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BY CHARLES W. RAMSDELL
To

BIG GEORGE AND MISS AMY
PREFACE

The common folk, white and black, constituted the bone and sinew of the Southern Confederacy. White yeomen comprised the bulk of the armies that followed Lee in Virginia, Joe Johnston in the central South, and Kirby Smith beyond the Mississippi. These rustics were not all exemplary soldiers by any means. Some of them were overly fond of liquor; others were impervious to discipline; thousands absented themselves without leave; many preferred filth to cleanliness; hundreds played the coward when the bullets whistled close. But on the whole they were good fighters. It is not too much to say that the record of the Confederacy on the field of battle must stand or fall on the basis of their performance.

The wives, children, parents, and other home connections of the plain soldiers composed the overwhelming majority of the South’s civilian population. These people had many rough edges. Many could not write. Their speech was usually crude and their manners unpolished. But they had
many virtues. For the most part they were sturdy, hardworking, respectable citizens. During the early years of the war they were staunch in their support of the Southern cause. After Gettysburg and Vicksburg their patriotism dwindled. But their defection probably was due more to the conviction that they were being discriminated against by the privileged classes than to defeats or deprivations.

The colored folk constituted about a third of the Confederacy’s populace. They were not the docile, “Old Kentucky Home” type of subservients that romancers have depicted them to be. Most of them idealized freedom and grasped it with alacrity when Yankee soldiers brought it within convenient reach. While the slaves waited for emancipation, they raised foodstuffs for civilians and soldiers, ran spinning wheels and looms on the plantations, worked in factories and mines, built fortifications, and served as nurses, cooks, and personal servants in the Southern army. Their good humor buoyed the spirits of white associates both at home and on the firing line. Their contribution to the Southern cause was enormous.

In the chapters that follow I have sketched the character and experiences of the Confederacy’s humbler peoples—the Johnnies, the folk at home,
and the Negroes. I have been conscious of a desire to give these plain folk a conspicuous place in the South's war history because of a long-standing conviction that they have not had due recognition. But at the same time I have striven earnestly to be objective.

In both form and content these essays are essentially as presented as the Fleming Lectures at Louisiana State University. I am indebted to Dr. Marcus M. Wilkerson, Director of the Louisiana State University Press, for assistance in preparing the manuscript for publication, and to Professor Edwin A. Davis for helpful suggestions concerning material and organization.

The Yale University Press and the Bobbs-Merrill Company generously permitted me to paraphrase and quote portions of two previous studies published, respectively, by them—Southern Negroes, 1861–1865, and The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy.

Bell Irvin Wiley
Second Army Headquarters
Memphis, Tennessee
16 June 1943
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I

THE COMMON SOLDIERS

The Southern Confederacy achieved her greatest renown from the exploits of her armed forces. These forces were composed of two groups: the officers and the common soldiers—the lowly men who marched in the ranks and who by their contemporaries were given the sobriquet of Johnny Rebs.\(^1\)

The overwhelming majority of Rebs were Southern-born, but a considerable sprinkling were Yankees by birth; and the number who first saw the light of day in foreign lands ran well up into tens of thousands. Several regiments of red men were organized in the Indian country, and in more than one engagement the savage war whoop blended with the Rebel yell to set Federal spines a-tingling.

\(^1\) Materials for this portrait of soldiers and soldier life are drawn mainly from wartime letters and diaries, court-martial records, muster rolls, medical reports, and other primary sources.
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Well over half of those who wore the gray were tillers of the soil, but muster rolls list large numbers of students, laborers, clerks, mechanics, carpenters, merchants, blacksmiths, sailors, doctors, painters, teachers, shoemakers, lawyers, overseers, printers, masons, tailors, millers, coopers, and bakers. A sampling of 107 muster rolls representing seven states, 28 regiments and 9,000 private soldiers revealed more than 100 occupational groups ranging from apothecaries to wheelwrights, and including such surprising classifications as gamblers, rogues, and speculators.

Writers who treat the Confederate period in cursory fashion are prone to make much of the young boys and the old men who marched under the Stars and Bars. Both of these elements were represented, but in negligible proportions. Examination of descriptive rolls comprising 11,000 privates from eleven states recruited mainly in 1861–1862 revealed one 13-year-old boy and one 73-year-old man. Three recruits among the group were 14 years of age, 31 were 15, 200 were 16, and 366 were 17. Boys under 18 constituted approximately 1/20 of the total; men in their 30's, ½; and those in their 40's, 1/25. Eighty-six recruits fell in the 50–59 age group, 12 were 60–69, and one
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was 70. But \( \frac{4}{5} \) of the 11,000 cases were included within the limits of 18–29. Conscription acts passed in 1863 and 1864 doubtless changed somewhat the pattern represented by this sampling, but not enough to substantiate the charge made by Grant that the Confederacy robbed the cradle and the grave to sustain its armies. The overwhelming bulk of the Southern fighting force from beginning to end appears to have been made up of men ranging from 18 to 35.

Rebs were as diverse in culture and education as they were in age. Roseate reminiscers have had much to say of the gentle scholar who pored over his Greek and Latin books near the campfire, and there were some men of this type among the rank and file. But every learned Reb had several comrades who could not read or write at all. Company descriptive rolls which recruits were supposed to sign when they were mustered into service afford some idea of the extent of illiteracy. In a few companies more than half of the privates had to make x marks in the spaces allotted to signatures; and almost every company had from one to a score of men who could not sign their names. But the majority of Rebs had sufficient education to enable them to write letters to their home folk, though

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usually not without mighty struggles with spelling, grammar, and chirography.

The bulk of the Confederacy's fighting forces came from nonslaveholding families. In a general way they reflected both the weaknesses and the virtues of the yeoman society from which they sprang. They were naïve, susceptible to prejudice, neglectful of sanitation, haphazard in dress, and unpolished in manner; but they were endowed with a good measure of integrity, self-respect, and courage.

One of the principal concerns of Johnny Rebs, whatever their economic or cultural status, was food. In the early days of the war, rations were generally adequate, and some of the volunteers fared sumptuously. Government issues of beef, oven-baked bread, and vegetables were supplemented by all sorts of delicacies sent from home or brought in by patriotic citizens living near the camps.

But the days of abundance were short. In 1862 a general diminution of the government ration became necessary, and further curtailments were ordered in 1863 and 1864. The deterioration of transportation facilities restricted the flow of supplies from home to a mere trickle. Except in camps
that were close to food-producing areas, full stomachs were the exception rather than the rule after 1862.

In some instances acute deprivation came early in the war. During the retrograde movement from Yorktown to Richmond in the spring of 1862, some of Daniel H. Hill’s men subsisted for three days on dry corn issued in the shuck and shelled and parched by the men. “I have never conceived of such trials as we passed through,” wrote one soldier after this retreat; and another observed, “I came nearer starving than I ever did before.”

Hunger was more common during periods of active campaigning, particularly when forced marches were the order of the day. Suffering was acute in the rapid withdrawals from Antietam in 1862, from Gettysburg in 1863, and from Petersburg in 1865. The nadir of deprivation was experienced by soldiers under siege at Port Hudson and Vicksburg—where dwindling larders caused resort to such expedients as peabread, boiled weeds, stewed rat, and roasted mule.

The mainstays of diet after the first year of war were cornbread and meat, and of these the Rebs became exceedingly tired. “If the war closes and I get to come home I never intend to chew
any more cornbread,” wrote a Mississippian in 1863; and about the same time a comrade scribbled poetically in his diary:

Oh what a wonderful day is this
When our rations a little more than meal do consist,
I’d give a great deal for some turkey or Beef
To comfort our stomachs and give them relief.

Just prior to Lee’s surrender a Louisianian said: “If any person offers me cornbread after this war comes to a close I shall probably tell him to—go to hell.” But the quality of meat elicited even more eloquent disparagement. “The beef is so poor it is Sticky and Blue,” observed Private O. T. Hanks; “if a quarter was thrown against the wall it would stick.” Another Reb complained that the cows which supplied the meat for his regiment were so emaciated that “it takes two hands to hold up one beef to shoot it.”

Experience proved to the majority of Johnnies that they could live and fight on the most meager rations, but they never ceased yearning for the abundance of home larders. Through their letters they kept a close tab on fruits and vegetables as they came into season, and hog-killing time almost
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invariably evoked expressions of homesickness and war-weariness.

Some soldiers made unreasonable demands upon their home folk. A hungry North Carolinian wrote in the fall of 1864:

Dear Father I want that Box you loud to send to me I want sweet Bread and pyes and Cab’g heads and all you think nesery and some of that strong stuff its a little like camfire all it lacks the camfire ant in it But it drinkes all write any way you can give a ruf ges what it is and Send me some money if you please . . . and I want you to send me some paper two and send me some red peper and some unions and Butter and evything that you can think of appels two for I had forgot the apples and some eggs and potatoes iresh potatoes and sweet ones and Biskets and I want you to send me a Jacket and gloves and two pare of sox and dont fail Dear father I must clos as I hant got much to write[.]

A Texan, who suffered exceedingly from the failure of Bragg’s commissariat at Chattanooga, reflected a widespread sentiment when he said that if he ever got back to his father’s house he intended “to take a hundred biscuit and two large hams call it three days rations, then go down on Goat Island and eat it all at ONE MEAL.”

Experiences as to clothing were much like those
concerning food. Army regulations of 1861 prescribed natty outfits consisting of gray tunics, sky-blue trousers, double-breasted gray overcoats fitted with capes, French-style caps with havelocks of canvas or oilcloth to protect the neck, black leather cravats, and Jefferson-style boots. These specifications were reissued year after year, but they received scant attention in actual practice. The sky-blue trousers seem to have been exceptional even in 1861, and no mention of them is found after the first year of the war, except in army regulations. The tunic soon gave way to a short jacket which came to have such universal use as to cause the application of the name “gray jackets” to the generality of soldiers. A soft felt hat replaced the kepi as a headpiece, and brogan shoes were substituted for the Jefferson boots.

Early in the war there was much display of finery. In 1861 the Georgia Hussars left Savannah in resplendent uniforms costing in the aggregate some $25,000. The Orleans Guard Battalion wore flashy blue dress uniforms, dating back to militia parade occasions, into the action at Shiloh. Fellow soldiers mistook the blue-garbed Louisianians for Yankees and began to shoot at them. The Guards forestalled annihilation by quickly turning their
coats inside out so as to present the white linings, and thus they went through the fight. Other volunteer outfits arrived at the front in uniforms of green, yellow, and flaming red. Most outlandish of all were the uniforms worn by the notorious Louisiana Zouaves; these consisted of scarlet bloomers, blue shirts, brocaded jackets, wide sashes, white gaiters, and gaudy fezzes worn at a jaunty angle.

Fine uniforms were as short-lived as sumptuous rations. By 1863 Confederate gray had given way in large measure to a rough fabric made in Southern mills or in home looms, and dyed with a native coloring made of walnut hulls and copperas. The yellowish hue of suits made from this cloth fastened upon Johnny Rebs a title that gained wide use in both North and South; namely that of "butternuts." By 1864 butternut jackets and blue trousers taken from dead Yankees on the battlefield had become a sort of unofficial standard of what the well-dressed Reb should wear.

But in spite of Yankee providence and the utmost exertions of home folk and government purchasing agents, Rebel wardrobes were never adequate. The most acute shortages were those of shoes and blankets. Experiments were made with
shoes fashioned about the campfire from raw-hides secured at army slaughter pens, but these expedients proved unsatisfactory.

Johnnies attempted to rehabilitate their uniforms with needle and thread, but maladroit seamsters "puckered" their patches, and strenuous campaigning caused wear to outstrip repair. In June, 1864, a Texan summed up with striking aptness the Rebel clothing situation. "In this army," he wrote from near Atlanta, "one hole in the seat of the breeches indicates a captain, two holes a lieutenant, and the seat of the pants all out indicates that the individual is a private."

Confederate soldiers had many other woes besides hunger and raggedness. In summer the flies, mosquitoes, and gnats that swarmed about encampments made life utterly miserable. Body lice gnawed away without regard to season. "There is not a man in the army, officer or private that does not have from a Battalion to a Brigade of Body lice on him," wrote one Reb in 1863; and others dubbed the pests with such military names as "graybacks," "Zouaves," "tigers," and "Bragg's body-guard." Killing lice was referred to as fighting under the black flag; throwing away
an infested shirt was called giving the vermin a parole; and evading them by turning a garment wrong side out became “the execution of a flank movement.” One sardonic Reb when about to go to bed was seen to assume a prayerful pose and to recite:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
While gray-backs o’er my body creep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord their jaws to break.

