

UNION MUSIC DURING THE CIVIL WAR ERA

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

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The story of the Civil War can be expressed through the music of that era. Battle tales were glorified, the call to arms was strengthened and many of the emotions and actual feelings during the war could be visualized, all through music. By the end of the conflict, more music had been written, sung and played, than in all other wars combined.<sup>1</sup> John Scott, in his book The Ballad of America, states that Civil War music is "a commentary on human life and fate; it gives us a key to the moods, thoughts and agonies of a generation of Americans."<sup>2</sup> Though the Union makes up only a part of the people involved in the Civil War, its music gives us a picture of conditions and feelings as they were all over the United States.

A great encourager of music on the Union side was President Lincoln. Although not musically inclined himself, the President thoroughly enjoyed music. Many Saturday afternoons, despite his pressured schedule, he found time to sit on the South Porch of the White House and listen to Marine Band concerts.<sup>3</sup> Lincoln was the inspiration for quite a few Union songs. Probably his first act that inspired song writers was his call for 300,000 volunteers in 1862. The call came at a time

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth A. Bernard, Lincoln and the Music of the Civil War (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1966), p. xvii.

<sup>2</sup>John Anthony Scott, The Ballad of America (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1966), p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>Bernard, Lincoln and Music of Civil War, pp. xviii and 31.

when there was great discouragement in the Union. A Northern abolitionist, James Gibbons, wrote "We are Coming Father Abraham" which was sung at war meetings and rallies everywhere.<sup>4</sup> The response to the call and to the song was overwhelming. Although not used much as a marching song, "We are Coming" was sung by a group of soldiers responding to the call, as they marched past the White House. And the author sang the song for Mr. Lincoln with a group of senators and secretaries, after the defeat at Fredericksburg. This song played a large part in restoring and keeping up morale, at home and at the front, during the entire war.<sup>5</sup>

"We'll Fight for Uncle Abe" was another song for which Lincoln was the inspiration. Though it was a kind of comic song, it was not disrespectful. It was sung in the minstrel style and did wonders in raising spirits. It was mostly sung behind the lines and in the troops' barracks.<sup>6</sup>

There was still another act of the President, which was praised in a song. At the request of the editor of Godey's Lady's Book, Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November to be a day on which the nation would give thanks. Almost immediately, "Give Thanks, All Ye People" was written and published. It was not one of the most popular songs of the war period, but it did have great meaning to many people. In honor of President Lincoln, the title of the song was later changed

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<sup>4</sup>C.A. Browne, Story of Our National Ballads (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1931), p. 208.

<sup>5</sup>Bernard, Lincoln and Music of Civil War, pp. 79 and 75.

<sup>6</sup>Phillip D. Jordan and Lillian Kessler (eds.), Songs of Yesterday (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1941), p. 347.

to "The President's Hymn."<sup>7</sup>

Lincoln also had his share of critics who used him as the inspiration for songs. The recruiting song, "Abraham's Daughter," was sung by those who opposed the recruiting system and the war. This song was also known as "Raw Recruit" and in it, Abraham's Daughter is actually the war itself.<sup>8</sup>

Lincoln was not the only inspiration for the songwriters of the Union. There were songs written about the food, the draft, prohibition, and parodies of songs already in existence. One of the very first comical songs came into existence because of prohibition. "Farewell to Grog" was written on the eve of prohibition. Grog, an alcoholic beverage, was a common ration of the United States Navy. On September 1, 1862, prohibition was started and all liquor had to be disposed of. On the night of August 31st, sailors on the U.S.S. Portsmouth held a wake for their bottles of grog. In honor of the sad occasion, a seaman, Caspar Scheck, wrote the song "Farewell to Grog." That night, as the bottles were poured out, he sang it in memoriam.<sup>9</sup>

Parodies were written of both Confederate songs and Union songs that were already in existence. "Maryland, My Maryland," was the Southern song that was imitated the most. The success of the original, published in 1861, prompted the release of many parodies. But the invasion of Maryland, by Lee and Jackson in 1862, brought on a whole new set of Union verses. All the versions conveyed the bitterness

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<sup>7</sup> Bernard, Lincoln and Music of Civil War, pp. 178-81 and 190.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Arthur Dolph, "Sound Off!": Soldier Songs from Yankee Doodle to Parley Voo (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corp., 1929), pp. 255-56.

