsing. He recorded the constant anxiety of not knowing if or when he would be able to return home to his family. His suffering and his loss of ideals may have caught up with him if his termination of the journal while a prisoner/exeelee in New Orleans parallels a feeling of futility.

Hobbs's views of slavery when he joined are unclear, but he came to hate the institution as he saw its cruelty in Houston. His opinion of southerner soldiers changed as he came into contact with them for the first time in Galveston and Houston. He realized that they were not the brutal people he had believed them to be when he entered the army. They did not murder wounded soldiers or torture
prisoners of war, as he had been told, but treated them with
compassion and sympathy.

For the professional historian, as well as for the amateur Civil
War enthusiast, Alexander Hobbs's diary provides a vivid, fresh view
of the life of the Union Civil War parolee and the attitudes of Union
and Confederate citizens on the Gulf coast towards blacks, military
prisoners, and soldiers. The diary's depiction of the Battle of
Galveston really captures the sense of the conflict, and it brings
home to the reader how terrifying and confusing battle can be.
APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF PAROLE OATHS GIVEN.

1. I swear (or affirm) that I will not take up arms against the United States or serve in any military capacity whatsoever against them until regularly discharged according to the usages of war from this obligation.

2. We and each of us for himself severally pledge our word of honor as officers and gentlemen that we will not again take up arms against the United States nor serve in any military capacity whatsoever against them until regularly discharged according to the usages of war from this obligation.

3. I beg to state that we have remained on parole of honor since____not to serve directly or indirectly against the southern Confederacy until properly exchanged by said government of the Confederate States for prisoners of [equal] rank held by the Federal Government that may be agreed upon between the Secretary of War of the Confederate States and of the Federal Government.

4. Whereas,______ ______, agent for the care of prisoners of war at______, has granted me the undersigned prisoner described on the back hereof permission to return to_______upon condition that I give my parole of honor that I will not enter into any naval, military or other service whatever against any power at peace with______until I shall have been regularly exchanged, and that I will surrender myself if required by the agent of the government at such place as may be appointed in case my exchange shall not be effected. And I will until exchanged give notice from time to time of my place of residence.

   Now in consideration of my enlargement I do hereby declare that I have given my parole of honor according and that I will keep it inviolably.

   Given under my hand at______, this______day of______, in the year of our Lord______ . (Domschke, Bernard, Twenty Months in Captivity, p158-9.)

5. I do hereby solemnly swear and pledge my most sacred word of honor that I will not during the existing war between the Confederate States and the United States of America bear arms or aid and abet the enemies of said Confederate states of their
friends, either directly or indirectly in any form whatsoever, until regularly exchanged or released.

6. I do solemnly swear that I will not take up arms against the Confederate States of America or form any alliance to defeat them until regularly exchanged or otherwise honorably discharged.

  Given and sworn to______.

(Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Series II-Volume IV. P297.)
APPENDIX B: DIX-HILL EXCHANGE CARTEL.

The undersigned having been commissioned by the authorities they respectively represent to make arrangements for the general exchange of prisoners of war have agreed to the following articles:

Article 1. It is hereby agreed and stipulated that all prisoners of war held by either party including those taken on private armed vessels known as privateers shall be discharged upon the conditions and terms following: general-in-chief valued at 60 enlisted men; lieutenant colonel, 10; major, 8; captain, 6; lieutenant, 4; second lieutenant, 3; noncommissioned officers, 2.

Article 2. Local, state, civil and militia rank held by persons not in actual military service will not be recognized, the basis of exchange being the grade actually held in the naval and military service of the respective parties.

Article 3. If citizens, held by either party on charges of disloyalty or any alleged civil offense are exchanged it shall only be for citizens. Captured sutlers, teamsters, and all civilians in the actual service of either party to be exchanged for persons in similar position.

Article 4. All prisoners of war to be discharged on parole in ten days after their capture, and the prisoners now held and those hereafter taken to be transported to the point mutually agreed upon at the expense of the capturing party. The surplus prisoners not exchanged shall not be permitted to take up arms again, nor to serve as military police of constabulary force in any fort, garrison, depots or stores, nor to discharge any duty usually performed by soldiers, until exchanged under the provisions of this Cartel. The exchange is not to be considered complete until the officers or soldiers exchanged for has been actually restored to the lines to which he belongs.