Disease was an inevitable concomitant of the hunger, the exposure, the filth, and the vermin which bedeviled Confederates. The first malady to strike in epidemic proportions was measles. In one camp of 10,000 recruits, 4,000 men were stricken; and during the first year of war the percentage of illness was heavy throughout the army. Comparatively few men died from measles alone, but mortality from subsequent complications was heavy. A prevalent attitude was reflected by a Reb who wrote in July, 1861: “I had rather risk my life in battle than with the measles in camp.”

Dysentery and diarrhea were an exceedingly great scourge. One soldier observed: “it is a very
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rare thing to find a man in this army who has not
got the diorreah.” And reliable medical records
tend to sustain his observation.

Malaria, typhoid, smallpox, pneumonia, scurvy,
and pulmonary tuberculosis each took a considera-
ble toll from Rebel ranks. One private remarked
in 1862 that “Big Battles is not as Bad as the
fever.” And a prominent Confederate doctor who
made a careful study of medical records after the
war estimated that for every soldier who died as
a result of battle there were three who perished
from disease.

Much of the mortality from sickness was due to
the undeveloped state of medical practice which
prevailed during Civil War times. Inadequacy of
medicine and hospital facilities also had a part in
the tragedy. Scarcity of well-trained doctors was
a further cause. One poor Reb complained that
“Doctors kills more than they cour. . . . Do-
tors haint Got half Sence.” And there were enough
quacks among army practitioners to lend con-
siderable credence to his charge.

Among lesser woes of the rank and file were
the incompetency and highhandedness of officers.
This gave rise to numerous difficulties between
officers and soldiers. Some of the conflict with
superiors derived from the soldiers' misconception of military usages. The authoritative manner in which officers gave orders was viewed by some privates as a personal insult, and therefore deeply resented. Other Rebs were aggrieved by alleged discrimination as to the assignment of guard and fatigue duty, and the granting of furloughs. "I am not allowed the chance of a dog," bemoaned a Texan in 1863. "Col Young . . . can go to Hell for my part you know that if any one will try to do I can get along with them but when they get Hell in their Neck I cant do any thing . . . and so I dont try . . . he has acted the dam dog and I cant tell him so if I do they will put me in the Guard House . . . but I can tell him what I think of him when this war ends."

Many of the disparaging statements of privates concerning their superiors were exaggerated, but there can be no doubt that the Confederacy had its share of incompetent officers. Sometimes, sorely tried Rebs took upon themselves the responsibility of putting offensive superiors in their places. Privates of the Fifty-third Georgia Regiment rode their colonel on a rail and thus extracted from him the promise to treat them more civilly—and the colonel submitted contritely to
this treatment. A Tarheel wrote in 1862 concerning his captain: “he put me in the gard house one time & he got drunk agoin from Wilmington to Golesboro on the train and we put him in the Sh-t House so we are even.”

The most despicable of all the officers were those who showed the white feather under fire. An illuminating glimpse of the disdain in which such leaders were held is afforded by the following entry in a Reb’s diary:

Camp Vandorn Agust 5 1862
The following little piece of poity made its appearance in camp to day a little explainnation will be nessary to understand it right it is got up on Leueit Doyle of the Franklin Lilf [?] guards who did not stand fire at the James Island Fight on the 16th of June and as gained some notoriety for putting the Boys in the Guard House for not walking there post on Guard when he is Officer of the Guard he putts on a great many airs and is disliked by the Boys Generly he used to cause a good deal of amusement when he was a Drilling his company with his hand grasp around the hilt of his sword and the blade parallel with the ground he would command them to left wheal, with all the cautionary remarks such as steady; steady; on the pivot come round like a gate now. hepp. hepp. and so on. The Fort Doyle that is spoking of is the
Boys that he had put in the Guard House gathered up some old camp kettels and mounted them in front of the Guard House calling the fort after him[.]

Latest From The War;
The last Fight at Secessionville!

We went to Secessionville a disturbance to quell
Where the Yankees were storming our batteries, in fact raising hell
The boys all pitched in as all who are brave
Not one of them flinching not one of them caved

Except one—Mr. Doyal who stopped when he saw
Shot falling so fast—for want of sand in [h]is craw
He turned on his pivot—swung around like a gate
And made strides from the field from six feet to eight

He left in a hurry, and we all really suppose
His time is the fastest on record—yet nobody knows
He went to the Surgeon and struck for a job
To act as assistant, or be placed in a squad

The Surgeon was busy, and made no reply
So Doyal left the line another place to try
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He left swift footed, and we saw him no more 
Untill the day was far spent, and the battle was oer 

When he again turned on his pivot, swung around 
like a gate
Walked into supper—sat down and ate  
So in honor of him, we’ve erected Fort Doyal 
Costing large sums of money—besides great toil 
A gun shall be fired at the raising of each 
sun 
In honor of Doyal, who at Secessionville 
run 

Now listen to me, take the advice of a friend 
Be true to the country, you’ve taken arms to de- 
fend, 
Let your motto be onward and go straight ahead 
Though you march through blood and crawl oer the dead 

So on ward it is dont flinch “nary” time  
Glory, honor, and victory, shall surely be thine 
Be kind to the boys, and treat them all well 
Or they’ll blow up the Fort—and send you to hell. 

Patriotic

One of the most trying phases of soldier life was the drabness of camp routine. Country-bred Rebs, accustomed to the freedom of farm and forest, were exceedingly irked by the endless re-
currence of reveille, roll call, drill, and retreat. Even more intolerable were the periodic turns at guard duty. "Oh how glad I will be when the day comes that we . . . never hear the Tap of a drum again which bids us to rise and drill," wrote a Mississippian in 1863; and a comrade blurted: "When this war is over I will whip the man that says 'fall in' to me."

From the devious ills that oppressed them, Rebs naturally sought sundry escapes. Some lightened the load of boredom by reading, but this diversion was greatly restricted by the scarcity of books and papers, the inadequacy of lighting facilities, and, except during winter quarters, by the interposition of camp duties. Many soldiers found keen enjoyment in swimming, fishing, hunting, baseball, wrestling, foot racing, marbles, and tenpins—the last played by rolling cannon balls at holes in the ground.

Music was the most popular form of diversion. Soldiers gathered about the campfire or in winter huts to sing such wartime favorites as "Home Sweet Home," "Lorena," "Annie Laurie," "Juanita," "Sweet Evelena," "When This Cruel War is Over," and a lugubrious number borrowed from the Yankees which had the title, "Just Be-
fore the Battle, Mother." Regimental bands gave occasional concerts, but Rebs enjoyed more the informal "jam sessions" at which small groups of fiddlers and guitarists "cut loose" on such tunes as "Dixie," "Hell Broke Loose in Georgia," "Willie's on the Dark Blue Sea," "Arkansas Traveller," "When I Saw Sweet Nellie Home," and "Oh Lord Gals One Friday."

Theatricals, womanless dances, parties at country houses near the camps, and visits to cities provided occasional breaks in camp routine. A few outfits, such as Morgan's cavalry and Price's Missourians, printed camp newspapers on cherished presses that were hauled about the countryside. Less fortunate units occasionally issued small newssheets done entirely with pens.

Pranks and teasing afforded diversion for countless Rebs. One group of veterans "honored" a greenhorn recruit by electing him to the fictitious position of fifth lieutenant. When the novice inquired in all seriousness as to the duties of his office he was told that they consisted of carrying water and catching fleas out of the soldiers' beds. He actually attempted to discharge these responsibilities until some generous comrade revealed the hoax to him.
A REB "LOADED FOR THE YANKEES"
Robert B. Hurt, Jr., Adjutant 55th Tennessee Regiment; killed at the Battle of Franklin
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The appearance in camp of a soldier or civilian wearing any sort of unusual garb would elicit a chorus of jibes and taunts. If the visitor was a little man wearing high boots the cry would be, "Come up out of them thar boots; I know you’re in thar; I see your arms sticking out." A characteristic greeting for a man with a "stovepipe" headpiece was: "Come out of that hat; I see your legs"; or, "Look out, that parrot shell you’re wearing’s going to explode"; or, "Take that camp kettle home. Aren’t you ashamed to steal a poor soldier’s camp kettle?"

A staff officer who rode through camp sporting a finely twisted mustache was almost certain to receive from behind tents and stumps the irreverent suggestion: "Take them mice out’er your mouth; take em out; no use to say they aint thar; see their tails hangin’ out." An enormous beard might elicit the suggestion: "Come out er that bunch of har. I see your ears a workin’.

If some soldier happened to mimic a chicken, a cow, or a donkey the whole camp would break out in a chorus of cackling, crowing, shooing, braying, or bellowing. When a Reb on the march greeted a friend with "How are you, Jim?" fellow soldiers would follow suit until Jim was over-
whelmed with the greetings of a brigade or division.

Rebs sometimes purloined one another’s letters. Discovery of a sugary missive from some indiscreet sweetheart would immediately lead to a broadcasting of the contents and the taunting of the recipient. Private J. W. Rabb one day received a poetically endearing letter from his sister Bet. When this note was discovered by Rabb’s comrades they jumped to the conclusion that Bet was his sweetheart; and they proceeded to tease him roundly. Rabb’s barely decipherable narration of this incident to his sister gives a significant insight into the bantering, fun-loving character of the common soldier: “You roate me such a good long letter,” he observed. “i like it so much for the boys all thought that it was from my jularky and one little fellow develed me so much about Fly home to thy native home gentle dove he sayed that I looked more like a paterage.”

Excursions through the countryside in search of supplies afforded diversion for many soldiers. Much of this foraging was of the innocent sort, but an objective study of primary sources makes inescapable the conclusion that theft and destruction of private property were also woefully com-
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mon among wearers of the gray. Early in 1862 the practice of stealing rails for campfires became so prevalent that the Secretary of War issued a circular stating that "unless the destruction of fences can be arrested it will materially lessen the crop . . . and impair the power of the Government to subsist the Army." Prohibitive orders against this evil were promulgated repeatedly, but they were of little avail. By the spring of 1865 a rail fence in an area near Confederate camps was a rare spectacle.

Theft of hogs and poultry was even more common than molestation of premises. A pig that made the mistake of wandering near an encampment had small chance of survival. Soldiers throughout the army enjoyed a story that ran something like this: One day a Reb came to camp with a bulging object concealed under his coat. On being questioned by a lieutenant as to the nature of his burden he replied, "It's a pig." When the officer inquired if he was not aware of the stringent orders against shooting livestock, he responded, "Yes, sir, I know it's against regulations, but I killed this pig in self-defense."

"But how was that?" asked the officer.

"Well," responded the culprit, "I was coming
up the path back yonder when I heard something roaring behind me. I looked around and saw a pig coming out of a hole in the ground. Just before it got to me I fired, and it was mortally wounded."

Whereupon, according to the tale, the officer appropriated the meat to his own use.

No doubt many pillagers were influenced by a feeling that the country for which they were fighting owed them sustenance, and that if the commissariat did not furnish them with an adequate supply of edibles, there was no harm in providing for themselves. This point of view was reflected by the statement of a Reb who observed to his brother in 1863: "The Government tries to feed us Texains on Poor Beef, but there is too Dam many hogs here for that, these Arkansaw hoosiers ask from 25 to 30 cents a pound for there pork, but the boys generally get it a little cheaper than that. I reckon you understand how they get it."

Gardens, orchards, smokehouses, and beehives were likewise plundered by Confederates. On June 2, 1864, a soldier wrote to his wife from a camp in North Mississippi: "Our soldiers act outrageously . . . in reference to . . . private property. . . . [They] have not left a fat hog, chicken, Turkey, goose, duck, or eggs, or onions

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behind.” Other troops wrote their home folk that a visitation of Rebels was to be dreaded almost as much as invasion by the Federals. A Georgian addressing his wife in July, 1864, sized up the situation thus: “I have but little or no fears that the Yanks will ever git down to whare you are but I think you will be pesterde by our own soldiers . . . strowling about . . . and stealing your chickens, etc. I had almost as leave have the Yankees around my hous as our own men, except they will not insult ladies.”

Much has been said by descendants of Confederates about the good conduct of Rebels who invaded Pennsylvania in 1863. But letters written at the time by men who participated in the campaign do not square with Lee’s published order against molestation of enemy property. An army doctor recorded in his diary while at Chambersburg that “hogs, sheep, and Poultries stand a poor chance about here for their lives,” and added significantly, “we are living on the ‘fat of the land.’” A Virginia officer reported to his family about the same time that Southern soldiers “took everything” from farmers along the line of march; “they even stripped their houses,” he added, “though it was against orders.” Still another of-
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ficer observed: "It seems to do the men good to burn Yankee rails as they have not left a fence in our part of the country. . . . In spite of orders they slip out at night and help themselves to milk, butter, poultry, and vegetables."