<sup>9</sup> Irwin Silber (ed.), Songs of the Civil War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 169.

that was felt by the North at the time.<sup>10</sup>

The popular Union song that was parodied was "Battle Cry of Freedom." One parody of it became almost as inspiring as the song it was taken from. The first verse and refrain are as follows:

Mary had a little lamb,  
'Twas always on the go.  
Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.  
So she staked it on a grassy slope  
Along the Shenando'  
Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.

Hurrah for Mary! Hurrah for the lamb!  
Hurrah for the sojers, who didn't care a damn.  
For we'll rally round the flag, boys,  
We'll rally once again,  
Shouting the battle-cry of freedom.

This song, though not making much sense, was found to be a good, lively, marching song and was even sung by men as they went into action.<sup>11</sup>

The indigestibility of some of the rations of the Union troops also prompted songwriters to write many satirical songs. Hardtack and sowbelly bacon were frequently served to the troops and though they were eaten, they were not really enjoyed. It was a case of eating that or nothing at all. The hardtack especially, was found to be quite wormy and unpalatable. The Union song "Hard Crackers, Come Again No More," sung to the tune of "Hard Times, Come Again No More," exactly depicted how the soldiers felt about their rations.<sup>12</sup>

And of course the draft prompted many none too flattering songs. There were songs written about men who hired substitutes and about those who tried to evade the draft. "Come In Out of the Draft" or "The

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<sup>10</sup>Vera Brodsky Lawrence, Music for Patriots, Politicians, and Presidents (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), p. 360.

<sup>11</sup>Dolph, "Sound Off!", pp. 236-37.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 320 and 227.

Disconsolate Conscript," as some people called it, was a song about humorous efforts made to avoid the draft. Probably the most popular Union song about the draft was "Grafted into the Army." It was written by a famous composer of the era, Henry Clay Work, and it was a comic satire on the draft.<sup>13</sup>

Even though music was popular throughout the war and encouraged by men like Lincoln, many men were reluctant to enlist as a musician. The rank was often considered to be extremely minor and even degrading. And yet, musicians and bands could be found with most regiments. There were volunteer bands and regular army bands, up until the War Department, in 1862, mustered out the regimental volunteer bands. Apparently this was due to the high cost of maintaining a band. There were actual provisions for regular army regimental bands, which provided for every regiment to have, at least a brass section, if not also a fife and drum corps.<sup>14</sup>

After regimental volunteer bands were mustered out, Federal brigade bands were formed. These bands were present at most official gatherings which could range anywhere from a military ball to a court martial or execution of a deserter. These Federal brigade bands could also be found at many battlesites, playing their songs for inspiration and encouragement.<sup>15</sup> It is reported that at Williamsburg, some Union army members had started to retreat. Their General, seeing the panic that was starting in his troops, called to the band to play "Yankee

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<sup>13</sup>Jordan and Kessler, Songs of Yesterday, pp. 347-48.

<sup>14</sup>Francis A. Lord and Arthur Wise, Bands and Drummer Boys of the Civil War (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1966), pp. 39, 29-30, and 8.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

Doodle or some other doodle!"<sup>16</sup> It worked to stop the fleeing troops. The band of the 14th Connecticut Infantry should be acknowledged as being extremely brave. This band went into an open space between the Union and Confederate troops who were in the midst of a battle. With fighting going on all around them, they played "The Star, Spangled Banner," "The Red, White and Blue," and "Yankee Doodle" for twenty minutes. Miraculously, no one in the band was killed. Another brave band was present at the battle of Chancellorsville. General Hancock, seeing the disaster being waged on his troops by a surprise attack from Jackson, ordered the band to play. As they were being fired on from all sides, they played "Battle Cry of Freedom." This proved to be a very good source of encouragement to the Union soldiers who were fighting.<sup>17</sup>

Many Union generals knew how encouraging the sound of music could be and consequently used their bands to the fullest. General Meade so liked music, that when he did not know the name of a selection, he sent an orderly to find out the title and composer. General Crawford ordered his band to play in honor of the victory of General Sheridan at the Valley of Shenandoah. The band played far into the night in honor of the victory. But on the other hand, General Grant was not too fond of music. This could be due to the fact that he had no ear for music and rhythm and he could not keep in step to band music.<sup>18</sup>

There are many testimonials as to the positive effects of band

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 197-200.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 220-23; Allan Nevins (ed.), A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Colonel Charles S. Wainwright 1861-1865 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962), pp. 473-74.