Article 5. Each party upon the discharge of prisoners of the other party is authorized to discharge an equal number of their own officers or men, from parole, furnishing at the same time to the other party a list of their prisoners discharged and of their own officers and men relieved from parole, thus enabling each party to relieve from parole such of their own officers and men as the party may choose. The list thus mutually furnished will keep both parties
advised of the true conditions of the exchange of prisoners.

Article 6. The stipulations and provisions above to be a binding obligation during the continuance of the war, it matters not what party may have the surplus of prisoners, the great principles being,

first, an equitable exchange of prisoners, man for man, officer for officer, of officers of higher rank for privates, according to the scale of equivalents;

second, That privateers and officers and men of different services may be exchanged according to the same scale of equivalents;

third, that all prisoners, of whatever arm of service, are to be exchanged or paroled in ten days from the time of their capture, if it be practicable to transfer them to their own lines in that time; if not, as soon thereafter as practicable;

forth, that no officer, soldier of employee, in the service of either party, in to be considered as exchanged and absolved from parole until he equivalent has actually reached the lines of his friends;

fifth, that the parole forbid the performance of field, garrison, police, or guard, or constabulary duty.

SUPPLEMENTARY ARTICLES

Article 7. All prisoners of war now held on either side and all prisoners hereafter taken shall be sent with reasonable dispatch to A. M. Aiken's, below Dutch Gab, on the James River, Virginia, or to Vicksburg, on the Mississippi River, in the state of Mississippi, and there exchanged or paroled until such exchanges can be effected, notice being previously given by each party of the number of prisoners it will send and the time when they will be delivered to those points respectively; and in case the vicissitude of war shall change the military relations of the places designed in this article to the contending parties so as to render the same inconvenient for the delivery and exchange of prisoners, other places bearing as nearly as may be present local relations of said places to the lines of solid parties shall be by mutual agreement substituted. But
nothing in this article contained shall present the commanders of the two oppressing armies from exchanging prisoners or releasing them of parole from other points eventually agreed on by said commanders.

Article 8. For the purpose of carrying into effect the foregoing articles of agreement each party will appoint two agents, to be called agents for the exchange of prisoners of war, whose duty shall be to communicate with each other by correspondence and otherwise, to prepare the lists of prisoners, to attend to the delivery of the prisoners at the places agreed on and to carry out promptly, effectually, and in good faith the details and provisions of the said articles of agreement.

Article 9. And in case any misunderstanding shall arise in regard to any clause or stipulation in the foregoing articles it is mutually agreed that such misunderstanding shall not interrupt the release of prisoners on parole, as herein provided, but shall be made the subject of friendly explanations in order that the objects of this agreement may neither be defeated nor postponed.

D. H. Hill,  
Major General C. S. Army

John A. Dix,  
Major General
APPENDIX C: ILLUSTRATIONS

Bottom Left: Captain Leon Smith. Franklin. Battle Of Galveston, 12.

Page 233. Top: U.S.S. Harriet Lane. United States Department of the Navy, Naval History Division. Civil War Naval Chronology 1861-


Page 235. Top: Picture of Kuhn's Wharf 1863. History of the Forty-
second, 81.


CONFEDERATE COMMANDERS

Capt. Leon Smith
died 1869
(Reproduced from a Civil War ambrotype)

Major General John Bankhead Magruder
1810 – 1871
C.S.S. Harriet Lane prior to her capture by Confederate forces at Galveston.

Union Flagship, Westfield
KUHN'S WHARF, GALVESTON, TEXAS.

1863.
SURPRISE AND CAPTURE OF THE UNITED STATES STEAMER "HARRIET LANE" BY THE CONFEDERATES UNDER GENERAL MAGRUDER, AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLAGSHIP "WESTFIELD" IN GALVESTON HARBOR, TEXAS, JANUARY 4th, 1863.
U.S.S. Westfield, Commander Renshaw, was destroyed by her crew to prevent capture at Galveston after she had grounded.
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