A considerable number of Rebs sought surcease from the humdrum of camp life in lurid associations, for the Confederate Army, like all other large military organizations, was bedeviled by prostitutes. Some "fancy women" plied their vocations by donning masculine attire and joining up as soldiers. Others set up establishments in communities adjoining encampments. In the spring of 1864 one of Joe Johnston's staff officers wrote to the post commander at Dalton, Georgia: "Complaints are daily made to me of the number of lewd women in this town, and on the outskirts of the army. They are said to be impregnating this whole command, and the Commissariat has been frequently robbed with a view of supporting these disreputable characters." The vice situation in this area became so serious that General Johnston issued an order to have the town and the surrounding country searched, so that all women who were not able to give proof of respectability and the means of an honest livelihood might be
sent to points beyond the reach of his soldiers. But in view of prior failures, it is doubtful if this measure met with much success.

Richmond and Petersburg, because of their proximity to large troop concentrations, became veritable meccas for "nymphaes du monde," and soldiers on leave flocked to their houses by the score. The sad story of this allurement is told on monthly regimental sick reports, many of which are on file in The National Archives. One regiment of about a thousand men, which moved from rural Alabama to Richmond for a few weeks' sojourn in the summer of 1861, reported for the month of July sixty-two new cases of gonorrhea and six of syphilis.

Perhaps the most pervasive of unorthodox diversions was gambling. Cards—some of them bearing the likeness of Jefferson Davis—dice, chuck-a-luck banks, and raffling boards were everywhere in evidence on payday. Even the lice that swarmed the camps were pitted against each other at trials of speed, with tin plates, canteen sides, or small circles inscribed on tent flies constituting the race tracks. In December, 1862, shortly after a visit of the paymaster, Private Ruffin Thomson wrote to his mother: "Yesterday
was Sunday and I sat at my fire and saw the preachers holding forth about thirty steps off, and between them and me were two games of poker, where each one was trying to fill his pockets at the expense of his neighbor. Chuck-a-luck and faro banks are running night and day with eager and excited crowds standing around with their hands full of money. Open gambling has been prohibited, but that amounts to nothing.”

Drinking was almost as pervasive as gambling. A chaplain testified that after First Manassas “drunkenness became so common as to scarcely excite remark, and many men who were temperate . . . at home fell into the delusion that drinking was excusable, if not necessary, in the army.” Ministers threatened tipplers repeatedly with hell-fire, and commanding generals showered them with punishments, but to little avail. Thirsty Rebs were ingenious at devising means of “flanking” prohibitions, and rare were the times when some sort of “distilled damnation” was not procurable. The potency of Confederate liquor, as well as the esteem in which it was held, was reflected by nicknames applied to it by campaign-hardened butter-nuts; among the appellations were these: “How Come You So,” “Tanglefoot,” “Rifle Knock-
Knee," "Bust Skull," "Old Red Eye," and "Rock Me To Sleep, Mother."

While some Rebs were seeking relief from hardship and ennui in worldly pleasures, others were finding solace in religion. In fact, the violent encounters on the battlefield were matched throughout by conflicts no less mighty within Rebel ranks between the forces of sin and those of righteousness. And at war's end, it must have seemed to many Southerners that Mammon had won a decisive victory in both contests.

In the early days of the war, chaplains made but little progress in religious undertakings. Soldiers seemed obsessed with the idea of having a fling at evil while absence from home restraints—which absence they thought would be ended shortly by overwhelming Southern victory—afforded the opportunity. Many divines despaired after a few months of fruitless endeavor and returned to their homes.

But more persistent church authorities worked on. Agents were sent abroad to purchase Bibles, while at home tract societies were organized to publish Testaments and religious pamphlets. Colporteurs and chaplains fairly flooded camps with the literature thus obtained.

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By the autumn of 1863 the evangelistic efforts of the various denominations were in full swing. By that time also soldier attitudes toward religion had become more receptive. The reverses of Gettysburg and Vicksburg dispelled what little there remained of hope for a short war. Dwindling of regiments from hundreds to scores impressed upon survivors the uncertainty of life. The prospect of conflicts in the future, even more deadly than those of the past, was a powerful incentive for accepting the chaplain's promise of heavenly bliss to those who would renounce sin.

These and other influences led in the fall of 1863 to an army-wide outburst of revivals. Prominent ministers—eager to exchange indifferent home congregations for enthusiastic hearers in the army—flocked to camp to give gray-clad penitents the benefits of their fervid oratory. Stonewall Jackson and other spiritually-concerned generals suspended drill to accommodate day services, and at night encampments reverberated with the prayers and the hymns of both seekers and Christians.

The high tide of revivalism extended through the winter, but renewal of active campaigning in the spring of 1864 restricted the religious pro-
gram. Converts absorbed in marching and fighting naturally neglected their Bibles and prayers. Backsliding became rife, and standby evils of swearing, drinking, and gambling emerged from eclipse.

The war’s last winter saw the recurrence of large-scale revivals, but the peak of the previous year was not regained.

Most commanding officers attributed to religion a salutary effect on morale. Granting the general correctness of this view, it was unfortunate for the Confederacy that army revivals moved only a minority to repentance, and that evangelistic influences were so often ephemeral.

For morale sank to a very low ebb during the latter half of the war. The initial wave of patriotism that swept over the Confederacy after Fort Sumter was not of long duration. War-weariness began to creep into home letters after a few months, and discontent gained momentum during the dull period of hibernation. The Conscription Act of April, 1862, compelling to further service men whose terms of voluntary enlistment were about to expire, was a severe blow to morale. The victories of summer and autumn aroused lagging spirits for a time, but the reverses of Gettysburg
and Vicksburg the following year brought unprecedented gloom. There was some improvement in the spring of 1864 when Grant bogged down in the Wilderness, but Sherman's march through the heart of the Confederacy and Hood's disaster in Tennessee gave new impetus to defeatism.

Many Rebs who might have remained firm in the face of repeated reverses on the field of battle had their spirits broken by the reports of hunger, raggedness, and sickness that came to them from loved ones at home. An Alabaman who received a distressing letter from his wife wrote back that he was going to ask immediately for a furlough, but that if his request for leave was rejected, he was "coming home enny how . . . for I cant stand to here that you and the children are Sufren for Bread."

Declining morale was evidenced by a mounting tide of leave-taking. Some of the men who slipped away from camp under cover of night went home to harvest the crop, to cut the winter's supply of wood, to tan the leather for shoes, or to bury a dead child, and then returned voluntarily to camp. But a much larger number took to fastnesses of mountain and forest and flaunted Confederate authority for the duration of the war.

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All in all, more than one hundred thousand men swelled the roll of deserters.

Military authorities might have stemmed the tide of leave-taking by a more consistent meting of severe penalties. Unwarranted absences of short duration were often unpunished, and in many other cases offenders received such trivial sentences as reprimand by a company officer, digging a stump, carrying a rail for an hour or two, wearing a placard inscribed with the letters AWOL, confinement in the guardhouse, marching about camp in a barrel shirt, riding a wooden horse, and marking time on the head of a molasses keg.

Punishments for desertion were considerably more severe than those for absence without leave. Burning the letter D on hip or hand with a red-hot iron and then drumming the delinquent out of camp to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" or the "rogue's march" was a favorite sentence of some courts-martial. Before enactment of an interdicting law in April, 1863, whipping was a common punishment for deserters. Another corrective in fairly common use was head shaving, followed by long imprisonment at hard labor with ball and chain. But some courts prescribed such lenient sen-
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tences as forfeiture of a few months' pay, or the carrying of weights on the parade ground.

Tribunals showed the greatest reluctance to impose the death sentence, and if execution was prescribed, there was considerable likelihood of interposition by higher authorities. In 245 cases of conviction for desertion during the last six months of the war by courts belonging mainly to Lee's army, the death sentence was ordered in only 70 instances, and 31 of these sentences were invalidated by President Davis' general amnesty of February, 1865. Others were probably set aside by Lee and Joseph E. Johnston.

But during the course of the war many deserters paid the supreme penalty. When time came for the execution, the culprits were usually mounted on their coffins, taken to a hollow square, and shot as they knelt beside open graves. Comrades forced to witness these gruesome ceremonies were greatly awed. But the realization that scores deserted with impunity for every one that was shot must have left an impression more enduring even than the ghastliness of execution.

Great as was the tide of desertion and leave-taking, the majority of Rebs stayed at their posts till death, disability, or peace gave them honorable
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discharge. But the morale of many of these faithful ones wavered. There were times when the manifest selfishness, bickering, and inefficiency drove them near the point of desperation, but family pride, an inner sense of honor, or motives less worthy, restrained them.

The spirit of the youngsters was much better than that of their older comrades. They could wade through a sea of blood one day and snap back to cheerfulness the next. They bore the strain of marching, the inclemencies of weather, the scourge of disease, the scantiness of rations, and the separation from loved ones with much greater equanimity than did men in the thirties and forties who had wives, children, and other home responsibilities. The older men let their minds dwell unduly on the horrors of battle. They weighted their spirits by taking thought of the morrow. They appropriated the gloom of their home folk. They were crushed by longing for wives and children. And when sick or wounded they were apt to grovel in despair. If the Confederate War gave any formula for happy soldierhood, it was this: "Be young and unattached."

But what of the conduct of Rebs on the battlefield? Space will not permit a full answer to this [ 33 ]
question, but it should be said in this connection that the Confederate army like all other large military organizations was cursed with numerous cowards. Every sizable encounter from Bull Run to Bentonville had its portion of skulkers and shirkers. And there were times of panic, as at Missionary Ridge in 1863 and at Winchester and Cedar Creek in 1864, when entire regiments and brigades broke under attack and gave themselves to shameful flight. After Cedar Hill, General Bryan Grimes wrote: “It was the hardest day’s work I ever engaged in trying to rally the men. Took over flags at different times, begging, commanding, entreating the men to rally—would ride up and down the lines, beseeching them by all they held sacred and dear to stop and fight but without any success. I dont mean my brigade only, but all.” And a captain who witnessed the rout at Winchester wrote: “The Ladies of Winchester came into the streets and beged them crying bitterly to make a stand for their sakes if not for their own honor, but to no avail. The cowards did not have the shame to make a pretense of halting.”

But taken as a whole the fighting record of the men who wore the gray was a good one. On dozens
of battlefields humble men from the Southern hinterland rose to great heights of individual valor and transformed their tattered butternut uniforms into emblems of glory. The world has known no better fighters than the yelling Southern hosts who charged the heights at Malvern Hill and at Gettysburg.

And even in defeat the spirit of some remained indomitable. A few years ago when this writer visited relatives near Pulaski, Tennessee, he was escorted to New Zion churchyard to see the grave of a Confederate veteran named Tom Doss. The grave lies north and south with the headstone at the south. This unorthodox arrangement was of Tom's own planning. Shortly before he died he made his family promise that they would bury him with his feet to the north, so that when Gabriel blew the trumpet on the morn of resurrection he would be in a convenient position to give the Yankees a resounding kick.
II

THE FOLK AT HOME

The humble white folk constituted the great bulk of the Confederacy's civilian populace, just as they made up the lion's share of her fighting force. Most of these lowly people lived on the farm in small ill-furnished houses. A majority owned plots of land ranging from a few acres to a quarter section; a negligible proportion possessed from one to a half dozen slaves. They were sparsely educated and generally rough in appearance and demeanor. Some were so shiftless, ignorant, undernourished, and depraved as to merit the title of "poor white trash," but the great majority compared favorably with the planter class in self-respect, in integrity, and in the other attributes of character and citizenship.

The war affected the life of the lower classes in many ways. Particularly vital was its influence
on food. In 1861 there was little change in either the quantity or quality of edibles. But from 1862 on, impingements came in increasing number and weight.

One of the first items to be dropped from the dietary list was coffee. By no means all of the humbler folk had been accustomed to this beverage in ante-bellum times, but those who had enjoyed their regular morning cup felt the deprivation keenly. Various substitutes were utilized, including parched particles of sweet potatoes, peanuts, rye, corn, English peas, and okra; some users boasted that the improvisations were almost as satisfying as the genuine Rio, but most of these testimonials savored more of patriotism than of sincerity.

Except in Louisiana and southern Mississippi, sugar became so dear after the first year of the war as to be rarely obtainable by the poorer classes. Sorghum cane, grown before the war only in limited quantities, was planted extensively throughout the Confederacy, and sorghum molasses became a universal sweetener for "ersatz" coffee, and for pies, cakes, and gingerbread. Honey was also a widely used substitute for sugar. A few enterprising housewives made sirup from
watermelon juice, but the great majority deemed this process impracticable.