music. A Union veteran recalled, "We boys used to yell at the band for music to cheer us up when we were tramping along so tired that we could hardly drag one foot after the other."<sup>19</sup> A good illustration can also be found in General Butterfield's brigade. In 1862, he issued a standing order that bands should not play in camp. This even included before and after battle. This went on until one day, when a division of his was asked to act as support for reserve artillery. The men filled in, but were almost too exhausted to do any good. So a staff member, against the General's order, told all the regimental bands to play "The Star-Spangled Banner." That's all it took to bring the men to life. And as the men cheered and clapped, more bands started playing, each one trying to outdo the other. Just then Generals Butterfield and McClellan rode through and received an overwhelming reception. Needless to say, General Butterfield did not stop the bands from playing and the troops moved off, with the bands playing full force.<sup>20</sup>

The songs that were played by the bands and sung by soldiers, relatives and friends, leave a rich legacy to the music world and enrich our history by telling the stories of the era. Songs were composed throughout the war for almost every event that took place. Many times a song could cheer, comfort and inspire those who sang and those who listened. One inspiring incident occurred at the battle of Shiloh. A Captain in a Western regiment had received wounds in the battle from which he would not recover. As he lay on the field, waiting to be taken to the hospital, he decided that if he were going to be with God soon,

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<sup>19</sup>Lawrence, Music for Patriots, p. 363.

<sup>20</sup>Frank Moore (ed.), The Civil War in Song and Story, 1860-1865 (New York: P.F. Collier, 1889), p. 546.

he should praise him. He started to sing a hymn and soon heard another soldier nearby also start singing. Others too, joined in later. As he related it before he died, he said, "That night the echo was resounding and we made the field of battle ring with the hymns of praise to God."<sup>21</sup> The power of a song is fully illustrated by the moving story of that night.

Many of the songs of the Union could be heard at a variety of different events and occasions, as in the case of "Marching Along." This was the first martial volunteering song and was sung, of course, on the march. The Singing Sixties also points out that "one could hear it wherever a group of soldiers gathered around a campfire."<sup>22</sup> This is just one of many songs written to support a particular cause that was also just sung for the enjoyment of the soldiers. Another point in favor of "Marching Along" in particular, was the fact that the name of the leader in the song could be changed to fit the name of the leader of the soldiers who were singing the song. As a consequence, this song was sung by soldiers all over the North.<sup>23</sup>

The Union had many different songs that contributed to its cause. Most of the songs were valuable for their inspirational help. The wide variety of songs written during that period also provided emotional outlets for both the soldiers and their loved ones. While they served as inspirations and emotional outlets for the Union soldiers and their countrymen, it is possible that the songs had an even greater influence on the Union cause. One incident suggests that the music of

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>22</sup>Willard A. and Porter W. Heaps, The Singing Sixties (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 86.

<sup>23</sup>George Cory Eggleston (ed.), American War Ballads and Lyrics (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1889), p. 80.

the Union was a prime factor on the outcome of the war. Shortly after the surrender at Appomattox, some Federal naval officers were celebrating in a tavern in Richmond. During the course of the celebration, some started singing around a piano. In respect for some Confederate officers that were sitting nearby, they sang no Union patriotic songs and no satires on the South. But one of the Confederate generals soon asked them to sing some of their songs. The Union officers obliged by singing "Battle Cry of Freedom," "John Brown's Body," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic," among others. A Confederate major was later quoted as saying, "Gentlemen, if we'd had your songs, we'd have licked you out of your boots! Who couldn't have marched or fought with such songs?...every one of these Yankee songs is full of marching and fighting spirit."<sup>24</sup> Actually, the music of the Union might not have been a factor on the outcome of the war, had it not been for the inspirational and emotional values of the songs. But even more important were the people who wrote and sang the songs. They were the ones who were inspired enough and who felt strongly enough to make the eventual outcome of the war a reality.

The songwriters for the Union could be found many places. At times, soldiers and other active participants wrote songs to express their thoughts or to tell about something that had happened. But even civilians, not directly involved in the action, wrote songs that also expressed soldiers' and relatives' thoughts and experiences. Perhaps the most productive civilian songwriter was George Frederick Root. He wrote songs that really expressed the feelings of soldiers, their families, prisoners, etc. He also wrote songs that were inspiring to the country as well. The first Union song every written was done by

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<sup>24</sup> Lord and Wise, Bands and Drummer Boys, pp. 72-73.