Peanuts—known also as pindars, goobers, and ground peas—were roasted and eaten about the fireside or mixed with molasses to make nourishing candy. Poultry and dairy products were enjoyed to only a limited extent except by the more thrifty. In most localities fruits and vegetables were abundant in season, and provident households dried large quantities of apples and peaches for use during the winter. But the staple items of diet were sweet potatoes, common field peas, bread, molasses, and meat. Most of the bread was made of corn meal, for wheat was scarce except in a few localities. Meat consisted mainly of salted or pickled pork.

The majority of humble folk seem to have had enough food throughout the Confederate period to forestall the pains of hunger. Some, indeed, fared better during the war than before, thanks to the legislative curtailment of cotton and tobacco. But there were thousands of instances of deprivation. Suffering was most frequent in areas lying within reach of either the Federal or the Confederate army and in sections inhabited mainly by nonslaveholders. Tenant classes in the
country and wage earners of town and city experienced greater hardship than did people of higher economic standing. Those who owned slaves suffered least of all.

Shortage of manpower was a paramount factor in the scarcity of food. In countless instances conscription took away all the adult males of a household, and in some cases entire communities were stripped of the accustomed food producers. Women, children, and older men assumed the full responsibility of farming, and some achieved notable success. But planting and harvesting operations were too onerous for the majority. Women with small children had little time for field work.

Visits by husbands or sons in the army afforded some respite, but these furloughs as often as not resulted in the addition of new members to the household, thus enhancing rather than abating the problem of subsistence.

The question naturally arises: what of the labor of the multiplied thousands of men who evaded military service? Comparatively few of those who escaped the army by exemption, substitution, or detail belonged to the farmer class; and the majority of those who deserted found it difficult to tend their crops with any degree of regularity
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because of the threatened visitation of enrolling officers. It must be admitted, however, that many cases of hunger were prevented by the irrepres- sible practice of Rebs absenting themselves without leave during the planting and harvesting season.

Pertinent likewise to the hunger experienced by home folk was the deficiency of livestock and farm equipment. In many instances horses and mules were taken by military authorities or by guerrillas, and it was almost impossible to replace work animals lost to use for any reason. Plows, wagons, hoes, scythes, and cane grinders incapacitated by wear or by breakage frequently had to remain idle for months because of the owner’s inability to procure new parts or to engage the services of a blacksmith. In the latter part of the war many poor families were reduced to such archaic expedients as threshing their wheat by beating the heads over barrels, and then winnowing it in the breezes.

Scarcity of salt militated against preservation of meat, and the difficulty of procuring jars complicated the problem of canning fruits and vegetables. But these factors were less responsible for the hunger which cursed the Confederacy than
were the companion evils of inflation and speculation. Constantly soaring prices caused producers to hoard their crops, and from 1862 until the end of the war the South was beset with a speculation mania. Men left the army in large numbers to join a host of entrepreneurs already engaged in buying corn, wheat, salt, meat, molasses, whisky, and cotton cards, and holding them until scarcity and inflation made possible a trebling of their investments. Many producers and speculators refused to sell at all for Confederate money, but demanded specie—which simply was not to be had by the lower classes; or they required barter for articles that were even dearer than those offered in exchange.

Against this tide of profiteering there was little chance for the poor, particularly for women who depended for a livelihood mainly upon the eleven dollars a month drawn by their soldier husbands from a government that was always in arrears with its obligations. Private and public agencies attempted to remedy this deplorable situation by dispensing money and supplies. Voluntary relief associations of towns and cities staged fairs, bazaars, pantomimes, and tableaux to support free markets for the poor.
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In North Carolina county governments raised no less than twenty million dollars for the relief of soldiers' families, and the state contributed several million dollars more. In Alabama, and in other states as well, taxes were suspended in invaded areas, and salt was given to the needy. The Louisiana legislature authorized the governor in 1864 to purchase corn, bacon, flour, sugar, and beef for distribution in districts where provisions were unusually scarce. In many instances public-spirited individuals looked after the needs of indigent soldier families of their neighborhoods. One North Carolinian who owned a gristmill ground corn without toll; another donated grain to forty families. A third assumed the responsibility of sustaining twenty-five impoverished families for several months. In all parts of the Confederacy there were occasional philanthropists who sold corn and wheat to soldiers' wives at figures far below the current price.

But relief measures both public and private fell far short of the needs. Appropriations were inadequate and local committees who bore the brunt of relief administration were frequently incompetent or negligent. A North Carolina county court clerk wrote to Governor Zebulon B. Vance in
1863: "I feel it my duty to report to you the dereliction of the magistrates . . . with regard to our volunteers' families. They are actually suffering and I have made four unsuccessful attempts to get a quorum and have failed every time. . . . How can our soldiers fight when they know that their wives and children are destitute of even a peace of bread?" The relief money, allocated on a per capita basis, was nearly always incommensurate with the high prices that had to be paid for provisions. Frequently the recipients could find no one who would sell to them even though they trudged for miles about the countryside. And if they were successful in buying corn or wheat they often had no means of transporting it to their homes.

Red tape was also an omnipresent deterrent to the relief program. In North Carolina soldiers' wives who lived in a county other than that from which their husbands enlisted were not entitled to assistance. Dependents of substitutes were denied public support. Frequently, no provision was made for the help of families who had no immediate relative in military service.

A graphic picture of the deprivation and hunger suffered by the wives and mothers of the poor-
est soldiers is afforded by letters written to Governor Vance. Vance, by his democratic manner and his oft-expressed concern for his humble constituents, elicited an unusual amount of correspondence from them. Some of the complaints are obviously exaggerated, but others have an unmistakable ring of sincerity. One woman, who wanted her son furloughed to help with the harvest, wrote thus:

“Der Mr Vance i wante you if you plesse you and Mr Davis to fix preperashenes to send home the poer solgers to cut the wheat for we have soad aboute fiftween bushel . . . excepten you gentle- men fixes sum way fer ous we can not get it cut . . . i hope that you and Mr Davis will helpe ous all you can fer vous are all the wones that can dew aney thing.”

Another who had tried without success to buy wheat wrote: “them that has to Sell wont sell . . . tha will hafto bee Some amands made or the soldiers wifes will Starve. D. H. Peeler raisd a hundred an two bushels of wheat an wont Sell. John Mull raised hundred and 9 bushels . . . and wont Sell he is a welthy man. . . . Missis feeler a widow woman rais 94 . . . bushel of wheat an wont sell.”

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A YOUTHFUL REB CLAD IN HOMESPUN GREYJACKET

PRIVATE GRESHAM HOUGH, MOSBY’S CAVALRY; ORIGINALLY A MEMBER OF CO. H, 1ST MARYLAND INFANTRY
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A third poured out her woes in extenso: "gov-ner Vance i set down to rite you afew lins and pray to god that you will oblige me i am apore woman with a posel of little children and i wil hav to starv or go neked me and my little children if my husban is kep a way from home much longer . . . i beg you to let him come tha dont give me but thre dolars a month and fore of us in famely . . . i hav knit 40 pare of socks fo the solgers and it take all i can earn to get bread . . . if you cud hear the crys of my little children i think you wod fell for us i am pore in this world but i trust rich in heven i trust in god . . . and hope he will Cos you to have compashion on the pore."

A widow whose supporting son was in the army, and whose small farm was about to be sold for a fifty-dollar debt wrote dolefully: "It is with and aking hart and tremelous hand I seat my self this morning to inform you of my condition. . . . [I fear] the Speceerlators will prove too hard for us as we have evry thing to by and so little to by with som times I am all most reddy to giv up the strugle as thar is no ey to pitty or hand to swath her[e] I lie in a pore neighborhood those that can assist the nedy will not do so they all have and excuse. . . . I had one side of bacon from the

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Govement the summer after my son left is all I have had I am in my 72 year . . . pleas excuse bad speling and writing and help me if you pleas.”

Another woman wrote: “Mr govner Vance Sier I now Seate myself to drop you a few lines to let you [know] mi condition and in witch way the people are treating of me mi husban is bin in Survas over twelve months and I have never received eny thing from the county yet only . . . three dollars for my Self and one dollar and a half for mi youngest child at five years old and I have two more children one nine and the nother eleven . . . I have one nag and Seven hed of hogs and I am nerly out of corn and I have bin walking the laste five dayes and have not got eny yet I had not the money but I barred it and then the[y] refused to take it the[y] Say the[y] are afraid it will bee no count . . . I now Sende this to you fore ad-vice . . . the pore soldiers are in the army wading thru mud and water and fighting fore our bee loved cuntry while nothers at home a specerlating of[f] ove the pore women . . . and now Ses the[y] have got as murch of the Confedret money as the[y] wante and refuses to take it . . . I thinke ther are a wating fore a hier price and du thinke it is harde fore me and mi children
while there is a nuf in the nighbourhood hosanna blessed is the king of israel that cometh in the mane [name] of the lord yours truly.

One woman told of her misery in even greater detail: "I sent to Warrenton yestiday and they Said the govenrment had not put any thing there for the Soldiers wives I never have suferd so much as I have for the last three or four months for I have to go Some times week[s] with nothing but bread to eat and I think that is to hard to take a poor man from his wife and children to leave hear to perish to death when we go to these rich people bout hear they wont let us have not one pound of meal for less than 50 cent . . . we have commity in our district but they will not do any thing for us . . . if you dont provide some way for us to live we will be compell to take our little children and [go] to our Husband or they must Come home to us."

Another was even more ominous in tone: "Sir we take the privilege of writing you a fiew lines to inform you of a fiew things that is mooving at this time in the state of NC the time has come that we the common people has to hav bread or blood & we are bound booth men & women to hav it or die in the attempt some of us has bin
travling for the last month with the money in our pockets to buy corn & tryd men that had a plenty & has bin unable to buy a bushel holding on for a better price we are willing to gave & obligate two Dollars a bushel but no more for the idea is that the slave oner has the plantation & the hands to rais the brad stuffs & the common people is drove of[f] in the ware to fight for the big mans negro & he at home making nearly all the corn that is made, & then becaus he has the play in his own fingers he puts the price on his corn so as to take all the Solders wages for a few bushels & then . . . [extend credit] until the debt will about take there land & every thing they hav & then they will stop all & if not they will hav to Rent there lands of there lords Sir we hoos sons brothers & husbands is now fighting for the big man's negros are determined to hav bread out of there barns & that at a price that we can pay or we will slaughter as we go . . . we no that this is unlawful at a common time but we are Shut up we cant trade with no body only Just those in the Confederesy . . . & it seems that all harts is turned to gizards. Sir consider this matter over and pleas send us a privat letter of instruction.”

That the threats of violence contained in this
and other letters were not mere persiflage is evidenced by bread riots in a number of Southern cities. At Salisbury, North Carolina, a group of women went to some merchants and offered them the prices fixed by the government for military purchases, and when they were refused they broke into the establishments with hatchets and took away a quantity of flour, salt, and molasses. A similar incident was forestalled at Greensboro by nabbing the leaders and putting them in jail. A provision shop in Mobile was raided by a group of hungry women in the spring of 1863; and about the same time a large-scale riot was initiated in Richmond by a group of women marching down the streets, brandishing weapons, and clamoring for bread.

Experiences of humble folk in reference to clothing were very much like those pertaining to food. The similarity was aptly set forth in a poetic taunt of Yankee origin which a Tarheel soldier in 1864 passed on to his home folk:

The ladies down south they do not denigh
They usted to drink the coffey and now they drink the rye
They ladies in dixey they are quite in the dark

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They used to bye the indigo and now they bile the Bark.

Not long after the war broke out spinning wheels and looms were brought from outhouses and attics and deft hands began the fabrication of materials to replace the supply of store-bought clothes. In November, 1861, a North Carolina woman wrote her soldier husband proudly: "I do not ask the Yankee any odds if I can get thread and dye stuffs I can make my own dresses." And James D. B. De Bow proclaimed in the spring of 1862 that "every household has become a manufacturing establishment; the hum of the spinning-wheel may be heard in every hamlet and the rattle of the loom sings the song of better times to our glorious South."

Many of the poorer women were spinning and weaving at least a portion of the cloth used in their households when the war broke out, and others had desisted from the practice so recently as to need little refreshing of technique. As a general rule, therefore, the inmates of cabins made the adjustment to the new clothing order more readily than did the plantation women. During the lean days following 1862, many of the poorer
households supplemented their meager incomes by making cloth for their economic superiors. "Some boddy is all wa[y]s after mey and the girls to work for them," wrote a lowly Tarheel mother to her soldier son. "Ben Thorp wife Sent to me to weave a peace of clorth . . . Salla wove 15 teen yards in too days—wove 6 in the day and too in nigh[t] every [one] is push[ed] a weaving the Big folks wants so much work don . . . we is got Soo much work to doo we have to Spin late in night the girls Sas tha wish you was hear to see you[r] new Bed tick."

In some instances women whose husbands were in the army made cloth for neighboring men in return for the plowing of their fields, the cutting of their wood, and the performing of other services. "I got wheat from Rich Harp," wrote one housewife. "I spun flax for him at the old price [and] he let mea have wheat at the old price."

A few women grew indigo for the dye of their homespun clothing, but the majority depended on coloring obtained from walnut hulls, and from the roots, bark, leaves, and berries of sundry vines, trees, and shrubs. Pine roots, for instance, yielded an attractive garnet and the myrtle bush produced a nice gray for woolens. By varying the strength
of the dye solution, a diversity of shades might be easily obtained. Copperas, produced by soaking pieces of rusty iron in a kettle of water, was used to set or fix the color in thread or cloth. Many women succeeded in making appealing garb of their homespun fabrics.

A Yankee soldier who participated in the Prairie Grove, Arkansas, campaign of December, 1862, noted in his diary that “Three buxom blooming lasses real country beauties dressed with taste and seeming care in striped homespun flannel” were standing in front of their log shanty encouraging the Federals with such expressions as “Go in boys give them h-ll—you are the boys who can whip all the G-d d-md secesh in Arkansas—I’ll bet on you fellers.”

But the finery displayed by these girls was as unrepresentative of the majority of poor folk as were their disloyal sentiments. The difficulty of obtaining cotton cards—the wire-toothed brushes used in preparing the lint cotton for spinning—was the principal crux in the clothing situation. Southern governors made tremendous efforts to obtain cards by blockade-running and by domestic manufacture, and to make them available to their constituents—particularly to soldiers’ families—[ 52 ]
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at reasonable prices. But the supply was far from adequate to the needs.

In North Carolina, and in other states as well, some relief was afforded by the practice of taking cotton and wool to textile mills for carding and spinning but frequently the owners refused to perform this service except in exchange for grain or meat, and many poor people needed these products worse than they needed clothing. "I have went twice to the U[n]ion factory . . . to get me some thread" wrote a distressed North Carolinian to her governor, "and not one single lbs could I get . . . myself and family are very bare indeed for clothes . . . the reason that we cannot get thread is that we have not corn or bacon . . . [to] barter . . . my husband has sent me some money to buy thread with but it will not do."

Shoes were harder to get than other items of clothing. Tanning of cowhides entailed a degree of skill and brawn that few manless households possessed. And those who were able to obtain leather by hook or by crook often found the prices charged by shoemakers prohibitive. Some families resorted to wooden footwear or to cloth shoes with soles of wood. Others went barefooted the year round. But some of these latter felt keenly
the social restraints imposed by their deprivation. “Half the ladys in Rutherford County hast to Stay at home from church for the want of a pear off Shoes,” wrote an anonymous female to Governor Vance in the summer of 1863; “the[y] Say the[y] never did go to church beare footed sence they weare grone and they will haft to Stay [now] or go beare footed. . . . Thears hides enowgh in this naborhood to Shew the people if we cold get them tand on fare terms.”

Scarcity of clothing was of particular significance in winter because of the shortage of fuel. Many country people could not pay the cost of cutting and hauling wood. Poor townspeople, being farther removed from the source of supply, suffered more than rural folk; and even the middle-class element sometimes had to observe the strictest economy. “Wood is so scarce,” wrote the daughter of a Lenoir, North Carolina, minister in January, 1864, that “we sit together in ma’s room & there . . . is so much confusion that I can get nothing done.”

Education naturally suffered as a result of the impingements of war, particularly in the rural sections. Children often were required to forego
school in the interest of the family livelihood. Books, slates, and other supplies were expensive and scarce. The dearth of horses and carriages made transportation a difficult problem if not a downright impossibility.

A North Carolina woman who spun and wove long hours for the "big folk," in addition to taking care of her own crops, wrote to her soldier son in August, 1864: "5 goes to scoll every day . . . the girls is most throu thear spelling book got . . . six more leaves to Say Miss Adda is going to put theam to redding this weak if tha get ther Bookes." Several weeks later she wrote with obvious disappointment that the sickness of her husband had forced the removal of the boys from school to help her with the grinding of sorghum cane. "The girls is got a 11 more days to goe to school and thear time will bee out Miss Adda Sas she is sorry the girls is got to S[t]op tha learn soo fast . . . I wish you was hear to learn the girls of night when tha stop school Miss Adda . . . told the girls tha had be[a]t all of the rest of her Scollars."

Soldiers often made inquiry of the progress in school of their children, and there can be no [55]
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doubt that this solicitude, attributable largely to
an increased appreciation of learning derived from
army experience, was a boon to education.

Most of the elementary schools seem to have
been run on a subscription basis. Tuition was often
paid in farm products or in cloth. The majority
of schoolteachers were women, preachers, or old
men, and few of them were well qualified for the
role of instructor. Teacher compensation was
miserly. A North Carolina woman in 1863 re-
ceived $20 per month and board for teaching a
school that opened at seven-thirty o’clock in the
morning and closed at six in the evening. Sessions
were generally shortened to two terms of three
months or less—one in summer and the other
after harvest. Educational activities were discon-
tinued in many border localities, but in most inter-
ior communities schools of some sort continued
to function throughout the war.

Textbooks of Confederate imprint came into
existence in considerable number. Some of these
contained choice bits of propaganda. For instance,
Johnson’s Elementary Arithmetic set forth these
problems: (1) “A Confederate soldier captured
8 Yankees each day for 9 successive days; how
many did he capture in all?” (2) “If one Con-
federate soldier can kill 90 Yankees, how many
Yankees can 10 Confederate soldiers kill?" (3)
"If one Confederate soldier can whip 7 Yankees,
how many soldiers can whip 49 Yankees?" But
books used by most Rebel scholars consisted of
such favorites of prewar days as Webster’s
spellers, McGuffey’s readers, and Davies’ arith-
metics.

The hardships produced by war were alleviated
occasionally by diversions of various sorts. Mem-
ers of both sexes assembled for cornhuskings in
the fall and early winter. "We had [a] gae corn
Shuking," wrote a North Carolina mother to her
son in November, 1864. "The croud . . . put all
of the Shukes away that night Doc will Shuk his
corn next." Women had all-day quilting parties
and spinning bees where work was combined pleas-
antly with gossip. These occasions apparently lost
none of their merriment when refreshments were
reduced to roasted sweet potatoes, gingerbread,
molasses candy, and cereal coffee. The meetings of
sewing and knitting societies pledged to the mak-
ing of clothes for soldiers were usually marked by
sprightly conversation. Younger women occasion-
ally inserted slips of paper containing their names
and addresses into their finished handiwork; and
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sometimes poetic sentiments calculated to edify and amuse the soldier recipient were included. One girl adorned her card with this combination of profoundity and nonsense:

Never Saw I the righteous forgotten
Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

P.S. Apples are good but peaches are better
If you love me, you will write me a letter.

In some parts of the South, country people made a social occasion of the cutting of a bee tree. "Lamon . . . is going to cut his Beetree," wrote a young Tarheel to a friend in 1863, "and you no that he will invite every person in this part of the country . . . tell my frind Mr. Lewis to come and bring . . . the Black bottle and we will put up with what will mix with it." Perhaps the practice of taking along the "black bottle" explains in part the enthusiastic comment of another correspondent concerning an affair in a neighboring community: "We found a Bee-tree near Philadelphus—had a number of ladies at the cutting—the tree had neither bees nor honey—the crowd though
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seemed to enjoy it as much as if there had been ten gallons."

Rural people continued to derive enjoyment in summer from picnics, fishing, and barbecues. Holiday seasons, especially Christmas, were marked by rounds of parties that featured games and dancing. Singing, in small groups and on such a scale as to merit the designation of musical sprees and singing schools, was an important source of diversion throughout the war. Correspondence of the times indicates the popularity of such songs as "Dixie," "Bonnie Blue Flag," "Maryland," "Lorena," "All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight," "Farewell to Brother Jonathan," "God Save the South," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "When This Cruel War Is Over," "Gay and Happy Still," and "Wait for the Wagon." But among rural people the folk songs and sentimental favorites of ante-bellum days were generally preferred to tunes which drew their inspiration from the war. "Home Sweet Home" ranked high in the esteem of country singers, along with "Annie Laurie," "Juanita," "Her Bright Eyes Haunt Me Still," "Annie of the Vale," "Sweet Evelena," and "Lilly Dale."

Older men found diversion mainly in informal
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get-togethers at county court sessions and at cross-roads stores where conversation—punctuated by meditative puffs at corncob pipes and spitting of tobacco juice—leaned to politics, community trivia, and the vicissitudes of war. Boys amused themselves with such customary juvenile recreations as marbles, mumble-peg, wrestling, jumping, and swimming. Fathers and older brothers in the army occasionally sent home the requisite powder and lead for hunting.

Courting afforded considerable diversion for the young folk, though the scarcity of eligible males created special problems. "I am still flying around with the girls," wrote a teen-age youngster to his bachelor uncle in the army; "I tell you they keep me stered up. I went to meting . . . at Union and coming home I had to keep company with about a dozen girls and you know that they keep me stirede up. I want you to make haste and kill these old Yankies by Christmas and come home to help me out for I tell you that I have my hands full." Another young beau indicated similar difficulties. "You said you wanted me to keep the girls from going wild," he wrote his soldier cousin. "That [is] hard to do with some of them . . . all they want is aman So you must come hom with
Hugh this fall and I will try to make arun and we will have a fly round with the girls and have a big spree.’

Much of the love-making was done at church functions, particularly at summer revivals. A Virginia cavalryman wrote to a friend in Rockingham County: “right to me a bout the big meating and how you in joyed your self and how menny girls you Sqese.” And a North Carolinian reporting to a soldier correspondent said: “At Camp meating the boys an girls did not fly round the black stumps much they was a great many wounded soldiers there the girls did not set back much this year like they allways did . . . i recon the reason of that was that the boys did not Suit them.”

When unattached soldiers went home on furlough they made the rounds of picnics, singings, and parties; and often they found it impossible to meet all the social demands occasioned by their visits. “I did not marrie whiles I was at home,” wrote a young Alabaman in the closing days of the conflict, “but you would have thought I would if [you] had of seen me. . . . The gi[r]les was more friendly than ever I saw them in my life they is getting very tired of this war, they all wants it to end. I do too.” In view of the concentrated so-
cial activity occasioned by circumstances such as these, it is not surprising that the Confederacy witnessed a series of marriage epidemics.

War has ever been conducive to moral and spiritual deterioration and the Confederacy offered no exception to the general rule. In the early months of the war many preachers joined the army, and later on others were forced by the mounting cost of living to forsake the pulpit for more lucrative employment. Attendance at church services dwindled because of the absence of menfolk and because of the difficulties of travel. "The ways of Zion languish and mourn," observed the Mississippi Synod in 1863. "Pastors are parted from their flocks, God's worship interrupted or forbidden, while from many churches God's people are exiled sheep scattered without their shepherd."

Religious disorganization and apathy was accompanied by an increase of crime and an ebbing of morals. In Richmond and in other cities garroteers, drunkards, and prostitutes roamed the streets with comparative impunity. In rural areas of the interior, conditions were not nearly so bad; but in border sections and in the deserter country, brigandage and vice flourished. A Confederate major stationed in East Tennessee wrote in 1863
to his wife: "I will state as a matter of history that female virtue if it ever existed in this country seems now almost a perfect wreck. Prostitutes are thickly crowded through mountain & valley, in hamlet & city." And a Mississippian remarked that if a dead man were found on the streets of Ellisville in Jones County, authorities would "pay no more attention than if it was a dog." The disruption of the local court system made law enforcement a mockery in many localities.

Despite state legislation forbidding the distillation of spirits from grain and from other food products, an enormous amount of whisky and brandy was manufactured and consumed throughout the Confederacy. "William McLean Died the 3 Day of January by hard drink," wrote a North Carolinian to his son in 1862. "I believe Liquor is doing more harm than the war. Every body is [s]tilling that can get a still." The mountain country was a favorite haven of the whisky makers. A Tarheel wrote Governor Vance in 1864: "Thar is now and has bin for the last Three months Sum Twelve or fifteen stills running night and day . . . most of the men who own the Stills lives in South Carolina and tha have imploid the poorest men tha can find So as to Ignore the Fine . . . if it is

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not Stopt . . . the poor people must and will Starve for the want of bread these abominable law breakers are paing from Thirty to forty Dollars pir bushel for corn.” Another North Carolinian wrote to his brother: “There are many church members who have gone into the whiskey business . . . many members of churches are drinking and getting drunk constantly.”