Root immediately after the Fort Sumter attack. "The First Gun is Fired," called to Northerners to be ready to fight for what they felt was right.<sup>25</sup>

The stirring "Battle Cry of Freedom" is also a Root creation. He wrote it shortly after one of Lincoln's calls for additional troops. It was sung the day after it was written at a war meeting. Because it was easy to sing and had a good marching rhythm, it was very popular among the Union soldiers. Often times it was sung on the battlefield to encourage bravery and renew the will to keep going.<sup>26</sup> A few specific instances best show the spirit of the song. An officer at the battle of Vicksburg told about an Iowa regiment that had lost more than half their men. The men who survived the battle, gathered around the torn flag and sang, "Yes, we'll rally 'round the flag, boys," the refrain of the song.<sup>27</sup> The officer was quite moved by this gallant show of patriotism. At the battle of the Wilderness, in May of 1864, "Battle Cry" was again heard. A Union brigade had suffered tremendous losses and had retreated a few hundred yards. As they re-formed to attack again, a soldier shouted out the first words of the refrain and immediately, all the soldiers began to sing. The song was heard above the noise of muskets, shouts and the cries of the wounded.<sup>28</sup>

An impartial testimony of the power of "Battle Cry" came from a Confederate Major as told to a Union General after the war. The Major had remembered, during the Seven Days fight, hearing many Union soldiers

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<sup>25</sup>Browne, Story of Ballads, p. 153.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 154-55.

<sup>27</sup>George Frederick Root, The Story of a Musical Life (Cincinnati: John Church Co., 1891), p. 133.

<sup>28</sup>Browne, Story of Ballads, p. 157.

singing "Battle Cry." It really puzzled him because the Union army had been licked for six straight days and were singing the song on the eve of the seventh day. He said he felt the singing was almost prophetic of Confederate doom and it made him feel that he was fighting an uphill battle ever since then.<sup>29</sup>

A few other songs that Root wrote are not quite as lively as "Battle Cry;" but they do depict, just as vividly, other aspects of the war, namely those of loneliness and sorrow. "Just Before the Battle, Mother," explained the feelings of a soldier the night before a battle. Because many of the soldiers were under eighteen, it was natural for many of them to think of their homes and mothers before battle. Often times, the discussions around the campfires centered on home and mother. Likewise, Root wrote "Just After the Battle, Mother," also to depict a soldier's thoughts. This time the thoughts of home came as the wounded soldier lay on the field, waiting to be taken away.<sup>30</sup>

Though not sung by soldiers, "The Vacant Chair" was another song that expressed the feelings of so many people. The story behind "The Vacant Chair" tells of eighteen year old John Grout who was awaiting his first trip home, at Thanksgiving. But John was wounded and drowned at the battle of Ball's Bluff, the last week of October. So on Thanksgiving at his family's house, one chair was left vacant at the table. Henry Washburn, a family friend, was so moved by the family's grief and memories, that he wrote, what became the words to "The Vacant Chair." Root, upon hearing the poem, decided to write music to it.

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<sup>29</sup>"Union War Songs and Confederate Officers," The Century, as cited in Root, Story of Musical Life, p. 135.

<sup>30</sup>Browne, Story of Ballads, p. 159.

The song that was created was widely sung in both the North and the South.<sup>31</sup>

Whether a song of lament or a stirring march, Root's songs were some of the most frequently sung of the Civil War period. Lincoln summed up the country's attitude toward Root when he told him that he had, through his songs, done as much for the country as the men who were fighting.<sup>32</sup>

Another civilian was responsible for changing a favorite marching song into one of the most famous songs of all time. The background of the marching song must first be known to understand how the transition came about. "John Brown's Body," or "The John Brown Song," as it was first called, surprisingly enough, did not begin as a song about John Brown, the abolitionist martyr. The song was really about a Sergeant John Brown from a Massachusetts regiment at Fort Warren. John Brown's buddies started the song as a spoof of Sergeant Brown who sang tenor in their quartet. They sang the song to the tune of an old Methodist hymn. The first stanza of the song, "John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the grave," was the original verse sung to tease Sergeant Brown. As the war progressed, other verses were added. Most of the verses were rather derogatory to the South and ill-fitted to the tune. The original verse has remained as the first one of the song. It is that verse that causes most people to think the song is about the Abolitionist, John Brown.<sup>33</sup> It was said, at Fort Warren, that the song