But it is easy to exaggerate the prevalence of evil-doing. In the face of the widespread degeneration which the war called forth there were large numbers who remained steadfast in character and in religion. Letters of poor people to relatives in the army and to the state governors frequently indicate a religious sincerity and a humble reliance on divine providence.

What of the morale of the poor folk? Indications are that they supported the war in its early stages with no less zeal than their upper-class neighbors. But as the conflict dragged on into the second and third years, there was a notable defection of spirit, particularly among the wives and mothers of soldiers; and by the summer of 1864, if not sooner, the majority of them would probably have welcomed peace on the basis of emancipation of slaves and the restoration of the Union.
Several factors contributed to the disheartening of the poorer classes. Paramount among these was the feeling that privileged groups, particularly the planters, were shirking their military responsibilities. This opinion derived mainly from the law exempting the owner of twenty slaves from military service, and from the failure of planters to meet the requisitions of army leaders for Negroes to work on fortifications. Dissatisfaction on these scores gained currency from the airings of local politicians who bore grievances against the Davis administration. A Mississippian wrote his governor in the fall of 1862 that the twenty-Negro law was "the handle at which most of the malcontents grind." A soldier who wrote to Vance in June, 1863, asking for a furlough to harvest his small crop of grain remarked significantly: "how can we go in to battle and fight to keep the enemy back of the rich man who beca[us]e he owns twenty negros is permitted to stay at home with his family and save his grain but the [poor] man must suffer in the armmy for somthing to eat his family suffer- ing at home for somthing to eat."

Another factor which depressed mightily the spirit of the poor was the conviction that the "big folk" were using the war to enhance their riches.
A Georgian wrote his brother in 1862 that "lyeing, Swindling and a Speculation is all that is goinge on here now thare is but littel sade about war here all that has the means to go on is a trying to Seake and devour evry thing ... theare is a heap of Yankies here as well as in [the] North." As the war went on there was an increasing protest against slaveowners' hoarding foodstuffs while the families of soldiers were reduced to the verge of starvation. Thousands of impoverished people doubtless were of the opinion expressed by a North Carolina woman who beseeched Governor Vance to detail her husband to home service so that her crying children might be fed. "i would like to know what he is fighting for," she said; "he has nothing to fight for i don't think that he is fighting for anything only for his family to starve."

Distress caused by suffering of loved ones in the army was another depressing influence. A North Carolinian wrote to his brother in 1863, urging him to desert. "I would advise you to ... go to the other side," he said, "whear you can get plenty and not stay in this one horse barefooted naked and famine stricken Southern Confederacy."

Reverses suffered by the South on the field of battle had a decidedly disheartening effect on the
poorer folk. The defeats at Gettysburg and Vicksburg followed by Bragg's failure at Chattanooga were depressing enough, but the fall of Atlanta and Hood's defeat in Tennessee utterly destroyed the hope of many people. In January, 1865, one of Governor Vance's correspondents who signed her letter, "A Poor Woman and Children," remarked: "You know as well as you have a head that it is impossible to whip they Yankees, there for I beg you for God sake to try and make peace on some terms . . . why sir every state has been over run but North Carolina and now you see that they Yankees are doing as they pleas in South Carolina, we haven got the forses . . . I believe slavery is doomed to dy out that god is agoing to liberate niggers and fighting anylonger is fighting against God." A short time later Lee wrote Vance that an increasing tide of desertion was being provoked by letters of despair flooding the camps of his army. Efforts were made to renew the spirits of the people, but these were of little avail.

A final and significant factor tending to undermine morale was the crushing weight of hardship which fell upon the poorer women of the Confederacy. Their long hours of labor at plows and spinning wheels constituted the lesser part of their
woes. Far more distressing was the mental harassment which tormented them—the fear of being unable to provide adequate food and clothing for their children; the dread of disease; anxiety for the safety and welfare of husbands, sons, and other loved ones in the army; the fear of visitation by enemy raiders, or by native marauders; the apprehension of Negro uprisings; and the worry over such innumerable trials of farm operation as the breaking down of equipment, the deterioration of fences, the straying of livestock, and the caprices of the weather. These vexations combined with the obsessing loneliness for absent male companions to break down even the staunchest of spirits. One North Carolina woman who manifested the most stubborn courage against all sorts of difficulties for three and a half years of the conflict was finally moved to write to her soldier son in January, 1865: "Tell theam all to s[t]op fiting and come home to live if you all wod put down you goums and come home and let the Big men stae the fiting wod Soon Stop if you all Stae theaire you all will bee kild I want you all to come home."

Undoubtedly the greater burden of war was borne not by the ragged followers of Lee and Johnston, but by the poor wives and mothers at
home who strove valiantly to provide a livelihood for their dependents. It is remarkable that they bore up under their trials as well as they did. And those humble women who did remain steadfast in labor and loyalty to the end—and their number was considerable—were indeed the greatest heroes of the Lost Cause.

Two of the greatest mistakes of the Confederate government were the refusal to exempt from conscription nonslaveholding adult males upon whose labor the livelihood of wives and small children was vitally dependent, and the failure to take effective measures against hoarding and speculation. Dissatisfaction arising from these sins of omission did more than anything else to break down the morale of the civilian masses. Long before the finale at Appomattox, the doom of the Confederacy had been firmly sealed by the widespread defection of her humblest subjects.
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WHEN the booming guns at Charleston inaugurated hostilities between the North and the South in 1861, there were about three and a half million slaves living in the eleven states which were to constitute the Confederacy. The effects of war upon the life of these blacks varied considerably with time and locale. Day-by-day activities of those inhabiting interior portions of the South were not greatly disturbed during the first year of conflict; and many of those residing in areas untouched by Federal troops experienced surprisingly little change from beginning to end of the war.

But in the invaded sections of the Confederacy, the effects of the coming of the Yankees were immediate and tremendous; and the results were virtually the same whether the invasion was of Virginia in 1861, of Tennessee in 1862, of Mississippi
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in 1863, of Georgia in 1864, or of South Carolina in 1865.

One of the first consequences of the approach of Federal troops to a given locality was the exodus of Negroes from that area to the Yankee lines. There can be no definite estimate as to how many or what per cent of slaves ran away to the Federals during the war, but it can be said without fear of exaggeration that the approach of Northern troops to any community initiated a trek of Negroes toward the Yankee camps; and that in many instances the stampede became so great as to carry away the major portion of the black population.

The tendency of the blacks to flock to the Union camps on the approach of the invaders is well illustrated by the case of Shirley Plantation in Virginia. The Federals came first to this vicinity on June 30, 1862. There is no evidence in the records of any slaves having run off before this time. But on July 14, two weeks after the arrival of the Union force, the plantation journal records that “15 negro men and boys ran off.” A few days later a Negro woman and two children disappeared. Shortly afterwards the Federals withdrew. On July 13, 1863, the Yankees made their second appearance in the vicinity. Within the next three days, fifteen Negro
men took flight to "Yankeedom." On April 5, 1864, the Federals again came to the environs of Shirley, this time in greater force than previously. After a month of quiet, during which the slaves were evidently making secret preparations for departure, a grand exodus began. Within four days thirty slaves went to the Yankees. By June 20, seventeen more had left the plantation. This brought the total of fugitives for the three Federal incursions to eighty, a figure which comprehended nearly all of the slaves of this plantation.

The proportion of slaves running away from Shirley may have been exceptional. But an abundance of evidence indicated a close parallel of tendencies in other invaded sections. In August, 1862, a Confederate general estimated that every week a million dollars worth of North Carolina Negroes were fleeing to the Yankees. A Union official wrote from Mississippi that after Pemberton's surrender, "Vicksburg was looked upon by the Negroes as the very gate of heaven, and they came trooping to it as pigeons to their roost at night."

One of the most interesting, and perhaps significant, commentaries on the propensity of the slaves for seeking the Yankee camps when opportunity presented itself is that of a small Virginia girl as
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recorded by her mother in a diary. On April 20, 1862, the diarist, who was at that time residing in Fredericksburg, noted that the full band of the Federal army encamped across the river was playing "Yankee Doodle" and the "Star Spangled Banner." Entries in the diary after that date indicate that Negroes were stealing away across the river in ever-increasing numbers. Naturally the departure of the slaves became a common topic of conversation in Fredericksburg. One day in early August, 1862, the diarist's little daughter, Nannie Belle, and Sallie, a neighbor's child, were playing "ladies." Sallie, pretending to be a woman making a neighborly call, said to Nannie Belle, "Good morning, ma'm, how are you today?" Whereupon Nannie Belle replied with a sigh: "I don't feel very well this morning. All of my niggers have run away and left me."

Drastic steps were taken by state and Confederate authorities to prevent the escape of Negroes to the Federals. Picket lines were doubled in some sections; the passport system was rigidly applied in others. Local organizations were formed throughout invaded areas under such designations as "home guards," "independent scouts," and "mounted pickets" to assist in keeping the slaves
with their owners. Threats of severe punishment for attempts to escape were made by masters. The churches cast their influence on the side of the harassed planters by expelling from membership Negroes who sought the Federal camps. The record book of a Virginia Baptist congregation contains this entry for September 17, 1864: "Martha . . . was excluded from the fellowship of the church for fornication . . . church lists revised. Forty-one excluded who have gone off to the enemy." But the lure of freedom and the ingenuity of the blacks in contriving means of escape were usually great enough to overcome all these obstacles.

Another noticeable effect of Federal invasion was the tendency among Negroes in areas near the Union lines to become insubordinate and insolent toward owners and overseers. A typical case is that of a Virginia coachman who, after the Federals told him that he was free, went immediately to his master's closet, helped himself to a splendid suit of clothes, a watch and chain, and a walking stick. After adorning himself with this finery the servant returned to the parlor and told his master that in future he must drive his own coach.

Several years ago an intelligent ex-slave of Pulaski, Tennessee, told the writer that Negroes of
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his county celebrated the approach of the Yankees with songs containing impudent thrusts at the whites, as:

De ladies in Tennessee wuz a gittin' mighty gran'—
Hoop-skirts and petticoats a draggin' on de groun',
Bonnets on dey shoulders and dey noses to de sky—
Bye and Bye will come a time, big pig, or little pig, Root hog or die;
Old Tennessee used to drink coffee but now she drinks rye.

Oh black gal, you can't shine,
I done quit foolin' wid de kinky-headed kin’;
First of July and de las' of May,
I've had a white gal on my min'.

Ole massa come down de road dis mornin',
Wif de muffstash on he face;
He grab he hat and he lef' very sudden,
Lak he gwine to leave de place;
Ole massa runned away,
And de darkey stayed at home;

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It must now be very confiscatin’;
De Lincum soldiers come;
Dere’s wine and cider in de cellar,
And de niggers must hab some.

The exasperation of the whites when subjected to Negro insolence in invaded areas is illustrated by an incident that took place in Helena, Arkansas, early in 1865. Two white men, Powell and Yates, walking down the street were greeted by a Negro. Powell returned the salutation with the greeting, “Howdy, Uncle.” The Negro replied with an oath that he did not permit such people as Powell to claim kin with him. “Call me mister,” the Negro added angrily. When the two whites had walked on out of the Negro’s hearing, Powell said to Yates, “Oh my God; how long before my —— will be kicked by every Negro that meets me.”

The insubordination of slaves frequently took the form of refusing to continue work after the approach of the Federals. The correspondence of Mrs. C. C. Clay, of Northern Alabama with her son, Senator Clement C. Clay, is replete with complaints of Negro idleness. In February, 1863, she wrote that “one piece of cloth had been woven in the time I used to have ten. . . . We cannot make
any cotton unless a speedy change takes place.” The next month she bemoaned: “The slaves are ignorant and grasping. . . . I have a hard time with ours for they just do as they list. I try by ‘moral suasion’ to get them to do their duty—and it sometimes succeeds.” Still later she wrote: “They say they are free. We cannot exert any authority. I beg ours to do what little is done. Lucindia makes the beds. Maria gets the morsel we eat for we have just sufficient to keep us from starvation. She and Critty milk two cows but grumble and threaten.”

But the Clay slaves were less slothful than some in other invaded areas. At Magnolia in Louisiana the Negroes were so completely demoralized by the coming of the Federals in 1862 that the overseer was finally provoked to write in the plantation journal: “I wish every negro would leave the place as they will do only what pleases them, go out in the morning when it suits them, come in when they please, etc.” Slaves in all invaded areas began to demand wages for their work shortly after the arrival of the Yankees. In some cases the planters were able to postpone the adoption of the wage system by promises, presents, and other inducements. But eventually the importunities of the
workers forced a general acquiescence in some plan of cash compensation.

Refusal to submit to punishment was another form of insubordination common among slaves throughout invaded portions of the South. A senile Texan attempted to whip a recalcitrant Negro in the summer of 1863. The servant resisted and, according to the report of a neighbor, "cursed the old man all to pieces," walked off in the wood, and then sent back word that he would not return unless a pledge of impunity were given him. His terms were accepted and he came back.

Planters in this and in other communities actually became afraid to punish their slaves. A Tennessee woman wrote to her soldier husband in 1863 that "overseers generally are doing very little good, and they complain of the negroes getting so free and idle, but I think it is because most everyone is afraid to correct them. I tried to correct one negro for a thing last summer; it would frighten Mr. Ashford [the overseer] out of his wits almost." Three Alabama slaves threatened to kill the overseer on the C. C. Clay plantation, if he attempted to punish them. Mrs. Clay went so far as to go to a colored woman who had threatened to
burn a dwelling if she were punished, and to beg the slave to think of the "sin" of her proposed action.

In many instances Federal invasion caused outbursts of violence among the slaves. Frequently these uprisings took the form of seizure and destruction of the master's property and riotous celebration of the advent of freedom. Slaves on the plantation of Governor Thomas O. Moore of Louisiana "had a perfect jubilee" for the "space of a week," according to a neighbor's report to the governor, when Yankee raiders appeared in the vicinity. "Every morning," wrote the neighbor to Moore, "I could see the beeves being driven up from the woods to the quarters—and the number they killed of them it is impossible to tell." The furniture was taken from the owner's house and distributed among the Negro shacks.

When the Federals passed on, most of the adult Negroes followed them, taking as much of the master's property as they could transport and regretfully leaving that which they could not carry. Little wonder is it that the correspondent reporting the affair to the governor ejaculated: "Confound them, they deserve to be half-starved and to be
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worked nearly to death for the way they acted.
. . . They are the greatest hypocrits and liars that God ever made.”

The overseer of Magnolia Plantation reported that the approach of the Federals incited the slaves to unrestrained festivity. On one plantation, he said, the Negroes “Rose and Destroyed everything they could get hold of. . . . Pictures, Portraits, and Furniture were all smashed up.” Some of the blacks marched around over the countryside “with flags and drums shouting ‘Abe Lincoln and Freedom.’ ”

There were similar disturbances when the Federals invaded South Carolina. At Pooshee Plantation the slaves “cleaned out the storeroom and the meat room.” At Whitehall, after being told by the Union troops to help themselves, the Negroes “rushed into the house and took beds, carpets and everything.”

The numerous slaves of R. F. W. Allston of South Carolina seem to have reverted to a state of savagery when the Federals arrived. On one Allston plantation, the blacks locked the overseer in the house, and placed an armed Negro at the door with instructions to shoot him if he attempted to escape or to interfere with their plundering. From
another Allston plantation the harassed overseer wrote: "I have been Compeld ... to give up the Barn Key. ... I would have moved away but have no means to do so ... on Sunday ... two Yankeys came up and turned the people loose to distribet the house which they did taking out everything and then to the smoke house and Store Room doing the same ... the hogs in the Pen is Kild, ... the Pore mules has been Road to death all most—after this the People have puld down the mantle Pieces, taken off all the doors and windows Cut the banisters and sawed out all such as they wanted."

When report of these disorders came to Mrs. Allston, she and her daughter went to Guendalos Plantation to investigate. No sooner had they arrived than they were surrounded by a crowd of howling, threatening "freedom-intoxicated" slaves. As they danced about their mistress and her daughter brandishing rice hoes, pitchforks, guns, and hickory sticks, they chanted weird verses the words of which were incomprehensible to the whites, followed by a much repeated chorus:

I free, I free,
I free as a frog,
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I free till I fool,
Glory Alleluia.

Only the composure of the white women kept them from suffering bodily injury.

In a considerable number of cases the approach of the Federals incited the Negroes to acts of personal violence against the whites. Two slaves "mercilessly whipped" an old woman near Canton, Mississippi, in 1863. A patrolman who returned a fugitive in Louisiana in 1862 was mortally wounded from ambush just after he delivered the slave to his master. Negroes on the David Pugh Plantation attacked the owner and his overseer and injured them severely. A Natchez resident traveling in Louisiana in 1863 was attacked, robbed, and then brutally murdered by Negroes. In several instances slaves fired on Confederate pickets. Two refugee Virginia planters who returned to their homes after the passing of a Federal raid were seized by their slaves, subjected to great abuse, and then murdered with shotguns. Criminal attacks of blacks upon white women were rare, but there is certainly a sufficiency of evidence on this point to blast the postwar statement of a Southern planter that "no woman in the whole South was ever molested by a negro during the Civil War."

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It would be erroneous to leave the impression that disorder and insubordination were universal among slaves of invaded areas; for there were some who manifested a high degree of loyalty and affection in the midst of the most trying circumstances. Many pieces of silver in use by Southerners today were concealed from the Yankees by faithful domestics. In several instances Negroes upbraided the Federals for mistreating their "white folks." During the long nights of uncertainty and fear incident to invasion, black guardians kept watch over white women and children and reassured them with repeated promises to sacrifice life itself for their protection. But instances of such positive loyalty were exceptional, and restricted largely to the house servants who, because of their privileged status, had perhaps more to lose than to win by freedom.

Sometimes even trusted domestics abandoned their masters during the stress of invasion and went in quest of the uncertainties of freedom. "Those we loved best, and who loved us best—as we thought—were the first to leave us," wrote a Virginian; and other owners told sorrowfully of house servants turning over keys to Yankee plunderers.
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All in all, the reaction of slaves to the coming of the Federals was such as to reveal to the whites how little they knew of the real feelings so effectively concealed behind the veil of smiles and obsequious manners. And people who boast today that they "know the nigger" might well learn a lesson from the experience of their Confederate progenitors. Before the war was over most whites living in areas penetrated by Federal troops had abundant reason to feel as did an Alabaman who in 1863 complained that the "'faithful slave' is about played out."

In considering the demoralization that prevailed throughout invaded sections it is important to bear in mind the fact that only a minority of the total slave population lived in regions penetrated by the Yankees. For the effects of war upon the majority it is necessary to focus attention upon the vast areas that lay beyond the reach of the men in blue.

The conduct of slaves in these areas was much more orderly than in regions that felt the direct influence of invasion. But the comparative quietude of these slaves should not be interpreted as a willing acquiescence in bondage or an indifference to the outcome of the war. Many Negroes of the interior South were of the opinion that freedom was
an issue of the conflict even in its early stages, and after Lincoln's Proclamation, ignorance of the connection between Union victory and emancipation seems to have been exceptional. Most of the slaves earnestly desired freedom, and when it came within safe and convenient reach they seized upon it with alacrity. Some went into wild effusions of joy. A Virginia Negro when informed of his liberation ran out to the barnyard and jumped from one strawstack to another, screaming at the highest pitch of his voice. And a colored woman waked the folk at the big house late at night with cries of "Thank Gawd! Thank Gawd! Thank Gawd A'Mighty!"

Both Northerners and Southerners of Civil War times were somewhat surprised at the failure of the slaves to attempt large-scale insurrections. But to present-day students this circumstance holds no mystery. The only Negroes qualified to lead such undertakings were, with a few exceptions, house servants, and this group was closely bound to the whites by ties of association and affection; communication over large areas was virtually impossible; and the great majority of slaves were of a nonviolent, opportunistic disposition. They deemed it better, therefore, to wait for deliverance
by the Yankees than to resort prematurely to bloody attacks upon their powerful overlords.

The prevailing attitude was aptly summed up by an alleged conversation between two Negroes early in the war. One of them, speculating on the effects of the conflict, suggested that the slaves might eventually take up arms for their deliverance.

"Yo talkin' fool talk, nigger," the other rejoined; "ain' you neber been see two dogs fightin' ober bone 'fo now?"

"Cose I is—but I dunno what dat dar got to do wid dis here."

"Well," came the retort, "yo aint neber been see de bone fight none, is yo?"

While the Negroes of the interior regions waited for freedom the war necessitated some adjustments in their manner of life. One of the most significant of these had to do with labor. In times of peace the bulk of farm work had been devoted to the production of cotton. But the blockade of Southern ports, Federal occupation of the meat and grain districts of Kentucky and Tennessee, and the necessity of sustaining a large army led to a widespread movement after 1861 to replace cotton with food crops.
At first de-emphasis of cotton was attempted by voluntary pledges, but tardiness of some planters in complying with the restrictive program caused a resort to legislative prohibitions. By the spring of 1863, most states had passed laws compelling the reduction of cotton to an amount not exceeding three acres per hand. The combined effects of public sentiment and of legislation appear to have limited cotton acreage in 1863 and 1864 to about one fourth or one fifth of the prewar average.

As cotton production was curtailed, the labor of slaves thus released was turned to the growth of foodstuffs. Fields of the Alabama Black Belt that in the 1850’s were flecked with white as far as the eye could see now presented mosaics of sorghum cane, potato vines, and corn. Throughout the length and breadth of the Confederacy “King Cotton” yielded the majority of his domain to such vital products as cowpeas, sweet potatoes, soy beans, peanuts, oats, barley, and wheat.

Available testimony indicates that Negro workers adapted themselves to the program of diversification with marked success. The food grown in the uninvaded portions of the Confederacy was ample for the needs of the entire Southern population, both civilian and military. And while it can-
not be denied that hunger bedeviled both the army and a portion of the home folk, this was due not to inadequacies of production, but rather to failure of distribution.

Crops would have been even more bountiful if the war had not disrupted labor supervision. At first many overseers and owners were permitted to remain at home under exempting clauses of the conscription acts. But unpopularity of this policy among nonslaveholders, plus increasing demands for soldiers, led after 1863 to induction into military service of the majority of accustomed farm directors. Their supervisory functions were taken over largely by women, boys, and old men. In many instances the immediate oversight of plantations was entrusted to responsible Negroes who in peacetime had acted as drivers or foremen.

This modified system of supervision worked well on some plantations, but in the great majority of cases it proved unsatisfactory. Letters of women to state governors and to soldier husbands are replete with complaints concerning the slaves—of their dilly-dallying, of their neglect of fences and plows, and of their mistreatment of livestock. A harassed Texas woman wrote her husband in 1864: “With the prospect of another 4 years war
you may give your negroes away . . . and I'll move into a white settlement and work with my hands. . . . The Negroes care no more for me than if I was an old free darkey and I get so mad sometimes that I think I dont care . . . if Myers beats the last one of them to death. I cant stay with them another year alone."

Many other feminine supervisors had less difficulty, but the conclusion is inescapable in the light of the best evidence that the work of slaves deteriorated greatly when deprived by the war of the accustomed management.

Another notable incident of the war was the diversion of workers from fields to factories and mines. In 1861 and 1862 old manufacturing establishments were expanded and new ones set up for the making of guns, ammunition, wagons, uniforms, shoes, saddles, bridles, soap, salt, candles, and numerous other products for soldiers and civilians. Some of these enterprises employed Negroes from the beginning, and the great majority had to depend on colored workmen to an increasing extent as whites were called into the ranks. The blacks were used principally for the heavier work, but enough of them were employed at skilled tasks to weaken considerably the argument of conservative
agrarians that colored labor could not be adapted to an industrial economy.

The war had less effect upon the food of slaves than upon their labor. In invaded areas there were recurrent periods when the fare was scant, but in most other sections Negroes had an abundance of edibles throughout the period of conflict. There was some change, however, in the items of diet. The difficulty of obtaining salt led in some instances to a reduction of the meat ration. But planters usually compensated for this deficiency by issuing liberal allowances of molasses. Sweet potatoes were also enjoyed in greater abundance during the war than before. It is not at all unlikely that the shift of emphasis from cotton to food crops resulted in a general improvement of the slave diet during the Confederate period.

Clothing of slaves was modified considerably as a result of the Federal blockade. Homespun garments had generally given way to factory-made suits in the forties and fifties, but during the war there was a reversion by most planters to the practice of spinning, weaving, and making up the clothes of both Negroes and whites at home.

Wool was grown much more extensively during the war than before, but the supply was never equal
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to the demand. Cotton was usually available in abundance, but the difficulty of procuring the steel-toothed cards for combing the yarn prior to spinning often led to a scarcity of the lighter materials needed for summer suits. Some planters were reduced to the expedient of cutting up carpets and curtains in order to meet the clothing need of their servants. But such drastic measures were rarely necessary before the last winter of the war.