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>33</sup>Lawrence, Music for Patriots, p. 357; Maymie Krythe, Sampler of American Songs (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 118.

helped to ease the labor of the men. The soldiers sang it as they carried away the rubbish of the old fort and built entrenchments. After the tune was changed, the song gained an even greater popularity. It has even been reported that there were, at one time, sixty-five different editions of "The John Brown Song" published.<sup>34</sup>

It was one of the ill-fitted verses sung to "John Brown's Body" that Mrs. Julia Ward Howe heard, while watching a review of troops at Bailey Cross Roads in Virginia. A minister standing with her, asked her to promise to try and write new words to the stirring tune. It took Mrs. Howe about an hour, one morning, to write new verses. These verses are probably the most inspirational verses of any song written in the Civil War era.<sup>35</sup> "Battle Hymn of the Republic" became an even greater marching song than "John Brown's Body." General Sherman's forces sang it on their march to the sea and prisoners at Libby Prison in Richmond all joined in singing it as soon as they heard of Lee's defeat at Gettysburg. Such was the power of the song, that it is said that President Lincoln cried each time he heard it. Today the song is valued by the North and South alike and is considered by many to be our only truly national hymn.<sup>36</sup>

Soldiers, as stated before, were also responsible for writing some famous Union songs. "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground," was written by Walter Kittredge on the night he was drafted. Kittredge was, at the time, in the midst of a conflict of emotions. On the one hand,

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<sup>34</sup>Browne, Story of Ballads, pp. 175 and 177; Lawrence, Music for Patriots, p. 357.

<sup>35</sup>Bernard, Lincoln and the Music of Civil War, p. 50; Browne, Story of Ballads, pp. 183, 185-87.

<sup>36</sup>Krythe, Sampler of Songs, pp. 120 and 125; Browne, Story of Ballads, p. 190.

he wanted to be loyal to his section, but on the other hand, he strongly opposed the war. It was this conflict that led him to write the words, "Many are the hearts that are weary tonight, wishing for the war to cease."<sup>37</sup> Soldiers were very fond of this song because it expressed their own silent feelings.

Another soldier wrote a song while in a Southern prison. Lieutenant S.H.M. Byers was one of 800 Federal officers held in a South Carolina prison. The prisoners had heard, just slightly, of Sherman's march to the sea. Their captors would not tell them any information about the war. But they learned the whole story one day, from a newspaper that was smuggled in, in a loaf of bread. After reading about the march, Lieutenant Byers wrote a verse about it and another Lieutenant put it to music. The song was called, logically enough, "When Sherman Marched Down to the Sea." It became an instant hit with the prisoners. The song even got out of prison before Lieutenant Byers did, for a prisoner who escaped, hid a copy in his hollow wooden leg. Once on the outside, the song was an immediate success with Union patriots. Of course, it was a hateful piece of music to the South.<sup>38</sup>

Some songs proved to be very influential in solving problems of the conflict. "All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight" helped solve a problem that was common to both the North and the South. Though written by a Northerner, the actual idea for the song was brought about by an incident involving Confederates. One night along the Potomac River, a Confederate soldier was keeping guard with his friend. As

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<sup>37</sup>American War Songs (Detroit: Gale Research Co., Book Tower, 1974), p. 106; Krythe, Sampler of Songs, p. 155.

<sup>38</sup>Scott, Ballad of America, p. 248; Nevins, Diary of Battle, p. 347.

he went to wake his friend, he stirred the coals in the fire. The glow revealed the men to the Union soldiers camped on the other side of the Potomac and the soldier's friend was shot by Union soldiers. The next day a headline caught a Northerner's attention and moved him to write, what became the words of the song. These words were set to music by a Southern man who was training recruits in Virginia. The song was truly a combined effort and actually did both sides a favor. It aroused people's anger to the point that both armies prohibited any further sniping of pickets.<sup>39</sup>

Another song that both the North and South claimed was "Dixie." A fact that is unknown to many people is that the song was written by a Northerner and was originally called "Dixie's Land." Daniel Emmett wrote the song two years before the war started. During the first year of the war, the North claimed sole possession of "Dixie." They tried to make it more a song of the North by changing the words and calling it "Dixie for the Union" and "Dixie Unionized." A "Unionized" version was even published in the John Brown and the Union Right or Wrong Songster.<sup>40</sup> Emmett even tried to destroy the effect of the song by changing the words to "Away down South in the land of traitors, Rattlesnakes and alligators." But by then the original song had become the anthem of the South. It wasn't until the surrender of Lee, that the song could be claimed by both the North and South. In fact, on the day Lincoln heard of Lee's surrender, he asked one of the bands at the

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<sup>39</sup>Browne, Story of Ballads, pp. 211-12; Ruth and Norman Lloyd (comp. and arr.), The American Heritage Songbook (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1969), p. 132.