Hats were made of cloth scraps and of palmetto. Buttons were fashioned from small pieces of wood or from persimmon seeds. Shoes presented the greatest difficulty of all clothing items. Tanneries were set up on most plantations, and slave craftsmen achieved fair success as cobblers. But the supply of leather, particularly of the heavy type required for soles, was never adequate. Some planters sought to remedy the deficiency by attaching uppers of cloth or leather to wooden soles. A few resorted to shoes made entirely of wood. But this resulted in protests from plantation mistresses on the score of noise. And some improvident slaves infuriated their masters by using the wooden footgear for kindling.

The few privileges and pleasures enjoyed by slaves in days of peace consisted mainly of visiting
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neighboring quarters on Sundays, having respite from work on Saturday afternoons, hunting rabbits, opossums, and other small game, attending church services, raising a few pigs, chickens, or turkeys—for home use or for sale—going to barbecues or picnics at laying-by time, attending weddings, and dancing occasionally in the cotton shed or the sugarhouse.

These simple diversions suffered considerable curtailment during the early days of the war, for the increased fear of slave uprisings that accompanied Federal attack caused a general tightening of control agencies.

Long after hostilities had ended, writers and speakers were wont to descant upon the perfect confidence that masters reposed in their slaves during the dark days of conflict, but these testimonials do not square with repressive measures enacted at the time. During the first years of the Confederacy every state passed laws requiring that patrols give more frequent and more serious attention to surveillance of Negro activities, and slave codes were revised so as to lessen the likelihood of conspiracy and rebellion. Use by Negroes of boats and other means of transportation was restricted; penalties for furnishing slaves with firearms and
“DAY OF JUBILO DUN COME”

Photograph by Brady of group of Negro “contraband” laborers
with liquor were increased; and the practice of blacks' living on plantations without white supervision was prohibited.

Repressive state legislation was matched by similar action on the part of municipalities. Individual owners for a time lived up to prewar regulations requiring that slaves not be allowed to go beyond the limits of the plantation without a pass, and that they not be permitted to assemble in groups of over five or six without white escort. But as weeks passed into months and months into years without uprisings actually breaking out, owners and officials tended to relapse into unconcern as to the doings of their servants. Vigilance and attempts at restriction may have been revived by such disturbing phenomena as the Emancipation Proclamation, but the induction of a large proportion of able-bodied white men into military service made enforcement of regulations difficult. On the whole, slaves seem to have enjoyed as much, if not more, freedom during the war than before.

Scarcity of arms and ammunition probably curtailed hunting of such game as squirrels, coons, and rabbits, but quest for the lowly opossum was not affected by these deficiencies. Throughout the deep South fishing, picnicking, and visiting flourished
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during the greater part of the conflict. Scarcity of white ministers and deterioration of wardrobes diminished somewhat the splendor of weddings and funerals, but other religious activities were less disturbed by these contingencies.

The conviction that religious services were a stimulant to submissiveness and industry caused masters and churchmen to exert themselves mightily to keep the spiritual program going. And from numerous pulpits white divines—or if these were not procurable, trusted black exhorters—regaled colored congregations with such texts as "Servants obey your masters," "Let every man wherein he is called abide therein with God," and "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." Such themes as "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" and the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage were of course studiously avoided.

In meetings attended by whites—as many of them were—a correct attitude was consistently manifested by the slaves. Blessings were often asked by black leaders on the Southern cause, and sometimes defeat was besought for the Yankees. But now and then the colored folk were able to
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assemble secretly in their own places of worship; there they let go with sincere prayers for Federal victory and "the day of jubilo," and gave themselves to ecstatic singing of such songs as "No Man Can Hinder Me," and "Way Over in the Promised Land."

There was a considerable group of people in the Confederacy who thought that the rights and privileges of slaves should be increased in some particulars, and to this end they launched a movement to humanize the "peculiar institution." The reformers, led by James A. Lyon of Mississippi and Calvin H. Wiley of North Carolina, consisted largely of churchmen. Their program contained several proposals, including: first, repeal of the laws that forbade the teaching of slaves to read, so that Negroes might have the benefit of a direct perusal of the Scriptures; second, abolition of absentee ownership of slaves; third, limited acceptance of testimony of slaves in murder cases, so that overseers or owners could not take the lives of Negroes with impunity simply because of the absence of white witnesses; fourth, legal recognition of slave marriages; and fifth, passage of laws preventing the selling of children away from their parents.
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These proposals were discussed widely by religious groups, and they won some support among laymen as well as ministers. Lyon succeeded in getting a bill entitled "An act regulating the marriage and parental relations existing between slaves" introduced in the Mississippi Legislature early in 1865, but the committee to which it was referred thought the time inopportune for its consideration. The reaction of the country at large was very similar to that of this legislative committee, the overwhelming sentiment being that rectification of the "peculiar institution" should not be attempted until the war was won. But there can be no doubt that the establishment of Southern independence would have witnessed the development of a strong movement to purge slavery of its most flagrant evils. And it is possible that this humanitarian impulse which dated back to the days of Thomas Jefferson, but which had been driven under cover by the abolitionist onslaught, would have led eventually to the abolition of slavery itself.

The evil with which reformers found greatest fault—that of breaking up families—derived mainly from the slave trade. It might logically have been expected that the war would cause a marked decline in the buying and selling of Ne-
groes. But this was not the case. Newspaper reports indicate a heavy volume of trade during the first two years of conflict. Confidence in Confederate success was strong, and slaves were regarded by many as good investments. The removal of planters from invaded sections to temporary homes in the interior caused an exceedingly large number of slaves to be offered for sale. Prices in Confederate currency remained high, but there was a decline in values as represented in gold.

The reverses at Gettysburg and Vicksburg caused a slowing down of the slave trade, but in 1864 when Grant failed to take Richmond there was a revival of both confidence and traffic. Sherman's march through Georgia and Hood's defeat in Tennessee reduced buying and selling to a low level, but there was some trading up until the very end of the war. In fact, a few sales were reported after Lee's surrender.

During the last days of the Confederacy the tide of inflation carried slave prices to dizzy heights. John B. Jones recorded in his diary on March 22, 1865, that Negro men were selling in Richmond for $10,000 in Rebel currency. But, of course, the gold equivalent of this fabulous sum was only about $100.
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The slaves who experienced the least of freedom and the most of hardship during the war were the ones who labored in military occupations. Hundreds of blacks were engaged as cooks, teamsters, hospital attendants, and railroad repairmen; and the number employed in the construction of defense works ran far into the thousands. The first Confederate volunteers were inclined to balk at menial tasks as unbecoming to their exalted roles as fighters; so Negroes were called upon by military leaders to perform the lowly duties. The exigencies of war considerably modified soldier attitudes toward hard work, but heavy battle casualties required increased use of black labor by the military so as to release every available white man for service in the ranks.

Military work by Negroes consisted mainly of throwing up foundations for heavy artillery, planting obstructions in rivers, building forts, and digging entrenchments. Much of the labor had to be done in marshy country and in extreme weather. Rations were frequently short, and clothing inadequate. Sickness was common, and hospital facilities were deficient. The tendency of workers to run away caused superintendents to frown upon visits to neighboring Negro communities, and the neces-
sity of rushing projects to completion usually pre-
vented the granting of accustomed Saturday after-
noon holidays. It is not surprising, then, that 
Negroes thoroughly detested military labor, and 
that government agents charged with the impress-
ment of workers became veritable bugaboos in the 
slave quarter.

Another group of slaves having a military con-
nection enjoyed unusual privileges. These were the 
body servants who accompanied their masters to 
camp in the capacity of orderlies. The duties of 
these colored aides were light, consisting mainly of 
cooking, laundering, cleaning quarters, shining 
shoes, and in the cases of those who served cavalry-
men, of looking after their masters’ horses. A gen-
une affection, deriving from intimate association 
that sometimes dated back to early childhood, usu-
ally existed between soldiers and their servants. 
This fact, coupled with the impossibility of exercis-
ing a close supervision in the hurly-burly of cam-
paigning, caused masters to give a comparatively 
free rein to the blacks who shared with them the 
ups and downs of army life.

Body servants got together frequently for crap 
shooting and cards. They had abundant opportu-
nity to earn money by washing clothes and per-
forming other services for soldiers who were not so fortunate as to have aides. They were frequently able to supplement army rations by foraging expeditions through the countryside; and their dramatic pleas, which were almost invariably for poor wounded masters, elicited substantial returns even from impoverished citizens.

The servants profited also from victories over the Yankees. After almost any fight sable retainers might be seen walking from the battlefield laden with knives, razors, caps, overcoats, canteens, bacon, and other plunder left by the Federals. The master was given first choice of the spoils, and the remnant was left to the servant’s own disposition. Confederate successes such as those of Manassas and Chancellorsville were followed by flush times among black Rebels as well as among white ones.

In view of the close association between soldiers and body servants, it is not surprising that the latter became thoroughly imbued with war ardor. So much so, indeed, that in a number of instances the blacks picked up guns during the pitch of battle and indulged themselves in a few pot shots at the Yankees. Several servants boasted of taking Federal prisoners.
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But their greatest contribution was not the wielding of guns. Rather it was the jollity and amusement which they dispensed around the campfire. Their singing, playing, and dancing were effective foes of gloom and nostalgia, and their unfailing cheerfulness gave a powerful fillip to army morale.

There were many Southerners who thought that slaves would make effective soldiers, and they urged the enrollment of large numbers in the army. The most influential of the pioneer advocates of this policy was General Patrick Cleburne. In January, 1864, he presented a paper on the subject to a group of fellow officers in the Army of Tennessee. The preponderance of sentiment at this meeting was unfavorable to Cleburne’s scheme, but his paper was forwarded to Richmond. President Davis, fearing the effects of publicizing such a controversial proposal, ordered its suppression.

The desperate need for soldiers, caused by sickness, desertion, and battle casualties, eventually led the government to change its attitude. In December, 1864, Secretary Judah P. Benjamin wrote to a prominent South Carolinian urging him to agitate the arming of the blacks. A few weeks later Davis
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came out in favor of slave enlistment; about the same time General Lee gave the proposal his endorsement.

On March 13, 1865, the Confederate Congress passed a law authorizing the recruiting of 300,000 Negroes. Most advocates of arming the slaves had argued the necessity of promising freedom to those who should render faithful service, but the law was silent on the subject of emancipation. A few companies of ebon soldiers were organized in Richmond, but as they paraded near the capitol in their spic uniforms they were pelted with mud by contemptuous white urchins who lined the streets. The war ended before colored enlistees had an opportunity to go into battle. But it seems incredible that the ironic experiment of slaves fighting to perpetuate their own bondage could have succeeded.

Negroes were taken into the Northern army to the number of some 200,000. But these soldiers served as freemen, rather than as slaves. Even so, they suffered much discrimination. In several instances white companies refused to serve with them—and once, at least, Negro troops were fired upon by white comrades. The Northern government refused, until the last year of the war, to give colored soldiers equal pay with the whites.

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And throughout the conflict Negro troops had to do a disproportionate amount of guarding, policing, ditch digging, and other less pleasant duties of soldiering. When they were given a fair trial on the battlefield they acquitted themselves as creditably as unbiased observers might have expected. Some of them ran when the battle waxed warm, but for such conduct they had ample precedent among their Caucasian associates. Others marched unflinchingly through showers of lead to cross bayonets with yelling Rebels who pounced with demoniacal glee upon their black opponents. When consideration is taken of their background—particularly of the fact that they recently were slaves—it is surprising to find that these black soldiers fought as well as they did.

When the "day of jubilo" finally came it was disappointing to colored civilians as well as to soldiers. The Yankee deliverers showed an unwillingness not only to give the Negroes forty acres and a mule, but even to treat them as freemen. The government herded them into concentration camps where they fell easy prey to exposure and disease; or else they were hired out to adventurers who came South in the wake of Federal invasion to make quick fortunes raising cotton on confiscated...
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plantations. Their new employers often defrauded them of their scanty earnings, subjected them to brutal punishments, and treated them shamefully in respect to food and clothing. True, there were many government officials and private citizens who tried sincerely to deal squarely with them, but these efforts were often thwarted by ignorance and excessive sentimentality.

The early days of freedom were indeed trying ones for blacks and whites alike, and the swell of hatred engendered by war remains today a stumbling block in Southern race relations. Persons of both colors who have the welfare of their respective peoples at heart cannot refrain from wondering now and then whether a better way might not have been found of bringing slavery to an end, if only immoderates in North and South could have been restrained. Peaceful methods would have required a longer time, but they might have achieved an emancipation much more real than that which was vouchsafed at the mouths of cannon.