<sup>40</sup>Lawrence, Music for Patriots, p. 352; Gilbert Chase, America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present, (2nd ed. rev.; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1955), p. 276.

celebration to play "Dixie." The crowds of people yelled for the band to stop. But Lincoln told them to finish it, as he felt the North had captured the song fairly, and it now belonged to the Nation.<sup>41</sup>

Other songs were also enjoyed by both the North and the South. Many times the two areas joined together in singing them. "Home Sweet Home" was one song that struck home in the hearts of both Union and Confederate soldiers. Mark Twain tells of a time when the Yankees were camped across the Rapidan River from the Rebels. It was between battles and, to pass the time, each side was singing. At first, each side sang a tune that was partial to their area. The Yankees sang "Yankee Doodle" and the Rebels sang "Dixie," and so on. But when "Home Sweet Home" was played, there was at first, complete silence. Then both armies joined in and sang it as one. A similar case is documented along the banks of the Potomac River. First one side would sing and then the other. But they were all sharing a common emotion when they sang together, "Home Sweet Home."<sup>42</sup>

Two other instances involving the song "Home Sweet Home" took place during truces at the battles of Spotsylvania and Fredricksburg. At Spotsylvania, it almost seems as if a band contest was being held. First the Confederate band would play a Southern song and the Rebels would all cheer. Then the Union band would play a Northern song and the Yankees would all cheer. But when the Confederate band played "Home Sweet Home," the cheer was almost deafening, for men in both armies were cheering together.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Fairfax Downey, Fife, Drum and Bugle (Ft. Collins, CO: Old Army Press, 1971), p. 82.

<sup>42</sup>Krythe, Sampler of Songs, p. 58; Silber, Songs of Civil War, p.120.

<sup>43</sup>Lord and Wise, Bands and Drummer Boys, p. 206.

During the winter after the battle of Fredricksburg, two armies were camped across the Rappahannock from each other. The Union army had the only band. One evening the band played Northern songs such as "Battle Cry of Freedom" and "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp" until a Confederate soldier yelled for the band to play some Southern music. The Union band complied by playing "Maryland, My Maryland" and "Dixie." They ended their concert with the neutral "Home Sweet Home." A few weeks later, these same two armies were battling each other at the battle of Chancellorsville.<sup>44</sup>

Another instance where Confederate and Union troops sang together involves a baptism. As a Confederate private was being prepared for baptism in a river, the Union troops, on the other side of the river, cast interested glances. They became so involved in the goings on that when the Confederates began to sing the hymn, "There is a Fountain," they joined in. When they all finished singing the hymn, the private was immersed in the river, to the satisfaction of all present.<sup>45</sup>

Finally, the most frequently sung song of the war was popular in both the Northern and Southern camps. "When This Cruel War is Over," was sung in camp and on the march and also, to a large extent, by the women in the homes. Eggleston, in his book, American War Ballads and Lyrics, said that the reason for the songs' popularity was baffling.<sup>46</sup> But the theme of the song was a dream held by many Americans, for people all over the country were making plans for the time

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 204-05.

<sup>45</sup> Bernard, Lincoln and Music of Civil War, p. 154.

<sup>46</sup> Eggleston, American War Ballads, p. 249.

when the war would be over.

The instances of the North and South singing together shows how music could bring people together, at least in spirit, if not in any other way. The spirit of the songs of the Union was indomitable, for many of the songs were heard in war times in the twentieth century. And of course, many of the songs have been preserved through the ages and can be heard in churches, at family get-togethers, in schools, at veterans meetings and other functions, even today. Besides adding to our heritage of music, the songs of the Union give a great contribution to our history and to our knowledge of the Civil War. The music brings to life the people of the Civil War era, by revealing their emotions, thoughts and problems. With these revelations, we discover the human side of the conflict, which can sometimes get lost with the names of battles and generals. The personal view of the Civil War that we get through the music of the Union, should help us to feel closer to the people of that era. It is a comforting fact to know that as long as the music of that era is preserved, so is a part of our history.

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